

Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

Communications plan

Issue

Communications to support the formal consultation on the final draft of the strategy from June 2024. This forms part of the wider engagement strategy which has been running since 2022.

Aims

- To share the final draft of the strategy with stakeholders and residents and to encourage them to respond to our consultation exercise.
- To ensure key stakeholders are aware of the strategy and how they can respond to it. Stakeholders have already seen and had the opportunity to comment on drafts of the strategy so we do not expect to generate a significant number of responses
- To ensure all residents have the opportunity to read the strategy and find out how they can respond to it.

Objectives

- To ensure all residents have the opportunity to see our key messages and call to action
- To generate 5,000 of visits to the consultation website
- To convert those visits into 1,000 number of survey responses
- To ensure Southwark Council staff with an interest in the strategy are aware of it and how they can respond.

Strategy

We will use existing internal and external channels to share the strategy and encourage residents to respond to the consultation; to ensure stakeholders have the opportunity to respond and to ensure interested Southwark Council staff are able to contribute their views to the homelessness team.

We will use broadcast channels to raise awareness of the consultation but as the primary call to action is to view and respond to a digital consultation, digital channels will be the most important, especially those where links can be embedded, such as the newsletter and social media.

Messages

Top Line

With one in every twenty-three children in London homeless, we are working hard to help families remain in their homes and reduce the take up and length of stay in temporary accommodation, as well as expanding help to those sleeping on the streets. We are renewing how we support local residents and strengthening our partnerships with all services to improve outcomes for those who are facing homelessness or rough sleeping. Southwark's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out our plan to prevent and relieve homelessness. We have spoken to partners and experts in Southwark and beyond but we need your views on our plans.

Call to action

You can read about our new strategy at [WEBSITE](#). You have until [DATE](#) to let us have your views.

Core narrative

Southwark's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out our plan to prevent and relieve homelessness. We review our strategy every five years to make sure it meets the needs of our residents.

We have consulted partners and experts in Southwark and across the sector and spoken to residents through public workshops, questionnaires, tenants' forums, landlord and agent forums and our homelessness forum. From that we have developed a new strategy that will build on our previous work and will set out our objectives, priorities and actions to meet current and emerging needs in our Borough.

It is a strategy that will focus efforts to prevent homelessness wherever possible through existing and new partnerships, relieve homelessness with accommodation that meets residents' needs and will aim to address inequality and insecurity in the Borough for our residents.

Our strategy has five priorities:

- prioritise homelessness prevention
- deliver high quality advice & support
- work to end rough sleeping
- quality outcomes through housing provision
- tackling systemic housing insecurity

Now we want to hear your views.

Key facts

- With one in every twenty-three children in London homeless, we are working hard to get families out of temporary accommodation and to help those sleeping on the streets. In 2022 we supported 70 rough sleepers into long-term homes, meaning they can start to rebuild their lives and future opportunities.

| Comparative statistics | Southwark | London | England |
|---|-----------|---------|---------|
| <p>How many people are homeless.</p> <p>Source Shelter 14/12/2023</p> | 7,206 | 167,469 | 309,000 |
| <p>Overcrowding – percentage of households that are overcrowded.</p> <p>Source: Census 2021 from the Office for National Statistics</p> | 12% | 11.1% | 4.37% |

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|---|----------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| <p>Rough sleeping.</p> <p>(The number of people estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night in autumn 2023 Source MLUHC)</p> | 42 | 1,132 | 3,898 |
| <p>People in temporary accommodation arranged</p> <p>A. by the council B. by themselves or homeless at home</p> <p>(Source: Shelter, November 2023)</p> | <p>A - 7,162 B - 0</p> | <p>A - 165,220 B - 1,391</p> | <p>279,390 5,416</p> |
| <p>Children in temporary accommodation</p> <p>Sources: 1. Shelter, December 2023 2023; 2. London Councils, Aug 2023; 3. Shelter, Feb 2024</p> | 3,021 ¹ | <p>83,473²</p> <p>4.4% or around 1 in 22 children</p> | 142,490 ³ |

Audiences

- Southwark residents, especially those facing homelessness or with an interested in homelessness and rough sleeping
- Partner organisations who have previously been engaged
- Southwark council members and staff, especially those whose areas of work may be relevant to the strategy.

Channels

- Southwark consultation web page

- *Southwark Life* – the consultation has been promoted in the Summer 2004 issue
- E-newsletter – our fortnightly email to Southwark residents
- Social media, especially our Facebook and Instagram channels for local residents and LinkedIn to target sector professionals
- Earned media – especially local media such as Southwark News and South London Press, through press releases
- Internal - intranet, staff bulletin, Althea’s blog
- Shared channels owned by partners

Activity Plan

| Date | Topic / Event | Details |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| 22 May 2024 | Communications and consultation plan and core materials to Strategic Director | Draft plan and papers to be presented for Strategic Director’s meeting |
| 12 June 2024 | Plan to Cllr Dennis’ review and approval | Lead Member’s Briefing |
| June 2024 | Consultation website and survey content agreed | |
| 23 rd July 2024 | Consultation plan presented to Housing Scrutiny Commission | |
| August 2024 | Consultation opens | Launch on consultation website; press release to sector and local media; articles in e-newsletter; intranet; paid social media and local media advertising, |

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| August – September 2024 | Campaign reminders | E-newsletter and social media |
| Mid - October 2024 | Final reminders | Press release TBC and Social media |
| End of October 2024 | Consultation ends | |
| Autumn/Winter | Final strategy approved and published | Separate comms plan to be developed |

Resources

- Council staff – homelessness, communications, engagement, digital
- Owned channels – social media, website, e-mails, Southwark Life, digital displays at leisure centres etc.
- Financial – is there a budget for any paid social, advertising or publications?

Communications Evaluation

The success of our Communications Plan will be measured by our evaluation of meeting the objectives set out in this Plan, namely:

- Have we communicated to enough residents and stakeholders and encourage them to respond during the consultation period?
- Have we generated enough visits to the Council’s website and Citizens Lab Platform?
- How well have we done in converting these visits to completed responses to our survey and in-person engagement exercises?
- Have Southwark staff had been sufficiently notified of this consultation and given the opportunity to provide feedback?