

# Living in Hampshire & the Culture

Your guide to the region, culture and more...

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## 1. History and geography

Hampshire is the largest county based in Southeast England, bordered by Dorset, Wiltshire, Berkshire, Surrey, and West Sussex. The southern boundary is the coastline of the English Channel and the Solent, facing the Isle of Wight.

Its two largest cities are Southampton and Portsmouth, it is also home to Winchester, a historic city that was once the capital of England until the Norman conquest. The three cities all host Universities, Southampton being home to the University of Southampton and Southampton Solent University, Portsmouth to the University of Portsmouth, and Winchester to the University of Winchester.

By visiting [England 101](#) website you can learn more about Hampshire.

## 2. Weather

During June, July, August, and September you are most likely to experience good days with pleasant average temperatures that fall between 20 degrees Celsius (68°F) and 25 degrees Celsius (77°F). The coldest month is February with an average maximum temperature of 8°C (47°F). November is the wettest month whilst July is the driest and most sunny month.



Did you know! Southampton is known as the sunniest city in the whole of the United Kingdom!

## 3. Southampton and surrounding area

When moving, one of the biggest decisions is to decide on is the area you would like to live in.

**Southampton** is a fantastic place to live, work and socialise, with some of the best weather in the UK. With an enviable location on the coast, yet just an hour from London, our locality combines incredible natural beauty with a thriving social scene, making it a very desirable place to live. For detailed information about Southampton, please visit [Southampton's official website](#).

## a. Popular residential areas in Southampton

**Highfield and Portswood (SO17)** are the areas closest to our Highfield and Avenue campuses, and consistently prove popular with both staff and students. Portswood is the more student-focused area, with a range of shops, cafes and restaurants, whilst Highfield is a quieter, desirable residential area.

**Shirley (SO15)** is a broad district and a former village on the western side of Southampton, close to the Common and only a 40-minute walk from the university campus.

**Bitterne (SO18)** is an eastern suburb of Southampton and is particularly popular with families as some schools have been rated outstanding by Ofsted.

**Hedge End and West End (SO30)** Originally small villages on the edge of Southampton, Hedge End and West End are now larger suburbs with easy access to the M27 motorway and many areas of newer housing, making these areas particularly popular with families.

**Totton (SO40)** is situated between the eastern edge of the [New Forest](#) and the [River Test](#). The town has a good mix of housing, shopping and good transport links.

**Eastleigh (SO50)** is located between Southampton and Winchester, it offers you all the shops and restaurants you need, but also gives you easy access to the surrounding countryside.

**Bishopstoke and Fair Oak (SO50)** The area is a mix of residential properties based around two villages together with open farmed countryside and beautiful woodland, riverside and country walks.

**Romsey (SO51)** is a historic market town and is situated 7 miles (11 km) northwest of Southampton. With good facilities, picturesque surroundings and a strong sense of community, Romsey has long appealed to families and young couples.

**Chandlers Ford (SO53)** sits between Winchester and Southampton. It is popular with families as there are a number of good schools and plenty of recreation areas, shops and eateries.

## b. Nearby cities and their surroundings

### New Forest

**The New Forest** area is a unique mix of landscapes including ancient woodlands, wetlands, and bogs, and it is home to many rare species of plants and wildlife long since lost in the UK and Europe. There are lovely small villages around the New Forest, which offer beautiful walks through the National Park, thriving high streets full of independent shops and a strong sense of community. You can find more detailed information by visiting the [New Forest official website](#).

### Winchester

**Winchester** is located 60 miles southwest of London, 14 miles from Southampton, and [UoS Winchester School of Art](#) is located here. Winchester offers history, culture, and fine food. Its location and schooling options have

long been its strong selling points. Inevitably, with so many offerings, the city demand for housing is high and prices reflect this; it is one of the most expensive places to live in the area. For detailed information about Winchester, please visit [Winchester's official website](#). If you are looking for a village feel, [Bishops Waltham](#) is a great alternative.



Did you know Winchester was the capital of England before London!

### Portsmouth

**Portsmouth** is one of the world's best-known port cities, its history can be traced back to Roman times, and it has been a significant Royal Navy dockyard and base for centuries. The city offers buyers a range of property types to suit every budget. Southsea is a particularly popular area. With its own seafront and long beach there is always something going on including a static funfair at Clarence Pier. You can find more detailed information by visiting [Portsmouth's official website](#).

### Bournemouth

**Bournemouth** is a coastal resort town located in the neighbouring county Dorset, where you can feel the holiday vibes all year-round. Due to the rare microclimate, living in Bournemouth means you can experience longer sunshine hours. If you've ever dreamt of living by the sea, then moving to Bournemouth will doubtlessly appeal to you. You can find more detailed information by visiting [Bournemouth's official website](#).

### Salisbury

The cathedral city of **Salisbury** located in the county of Wiltshire, is only 21 miles away from Southampton. This historical city has plenty to offer, from a wide range of property types and high-quality schools to cultural events all year. You can find more detailed information by visiting [Salisbury's official website](#).

## 4. Leisure

### a. Museums and historic sites

Family-friendly museums and historic sites in Hampshire offer something for everyone. You can check options from the [Visit Hampshire webpage](#).



Did you know that Winchester's Great Hall is home to the legendary [King Arthur's Round Table](#).

## b. Art galleries, music, theatre and cinema

No matter what attracts your attention the most, you will never feel far from it while living in Hampshire. Hampshire art centres offer world-class exhibitions, performances, workshops, and classes all around the year. Learn more about [Arts and Entertainment in Hampshire](#).

The biggest theatre on the south coast with over 2,300 seats in its auditorium, the [Mayflower Theatre](#), is located at the heart of Southampton city centre.

The most famous live music venues in Southampton, which host some of the biggest names are [The Joiners](#), [The Brook](#) and [O2 Guildhall](#).

## c. Sports and leisure centres

The Southampton University offers a wide range of facilities across Southampton for varying abilities and interests. There is a wide programme of activities in outstanding facilities which enables you to make lifestyle choices to enhance your wellbeing. There is a comprehensive range of courses and classes to suit your specific needs, including water sports, swimming, and fitness. For more detailed information about facilities please visit [Southampton Sport Facilities](#) webpage, and to learn details of membership visit [sign-up for membership](#) page.

There are also various high quality fitness centres in Southampton; David Lloyd Leisure, Pure Gym, The Gym Group, The Quays Swimming and Diving Complex and Spirit Health Club.

If you are a football fan, you can visit [Southampton FC website](#) to get more information about the club and add [St. Mary's Stadium](#) to your must-see list.

## d. Family activities

### Forests and parks

There are many forests in Hampshire where you can enjoy nature and wildlife. Some of those are [Moors Valley Forest](#), [New Forest](#), and [West Walk](#).

We also have some lovely parks such as the [Royal Victoria Country Park](#), [Eastleigh Lakeside Railway](#) and [Itchen Valley Country Park](#).

## Farms, zoos, and aquariums

You will have many opportunities to enjoy the wildlife in Hampshire, there are many farms, zoos and aquariums where you can spend family time, some of those are [Manor Farm](#) , [Long Down Activity Farm](#), [The New Forest Wildlife Park](#), [Hawk Conservancy Trust](#), [Marwell Zoo](#), [Bournemouth Oceanarium](#) and [Blue Reef Aquarium](#).

## Theme and amusement parks

If you are a fan of rollercoasters Hampshire has several theme parks and amusement parks that will guarantee you a whole lot of fun.

[Paultons Park](#) which is rated as the number one theme park in the UK by the TripAdvisor, [Clarence Pier Southsea](#) is one of the largest amusement parks on the south coast, [Funland Amusement Park](#) offers indoor and outdoor activities, [Hollycombe Steam in the Country](#) offers visitors a nostalgic look at Victorian and Edwardian times.

## Beaches and water sports

Hampshire's coastline stretches from Highcliffe in the west of the county to Chichester Harbour in the east. If you are a [beach](#) person, Hampshire has a lot to offer you.

If you like [water sports](#), Hampshire is a true haven for you.

## 5. Shopping

Hampshire has superb shopping facilities in Basingstoke, Portsmouth, Southampton, and Winchester. From local, independent retailers to high street brands and weekly [farmers' markets](#) Hampshire offers a shopping experience for everyone. [Shopping in Hampshire webpage](#) will give you all the information you need.

## 6. Culture

British culture has its roots in the United Kingdom's rich history, the people, and the four countries namely England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. Each of those countries has its unique traditions and customs which makes the United Kingdom a fantastic place to explore.

### Tips for adjusting to a new culture

Living in a culture that is different from your own can be both an exciting adventure and a challenging process. Regardless of what country you are from, it is common for all expats to go through a period of cultural adjustment. Understanding this adjustment process and getting support through this transition will help you to have a more fulfilling experience.

You are not alone! Culture shock is a common phenomenon. Regardless of how prepared you are for the new life, once you start living in the new reality you may experience culture shock.

Culture shock generally moves through four different phases: honeymoon, frustration, adjustment, and acceptance. Individuals experience these stages differently, and the impact and order of each stage vary widely.

But we can still give you some tips, which are very effective:

- Do not isolate yourself, get involved with your host culture and embrace the differences.
- Find local interest groups and clubs that you can attend and start communication around a common interest point.
- Keep an open mind, be curious, and learn as much as you can about your host culture.

## Sources for further reading

If you like reading, we can recommend you check the following list:

- Cultural Chemistry, Patti McCarthy
- Living Abroad, Cathy Tsang-Feign, PhD
- Psychology of Culture Shock – Colleen Ward, Stephen Bochner, and Adrian Furnham
- A Portable Identity – Charise Hoge and Debra Bryson
- The Emotionally Resilient Expat – Linda A. Janssen
- Third Culture Kids – David C. Pollock, Michael V. Pollock, and Ruth E. Van Reken
- The Expats – Chris Pavone

## Support line

The University provides an Employee Assistance Programme, which supports you to cope with life's difficulties and challenges. This will be available to you once you have commenced employment.

## Buddy programme

During your first couple of weeks in work, you may have an assigned buddy who is responsible for your adaptation to your new role and surrounding. Make sure you make use of this to make friends and feel more at home.

## Activities for kids

When you relocate with your family, of course one of the main focus points is supporting little and young members of the family to adapt to the new environment. You could take a look at, [Scouts](#) and [Girl Guides](#) which are great for finding friends and building confidence whatever your child's age.

## 7. Cuisine

Cuisine is usually associated with cultural identity and very much dependent on the geography and even history. Therefore, be open to trying new flavors to understand the culture you live in. Check this [20 best British dishes](#), and explore [fine dining in Hampshire](#).