

TACKLING POVERTY

What do we want to achieve?

Our aim is to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to share in increasing prosperity within the Borough and that the quality of life for the most disadvantaged is improved.

How will we do it?

- By addressing the causes of poverty
- By addressing the symptoms of poverty
- By alleviating the symptoms of poverty

Our objectives are central to the development of an anti-poverty programme for the Borough.

Why is this a priority?

The Council's approach to regeneration has transformed many parts of the borough and has repositioned north Southwark as a vibrant part of Central London. However acute poverty remains very real for many people. Communities in Southwark suffer from high levels of deprivation characterised by high levels of unemployment, benefit dependency, ill-health and crime. Consequently there are significant groups of people who do not have access to employment, adequate income, or affordable and good quality homes.

There are direct and indirect aspects of tackling poverty. The most direct issue, as reflected through research and consultation with people, is the health of the local economy and the extent to which local people can access employment and training. Southwark is the fourth most deprived London borough in relation to access to employment. Unemployment is currently double the London average rising to five times for Black and Minority Ethnic communities. The Southwark average income is approximately £12,000 compared with the national average of between £16,500-£18,000. Almost half of Southwark's wards have over 50% of children and young people in families claiming means tested benefits

The indirect effects of poverty include a wide range of problems that tend to be concentrated in specific neighbourhoods. The experience of poverty is compounded by factors such as race, age, gender and disability.

Poor housing and health are often symptomatic of poverty. 50% of all social housing in Southwark is of a non-decent standard and there are issues regarding the incidence of ill-health among groups experiencing disadvantage. Problems of poverty also have a negative impact on the future life chances of children and young people and enhance vulnerability of the elderly. There are many groups, particularly in the voluntary and faith sector, who are well placed to support those people who feel excluded.

Important issues identified through consultation included:

- Access to affordable, good quality housing
- The promotion of social cohesion and meeting the needs of disadvantaged groups
- Greater community involvement in decision-making and developing a sense of community responsibility
- Dealing with economic, social and environmental issues holistically through regeneration programmes
- Ensuring that services are joined up, accessible and of a high quality.

So what are we going to do...

What actions will we take?	By when?	Which agency takes main responsibility?	Which other partners are involved?	What are the success measures for this objective?
Addressing causes				
Implement the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy which targets the most deprived areas of the Borough.	First stage implementation by 2004	Southwark Alliance (Local Strategic Partnership)	Multi-agency approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure the neighbourhood renewal targets are successfully achieved. ▪ Reduce gap between worst ward and Southwark average ▪ <i>Resident setting up own business, lasting 18+ months</i> ▪ Over 2 years to 2004, and taking into account the economic cycle increase the employment rates in Southwark and reduce the difference in rates between Southwark and the inner London and London-wide region ▪ Over 2 years to 2004, and taking into account the economic cycle increase the employment rates of people with disabilities, lone parent, ethnic minorities and over 50s and narrow the gap between these rates and overall Southwark rate. ▪ <i>Borough job entry rate for young people aged 18-24 is equal to the inner London rate [which is?] by 2005.</i>
Deliver major regeneration programmes for Peckham, the Aylesbury Estate and the Elephant and Castle	Aylesbury Estate by 2008; Elephant and Castle by 2006	Southwark Council (Accountable Body)	All major partners; London Development Agency (LDA)	
Develop and implement an Enterprise Strategy for the borough to improve the health of the local economy, particularly focusing on attracting new business investment and providing support to business.	Implement over 2002 to 2005	Council, London Business Link and LDA	?	
Improve access to and take up of employment by local people and use the Employment Strategy to promote and support joined-up working across the agencies	First review of employment strategy by 2004.	Council, Job-centre Plus, LDA, Learning & Skills Council (LSC)		

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What actions will we take?	By when?	Which agency takes main responsibility?	Which other partners are involved?	What are the success measures for this objective?
Addressing symptoms				
Promote housing quality in the private sector through working with landlords and home owners.	?	Council (Housing), Housing Associations and Private Sector		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fuel Poverty – average SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) rating of council housing of 53 by 2005.
Promote affordable housing in the borough for both renting and home ownership				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that any affordable housing that is lost through redevelopment is re-provided in the local area.
Increase the availability of 'shared ownership' homes by establishing a common shared ownership register in order to maximise take up.	?	Council (Housing Department)		
Undertake a fundamental review of the housing allocation process, in order to build sustainable communities	?	Council (Housing Department)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Housing Strategy targets?</i> <i>Headline Connexions/Youth Strategy targets?</i>
<i>Young People – Connexions and Youth Council</i>	?	<i>Connexions Service</i>	<i>Council (Adult Learning)</i>	
Implement Community Councils throughout the Borough	Operational from April 2003	Council		
Agree a compact with the voluntary sector	?	Statutory agencies/ vol sector		
Implement initiatives concerning young people's welfare as expressed through Children's Services Plan. In particular projects that encourage out of school activities and build self-esteem.	To 2005?	Council	Health sector, Police, Voluntary and Faith sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the targets of the Children's Services Plan

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Alleviating symptoms				
Launch a major benefit take-up campaign through a partnership between the voluntary sector and the Council.	?	Council	Voluntary sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Halve Council rent debt, to £xm by 2006. ▪ Achieve tax arrears target of £11m by 2006. ▪ Reduce housing debt by 12.5% per annum.
Increase awareness of the direct payments scheme enabling Social Services users to purchase their own care.	?	Council	?	
Establish 7 UK Online Learning Centres to ensure access to computer training for those who wish it	March 2006	?	?	

For further information please see....	Available from.....
▪ Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy	▪ Council (Social Inclusion Unit)
▪ Employment Strategy	▪ Council (Regeneration Department)
▪ Enterprise Strategy	▪ Council (Regeneration Department)
▪ Children's Services Plan	▪ Council (Social Services)
▪ Southwark Council Corporate Plan	▪ Council (Corporate Strategy)