

## COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER 2013

### Themed debate on Green Southwark

#### SOME COMMUNITY VIEWS

*Do you think Southwark is more biologically diverse than it was 10 years ago (i.e. more variety of plants and animals)? What do Southwark's parks mean to you?*

- I have a degree in Botany, and so I find this question very interesting to me. I think that Southwark has made more of an effort with increasing the number of pollinators, and the pollinating sites around Rotherhithe are a welcome feature. Russia Docks Woodlands and Stave Hill Ecological Park are two such sites, and are near to where I live.

I am a frequent user of parks – I walk around my local park when I want to get over the stresses of the day, so you could say that parks form an important part of my lifestyle.

- I think that Southwark is a fantastic part of London for its parks, it has kept up with the rest of London for developing them - although, how useful the development is at Burgess Park is debatable....

I think that the biodiversity has increased.

- I work in Guy's Hospital – contrary to the biodiversity increasing, I have noticed a reduction in the green space, with the density of concreting impinging more and more.

The access to a park has been essential for me, the nearest space that I can find has been along Borough High Street, at Little Dorrit Park. In there I find a place where I can just escape the pressures of my day.

- I haven't paid a lot of attention to the wildlife in Southwark, even though I travel into and out of the borough quite a lot.
- It is hard to say because I have only been living in Southwark for three years, but I don't think so to be honest. Southwark is not as green as other areas in South East London.
- I have been in London nearly 3 years and although I don't live in Southwark I come very often, at least 3 times a week, and I don't think Southwark is a very green area or more biologically diverse than before. What I see is the deterioration in some parts due to the amount of trash on the floor that does not help to have a greener environment.
- Although I don't know many parks in Southwark, generally I enjoy parks a lot. I think that there should be more parks around Elephant and Castle. Sometimes I feel this area is a world of concrete and just a few trees.
- I really like parks because I feel free and I just can relax and escape the city for a couple of hours, I can read a book, and breathe some fresh air. I think Southwark is not as green as other areas. However, I occasionally enjoy Southwark's Park with friends and I really like it.
- Is Southwark a green borough? I suppose so yeah. I used to use the parks, but not recently. I work for the council so I know they encourage people to cycle. It's all "you gotta do this, do that, recycle."

- I lived in West Dulwich before and now I am in East Dulwich. Erm, the parks are lovely but they could do with some bins. I don't often find a bin for recycling stuff. It would be quite easy to do. You search for a bin to put your litter in and when you eventually find one there aren't any for recycling.
- There's the park just over there with the basketball courts [Warwick Gardens in Peckham]. It would be good to have some night lights so we could play when it gets dark.
- I think it is [a green borough] yes yes. Yes we've got recycle bins. I have Burgess Park just round the corner but I don't use it. I'm too lazy.

*Do you make cycling a part of your transport - what would encourage you to walk and cycle more?*

- I would love to cycle, but I won't do so until I see better infrastructure, with less accidents happening to cyclists.
- There really seems to be some thought about the cyclists in their transport strategy. I use the Old Kent Road as part of my route to work, and I feel safe enough, but it could do with more infrastructure around that area for cyclists. I keep up to date with the latest news and developments for cycling, including the cycling proficiency training, through the social media. The forum I use includes the Southwark Cyclists group.
- I come from High Barnet to work in Guy's, so do not use my cycle or walk as much as I should; I have to use the gym to exercise. I need to think more about my carbon footprint, besides recycling, which by the way, I think can be quite taxing for the elderly.
- I used to cycle, but had a few minor accidents. I will wait until the roads are safer before I start cycling again.
- I cycle daily to go to work, but I have not seen much information about safer cycling and I am not part of any network.
- Not as part of my daily transport but I cycle during the weekends to move around in areas close to my house, I don't have any information about cycling facilities.
- The cost of transport has certainly affected me as I have come off benefits to take up full-time education. I have a tight budget for bus fares and walk whenever I can.
- I and people from my college who live in my area, are now walking to avoid one leg of our bus journey, to save on fares to commute to college.
- I am on benefits so I pay half price for buses, but some other people who are working have to pay more for bus fares, and a couple of them ride bikes instead. But you know it's not everyone that can afford to buy a bike and they are expensive!
- Well my earnings never increase, but transport fares always increase, they are very high now. And sometimes on the Northern Line there is a signal failure, and so it affects my work because the manager will not want to listen to such excuses – the tube is expensive and unreliable. The tubes need to be more frequent. The bus is not easy either, so we are forced to walk or to cycle. It's not easy, but that is life.
- The cost of transport, as with the cost of living in general affects a lot of people who have not got a job. I don't use a car as it's expensive but travel on public transport and walk. More people are turning to using bikes because it's cheaper.

- I would like to be able to afford travelling on public transport like the buses [as I used to] but the increased cost of transport is negatively affecting me. Now I always ride my bike.
- I like cycling for fitness, and for convenience's sake. As a former tube worker, I have always found bus and trams heavily used. With fares doubling, I think I'll continue cycling, although it would depend on where the jobs are re-located.
- I'm learning to walk a lot and often walk to Camberwell, because of the high cost of transport. More people are now using public transport because of the [good] network, with Peckham bus garage and Peckham train station. I would really like to see [another] local tube station.