

**SOUTHWARK'S LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT (LAA)**  
**NARRATIVE OF PLACE - MARCH 2008**

## **1. A LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT THAT DELIVERS OUR VISION TOWARDS SOUTHWARK 2016**

Southwark has an exciting future as a world class quarter of a world city. We are committed to providing quality services alongside our ambitious regeneration plans which will ensure that Southwark is a key part of central London. But Southwark also has a history of poverty, deprivation and inequality. Our challenge – and our unique opportunity – is to take advantage of our location, our strategic asset holdings and our sophisticated approach to partnership working to transform the borough. Over the course of a generation, we will have created stronger, more equal and inclusive communities with access to world class housing, transport, education, retail, leisure and cultural facilities.

The overwhelming characteristics of our population are complex and diverse, in terms of ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation and deprivation. Southwark's population has been growing at a faster rate than the national average and reached 269,200 in 2006. By 2016 Southwark's estimated population could reach 319,300, an increase of 33,500 households in fifteen years. 37% of residents were categorised in the 2001 census as coming from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (BME), with significant diversity within this group. This diversity will continue to increase, and by 2016 it is predicted that around 39% of our population will be from BME backgrounds. Two thirds of pupils in Southwark schools are from BME backgrounds and over 170 languages or dialects are spoken in our schools. We are ranked 26<sup>th</sup> most deprived out of 354 local authorities in England (Indices of Deprivation 2007) and have improved from 17<sup>th</sup> in 2001 (Indices of Deprivation 2004). Within London, we are ranked as the ninth most deprived London borough, improving from sixth in 2001. More than half of the children in Southwark live in poverty with almost 38% of Southwark children living in families on key benefits. Southwark has always been a borough with high in and out migration, as well as people moving within the borough. Between 2005 and 2006, it was estimated that nearly 28,800 had moved into Southwark (with over two thirds moving from somewhere else in the UK) while 26,800 moved out. This is the second highest net migration in London.

Southwark is a diverse and changing London borough, stretching from the Millennium Bridge in the north to Dulwich College in the south. We have some of the most popular tourist attractions in the country, with the Tate Modern and Shakespeare's Globe in the Bankside area, alongside some of the largest regeneration projects with the Elephant & Castle and the Aylesbury Estate. The historic north of the borough - Borough and Bankside – is now a vibrant cultural and commercial quarter at the heart of the capital, with new commercial, cultural and retail developments. Having previously been dominated by manufacturing and docks, the Rotherhithe and Bermondsey areas have undergone a transformation in the last 10 years, and over 3,000 new homes of a mixed tenure have been built in the area. Peckham and Nunhead, Newington and Camberwell in the centre of the borough, are characterised by some of the most deprived communities in the country, albeit with pockets of affluence. Dulwich in the south, by contrast, is low density with a few pockets of deprivation. Dulwich retains a characteristically quiet, suburban atmosphere and is home to a large number of professionals who commute to central London.

## **2. INNOVATIVE APPROACHES AND AMBITION**

In December 2006 the Southwark Alliance agreed a new Community Strategy, Southwark 2016 [http://www.southwark.gov.uk/Uploads/FILE\\_25753.pdf](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/Uploads/FILE_25753.pdf). This sets out our long term vision for improving outcomes for people and place and delivering quality services. Our LAA will focus on delivering these headline themes through a joined up approach to delivery across the partnership. Beyond acting as the medium term delivery vehicle for Southwark 2016, the LAA also provides a mechanism for doing things differently. The LAA provides an opportunity to challenge the way we work, maximise the impact of resources and improve performance by focusing on making a real impact against our priority outcomes. However none of these issues stand alone and the LAA will need to recognise and focus on the complex interdependencies of these crosscutting priorities. For

example tackling child poverty and improving the life chances of a generation will require efforts to increase parental employment in sustainable jobs, expand housing choices, maximise income, reduce health inequalities and reduce attainment gaps for children and young people in poverty. Likewise developing sustainable communities and tackling climate change cannot be seen just as an environmental issue; we will seek to embed sustainability across our partnership working and bring together social, economic and environmental considerations to address our priorities and deliver joint solutions.

### **3. PARTNERSHIP**

Southwark Alliance, as the local strategic partnership for the borough, brings together the main agencies with a responsibility for and an influence on the public policy and services that shape the future of the borough. As a partnership, we have both the responsibility and the opportunity to speak for Southwark. We will continue our close dialogue with government departments and regional agencies, including the London Mayor, the Learning and Skills Council, the London Development Agency and others to tackle those issues like housing, transport and environment where a single borough solution does not make sense. We will continue to seek private sector partners that can add value to our policies and plans, working with them to bring benefits to our local communities.

Fundamental to shaping our journey is the direct engagement we have with local people – as electors, residents, students or service users or through businesses, faith groups and voluntary organisations. We have the opportunity to harness the skills and talents of our community to share in solving the problems. We will commit ourselves to working with the wide range of voluntary and community groups in Southwark. We will deliver on our commitments by making the most from our complex network of public, voluntary and private sector providers who are all delivering essential services.

We will strengthen decision-making and accountability at a local level, building on the experience of community councils and area partnerships. Throughout we will aim to improve public satisfaction with services across areas.

The Local Area Agreement will require ownership from the whole partnership if we are to deliver on these ambitious cross cutting priorities. We will review our partnership structures and working arrangements to ensure we have the capacity to deliver against this ambitious agenda e.g. development of a Strategic Housing Partnership.

### **4. COMMUNITY COHESION**

We will work to increase cohesion around our changing population; building a borough based on mutual respect and understanding within and between our diverse communities. We will work in partnership to strengthen the capacity of voluntary sector organisations to deliver citizen-led services and solutions and support self help and community-led activities. We want to continue to make Southwark a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

Strengthening community cohesion is seen as central to everything we do and will be at the heart of delivering against our LAA impact areas. Whilst delivering our priorities will contribute to strengthening community cohesion it is also important that in designing the action plans to deliver the LAA priorities we consider any impacts on community cohesion. Our success in engaging and empowering communities has recently received external validation by the borough being chosen as one of 18 National Empowerment Champions.

### **5. MAJOR PROJECTS**

Over 40% of the borough is covered by current or planned regeneration - including Elephant and Castle (London's largest ever redevelopment scheme by a single borough and costing £1.5bn). We also have regeneration of the Aylesbury estate, and ongoing change in Bermondsey, Canada Water, and Peckham. Southwark Council's Major Project Department has been set up to ensure that these major capital projects deliver our residents' aspirations of better housing, better

transport, more employment opportunities, better health and better education. This will have a major impact on the delivery of our crosscutting LAA outcomes.

The Southwark Plan, adopted in July 2007 is one of the most important tools to achieve the objectives of the community strategy. The new Local Development Framework will update and develop this spatial vision and bring in detailed programmes for delivery of the major growth in population and jobs. We are proceeding with area action plans in key areas of regeneration at Aylesbury, Peckham and Canada Water in advance of the core strategy, but work is starting on a core strategy as the overarching programme for the spatial planning of the borough.

## **6. LAA PRIORITY IMPACT AREAS**

### **PEOPLE - IMPROVING INDIVIDUAL LIFE CHANCES**

We are working towards a package of interventions to break the cycle of child poverty. Building on our successful partnership working; we are taking a whole system, preventative approach that is scalable, looking at how universal and targeted services and provision can support children, young people and families improve life chances. Underpinning our ability to reduce the inequality gap is the need to equip our children and people of working age with the skills to take opportunities, and create for them better pathways to employment. Given the long term and crosscutting nature of this outcome we will seek to measure our progress over the three year LAA timeframe through a basket of indicators. As part of a world city, we will continue to be an attractive location for innovative industries and use that dynamism to improve employment and business opportunities for local people.

#### **Children & Young People's Educational Attainment**

Key Stage 2 results show improvement in all subjects across all ethnic groups resulting in an overall improvement to 76.5% and 71.6% for English and Maths respectively from 73.3% and 68.9% in the previous year. We have one of the highest childhood obesity rates in London, with 18.4% of children in Reception and Year 6 classified as obese. In 2003 Southwark had the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the UK, 88 conceptions per 1,000 females aged 15-17 – double the national rate but teenage pregnancy rates are now reducing across the borough, with 17.6% reduction on the 1998 baseline.

The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) sets out the vision and principles of Young Southwark, our local Children's Trust: 'We want Southwark to be a place where every child and young person can have high expectations and the best opportunities. We will work together with children, young people and their families so that they can grow up in good health, feeling safe and secure and realise their full potential.'

The CYPP sets out how we intend to improve life chances across the five ECM outcomes and identifies our top five priorities for children and young people, based on needs assessment and what children and young people themselves have told us are important. The five outcome priorities are:

- Improved literacy and numeracy
- Reduced rates of teenage pregnancy
- Reduced incidence of crime against children and young people
- More for children and young people to do
- Reduced rates of childhood obesity

#### **Employment – Skills Agenda**

65,000 residents, or 40.4% of the working age population, are not qualified to NVQ Level 2. Some 33,500 or 20.5% have no qualifications. The chance of someone with no qualifications being in employment in Southwark is just 36.5% (LFS, 2005). Those with no qualifications are also more likely to have basic numeracy, literacy and ESOL needs. DfES data produced in 2002/3 estimated 53,180 Southwark adults are below Level 1 literacy and 19,975 are estimated to have an ESOL need.

We will support measures to prevent young people and adults from becoming unemployed in the first place by cultivating a positive attitude to skills and life long learning and promoting in-work training and development. Skills are a critical part of the route way to work and are essential as a means to achieve a sustainable income, independent living and the quickest route out of poverty. Once in employment skills development is essential for career progression and job sustainability.

The integration of skills and employment provision will be supported to meet the training needs of residents, employer demand and improve employment sustainability. We will encourage wider participation in higher education and support vocational training schemes. We will promote the engagement of employers in programmes for tackling worklessness, linking unemployed residents with employment opportunities generated from local economic regeneration. The VCS in Southwark have substantial experience of the work involved in engaging the hardest to reach in learning activities. Work related basic skills and language training will be promoted to address inequalities in employment for people with low or no skills and migrant groups. With our partners we are committed to supporting Southwark residents to achieve the minimum of a level 2 qualification.

Young people who are not in education, employment or training will be provided with targeted support to improve their longer-term employability and prevent them accessing the labour market at a disadvantage. Aspirations and the identification of route ways to achieve them is key to effective support. Within this group we will promote specific support for teenage mothers and people leaving council care.

### **Employment – Into Employment**

Headline employment rates and benefit claimant numbers have moved in the right direction for the past several years within a tough economic environment. The number of people in work outpaced population growth, so that the employment rate actually increased from 63.6% in 2005 to 64.9% in 2006, demonstrating that job growth has both absorbed migrants to Southwark and that previously workless residents have taken up new opportunities. Falling benefit claims corroborate this movement with people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance falling from 8,370 in May 2005 to 7,180 in May 2007; lone parents claiming income support falling from 8,220 to 7,500 over the same period; and incapacity benefit claims starting to fall back from a high in August 2006 of 13,930 to 13,610 in May 2007. Overall benefit claims have dropped from 33,940 in May 2005 to 32,270 in May 2007.

Despite matching the employment rate of Inner London, and closing the gap on Greater London, Southwark's employment rate of 64.9% lags London's by 4.1% and England by 9.4%. While the proportion of residents looking for work is slightly above the London average, the major driver behind this lower rate of employment is overall higher rates of inactivity, particularly among women and some ethnic groups. Benefit figures indicate where targeted intervention is required. Despite recent falls, lone parent numbers remain high compared to the national average (3.9% vs 2.1%) and it should be noted that many of the same barriers affecting lone parents are incurred by non-working mothers in couples.

We will work to improve economic wellbeing for all residents by promoting services to support those furthest from the labour market, particularly people with disabilities, people with mental health issues, people claiming incapacity benefits/income support, lone parents, ex-offenders, people with learning difficulties, black and ethnic minorities including refugees, young people, people with no qualifications and people aged 50 and over.

We are committed to supporting those with multiple and complex barriers to employment. We will encourage take up of mainstream and specialist support by as many hard to reach clients as possible and join up interventions addressing worklessness with health, housing, education and community safety services.

### **Reduction in Health Inequalities**

Overall, men in Southwark live about one year less than the England average of 76.9, but men in the least deprived areas live about 5 years longer than men in the most deprived areas. The

difference is about 3.3 years for women. However the gap in life expectancy for men and women in Southwark is closing. The death rate from smoking related conditions, cardiovascular disease (coronary heart disease and stroke combined) and cancer in those aged under 75 are all higher than the national average, but this gap has been closing in recent years.

There is good evidence demonstrating that people living in the most deprived neighbourhoods experience greater health inequalities; this has been demonstrated by a number of detailed analyses on Southwark's population. It is also clear that relative poverty underpins health inequalities; there is a strong association with poorer health; low income is also a determinant of poor access to quality housing, it affects dietary habits and other opportunities.

We will work to improve the health and wellbeing of Southwark's residents, narrowing the gap in life expectancy between different groups and improving the life chances of vulnerable children and adults. In addition to the identified key priorities Southwark will make a special effort to work in the most deprived neighbourhoods and with people on benefits or low income.

Improving health in Southwark is a huge challenge to be achieved with shared responsibilities across partnerships. Our LAA reflects this stance: many of our health improvement outcomes are embedded across the LAA. Some health outcomes may only become apparent in the longer term; meaning improvements will require a joined up approach with partner agencies, local communities and the voluntary sector.

### **PLACES – MAKING THE BOROUGH A BETTER PLACE FOR PEOPLE**

Southwark's population is set to grow over the next ten years. Already, our local consumption of resources like food, materials, energy, water - known as our ecological footprint - is three times the level the world can sustain. If we allow growth to continue at this rate, our way of life will be severely affected. We need to act now to promote more sensible ways of using resources and to respond to climate change. One of our major ambitions is for Southwark to be a model for London in how we manage physical development and embrace the changes in lifestyle and expectations that can contribute to creating a sustainable world city. We will promote an integrated approach to sustainability across five related activities – use of energy, waste management, transport, air quality and use of water. Developing sustainable communities will enable our citizens to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations. This will require us to live within our environmental limits whilst building a strong stable and sustainable economy.

#### **Cleaner Greener Environment**

Recycling rates have increased, and we have exceeded our statutory target for recycling and composting with performance of 18.46% in 2006/07, an increase of 161% since 2003/04.

In Southwark we have recognised the important role that a cleaner, greener borough has in increasing communities' satisfaction with where they live. This high quality environment leads to increased respect for their environment and reductions in criminal damage and nuisance behaviour.

We will transform the way Southwark's waste is managed through joint public and private investment in a major new waste management facility. We will make it easier for residents and businesses to become more sustainable through information and education. We will improve sustainability by ensuring new developments are above the national building regulation basic standard. We will work with partners to influence the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions, improve air quality and reduce the use and waste of water, including implementing the council's climate change strategy. The Elephant & Castle and Aylesbury have been designated Mayor's Energy Action Areas, in recognition of the effective implementation of the Mayor's Energy Strategy.

#### **Safer Environment**

The overall level of crime has decreased by 24% since 2004, and 7% over the last 9 months according to British Crime Survey (BCS) comparator crime data. In this time there have also been

significant reductions in robbery (-18%), motor vehicle crime (-11%), and pedal cycle theft (-24%). There has also been a significant improvement in the domestic violence sanctioned detection rate and criminal damage has seen a 9% reduction this year. Southwark saw a 22% reduction in wounding in 2006/07 compared with the previous year and a 24% reduction in knife enabled crime. We have maintained these levels of reduction in 2007/08 and knife crime has fallen by a further 3%. Domestic violence accounts for 21% of our violent crime.

SSP will continue to provide a clean, safe environment for everyone who lives works or visits our borough. Keeping safe is about tackling the causes of crime and identifying the risk factors that result in crime. Feeling safe is about addressing the fear of crime and reducing incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour and addressing the harm caused by drugs and alcohol to individuals, families and communities.

Over the last two years we have specifically focused on addressing violent crime, using our partnership resources to improve our work with victims, establish a range of early identification and intervention programmes and increase our intelligence, interventions and criminal justice processes. Having piloted the independent domestic violence model over the last year the intention is to substantially strengthen this and use this as the key method of intervention. Tackling violent crime remains the top priority.

We will increase safety by taking a four tier approach to tackling violent crime through: early identification of people, place and issues; early intervention particularly with vulnerable young people; medium term intervention; and enforcement. We will reduce the fear of crime and address anti-social behaviour and its impact on communities across Southwark. Over the next four years a wide range of interventions need to be put in place to provide both universal and targeted service for resettlement of offenders.

Southwark has an excellent partnership operation group which oversees tasking - an exemplar for the borough. Southwark's Stronger Safer Partnership, Young Southwark, and our Southwark Safeguarding Children's Board work closely together on early interventions and prevention strategies to safeguard against young people becoming victims, or in danger of becoming involved in crime. We are part of the 'Five Borough Alliance' - a cross borough initiative set up to tackle the serious violence linked to guns and other weapons involving Southwark, Lewisham, Lambeth, Greenwich and Croydon. The boroughs will be working to an agreed inter borough set of activities. Southwark intends to further develop excellent partnership activity by looking at all opportunities to co-locate teams and developing new ways of working e.g. PCSOs deployment within the warden teams. We also recognise the importance of effective emergency planning across all the agencies to help our citizens should there be a major incident in London.

### **Improved Parks & Open Spaces**

Attractive, good quality, clean, and sustainable public spaces make people feel better about the place in which they live. Southwark is developing a strategic framework to the management of the public realm, to target locations, secure funding, achieve and sustain high standards and quality public spaces. We seek to enable better coordination of those involved in the design, management and maintenance of the public realm and aim to ensure high quality is inherent in the design, management and maintenance of the streetscape.

Around 60% of Southwark households do not have a private garden, so it's particularly important that our green spaces offer a welcoming haven for residents. The parks service is the second most popular service run by the Council, with improving customer satisfaction scores for nine consecutive years. In 2006/07, three Southwark parks were awarded Green Flags as a consequence of efforts to drive up standards of management and maintenance. Over 25% of Southwark's open space is now managed to Green Flag standard.

Our aim is to widen participation in cultural, sporting and leisure opportunities for all. Southwark's two thousand years of culture and heritage is valued both internationally and by local communities. The London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics offer the opportunity to raise the profile of sport,

culture and exercise and to enhance facilities. Our challenge is to exploit this potential so that those who live and work in Southwark get the chance to develop and enjoy their creative and sporting talents and interests.

## **SERVICES – DELIVERING QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES**

### **Housing**

The council is the largest local authority landlord in London (and the fourth largest in England) owning around 35% of the borough's housing stock. Much of this stock is of very poor quality. In 2006/07 we achieved 852 new affordable homes in the borough. Of these, 72 had three or more bedrooms, important for alleviating overcrowding and catering for larger households who have more difficulty in accessing affordable housing in Southwark. Following a change to the Council's Allocations policy in 2005 there has been an increase in households in temporary accommodation to 1,367 households in December 2007. However, our successful homelessness prevention and reduction policies have stabilised the position, and we expect reductions in the future.

We will develop a cross-tenure strategic housing partnership to better enable us to deliver the additional homes and improvements to existing homes that are needed. We will review our housing strategy to better reflect and focus on changing national, regional and local priorities. We will make the best use of our existing housing and will work with housing associations and developers to ensure new housing of high design and environmental standards of the right size, type and tenure to meet demand, including demand for affordable housing. We will work with homeowners and landlords to bring housing up to a good standard, with particular focus on improving the quality of life of vulnerable people and meeting climate change targets. We will work with residents and landlords to improve the quality of housing management across tenures, with a particular emphasis on reducing anti-social behaviour and facilitating community cohesion. We will work with a wide range of housing and other service providers to prevent homelessness, reduce overcrowding and increase housing choice.

### **Enterprise**

There are 11,955 businesses in Southwark (ABI 2005) with business registrations above the English average, however eight other central London boroughs have a higher ratio of registrations to residents. Survival rates are better with Southwark ranked second in London. However, self-employment rates, a better indication of the level of small business start-ups, are low at 7.5% compared to 10.8% for London. Inequality between ethnic groups is high: 9.2% of 16+ White British are self-employed compared to 5.6% of 16+ BME (Census 2001). Both figures are below the London average. If Southwark achieved the same self-employment rate as London, a further 6,300 people would be directly self-employed (creating further job opportunities); the employment rate would improve from 64.9% to 68.2%.

We will promote a safe, high quality and accessible environment for business and use regeneration and other opportunities to increase the provision of affordable business space including business 'incubator' units for start-ups. We will promote Southwark as an ideal location to start, grow or locate a business and provide protection for commercial and industrial locations designated in the Southwark Plan. We will build an entrepreneurial culture, increasing access to information and advice that will support self-employment, services and skills set development for new entrepreneurs. We will enhance enterprise opportunities in the key business districts and town centres outside of the major regeneration zones through community regeneration schemes.

## **7. RISKS AND PROSPECTS**

We will need to ensure that these ambitious cross cutting priorities are owned by the entire partnership but have clear leads and mechanisms for ensuring partners contributions are coordinated. We will mitigate this risk for by reviewing our partnership structures and working arrangements to ensure we have the capacity to deliver against this ambitious agenda.

We will also need to recognise and mitigate against the potential risks of regeneration activity impacting negatively on our outcomes in the short term e.g. impacts on community safety and community cohesion whilst the work is taking place.

The Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 and subsequent Local Government Finance Settlement have significant resource implications for Southwark if we are to deliver against this challenging agenda. In negotiating our LAA targets we will need to balance our ambitions with a recognition of the financial constraints we will face. We will need to mitigate these risks by ensuring that our partnership working arrangements maximise the potential efficiencies from improved partnership alignment e.g. joint strategic commissioning.