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Article

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SharePoint Server 2016 & 2019 End of Support: what it really means (and what to do next)

Over the next 12–18 months, we'll see organisations caught out by the approaching end of support for SharePoint Server 2016 & 2019. It's not always front-of-mind because the platform will often keep running, but the risk and cost profile changes sharply once vendor support ends.



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Microsoft lists **14 July 2026** as the end of support date for **SharePoint Server 2016 & 2019**. (Microsoft Lifecycle: SharePoint Server 2016 & 2019)

What "End of Support" means in practice

Once SharePoint Server 2016 & 2019 hits end of support, you should assume:

- **No security updates** for newly discovered vulnerabilities
- **No product fixes** (even for known defects that become business-impacting)
- **No supported route** for Microsoft to help you troubleshoot incidents in the normal way

What can happen if you don't address it

In businesses, the "we'll leave it for now" approach tends to fail in predictable ways:

- **Security exposure increases**. Unpatched vulnerabilities are a real concern for an internet-connected or broadly accessible collaboration platform.
- **Audit/compliance challenges.** Unsupported systems are difficult to defend during audit, particularly where the platform stores sensitive information or underpins key processes.
- **Operational fragility and unplanned outages**. Even if SharePoint itself stays stable, surrounding dependencies change: Windows Server, SQL Server, certificate chains, identity/authentication patterns, browser behaviour, and third-party components.
- **Higher costs under pressure**. If you wait until you have an incident (or an urgent compliance driver), remediation becomes a rushed programme with avoidable downtime and expense.

The actions I recommend (a pragmatic sequence)

If you're running SharePoint Server 2016 & 2019, the most effective first step is not "choose a new platform", it's to have a methodical approach.

Understand your requirements

- Conduct a dependency review (e.g., SQL Server, Windows Server, Office Online Server if used)
- Understand what's actually in use
  - Consider your site inventory, ownership, criticality, data sensitivity
  - Decide what can be retired, archived, or consolidated

Look out for the 'Gotcha's'

- Identify blockers early:
  - Do you have any custom solutions? (farm solutions, custom web parts, timer jobs)
  - Review your Workflows (including legacy patterns)
  - Do you make use of third-party products and integrations?

Figuring it all out

- Decide the target direction and timeline:
  - On-premises modernisation vs cloud migration vs hybrid
  - Put together a phased roadmap with realistic cutover points well ahead of July 2026, which isn't far away!

Your realistic upgrade / migration paths

Option A: Migrate to SharePoint Online in Microsoft 365

For many organisations, moving to Microsoft 365 reduces infrastructure burden and accelerates modern collaboration capability - and it benefits from good information architecture, governance, and change/adoption planning.

Microsoft provides assessment and migration tooling, including the SharePoint Migration Assessment Tool and SharePoint Migration Tool.

Option B: Hybrid with SharePoint Server Subscription Edition

For organisations that need a phased route toward Microsoft 365 rather than a single big-bang migration, a hybrid approach provides a supported, low-risk transition path. The first step is to upgrade from SharePoint Server 2016 & 2019 to SharePoint Server Subscription Edition, and then enable hybrid connectivity with Microsoft 365 while moving content and workloads in manageable stages.

Option C: Modernise on-premises with SharePoint Server Subscription Edition

If you have strong reasons to stay on-premises (connectivity constraints, regulatory posture, specific technical dependencies), Microsoft's on-premises direction is SharePoint Server Subscription Edition, with documented upgrade approaches from SharePoint Server 2016 & 2019.

How we can help

If you're approaching a SharePoint Server 2016 & 2019 upgrade or migration, support doesn't have to mean a big-bang programme from day one. We can get involved at whatever stage you're at — from an initial sense-check through to delivery — and tailor the level of support to your internal capacity, timescales and risk appetite.

Typical ways Waterstons helps clients include:

Estate assessment – a structured review of your current estate (platform, content, customisations, risks and dependencies) so you know exactly what you're dealing with.

Options and recommendations – clear guidance on the most suitable route (on-premises vs Microsoft 365 vs hybrid), including pros/cons and the recommended sequencing to reduce risk.

Roadmap and delivery planning – a pragmatic plan covering approach, testing, cutover strategy and operational readiness, so delivery is predictable rather than reactive.

Migration / upgrade delivery – hands-on execution: build, migrate, validate and stabilise, with the right controls around quality and downtime.

Resource augmentation – additional capability for in-house teams under deadline pressure, whether that's project delivery, technical roles, or specialist SharePoint skills.

Governance and adoption – ensuring the end-state is not just "moved", but usable and sustainable, with the right governance, ownership and ways of working in place.

Need some help?

If you're not sure whether **SharePoint Server 2016 & 2019** is still in use (or how exposed you are), we'd love to have a chat and we can run a quick initial review and outline your practical next steps.

Contact us on: businessproductivity@waterstons.com