

DRAFT INPUT FOR THE SOUTHWARK CLIMATE EMERGENCY STRATEGY

**Extinction Rebellion (XR) Southwark
Lobbying Working Group***

**This document does not claim to represent the official policy of XR, XR Southwark, or our members; this is a living document to which we welcome feedback, rather than a final position. This document reflects the independent contributions of various groups and members of the community, whose efforts we gratefully acknowledge. It cannot be a replacement for genuine community engagement by the Council. As a general rule, XR does not tend to endorse specific policy proposals but recommends deliberative and participatory public processes to help establish them; however a variety of considerations follow logically from a commitment to net-zero and this document represents a starting point to support consideration of these.*

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Introduction

The world is currently undergoing the [sixth mass extinction](#) in the history of life on Earth.

In 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) [warned that the world faces catastrophic climate and ecological risks](#) if global warming exceeds 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, presenting existential risks to human communities and to other species. Time is running out to prevent catastrophe, which requires halting emissions to net-zero as soon as possible.

In 2019, the world reached levels of atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide not seen [in approximately three million years](#).

In the spring of 2019, the Council declared a [“Climate Change Emergency”](#) and the aim of carbon neutrality for Southwark by 2030. As XR Southwark, we are not offering endorsement for 2030 as a net-zero date; we support the XR UK demand for UK net-zero by 2025. This is an issue of equity and global justice because the historical concentration of industry and wealth in developed countries means that they are responsible [for 79 percent of the emissions from 1850 to 2011](#), and so they have an obligation to reach net-zero earlier than other parts of the world.

XR Southwark was formed around the 2019 April London rebellion, and includes over 1000 Southwark residents from all walks of life. As XR Southwark, we recommend being guided by the demands that inspired change in the UK: (1) Tell the truth (communicating the urgency for change to the public, including working with other institutions to), (2) Act Now (taking immediate action commensurate with the worsening climate and ecological emergency to achieve net-zero and halt biodiversity loss), (3) Beyond Politics (being led by deliberative and participatory public processes).

This paper identifies and explores key themes of the climate emergency, each of which should be explicitly addressed in the Southwark Climate Emergency Strategy and in the subsequent Climate Emergency Action Plan. In the final section, the paper lays out cross-cutting recommendations for how to ensure that its commitments are actually delivered.

This paper should not be seen as a substitute for meaningful, in-depth and broad-based Council engagement with the Southwark community. Since declaring a climate emergency over a year ago, the Council has as yet failed to engage the public in Southwark on this issue, aside from a few invitation-only events. This paper represents only a sampling of the thinking and potential contribution of Southwark residents which the Council still has the chance to engage.

We cannot delay in developing deeper democracy in Southwark. Since its formation in 2019, XR Southwark’s lobbying working group has consistently called on the Council to be more ambitious and do better in engaging with the community on Southwark’s response to the climate and ecological emergency. Deep community involvement is essential for successful design and implementation of the Council’s

goals, and the Council's ambitions will not be viable without this. Although the Council has agreed with this idea in principle, the Council still needs to improve its mindset and approach to engaging with partners in the community to become more participatory and deliberative.

The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated the Southwark community's power to change and transform in times of emergency. Given the pandemic, the Council's response to climate emergency, if done right, should offer shared prosperity, new jobs, and better health and quality of life, enabling a better recovery for Southwark. However, the Council can only do this if it recognizes that the situation prior to COVID-19 was not working for a great many people and was not tenable over the long term. We should come together as a community to more explicitly discuss and identify what must change and what stands in the way, both inside and outside Southwark.

A new world is coming, and a different way of doing things is possible.

Cross-cutting issues for delivering the Strategy

Mainstreaming and institutionalising the climate strategy

- **The climate emergency should be mainstreamed/reflected in all Council plans, policies, guidance and strategies.** The Council should commence a review of all current and future versions of these, identifying and resolving any inconsistencies with the climate emergency no later than 2021.
- **All Council decisions should be made in light of the climate emergency.** The climate emergency requires doing various things differently. Embedded in all Council decision-making processes should be a requirement to consider and study its implications and assess whether it helps or hinders efforts toward net-zero.
- **Designing and implementing a mandatory education programme for Councilors, officers, and staff on the climate emergency.** In order to ensure that the Council is properly informed and making good decisions in the context of the climate emergency, the Council should design and implement a programme to educate itself.
- **The Council should identify whether it has the human resources and capacity (e.g. staff) with which to deliver the climate emergency strategy, and if not take steps to solve this.**
- **Creating the institutional support to assure good delivery:**
 - **Establish an independent scrutiny group that includes relevant Council representatives and members of the community,** possibly appointed from people's assembly, to monitor progress on the climate strategy and work with the Council over the next 10 years (this could be an extension of the existing Partnership Steering Group).
 - **Establish an independent expert advisory group** to advise Southwark's leadership. This would assemble members of the Southwark community with prior expertise and experience relating to the climate emergency.
- **Transparency, tracking progress, and annual reviews.**
 - Meaningful engagement means committing to openly sharing information, data, failures and successes with others on a continuing basis. Making Council datasets open would encourage community participation, innovation and experimentation, accelerating discovery of new ideas and solutions. Conversely, if the Council does not commit to sharing planning assumptions and data out in the open, it will be difficult for 'would-be' delivery partners to collaborate in good faith. This is a journey which we must all embark upon together.

- As a matter of good practice, the Council should be transparent about its progress (or lack thereof), and publish audited annual reports on its progress (starting 2020). The Council should hold annual borough-wide open conferences on the climate emergency, allowing for opportunity to examine progress and any obstacles. All relevant information should be kept up-to-date on the Council's website, in addition to open surgeries by the Cabinet member quarterly or more frequently.
- **Interim targets -- to assure delivery of the Council's aims for 2030, the Council should adopt interim targets for 2025 and intervening years.** This should include a borough-wide emissions reductions target for 2025 as high as possible and at least 50%, and with near 100% reductions by 2028 or so. The Council should also match the items identified in this paper to calendar years throughout the period, after consultation with the community.

Communicating and engaging with all Southwark

- **Engagement with the whole Southwark community is vital to the success of the design and implementation of the emergency response.** A key outcome of effective engagement will be faster and greater levels of change towards the ultimate net zero target. Southwark Council is going to need community organisations, businesses, trade unions and other networks to "buy in" to the strategy and commit to delivering under key strands of work. Engagement cannot be an afterthought but a prerequisite to enable the plan to be viable.
- **The Council should develop plans to meaningfully engage with all residents on a broad-based and continuing basis.** Meaningful engagement consists of good faith discussion with the community on a two-way and regular basis, including events like People's Assemblies.
 - **The Council should ensure it is engaging with existing community networks and organisations in Southwark.** The Council's Partnership Steering Group represents a first step in this direction but should be expanded to ensure it is representative and includes representation from all groups.
 - **Holding annual or more frequent public conferences for Southwark on the climate emergency (as similar to "People's Assemblies" as possible), and regular open surgeries** on the climate emergency, on a quarterly basis or more frequently, attended by the Cabinet member and other representatives from the Council. Such events are essential to resolving more contentious questions.
- **In addition to the above Council should make specific efforts to engage particular constituencies and communities in greater depth.** The Council should aim to engage routinely with existing community networks and organisations, and take active measures to engage with underrepresented

groups (particularly in order to assure a just transition); the Council should establish advisory groups to allow for continued engagement with representatives of these. Others groups merit special attention as they are consequential by virtue of their emissions footprint.

- **Some groups of residents to engage in further depth** include: students and young people, trade unions, residents and tenants associations, members of BAME communities, diaspora communities, rough sleepers and users of food banks.
- **Engaging small and medium-sized businesses and enterprises (SMEs)**. This could include previously discussed measures around supporting retrofitting, energy efficiency, delivery systems, waste management, supporting active travel to work by employees and renewables.
- **Engaging major entities based in Southwark with national or global reach**. Southwark can have a significant impact by engaging influential organisations based in Southwark, These could include the NHS, international companies like PwC, supermarkets like Tesco, Primark, or restaurant chains such as McDonalds.
- **Engaging schools and universities and local climate experts**. Southwark is home to a number of universities including London Southbank, King's College London and University of the Arts London. The concerns and talents of staff and students should be drawn upon as part of the engagement process. Facilitation and support of a borough wide education programme for schools, colleges and communities should engage local organisations.
- **In line with the principle of "Tell the Truth", the Council should design, support, and implement a programme for borough-wide education of residents on the subject of the climate emergency**, offered to schools, colleges, and to all communities. This is essential to ensuring that the community understands the emergency and the need to act, and to building shared values. This will require resourcing from the Council.
- **Building shared values of climate justice and global climate solidarity**. Southwark's diverse community has ties across the globe. For many, the impact of the climate crisis in other parts of the world will be a personal reality. The Council should look to build on the community's exceptional showing of solidarity in response to COVID-19, to build a culture of climate solidarity in a world where ecofascism prefers to erect borders and fences.
- The Council's aim should be to ensure that a significant percentage of the population (e.g. 15%) engage in community-based climate action (e.g. rewilding) on a regular (e.g. monthly basis).

Financing delivery of the climate strategy

- **The Council's Climate Emergency strategy will fail to meet its objectives unless it is fully costed and underpinned by a rigorous plan for financing it.** This should be calculated at the earliest opportunity and should include budget allocation, approaches to raising capital, fees and levies, issuing bonds or other instruments, and working with the GLA and other London boroughs to pool capital and investment approaches. The Council should have an "invest to save" approach for seizing opportunities to cut carbon and costs together.
- **Given the context of year-on-year local government budget cuts, there will likely be a gap between available Council finances and the investment total required to transition Southwark to net-zero by 2050.** In this scenario, the council should be transparent about this with the community and work with the community to leverage the necessary finances in an appropriate and agreed manner.
- **Use of the Southwark carbon offset fund.** 75% of carbon offset funds collected Londonwide since 2016 remains unspent. Southwark: collected: £299,388; secured but not collected: £1,485,436. This fund obviously needs to be spent to help reduce emissions, but the fund needs to be spent as strategically as possible, rather than being disbursed on an ad hoc basis for randomly suggested projects that may not be the best use of capital.
- **Partnering with the GLA and other boroughs to explore creative opportunities for cost-sharing or reducing capital costs.** To help deliver the necessary finance at scale, the Council should explore innovative approaches such as pooling capital in a proposed pan-London public investment bank, proposed by the GLA as [the London Future Finance Facility](#). This could be a good use for the Southwark carbon offset fund.
- **The council could consider following the lead of other local authorities by creating a community municipal investment bond** (some [partnership](#) models exist with [firms](#) other local authorities are working with but XR Southwark does not endorse or promote specific companies). Such an approach would allow local residents to invest in renewable projects in the area, both enabling projects and creating income for local residents.
- **A workplace car parking levy or similar** could be used to raise funds, provided it does not disadvantage the vulnerable.
- **Legal and planning mechanisms such as Section 106 agreements, a Community Infrastructure Levy,** or other mechanisms could be used to raise funds.
- **Implementing licensing of the private rented sector** could cover enforcement costs of minimum energy efficiency standards.
- **As a general rule, Southwark should engage transparently, broadly and deeply with the community around the financing aspect of its plan, and around any of the proposed measures above.**

Advocacy with different levels of government and other institutions

- **Developing a lobbying and advocacy strategy toward assuring that Southwark’s climate goals can be delivered.**
 - Many of Southwark’s objectives under the climate strategy, including the 2030 net-zero target, will be difficult if not impossible to reach absent the necessary support from central government. Indeed, the Council has noted “it will be impossible to meet the 2030 target without bold steps from central government, changes to the national grid, transport improvements from City Hall, help from the construction industry, big business, individuals and more.”
 - In 2020, as part of its detailed analysis for delivering the strategy, the Council should undertake a “**gap analysis**” of areas in the climate strategy that are beyond the ability of the Council to deliver on its own, and make plans for influencing those actors, at **local, regional, and national levels.**
- **Within the borough:**
 - Use council memberships of Local Enterprise Partnerships to ensure all their decisions are in-line with the climate reduction pathway and nature restoration plans.
 - Engage key institutions (e.g. NHS trusts) about reducing their emissions in Southwark, and engaging national and global investors and businesses based in Southwark on reducing their Scope 3 emissions and achieving net-zero supply chains outside Southwark.
 - Provide particular support to SME businesses to access funds and expertise for reducing GHG emissions.
 - Engage the schools and universities based in Southwark toward reducing emissions, climate leadership, supporting students/youth.
- **Coordination with other local authorities**
 - **Working closely with other London Councils.** Southwark Council should form an alliance with other Councils that have declared an emergency and adopted the goal of net-zero by 2030. It should learn from and emulate the practices of more advanced boroughs, while sharing its learnings and encouraging less advanced boroughs.
 - **Coordinating across the United Kingdom.** The climate emergency requires action and collaboration across the UK, and coordination, sharing of best practice, and joint advocacy will be of mutual benefit to Southwark and other local authorities.
- **Engaging with the Greater London Authority toward a net-zero London by 2030**

- As the Mayor supports the goal of net-zero by 2030, Southwark Council should prioritise work with the GLA and other boroughs **toward a net-zero London in 2030.**
- **Engaging with Transport for London to ensure its strategy is in line with a 2030 net-zero date.**
- **Lobbying the central government**, in a coordinated effort with other authorities:
 - **Lobbying the government to bring forward its UK net-zero target date (currently 2050).**
 - **Lobbying the government to provide local authorities with the necessary support** to enable local authority net-zero targets
 - **Lobbying against government attempts to roll back the power of local authorities** to take more drastic independent action in the face of the climate emergency.

Themes to include in the Strategy and Action Plan

Just transition

- **The Council should ensure that the transformation is fair and equitable from a social perspective.** The Council should actively integrate [the just transition concept](#) into all relevant policies and decisions, applying lessons from research, best practice, and [case studies from other city contexts](#).
- **All proposed policies and decisions on climate change should be examined for their social impacts -- ensuring that no actions are socially regressive.** The Council should identify frameworks for analysis in line with best practice. Protective measures to avoid gentrification as a result of the transition, or reducing costs for public transport, to avoid fossil-based transport phaseout being disproportionately felt by poorer individuals.
- **The Council should adopt participatory/deliberative public processes in designing its policies, to identify unforeseen issues and prevent concerns about inequitable approaches.**
- **Pursue opportunities that combat social inequalities and the climate and ecological emergency together, and articulate this win-win potential.** Such opportunities include: addressing the housing crisis by a more climate-conscious approach to housing, reducing household costs by promoting the sharing and lending economy, combatting household fuel poverty by improving insulation and community energy projects, addressing unemployment through the creation of green jobs programmes, etc.

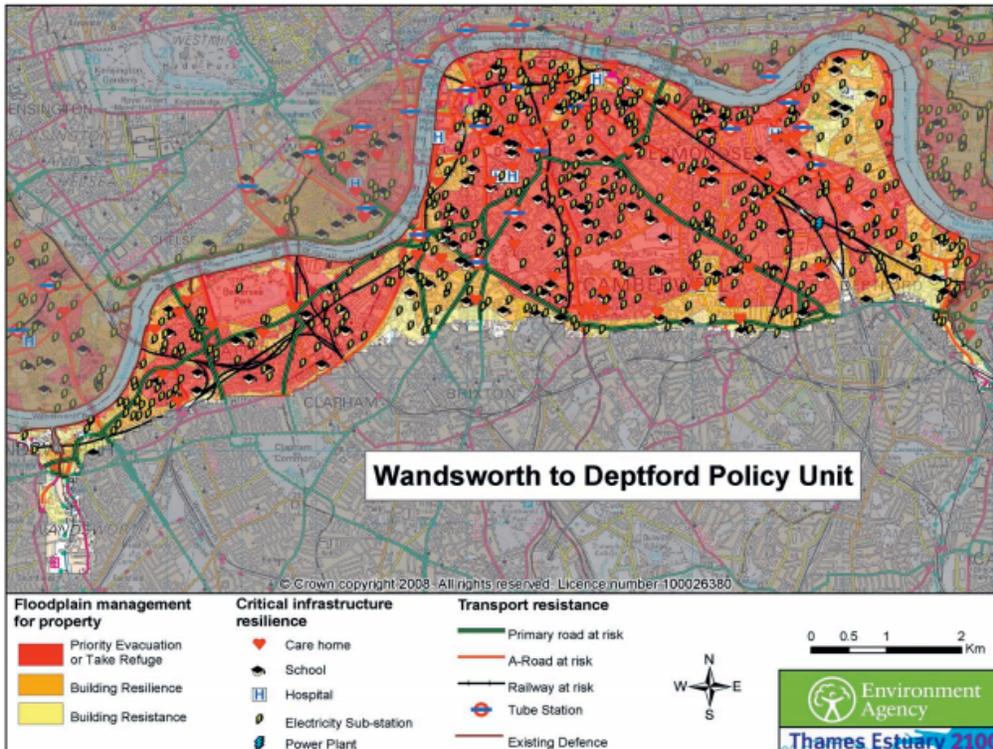
- **Explore creation of a green jobs programme for the Borough/across London boroughs, including skills and training, to support tackling the climate and ecological emergency.** Where jobs might be impacted by a transition to a more sustainable Borough, the Council should ensure alternative green jobs are just as attractive, well paid and skilled. It is vital that the workers in many of the impacted sectors have the skills they need in a green economy, so the council should invest in skills development and training to support the green transition.



Extent of flooding from rivers or the sea

● High
 ● Medium
 ● Low
 ● Very low
 ⊕ Location you selected

[Map of the risk of flooding from rivers and the sea. Source: [Environment Agency](#)]



At risk in Wandsworth to Deptford policy unit

[Areas in Southwark at risk of flooding. Source: Environment Agency]

Climate change vulnerability and resilience

- To protect Southwark and its residents, the Council should develop a climate change adaptation strategy and action plan to deliver a resilient Southwark, identifying the main vulnerabilities faced in Southwark and pathways to addressing them, as well as a program to mainstream and integrate climate adaptation and resilience concerns across all Council policies, strategies, and decision-making processes.
- In a cross-cutting way, the Council should ensure that the impacts of a changing climate (as well as opportunities for adaptation and enhancing resilience) are understood and considered by the Council at all relevant levels. The Council can apply lessons from research (see [Chapter 5 of GCA report](#), or the [IPCC](#)), best practice, and case studies from elsewhere. The Council should ensure climate-proofing of all infrastructure projects. The Council should take a public health approach to addressing the climate impacts that pose a risk to the health of Southwark residents.
- From a just transition perspective, the Council should **acknowledge and address the fact that the impacts on the borough will not be felt equally**. Poorer and otherwise disadvantaged communities, including the elderly, are more at risk, and the Council should target addressing these inequalities.

- **Key Vulnerability: Heatwaves**
 - In the UK, heatwaves are projected to result in [7,000 deaths per year by the 2050s](#), triple the current number. In a borough such as Southwark, the risk of heatwaves is exacerbated by the [urban heat island effect](#). At-risk demographics include the elderly and sick.
 - Local authorities have an [important role to play](#) to protect against heatwave risks, and Southwark Council should seize untapped opportunities. [Approaches](#) such as passive cooling can improve building efficiency while also helping to avoid overheating. Nature-based solutions such as increasing tree cover would help [combat the urban heat island](#) effect in Southwark (see infographic below).
- **Key Vulnerability: Storms and flooding**
 - Southwark lies on the Thames flood plan and is particularly vulnerable to failure of Thames flood defences. Southwark is therefore dependent on action at the city, national, and global levels, and should engage with them accordingly.
 - The Council can play a role in helping to prevent flood risk from extreme rainfall. [Nature-based solutions](#) -- including green spaces, but also meadowing of gardens for greater effect -- can help to absorb heavy rainfall and prevent flooding; see infographic below.



Source: Authors, based on Chu, E., Brown, A., Michael, K., Du, J., Lwasa, S., and Mahendra, A. 2019. "Unlocking the Potential for Transformative Climate Adaptation in Cities." Washington, DC: Global Commission on Adaptation and World Resources Institute.

[Source: [Global Commission on Adaptation](#)]

Nature and biodiversity

- **Protecting and expanding nature in Southwark.** Having declared a climate emergency, Southwark must protect and expand nature across the Borough. Nature and green spaces can provide valuable solutions for **enhancing Southwark's resilience to the impacts of climate change**, such as for flooding and heatwaves (see section on adaptation and resilience). Crucially, trees and plants also **represent a critical part of how Southwark can achieve net-zero**, because they consume CO2 and can help balance Southwark's emissions and drawn down emissions from the atmosphere.
- **Stopping the destruction of trees and increasing tree population.** Trees are a vital part of Southwark's ability to get to net zero, and so now more than ever it is important to maintain Southwark's mature trees, going beyond efforts under the [Tree Management Policy](#). According to the Council, in recent years the number of new trees and replacement trees has not kept up with the number of highway trees lost. (These figures indicate a net loss of around 1,400 trees between 2013 and 2017 alone.) While it would be better if for every tree lost in Southwark, one or more trees could be planted elsewhere in Southwark, this is not enough. A sapling is not equivalent to a mature tree, and an ecosystem of 20 trees is not as biodiverse as 20 trees scattered across the borough, so mature trees should be protected at all costs.
 - In future, the Council should not cut down any trees without an agreed and sufficient process of community engagement.
 - The Council should commence a large tree-planting programme in partnership with residents.
 - The Council could aim to double tree cover on council-owned land, update local planning strategies to double tree cover across the Local Authority area, in line with [recommendations](#) [Friends of the Earth].
- **Rewilding, expanding and creating new natural spaces from green and grey space.** The presence of natural spaces improves health outcomes (mental and physical) [Source: [World Health Organisation](#)]. Natural spaces and their expansion/creation should be accessible to the community:
 - In particular, lower income and ethnic minority groups; more investment is needed in lower income neighborhoods to ensure they are not disadvantaged in terms of access, filling green space gaps. New housing developments or reuse of non-residential buildings should ensure green space proportionate to number of new residents.
 - Given the Southwark community's interest, the Council should aim to develop programs to enable community groups to take forward rewilding projects. This could include grey space such as curbsides, pedestrianized roads, etc, as well as green spaces (e.g. lawns) which

could be allowed to rewild by an end to mowing or spraying, potentially saving costs. The Council should start with its own areas but should also systematically encourage individuals and estates to follow similar practices.

- **Protect and enhance biodiversity.** The world is currently undergoing the sixth mass extinction in the history of life on Earth; species and flora that are at risk and that contribute to supporting other species should be protected and encouraged by creating and preserving ecosystems for their needs. Green spaces should maximize biodiversity (i.e. avoid regularly mown lawns, using key species of plants) and where possible be joined to provide green corridors for the movement of wildlife. Council-owned land and road verges can increase biodiversity and drawdown carbon pollution, including through reduced pesticide use and increased planting of wildflowers.

Measuring net-zero

- **Defining the scope of emissions considered for Southwark.** The Council has established the goal of carbon neutrality in terms of the borough's emissions. Southwark should also aim to reduce the borough's [Scope 3 emissions toward net-zero](#) (emissions induced by the borough happening outside the borough). This should include active efforts to move individuals and institutions toward net-zero investment portfolios and net-zero supply chains, starting with the Council's own Scope 3 footprint (the Council has already made good efforts in fossil fuel divestment which it can promote more widely). This will require active collaboration with the GLA and other Councils around London, toward a net-zero London by 2030, in addition to engaging utilities, retailers, and other service providers. The Council should also not ignore the significant emissions of activities such as road vehicles moving through Southwark, or from embodied (upstream) emissions in materials for construction and building.
- **Defining how emissions can be offset and the use of the carbon offset fund.** Net-zero means that net carbon emissions in the borough of Southwark equal zero, which will require a balance between sources and sinks of emissions (i.e. if emissions from humans produce X tonnes of CO₂/yr, this should be balanced by plants that suck up X tonnes of CO₂/yr). Any offsets fund should be used as strategically as possible (possibly pooled with other borough funds; see section on financing), and any payment for emissions should be possible to tie to measurable emissions-reductions.
 - **XR Southwark does not recommend a specific policy for how to manage offsets** -- though clearly offsets should be strictly regulated and should only be agreed upon in cases where carbon emissions are unavoidable, and not as a means of maximising profits.
 - **Instead XR Southwark call for engaging the community in agreeing an approach to offsets.** Given wide-ranging and justifiable

concerns about the use of offsets, this is an area that the Council should engage deeply with the community on, in order to develop a science-based approach with integrity and acceptance from the community. (For example, one approach could be to require that any offsetting happen within London or within the borders of Southwark.)

- **Defining net zero in construction projects.** Construction projects currently do not take account of the significant emissions and embodied carbon during building, from materials, cement, etc, which is an oversight; see section on planning and construction.

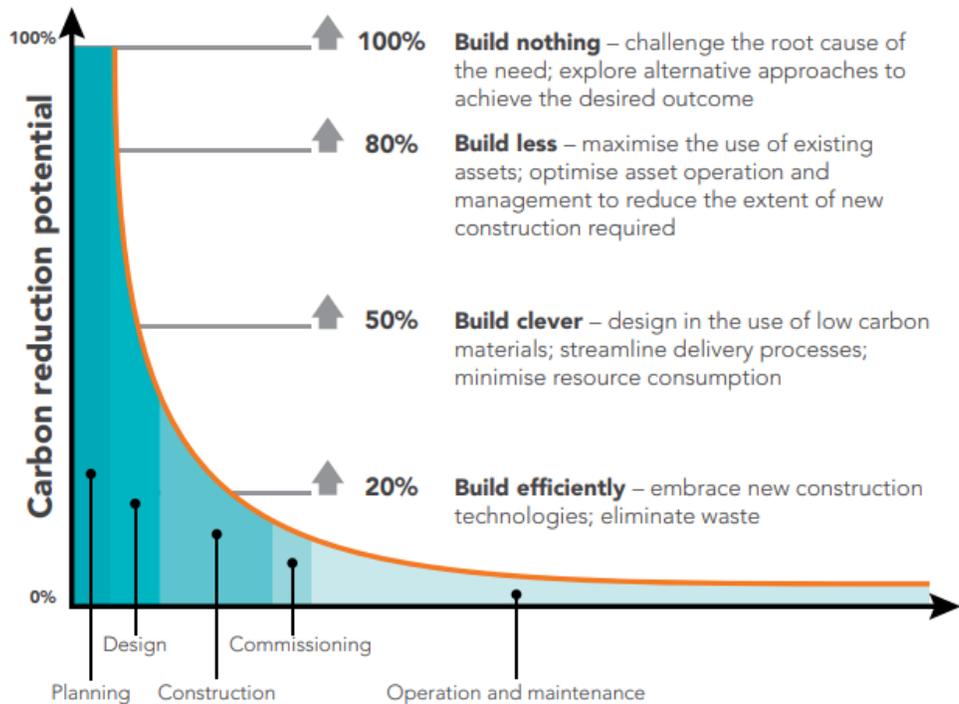
Planning and construction

- **Planning in Southwark should reflect a climate emergency.** Written before the context of the climate emergency, the New Southwark Plan is inadequate to current circumstances and should be revised to reflect the climate emergency, which puts urban planning in a new context.
 - In the next round of consultation on the New Southwark Plan, Main Modifications should be made to reflect the Climate Emergency. These changes should require all development applications to provide a whole life cycle carbon assessment (including embodied carbon) to satisfy that it is net-zero or net-negative, to be powered by electricity sourced 100% from renewable energy, with the maximum amount of on-site renewable energy, and a presumption against demolishing existing buildings, together with other recommendations in this document (e.g. on transport and nature) which have significant implications for urban planning.
 - The Plan should reflect the fact that the most carbon reduction potential in building comes from avoiding unnecessary construction and instead optimising existing buildings (see diagram below). For this reason, Southwark's planning and efforts to address the housing crisis must follow a choice hierarchy that prioritizes refurbishment over demolition. Repurposing of derelict or empty homes and buildings should be encouraged in place of new developments, as should green retrofitting of existing buildings; see graph from HM Treasury below.
- **Net zero targets on building projects currently do not take account of emissions during the building process.**
 - The current approach could be replaced by a cap on total permissible emissions during demolition, construction and over 30 years of use. The level of the cap could be linked to social use i.e. X tons of CO2 permissible per social housing unit created and a negative cap on emissions permissible in non social housing or commercial building projects (i.e. the building must create more renewable energy than it uses in order to go ahead). This would force developers to reuse

existing building materials with embodied carbon or to use new low-carbon building materials, and necessitate co-development of renewable energy generation projects alongside any new building project. Taken together, these measures should imply a reduction in new-build urban developments in Southwark, because current approaches in Southwark overlook the lifecycle impacts of construction on the climate.

Embodied carbon reduction potential at different stages of a building project

© HM Treasury; Green Construction Board



[Source: [UKGBC](#)]

- **For exceptional circumstances which do necessitate new build, require higher than current national building standards, especially for privately built new homes.**
 - **When new build/demolition is the only remaining option, then the Council should enforce strict building standards that reflect the climate emergency.**
 - **These should restrict the materials used, including requiring use of recycled materials, and supporting use of timber frames if strict climate requirements are in place.**
 - The Council should be guided by science and best practice. UKGBC offers a "[Net Zero Carbon Buildings: A Framework Definition](#)". The London Energy Transformation Initiative (LETI) offers "[Climate Emergency Design Guide](#)", as well as an [Embodied Carbon Primer](#), as well as other resources.

- **There should be a presumption against large glass-fronted buildings**, which according to experts are “extremely irresponsible” in a climate emergency. [[Source](#)]
- **There should be a presumption in favour of low-rise buildings**. According to UCL research “electricity use, per [sq. meter] of floor area, is nearly two and a half times greater in high-rise office buildings of 20 or more storeys than in low-rise buildings of 6 storeys or less. Gas use also increases...by around 40%... total carbon emissions from gas and electricity from high-rise buildings are twice as high as in low-rise” [[Source](#)]
- **The Council should continue to defend and exercise its right to impose higher than national standards, in partnership with other local authorities**. UK government recently consulted on a Future Homes Standard, which threatened to remove local authorities’ ability to set their own standards, in favour of a uniform national standard. Southwark Council rightly engaged with MHCLG to oppose this.

Building efficiency and heating

- **The Council should develop an efficiency and heating plan, if this does not exist**. The built environment represents approx. 40% of the UK’s total carbon footprint, and as a highly urbanized borough this is all the more important for Southwark. 30% of the UK’s total energy budget comes from domestic energy usage.
- **Retrofitting existing buildings**. A highly urbanized borough, over 3/4 of Southwark’s area is occupied by buildings, streets and car parks, and 80% of UK buildings that will be in use by 2050 have already been built [[Source: UKGBC](#)], so decarbonising existing infrastructure is of paramount importance. To do this, the council must:
 - Retrofit all Council buildings to an appropriate standard and enforce minimum energy efficiency standards in the private sector. Help owner-occupied homes be more energy efficient, for example by supporting energy companies to target fuel poor or vulnerable households with insulation.
 - Encourage Energiesprong/Passivhaus retrofits toward net-zero homes; Energiesprong/Passivhaus retrofits involve roof insulation, triple glazing and air ventilation. These deep home retrofits are useful in the following ways:
 - Reduce carbon emissions and self-financing in the long term.
 - Where Energiesprong has been applied in Nottingham, the money saved on energy and maintenance has been used to

pay for other things. [Source: [Institute of Engineering and Technology](#)]

- **In the spirit of the just transition, the Council should work to solve the problem of hard-to-heat homes, prioritising retrofits in social housing.** This can result in social and health outcomes as well as emissions reductions [Source: [Institute of Engineering and Technology](#)]. Across the UK, this can save the NHS, “£1.4 billion per annum in additional treatment costs for conditions arising from bad housing. At least £145 million of those costs arise directly from cold homes. Warmer housing could also prevent many of the 35,000 excess winter deaths recorded annually” [Source: [The Institution of Engineering and Technology: Scaling up Retrofit 2050](#)].
- **Decarbonising heating systems.** Decarbonising heating systems is therefore essential to meeting the targets required. Southwark should aim to avoid installations of new gas boilers, in favour of electric heating systems, such as heatpumps or hybrid systems, wherever possible.
- **District heating** can, when installed and operated both appropriately and well, reduce carbon emissions and costs. But it must not be assumed to do either. **Every proposed installation or extension must be scrutinised to ensure that it is genuinely low carbon and is the best possible solution** taking into consideration the nature and energy efficiency of the buildings, distance and access to heat sources and existing or other proposed heat networks, and other factors, including ensuring that residents will not end up paying more than would otherwise be necessary. Every heat network must meet stringent design standards and operation must be responsive and accountable to residents, e.g. via [Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations](#).
 - [People on existing heat networks in the borough experience intolerable levels of outages](#). It must be a priority to get them in working order. Meanwhile the promise of full compensation must be kept: no one should be out of pocket for using alternative means of space or water heating when the system is down.
- Promoting smart and efficient lighting among residents and other private buildings, using well-designed and well directed LED lights, while requiring it for all Council buildings and street lights.

Power generation and electricity

- **The Council should embark on a programme to ensure that Southwark harnesses 100% of its renewable energy potential, conducting a viability study of the borough (as part of the New Southwark Plan) and installing renewable energy generation projects wherever possible.** Every rooftop in Southwark should have solar panels and/or green roofs; green roofs have been a London policy since 2008. The Council should

operate a mass solar panel programme on all blocks with south facing roofs (and other roofs which are viable) where viable. Most viability assessments are easily achieved through desktop studies, and money earned in energy supply payments could go direct to residents as reduction in rent and/or reduction in service charges.

- **The Council should ensure that all sites under their operation (for example, schools) fully harness opportunities to install renewable energy projects**, with a view to powering 100% (or greater than 100%) of their needs.
- **The Council must speed the deployment of renewable energy by residents and on Southwark buildings not operated by the Council.** In partnership with GLA and other authorities, the Council should provide incentives and upfront funding for renewable energy generation rather than simply relying on the private sector which currently does not meet the borough's needs. (The Council or an intermediary could make grants and zero interest loans available to private residents and companies for installation and maintenance of solar panels.) This is especially needed in low-income areas of the borough. The Council should work with others to develop incentive schemes and aim to enable community energy programmes.
- Targets for harnessing of renewable generation potential should be **strictly required by the Council of any new-build developments.**
- The Council should also have targets for expanding the **development of energy storage, which is key to facilitating the uptake and cost-effectiveness of renewables.**
- **Where directly running on renewable energy is not possible, the Council should promote switching to utility contracts offering electricity 100% from renewables.**
 - The Council should ensure that **all sites under their operation (for example, schools) are powered by contracts offering electricity 100% from renewable energy** as soon as possible.
 - The Council could require making 100% renewable energy the default for all temporary accommodation.
 - For sites not under the Council's control (e.g. commercial buildings, schools with independent contracts, or private homes), the Council should **actively engage to promote a switch in suppliers.** XR Southwark does not endorse particular businesses, but a campaign using a partner (e.g. [Big Clean Switch](#)) should be considered.
- **In partnership with the GLA or other London Councils, the Council could set up their own company to generate energy from wind, solar or air/ground heat sources.** This should avoid biomass or other questionable 'green' energy sources which still contribute to global warming and ecological destruction. The GLA has recently set up [London Power](#), offering greener and more affordable energy as a white label service from an existing private

company, but it is not immediately clear that this power is exclusively from renewable wind, solar, or heat sources, and this should be checked.

- **The Council should learn from other local authorities, including:**
 - **The Council could learn from local authorities that have profited by partnering with a company to deliver renewable energy.** For example, “Warrington Borough Council has signed a huge solar plus battery storage deal, enabling it to generate all of its electricity and make millions of pounds a year in profit”. [[Source](#)]
 - **The Council could consider following the lead of other local authorities by creating a community municipal investment bond** (some [partnership](#) models exist with [firms](#) but XR Southwark does not endorse or promote specific companies). Such an approach would allow local residents to invest in renewable projects in the area, both enabling projects and creating income for local residents.

Mobility and transportation

- **A transformation is needed in how we move about, with the phasing out of private motorised journeys** (whether by fossil-fuel or electric powered vehicles) and **a longer-term transition towards public transport, walking and cycling** supported by sustainable freight for deliveries and services. This requires two core elements: disincentives for owning and driving a private motor vehicle, and enabling walking and cycling and links to public transport. All of these moves need to be supported by the GLA and TfL through measures to a) reduce motor vehicle usage such as Road User Charging, a London-wide ULEZ and improvements to public transport and b) support walking and cycling and sustainable freight. Sustainable and active transport (and car-less living) should be encouraged to a high extent in the New Southwark Plan.
- **Walking:**
 - As we have seen during the lockdown, far higher levels of walking will occur if the impact of traffic is reduced. Walking is a key tool for supporting the local economy. A number of things are needed to enable and retain high levels of walking:
 - Low volumes of traffic and maximum speeds of 20mph.
 - **Pedestrianising streets in key locations with high footfall** and other initiatives such as bus/cycle only corridors where possible in town centres (e.g. Rye Lane/Walworth Road), as well as quiet residential streets.
 - The development and rapid delivery (using low-cost measures) of a borough-wide network of **Low Traffic Neighbourhoods**.
 - **Improving crossing conditions** inc. more frequent crossings, longer crossing times and shorter wait times.

- **Enabling walking to school** with a borough-wide program of School Streets with pavement-widening outside schools on main roads.
- **Cycling:**
 - **Cycling requires a safe network across the whole of the borough reaching every school, high street, and station**, consisting of protected routes on main roads, through green spaces, liveable town centres, and low traffic neighbourhoods across Southwark, with high quality parking facilities at the start and end of the journey and a low speed environment with vehicles travelling at no more than 20mph.
 - This network should be safe enough for everyone from children to great-grandparents. Infrastructure should be accessible for people with inclusive cycles, people who use them as mobility aids, and parents taking their children to school by cargo bike.
 - Cycling can be supported through the establishment of a [‘Park & Pedal’](#) scheme.
 - [See: [The Guardian, Census data reveals commuter cycling has stagnated in the UK.](#)]
- **Public transport**
 - **Engage with the UK government, GLA and TFL to extend public transport accessibility and reduce costs to residents.**
 - 2019 saw cities across Europe move towards free public transport. Dunkirk successfully piloted a free public transport scheme. Monheim in Germany introduced free public transport and Luxembourg became the first country to make all public transport free. The city council of Kansas City has voted unanimously to make all city bus routes free. This should be the goal for Southwark.
 - All public transportation in Southwark needs to be accessible.
- **Zero emissions vehicles:**
 - **Southwark Council should commit to decarbonise their roads before 2030.** The public transport fleet (i.e. the bus system) and the Council’s fleet should be 100% zero emissions as soon as possible. The Council should require buses, taxis, etc to be zero emissions and provide incentives as necessary.
 - **Enable the rapid shift to electric vehicles through putting in place EV charging.** Southwark has made strides in this area but must continue to encourage the transition away from vehicles that give off emissions. The Council should also encourage those (e.g. local businesses) without alternatives to switch to ZEVs.
- **Road vehicles**

- **Given the availability of alternative modes of transport, extend and enforce existing bans on private road vehicles:**
 - **ban private cars from high street areas and develop car-free areas at locations where pedestrian footfall is extremely high.** Locations could include – Bermondsey St, St Thomas St between London Bridge Station and Guys Hospital and Elephant Road (E&C).
 - **enforce bans on private vehicles around schools at drop-off and pick-up time.**
 - **New developments in Southwark should be car-free.**
- **In a socially progressive way and without disproportionately putting costs on low-income households, increase costs of owning and driving cars** to better reflect the impact they have on residents. Measures could include:
 - increasing charges for parking (residential and on-street shopping) and reducing parking capacity (turning vehicle parking spaces over to other uses such as pocket parklets etc).
 - Southwark should move to an emissions-based parking charges residential and on-street parking charges but with a minimum parking cost to ensure no free parking for low emission vehicles. Residential parking charges should escalate for additional vehicles and free parking should be removed from our estates.
- **However, in line with the principle of the just transition, any bans or increased costs should not be regressive or favour the wealthy, and should include measures to exempt or provide for disadvantaged households.**
 - The Council should ensure that measures do not disproportionately affect those who currently need to use cars for work or who would be hit hard financially by fines etc.
 - The Council could promote efforts to encourage car-sharing.
 - Bans could be better than offering the choice to pay to pollute, as the latter simply makes it the privilege of the rich rather than tackling the problem together as a society.
- **Freight.** A sustainable freight network should be developed that includes:
 - Require deliveries to the council to be by electric vehicles or bike (e.g. through setting-up a distribution centre for onward deliveries by clean vehicles).
 - Incorporating sustainable freight/delivery hubs into all regeneration projects – Old Kent Road, E&C and Canada Water.
 - Encouraging sustainable freight as part of other major town centre development schemes such as Aylesham Centre Peckham, Butterfly Walk Camberwell and the Morrisons site in Walworth.

- Incorporating sustainable freight into Low Emission Zone/Neighbourhood and Liveable Neighbourhood projects.
- Co-ordinating skills sharing between the BIDs and local groups interested in setting up sustainable freight centres.
- Enabling/supporting local click and collections hubs in town centres/local centres across the borough.
- **Protecting children from vehicular pollution:**
 - Children are at particular risk from air pollution by vehicles as their lungs and other organs are still developing. Health impacts include asthma or other respiratory diseases, behavioural problems, suppression of lung growth, and long standing chronic diseases in adulthood which have been linked to early exposure of pollution. [Source: Professor Jonathon Grigg as told to [BBC Costing the Earth](#)]
 - The Mayor's team is working with two schools identified as being exposed to dangerous levels of air pollution. [Pupils at most Southwark schools are exposed to dangerous levels](#): 92 out of 498 nurseries, schools, further education centres and after school clubs in Southwark are within 150 metres of a road where the level of nitrogen dioxide from diesel traffic exceeds the legal limit of 40.0µg/m³.
- **The Council should learn from other local authorities who have instituted bold and transformative changes to transport networks**, such as [Nottingham City Council](#) which has been [cited as a model](#) to follow.

Waste and the circular economy

- **Southwark should revisit its Waste Management Strategy in light of the Climate Emergency**, taking it to the next level of ambition. This should be underpinned by new efforts to reduce waste, allowing full potential for reuse, and maximizing the potential for recycling, including the following goals:
 - **Sending zero waste to landfill or incineration.**
 - **Decreasing consumption and waste.** Starting with its own footprint, the Council should aim to reduce its unnecessary consumption and waste as far as possible and aim to reduce nonrecyclable waste to zero. The Council should use its officers to promote similar practices in the borough by residents, businesses, and other organisations.
 - **Facilitating the reusing, sharing and lending of goods.** The Council should promote platforms for facilitating the reuse of goods and the sharing economy, possibly on a ward by ward basis. This should require a digital component.
 - **Southwark should achieve 100% recycling of recyclables as soon as possible.** In order to do this and avoid recyclables in the wastestream, the Council must ensure that there are sufficient bins for recycling and that these are collected regularly, e.g. in all parks.

- Enable collection of food waste on Southwark estates, ideally by on-site composting (including fast composting systems that can deal with cooked food) rather than collection by truck.
- **Adopt circular economy waste policies in relevant plans and contracts, and integrate requirements for Council procurement.**
- **Every building should have access or improved access to composting.**
- **Engaging the community to reduce Southwark's use of plastics and other unsustainable materials:**
 - Ban the use of single-use plastic in council offices and premises, and promote this ban elsewhere.
 - The Council should develop a programme to engage actively in the community to promote good practice and discourage use of unsustainable materials, particularly non-recyclable materials. This will require resourcing on the Council's part.
- **Revisiting SELCHP. The heat and power from the SELCHP plant will be inconsistent with plans for net-zero if it comes at a higher level of pollution** (say in g CO₂ / kWh) than available elsewhere. Any emissions it creates must be reduced if Southwark is to achieve net-zero.
- **Use food waste according to the food waste hierarchy of prevent, reuse, recycle**, and ensure remaining non-recyclable biodegradable waste to generate biogas.

Sustainable diets, food, and farming

- **In terms of the just transition, the Council should aim to tackle the climate emergency at the same time as the problem of food insecurity and limited access to good quality food.** 2.3 million Londoners live below the poverty line and we must ensure they are part of the just transition [source: GLA Poverty in London, Intelligence Unit, 2017]. Providing access to sustainable locally sourced food can improve livelihoods and reduce the carbon footprint of diets.
- **The Council should support setting up more urban farms in Southwark:**
 - Following the Mayor's London Food Strategy calls for "including food growing spaces in new developments and as meanwhile use on vacant or under-used sites, encourage provision of space for community gardens, and protect existing allotment sites". [[Source: The London Food Strategy: Healthy and Sustainable Food for London](#)]
 - Southwark should aim to support, expand upon and make more visible existing examples of urban farming in Southwark, including: the Walworth Community Gardens Network covering 25 food and gardening projects, which has done training on the care of fruit and nut trees; Pembroke House community food hub which provides

training as well as growing for residents of local estates; and the school food matters project funded by United St Saviours.

- **The Council should implement a more widespread effort at growing food within usable community and leisure spaces such as parks, and expanding those currently operating:**
 - Community spaces such as parks are an important part of a sustainable food plan. The Mayor supports such efforts to 'promote planting of fruit and nut trees in parks, green spaces and institutional grounds, inspired by the Regent's Park Allotment, Growing Communities' Dagenham Farm and others across London'.
- **However, the Council should acknowledge that these small scale urban farming efforts will not lead to wholesale shift to sustainable food production or address food poverty in the borough.** The Council can reduce emissions via more radical and innovative approaches, including:
 - A new community model has emerged during the pandemic, of food parcels and community kitchens distributing cooked meals to workers in hospitals and vulnerable families. This shows how the Council could lead positive change in food distribution on a mass scale. These community projects should be supported now and expanded to ensure that they use sustainable and local food sources (teaming with food producers outside the borough but ensuring high environmental and employment standards). This could provide high quality plant-based meals in schools and communities at low cost.
 - The Southwark faith sector has historically run many food banks and community kitchens, so these should be considered in light of the above and should fit into a broader sustainable food plan.
- **The Council should more actively engage with Southwark residents to promote a shift to lower-carbon diets,** including by communicating the health benefits to more diverse diets and adopting meat-free days in schools.
- **The Council should aim to protect fruit and vegetable street markets and covered markets** as a community asset which contributes to local and sustainable sourcing of food.
- In the context of sustainable food, it is also important **for the Council to recognise the significance of ethnic and diaspora food outlets and of engaging with them.** These should not be left out of the shift to more sustainable food and diets.
- **The Council should follow other examples of good practice.** Brighton and Hove have one of the most advanced food strategy plans in the UK. The Brighton and Hove plan had a broad consultation base that included rough sleepers, food bank users and the BAME community. Some of the recommendations of the plan include:
 - 'Redevelopment of green space into a Heritage Lottery funded project to include teaching space, a local produce shop and demonstration fruit and veg growing.'

- 'Include food security in citywide resilience planning, in planning for climate change and in crisis planning e.g. a flu epidemic, flooding, drought and other extreme-weather. Collaborate with neighbouring local authorities to consider food security against the backdrop of Brexit, ongoing household food insecurity and a potential rise in food or energy prices.'
 - 'Become a test-bed for food waste innovation. Run practical campaigns, pilot projects and champion food waste leaders, e.g. in minimal and plastic-free packaging, food waste reduction and circular economy approaches.'
 - 'Increase recycling where reduction and reuse are not an option. Increase the number of Community Compost sites in the city to 50. Continue to investigate sites for an Anaerobic Digestion plant for food waste from business and explore increasing the range of materials that can be recycled from the domestic and business waste streams.'
- [Source: [Food Strategy Action Plan 2018-2023](#)]

Investments and supply chains

- **Southwark's investments and supply chains can have serious consequences outside Southwark, and so these must be a key part of the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy.**
 - As Southwark has some spillover from the City of London, one of the world's major financial districts, Southwark should engage financial firms and businesses based in Southwark about reducing their scope three emissions created outside Southwark.
- **For Southwark's investments**, Southwark should divest from fossil fuels and activities worsening the climate emergency, whilst using its money and increasing sustainable investments to drive the transition to net-zero.
 - This applies to **bank accounts, pension funds, and any other investments**; while this can begin with Council's own money, the Council should also have a programme to **engage other Councils, Southwark residents, and other local organizations regarding their money**.
- **Pension funds:**
 - **Background:** Southwark's pension fund has made progress in implementing its plan for reducing fossil investments, including a triennial investment strategy review to introduce a new 5% target allocation to sustainable infrastructure.¹ The Council should continue to advance its divestment and sustainable investment strategy, accelerating its implementation to achieve full divestment by 2025.

¹ As of March 31 2019, Southwark Council had net assets of £1.64bn in its pension fund, which also represent an opportunity to channel funds toward investments supporting net-zero.

- **Engagement:** The Council should actively and strategically communicate about its positive pension fund divestment approach, encouraging other Councils, Local Authorities, local unions, Southwark-based organisations, and Southwark residents to adopt a similar approach with their pension funds.
- **Bank accounts:**
 - Southwark Council should make sure its bank account (current account) is with a provider that does not lend to fossil fuels, and if it isn't, switch (as other London Councils have done) with a public announcement. This should be followed with engagement of other Councils, Local Authorities, local unions, Southwark-based organisations, and Southwark residents to follow a similar approach.
- **Promoting good procurement practices** in light of the climate emergency
 - **Where Southwark council are procuring goods or services, (for example, catering services for schools) tender specifications should require suppliers to meet strict minimum criteria on sustainability and net zero commitments.** Through its procurement, Southwark Council has a significant ability to influence wider supply chains and use public spending to drive positive behaviour change throughout the value chain.
 - All Council procurements and tenders could include separate category of evaluation for environmental impact and/or what the service/org/company does in relation to the climate emergency specifically as a separate section for evaluations, which should be given a high weighting in assessments (say 20/25%; to achieve this, Southwark can skim some off their default cost weightings which are higher than most councils).
 - **Engaging with supermarkets and retailers.** The Council should engage actively with supermarkets and retailers operating in Southwark, to promote a shift to net-zero and sustainable supply chains.

Appendix: The Above Responses Set out according to the Councils Request for Feedback via

<https://southwarkclimateideas.commonplace.is/>

Theme 1: Buildings, construction and regeneration

What can institutions do at a borough and city level?

The Council should develop an efficiency and heating plan, if this does not exist. The built environment represents approx. 40% of the UK's total carbon footprint, and as a highly urbanized borough this is all the more important for Southwark. 30% of the UK's total energy budget comes from domestic energy usage.

- Retrofitting existing buildings. A highly urbanized borough, over 3/4 of Southwark's area is occupied by buildings, streets and car parks, and 80% of UK buildings that will be in use by 2050 have already been built [Source: UKGBC], so decarbonising existing infrastructure is of paramount importance. To do this, the council must:

- Retrofit all Council buildings to an appropriate standard and enforce minimum energy efficiency standards in the private sector. Help owner-occupied homes be more energy efficient, for example by supporting energy companies to target fuel poor or vulnerable households with insulation.

- Encourage Energiesprong/Passivhaus retrofits toward net-zero homes; Energiesprong/Passivhaus retrofits involve roof insulation, triple glazing and air ventilation. These deep home retrofits are useful in the following ways: Reduce carbon emissions and self-financing in the long term. Where Energiesprong has been applied in Nottingham, the money saved on energy and maintenance has been used to pay for other things.

In the spirit of the just transition, the Council should work to solve the problem of hard-to-heat homes, prioritising retrofits in social housing. This can result in social and health outcomes as well as emissions reductions [Source: Institute of Engineering and Technology]. Across the UK, this can save the NHS, "£1.4 billion per annum in additional treatment costs for conditions arising from bad housing. At least £145 million of those costs arise directly from cold homes. Warmer housing could also prevent many of the 35,000 excess winter deaths recorded annually"

Theme 2: The energy we use - gas and electricity

What can institutions do at a borough and city level?

The Council should embark on a programme to ensure that Southwark harnesses 100% of its renewable energy potential, conducting a viability study of the borough (as part of the New Southwark Plan) and installing renewable energy generation projects wherever possible. Every rooftop in Southwark should have solar panels and/or green roofs; green roofs have been a London policy since 2008. The Council should operate a mass solar panel programme on all blocks with south facing roofs (and other roofs which are viable) where viable. Most viability assessments are easily achieved through desktop studies, and money earned in energy supply payments could go direct to residents as reduction in rent and/or reduction in service charges.

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The Council must speed the deployment of renewable energy by residents and on Southwark buildings not operated by the Council. In partnership with GLA and other authorities, the Council should provide incentives and upfront funding for renewable energy generation rather than simply relying on the private sector which currently does not meet the borough's needs. (The Council or an intermediary could make grants and zero interest loans available to private residents and companies for installation and maintenance of solar panels.) This is especially needed in low-income areas of the borough. The Council should work with others to develop incentive schemes and aim to enable community energy programmes.

Targets for harnessing of renewable generation potential should be strictly required by the Council of any new-build developments.

The Council should also have targets for expanding the development of energy storage, which is key to facilitating the uptake and cost-effectiveness of renewables.

Where directly running on renewable energy is not possible, the Council should promote switching to utility contracts offering electricity 100% from renewables.

The Council should ensure that all sites under their operation (for example, schools) are powered by contracts offering electricity 100% from renewable energy as soon as possible.

The Council could require making 100% renewable energy the default for all temporary accommodation.

For sites not under the Council's control (e.g. commercial buildings, schools with independent contracts, or private homes), the Council should actively engage to promote a switch in suppliers. XR Southwark does not endorse particular businesses, but a campaign using a partner (e.g. Big Clean Switch) should be considered.

In partnership with the GLA or other London Councils, the Council could set up their own company to generate energy from wind, solar or air/ground heat sources. This should avoid biomass or other questionable 'green' energy sources which still contribute to global warming and ecological destruction. The GLA has recently set up London Power, offering greener and more affordable energy as a white label service from an existing private company, but it is not immediately clear that this power is exclusively from renewable wind, solar, or heat sources, and this should be checked.

The Council should learn from other local authorities, including:

The Council could learn from local authorities that have profited by partnering with a company to deliver renewable energy. For example, “Warrington Borough Council has signed a huge solar plus battery storage deal, enabling it to generate all of its electricity and make millions of pounds a year in profit”. [Source]

The Council could consider following the lead of other local authorities by creating a community municipal investment bond (some partnership models exist with firms but XR Southwark does not endorse or promote specific companies). Such an approach would allow local residents to invest in renewable projects in the area, both enabling projects and creating income for local residents.

Theme 3: Transport and travel

What can institutions do at a borough and city level?

A transformation is needed in how we move about, with the phasing out of private motorised journeys (whether by fossil-fuel or electric powered vehicles) and a longer-term transition towards public transport, walking and cycling supported by sustainable freight for deliveries and services. This requires two core elements: disincentives for owning and driving a private motor vehicle, and enabling walking and cycling and links to public transport. All of these moves need to be supported by the GLA and TfL through measures to a) reduce motor vehicle usage such as Road User Charging, a London-wide ULEZ and improvements to public transport and b) support walking and cycling and sustainable freight. Sustainable and active transport (and car-less living) should be encouraged to a high extent in the New Southwark Plan.

Walking:

As we have seen during the lockdown, far higher levels of walking will occur if the impact of traffic is reduced. Walking is a key tool for supporting the local economy. A number of things are needed to enable and retain high levels of walking:

Low volumes of traffic and maximum speeds of 20mph.

Pedestrianising streets in key locations with high footfall and other initiatives such as bus/cycle only corridors where possible in town centres (e.g. Rye Lane/Walworth Road), as well as quiet residential streets.

The development and rapid delivery (using low-cost measures) of a borough-wide network of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.

Improving crossing conditions inc. more frequent crossings, longer crossing times and shorter wait times.

Enabling walking to school with a borough-wide program of School Streets with pavement-widening outside schools on main roads.

Cycling:

Cycling requires a safe network across the whole of the borough reaching every school, high street, and station, consisting of protected routes on main roads, through green spaces, liveable town centres, and low traffic neighbourhoods across Southwark, with high quality parking facilities at the start and end of the journey and a low speed environment with vehicles travelling at no more than 20mph.

This network should be safe enough for everyone from children to great-grandparents. Infrastructure should be accessible for people with inclusive cycles, people who use them as mobility aids, and parents taking their children to school by cargo bike.

Cycling can be supported through the establishment of a 'Park & Pedal' scheme.

[See: The Guardian, Census data reveals commuter cycling has stagnated in the UK.]

Public transport

Engage with the UK government, GLA and TFL to extend public transport accessibility and reduce costs to residents.

2019 saw cities across Europe move towards free public transport. Dunkirk successfully piloted a free public transport scheme. Monheim in Germany introduced free public transport and Luxembourg became the first country to make all public transport free. The city council of Kansas City has voted unanimously to make all city bus routes free. This should be the goal for Southwark.

All public transportation in Southwark needs to be accessible.

Zero emissions vehicles:

Southwark Council should commit to decarbonise their roads before 2030. The public transport fleet (i.e. the bus system) and the Council's fleet should be 100% zero emissions as soon as possible. The Council should require buses, taxis, etc to be zero emissions and provide incentives as necessary.

Enable the rapid shift to electric vehicles through putting in place EV charging. Southwark has made strides in this area but must continue to encourage the transition away from vehicles that give off emissions. The Council should also encourage those (e.g. local businesses) without alternatives to switch to ZEVs.

Road vehicles

Given the availability of alternative modes of transport, extend and enforce existing bans on private road vehicles:

ban private cars from high street areas and develop car-free areas at locations where pedestrian footfall is extremely high. Locations could include – Bermondsey St, St Thomas St between London Bridge Station and Guys Hospital and Elephant Road (E&C).

enforce bans on private vehicles around schools at drop-off and pick-up time.

New developments in Southwark should be car-free.

In a socially progressive way and without disproportionately putting costs on low-income households, increase costs of owning and driving cars to better reflect the impact they have on residents. Measures could include:

increasing charges for parking (residential and on-street shopping) and reducing parking capacity (turning vehicle parking spaces over to other uses such as pocket parklets etc).

Southwark should move to an emissions-based parking charges residential and on-street parking charges but with a minimum parking cost to ensure no free parking for low emission vehicles. Residential parking charges should escalate for additional vehicles and free parking should be removed from our estates.

However, in line with the principle of the just transition, any bans or increased costs should not be regressive or favour the wealthy, and should include measures to exempt or provide for disadvantaged households.

The Council should ensure that measures do not disproportionately affect those who currently need to use cars for work or who would be hit hard financially by fines etc.

The Council could promote efforts to encourage car-sharing.

Bans could be better than offering the choice to pay to pollute, as the latter simply makes it the privilege of the rich rather than tackling the problem together as a society.

Freight. A sustainable freight network should be developed that includes:

Require deliveries to the council to be by electric vehicles or bike (e.g. through setting-up a distribution centre for onward deliveries by clean vehicles).

Incorporating sustainable freight/delivery hubs into all regeneration projects – Old Kent Road, E&C and Canada Water.

Encouraging sustainable freight as part of other major town centre development schemes such as Aylesham Centre Peckham, Butterfly Walk Camberwell and the Morrisons site in Walworth.

Incorporating sustainable freight into Low Emission Zone/Neighbourhood and Liveable Neighbourhood projects.

Co-ordinating skills sharing between the BIDs and local groups interested in setting up sustainable freight centres.

Enabling/supporting local click and collections hubs in town centres/local centres across the borough.

Protecting children from vehicular pollution:

Children are at particular risk from air pollution by vehicles as their lungs and other organs are still developing. Health impacts include asthma or other respiratory diseases, behavioural problems, suppression of lung growth, and long standing chronic diseases in adulthood which have been linked to early exposure of pollution. [Source: Professor Jonathon Grigg as told to BBC Costing the Earth]

The Mayor's team is working with two schools identified as being exposed to dangerous levels of air pollution. Pupils at most Southwark schools are exposed to dangerous levels: 92 out of 498 nurseries, schools, further education centres and after school clubs in Southwark are within 150 metres of a road where the level of nitrogen dioxide from diesel traffic exceeds the legal limit of 40.0µg/m³.

The Council should learn from other local authorities who have instituted bold and transformative changes to transport networks, such as Nottingham City Council which has been cited as a model to follow.

Theme 4: Biodiversity, trees and green spaces

What can institutions do at a borough and city level?

Protecting and expanding nature in Southwark. Having declared a climate emergency, Southwark must protect and expand nature across the Borough. Nature and green spaces can provide valuable solutions for enhancing Southwark's resilience to the impacts of climate change, such as for flooding and heatwaves (see section on adaptation and resilience). Crucially, trees and plants also represent a critical part of how Southwark can achieve net-zero, because they consume CO₂ and can help balance Southwark's emissions and drawn down emissions from the atmosphere.

Stopping the destruction of trees and increasing tree population. Trees are a vital part of Southwark's ability to get to net zero, and so now more than ever it is important to maintain Southwark's mature trees, going beyond efforts under the Tree Management Policy. According to the Council, in recent years the number of new trees and replacement trees has not kept up with the number of highway trees lost. (These figures indicate a net loss of around 1,400 trees between 2013 and 2017 alone.) While it would be better if for every tree lost in Southwark, one or more trees could be planted elsewhere in Southwark, this is not enough. A sapling is not equivalent to a mature tree, and an ecosystem of 20 trees is not as biodiverse as 20 trees scattered across the borough, so mature trees should be protected at all costs.

In future, the Council should not cut down any trees without an agreed and sufficient process of community engagement.

The Council should commence a large tree-planting programme in partnership with residents.

The Council could aim to double tree cover on council-owned land, update local planning strategies to double tree cover across the Local Authority area, in line with recommendations [Friends of the Earth].

Rewilding, expanding and creating new natural spaces from green and grey space. The presence of natural spaces improves health outcomes (mental and physical) [Source: World Health Organisation]. Natural spaces and their expansion/creation should be accessible to the community:

In particular, lower income and ethnic minority groups; more investment is needed in lower income neighborhoods to ensure they are not disadvantaged in terms of access, filling green space gaps. New housing developments or reuse of non-residential buildings should ensure green space proportionate to number of new residents.

Given the Southwark community's interest, the Council should aim to develop programs to enable community groups to take forward rewilding projects. This could include grey space such as curbsides, pedestrianized roads, etc, as well as green spaces (e.g. lawns) which could be allowed to rewild by an end to mowing or spraying, potentially saving costs. The Council should start with its own areas but should also systematically encourage individuals and estates to follow similar practices.

Protect and enhance biodiversity. The world is currently undergoing the sixth mass extinction in the history of life on Earth; species and flora that are at risk and that contribute to supporting other species should be protected and encouraged by creating and preserving ecosystems for their needs. Green spaces should maximize biodiversity (i.e. avoid regularly mown lawns, using key species of plants) and where possible be joined to provide green corridors for the movement of wildlife. Council-owned land and road verges can increase biodiversity and drawdown carbon

pollution, including through reduced pesticide use and increased planting of wildflowers.

Theme 5: What we all consume (food, clothes and other goods)

What can institutions do at a borough and city level?

Southwark should revisit its Waste Management Strategy in light of the Climate Emergency, taking it to the next level of ambition. This should be underpinned by new efforts to reduce waste, allowing full potential for reuse, and maximizing the potential for recycling, including the following goals:

Sending zero waste to landfill or incineration.

Decreasing consumption and waste. Starting with its own footprint, the Council should aim to reduce its unnecessary consumption and waste as far as possible and aim to reduce nonrecyclable waste to zero. The Council should use its officers to promote similar practices in the borough by residents, businesses, and other organisations.

Facilitating the reusing, sharing and lending of goods. The Council should promote platforms for facilitating the reuse of goods and the sharing economy, possibly on a ward by ward basis. This should require a digital component.

Southwark should achieve 100% recycling of recyclables as soon as possible. In order to do this and avoid recyclables in the wastestream, the Council must ensure that there are sufficient bins for recycling and that these are collected regularly, e.g. in all parks.

Enable collection of food waste on Southwark estates, ideally by on-site composting (including fast composting systems that can deal with cooked food) rather than collection by truck.

Adopt circular economy waste policies in relevant plans and contracts, and integrate requirements for Council procurement.

Every building should have access or improved access to composting.

Engaging the community to reduce Southwark's use of plastics and other unsustainable materials:

Ban the use of single-use plastic in council offices and premises, and promote this ban elsewhere.

The Council should develop a programme to engage actively in the community to promote good practice and discourage use of unsustainable materials, particularly non-recyclable materials. This will require resourcing on the Council's part.

Revisiting SELCHP. The heat and power from the SELCHP plant will be inconsistent with plans for net-zero if it comes at a higher level of pollution (say in g CO₂ / kWh) than available elsewhere. Any emissions it creates must be reduced if Southwark is to achieve net-zero.

Use food waste according to the food waste hierarchy of prevent, reuse, recycle, and ensure remaining non-recyclable biodegradable waste to generate biogas.

In terms of the just transition, the Council should aim to tackle the climate emergency at the same time as the problem of food insecurity and limited access to good quality food. 2.3 million Londoners live below the poverty line and we must ensure they are part of the just transition [source: GLA Poverty in London, Intelligence Unit, 2017]. Providing access to sustainable locally sourced food can improve livelihoods and reduce the carbon footprint of diets.

The Council should support setting up more urban farms in Southwark:

Following the Mayor's London Food Strategy calls for "including food growing spaces in new developments and as meanwhile use on vacant or under-used sites, encourage provision of space for community gardens, and protect existing allotment sites". [Source: The London Food Strategy: Healthy and Sustainable Food for London]

Southwark should aim to support, expand upon and make more visible existing examples of urban farming in Southwark, including: the Walworth Community Gardens Network covering 25 food and gardening projects, which has done training on the care of fruit and nut trees; Pembroke House community food hub which provides training as well as growing for residents of local estates; and the school food matters project funded by United St Saviours.

The Council should implement a more widespread effort at growing food within usable community and leisure spaces such as parks, and expanding those currently operating:

Community spaces such as parks are an important part of a sustainable food plan. The Mayor supports such efforts to 'promote planting of fruit and nut trees in parks, green spaces and institutional grounds, inspired by the Regent's Park Allotment, Growing Communities' Dagenham Farm and others across London'.

However, the Council should acknowledge that these small scale urban farming efforts will not lead to wholesale shift to sustainable food production or address food

poverty in the borough. The Council can reduce emissions via more radical and innovative approaches, including:

A new community model has emerged during the pandemic, of food parcels and community kitchens distributing cooked meals to workers in hospitals and vulnerable families. This shows how the Council could lead positive change in food distribution on a mass scale. These community projects should be supported now and expanded to ensure that they use sustainable and local food sources (teaming with food producers outside the borough but ensuring high environmental and employment standards). This could provide high quality plant-based meals in schools and communities at low cost.

The Southwark faith sector has historically run many food banks and community kitchens, so these should be considered in light of the above and should fit into a broader sustainable food plan.

The Council should more actively engage with Southwark residents to promote a shift to lower-carbon diets, including by communicating the health benefits to more diverse diets and adopting meat-free days in schools.

The Council should aim to protect fruit and vegetable street markets and covered markets as a community asset which contributes to local and sustainable sourcing of food.

In the context of sustainable food, it is also important for the Council to recognise the significance of ethnic and diaspora food outlets and of engaging with them. These should not be left out of the shift to more sustainable food and diets.

The Council should follow other examples of good practice. Brighton and Hove have one of the most advanced food strategy plans in the UK. The Brighton and Hove plan had a broad consultation base that included rough sleepers, food bank users and the BAME community. Some of the recommendations of the plan include:

‘Redevelopment of green space into a Heritage Lottery funded project to include teaching space, a local produce shop and demonstration fruit and veg growing.’

‘Include food security in citywide resilience planning, in planning for climate change and in crisis planning e.g. a flu epidemic, flooding, drought and other extreme-weather. Collaborate with neighbouring local authorities to consider food security against the backdrop of Brexit, ongoing household food insecurity and a potential rise in food or energy prices.’

‘Become a test-bed for food waste innovation. Run practical campaigns, pilot projects and champion food waste leaders, e.g. in minimal and plastic-free packaging, food waste reduction and circular economy approaches.’

'Increase recycling where reduction and reuse are not an option. Increase the number of Community Compost sites in the city to 50. Continue to investigate sites for an Anaerobic Digestion plant for food waste from business and explore increasing the range of materials that can be recycled from the domestic and business waste streams.' [Source: Food Strategy Action Plan 2018-2023]

From what you know and have read today, what single topic or action should we focus on in Southwark to address the climate emergency?

From what I've read today, Southwark has some serious thinking about stepping up action in all areas to achieve Net-Zero. In the first instance, a Carbon Reduction plan aligned with Science-based targets covering Scope 1, 2 and 3 with yearly reduction targets through to 2030 should be created. This will give a serious assessment of the scale of the action needed, and the investment required to achieve this.

Is there anything else you think we should be exploring to tackle climate change, not covered in the previous sections?

Nothing here has mentioned a 'Just Transition' - i.e. how will Southwark ensure that any action doesn't disproportionately affect the most vulnerable in our community, who are already feeling the effects of COVID. Also reviewing the councils own Investments and supply chains should be included.

Finally, please refer to the document produced by XR Southwark - 'Input for the Climate Emergency Strategy'. This has a lot of detailed suggestions on all the above themes and more and sets a high bar for how Southwark council should respond to the emergency.