

Council Plan 2018-2020

2020 Refresh

Leader's Foreword

In 2010 we set out our vision to create a fairer future for all in Southwark. Over the last ten years we have delivered on our commitments to residents to make Southwark clean, green and safe, to build more affordable homes, to create jobs and opportunities for residents and to give young people in our borough the best start in life.

The 2018-2022 Council Plan set out our four-year plan for Southwark, building on our record of delivery and offering a new approach, with bold commitments to move Southwark forward and make our borough fairer. In the last two years we have already made good progress on delivering on many of the promises we set out in the Council Plan. We have supported thousands of residents into jobs, built hundreds of new council homes at council rents, opened another new state of the art library, rolled out free school meals to nursery schools, and set out robust plans to tackle the Climate Emergency.

Since we adopted the Council Plan in 2018 the context in which we operate has changed significantly, particularly in the last six months as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 has been an unprecedented challenge for the whole country, with thousands of lives tragically lost and millions more profoundly impacted. I am extremely proud of the way the council has worked with partners and volunteers to support our residents through the crisis. Southwark's response and the spirit of community demonstrated throughout the pandemic shows what a unified and supportive borough we are.

We know that there is still a long way to go to tackle the public health crisis, to deal with the long-term impact and to lead Southwark through recovery. The pandemic has created new demands and priorities for the council, which are reflected in this refreshed Council Plan.

The pandemic has also shone a light on wider inequalities which persist in our society as a whole. As a council our ambition always has been and remains to improve the life chances of everyone who lives in our borough. We are committed to working with our communities to do more to identify and implement solutions to address entrenched racism and injustice and take positive action to ensure equality of opportunity.

Despite the significant challenge, we remain ambitious for the future. We have worked to refine the Council Plan, to reflect new priorities and to set out the actions we will take between now and May 2022 to continue delivering a fairer future for all. As I hand over to a new Leader of the Council, I am confident that the council will continue to work tirelessly to deliver for the people of Southwark.

Cllr Peter John OBE
Leader of Southwark Council

About this Council Plan refresh

What is the council plan?

Southwark's Council Plan describes our vision for the borough. It sets out our priorities and our promises to the people of Southwark.

This refreshed council plan considers the progress we have made since 2018 and consolidates our ambitions for the next two years. It reflects the significant changes that have impacted the borough since 2018, in particular the COVID-19 pandemic, and the new and refreshed priorities the council is adopting in response.

As our plan of action, the council plan will shape what every team and member of staff does, meaning that we are all working together to achieve our shared goals; all the while recognising that a modern, agile and forward looking organisation is crucial to delivering our promises.

We aspire to be more than the sum of our parts. We know that when we work together to achieve shared goals, we achieve so much more and it's by working together that we can make the vision of a Fairer Future for all a reality.

Why are we refreshing the council plan?

Since the Council Plan was adopted in 2018, the context in which the council operates and delivers services has changed significantly, particularly in the last six months because of COVID-19.

Southwark, like the whole country and indeed the world, has been significantly affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The crisis has had a huge impact on our borough, and the council itself, which has had to fundamentally change the work we do to respond to the pandemic. The council has played a critical role in delivering the public health response, keeping frontline services operating during the crisis and developing new structures such as the Community Hub, to support our vulnerable residents. We have worked closely with NHS, health and public sector partners, the voluntary sector and community groups, as well as thousands of volunteers across the borough, to deal with the unprecedented challenge.

The pandemic and economic fallout has also had a lasting impact on Southwark's finances. The cost of

Southwark's response to the pandemic, including providing food and other support to vulnerable residents, community support grants for voluntary organisations, housing to help rough sleepers off the streets and emergency support for those facing hardship is an estimated £40.5m. Combined with the enormous loss of income facing the council as a result of the pandemic, without additional funding from government the council is facing a £32m shortfall in our budget.

COVID-19 and other events over the last few months have created new demands and priorities for the council. We know that the pandemic will continue to create a huge public health challenge. The work we are doing to provide vital support for vulnerable residents will also continue, and we will need to support Southwark's local economy to recover from the significant financial hit of lockdown.

The pandemic has also shone a light on wider inequalities which persist in our society as a whole. Through our response, Southwark Stands Together, we will identify and implement solutions and take positive action to ensure equality of opportunity. Southwark's recovery from COVID-19 must also take into account the climate emergency, which requires bold and urgent action at every level to meet our ambitious target to make Southwark carbon neutral by 2030.

We have made good progress on delivering on many of the promises set out in the 2018-22 Council Plan and some of the commitments we made in 2018 have already been met. In light of the pandemic and the resulting impact on the council and the borough, we know that there are some new priorities for the council, and some of the commitments outlined in the Council Plan will be significantly more difficult to deliver, or may need to be delivered in a different way.

What will the refreshed council plan deliver?

Despite the unprecedented challenge we face as a borough, the council remains committed to deliver a fairer future for all of our residents. We will continue the work we have been doing over the last two years to deliver the commitments set out in the Council Plan, including building more new homes, helping residents into jobs, making the borough

green and safe, and giving young people in our borough the best start in life.

Southwark has shown through our response to the pandemic how incredible our borough can be. From the council to the voluntary sector, and from businesses to residents, we have come together and mobilised quickly as a borough to manage an unprecedented challenge. We know that the biggest challenge over the next two years, and beyond, will be recovering from the significant and wide-reaching impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We also know that we need to continue to do more to tackle inequality in our borough, which prevents too many people from reaching their potential. The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, and recent events around the world, have shown us how far we still need to go before we live in a world that values every life equally. We have been listening to our communities about their experiences of racism and injustice in our society, and we have worked together to find tangible and long-lasting solutions we can implement in our borough. Our commitment to equality and fairness runs throughout this plan, both in the commitments we make to the people of Southwark, and the way we deliver services every day.

How will we report on progress?

We will be transparent and accountable about our priorities and what we will deliver. We will be regularly checking to make sure that we are meeting our targets and report on progress. The cabinet will also receive an annual performance report each year covering the previous year's performance, which we will publish on the council's website.

Our Fairer Future commitments

Our Values

Everything that we do as a council is to achieve our vision of a fairer future for all in Southwark. Our values inform how we will do this, and will guide our decisions and determine how we deliver on the commitments that we have made.

In 2010 we embarked on our *fairer future for all* programme. A decade later, some of the challenges have changed and some of the solutions have too, but our values remain the same. Our residents are still at the heart of everything we do and they have helped us form the values that underpin the work of the council. Our values will continue to inform all the work we do across the council and what you can expect from us.

We will:

- Treat residents as if they were a valued member of our own family;
- Be open, honest and accountable;
- Spend money as if it were from our own pocket;
- Work for everyone to realise their own potential;
- Make Southwark a place to be proud of.

Our Commitments

Guided by our values, and shaped by our context, the Council Plan presents a set of commitments, which will help us achieve our vision of a fairer future for all. The refreshed Council Plan sets out these commitments across six themes:

- A place to call home
- Climate Emergency
- A green and fair economic renewal
- Tackling health inequalities
- A great start in life
- Southwark Together

Alongside this ambition, we will continue to make sure that we get the basics right, so that you can be confident that the day to day services that the council provides are excellent and deliver what you and your family need.

A place to call home

Everyone should have a place that they are proud to call home. Southwark Council is the biggest social landlord in London and we are committed to delivering good quality, genuinely affordable homes for all our residents. That's why we are improving council homes and estates and building more affordable homes across the borough. We want residents to be able to take pride in their homes and their communities, so we're continuing to make sure all our housing estates are clean, safe and cared for. We're also taking action to drive up standards in the private rented sector, as more people in Southwark than ever before are living in private rented homes. We're empowering residents to make improvements on their own estates, and to have a greater say in decisions which affect their communities.

We have already made progress towards our ambitious homebuilding target and we are on track to deliver 1,000 more council homes by 2022, with thousands more being designed in consultation with local residents. We've launched the Great Estates programme – which guarantees that every estate is clean, safe and cared for and to give residents the tools to garden and improve their estate – with a £1m pilot scheme and we are hitting our ambitious target to turn around empty homes to make them ready for new tenants to move in. We have brought housing repairs back in-house to improve standards and we've changed the rules on estate improvements like security doors so those who live on estates get the biggest say.

COVID-19 has had an enormous and detrimental impact on our borough, but it has also shown us what is possible. Southwark, like other boroughs, took quick and widespread action to get all rough sleepers off the streets of our borough in response to the pandemic. This work must continue and we are committed to ending rough sleeping in Southwark. The housing crisis means that Southwark still faces a significant shortage of affordable homes. We will continue our long-term homebuilding programme, invest in and improve our estates, and make the case nationally for the powers and resources to build the homes our residents need.

We will:

- End rough sleeping in Southwark, including by campaigning for an end to 'no recourse to public funds' laws that trap people on the street
- Deliver or start on site at least 1,000 more council homes by 2022
- Introduce a Southwark Renters Union
- Secure the future of the Ledbury Estate, improving the estate for all residents and increasing the number of council homes
- Deliver the Great Estates Guarantee initiatives so that every estate is clean, safe and cared for
- Make it easier to book and track repairs online and ensure more jobs are done right first time
- Lobby the government to fix the broken housing system on land compensation reform, raising LHA rates, tackling Right to Buy and supporting councils to build the affordable homes our residents need
- Take action to reduce the number of empty homes in our borough, so more local people can move into them
- Have zero tolerance on domestic abuse and ensure domestic abuse survivors can access high quality services and do not end up without a home
- Empower more residents to get involved in making decisions about council homes and estates and roll out the new resident participation structures
- Deliver a Southwark Gold Standard for private rental properties and clamp down on irresponsible short term lets
- Work with the community to agree major improvements on the Tustin Estate, ensuring residents have the final say and there is no reduction in council homes
- Deliver quality new homes for residents and a new library and GP Health Centre on the Aylesbury Estate, with no reduction in the number of social rent homes
- Refurbish and expand Maydew House, with 100% of the homes for council rents

Social regeneration charters

We are committed to ensuring that regeneration in our borough works for all residents and results in better outcomes for local people, as well as growth and development of the area.

Social regeneration charters are Southwark's borough-wide approach to improving the wellbeing of current and future generations through regeneration. We are developing a social regeneration charter for each area of major development in the borough, to set out clearly how the regeneration will improve outcomes for residents. This includes improving health and reducing inequalities, improvements in environment and transport, and delivery of affordable housing, as well as wider benefits such as leisure centres, libraries, parks, community facilities, business space and healthcare.

We are listening to residents about the things that are important to them, and each charter is developed with local communities.

Southwark's social regeneration charters

- [Canada Water](#)
- [Old Kent Road](#)
- [St Thomas Street](#)
- [Borough and Bankside](#)
- [Walworth](#)
- [Bermondsey and The Blue](#)
- [Camberwell](#)
- [Peckham and Nunhead](#)
- [Dulwich](#)
- [Elephant & Castle](#)

Climate Emergency

Southwark declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, recognising that this is the biggest issue affecting our borough, the country and indeed the world. The Climate Emergency has a direct impact on Southwark residents and the situation requires urgent action at all levels of government, businesses and individuals. The council has already taken action to reduce carbon, but we know we need to go further to tackle this challenge.

We have already made good progress on our commitment to halve council emissions by 2022 and Southwark is leading the way on sustainable divestment. We have published our ambitious Climate Emergency Strategy, setting out how we will work towards making Southwark carbon neutral by 2030. We have installed over 100 lamppost charging points and 45 rapid chargers for electric cars, and made it easier for people to walk and cycling instead of driving. Our Back the Bakerloo campaign has the support of over 20,000 Londoners and we'll continue to campaign for the Bakerloo line extension, which will reduce air pollution and congestion on the roads, as well as improving transport links and accessibility in Old Kent Road.

We will go further to tackle the Climate Emergency, putting the environment at the heart of everything we do as a council. We will retrofit our council homes to make them greener and more energy efficient, and we will ensure new homes are built to the highest environmental standards. We will build on positive changes introduced during the pandemic to enable residents to walk and cycle safely by creating more space for active travel and improving air quality. We will plant thousands of new trees and continue to protect and enhance Southwark's biodiversity, for all residents to enjoy.

We will:

- Make Southwark carbon neutral by 2030 and deliver the Southwark Climate Emergency Strategy
- Continue the work we began in 2010 to halve council emissions by 2022
- Create more space for walking and cycling and improve air quality by reducing car journeys
- Bring forward low waste, low energy new council homes and retrofit council homes to make them greener and provide more reliable and energy efficient heating for residents
- Use land and roofs our council estates to produce clean energy
- Plant 10,000 new trees by 2022
- Divest council investments away from fossil fuels and into sustainable alternatives
- Vary parking charges in areas with poor air standards to discourage the most polluting vehicles
- Work towards having electric car charging points on every street with an additional 200 charging points delivered by 2022
- Have zero tolerance on fly tipping and increase enforcement action by targeting hot spots
- Protect and enhance Southwark's biodiversity and make nature accessible for all
- Boost access to cycle hire
- Double the number of bike hangars in the borough by 2022 and work towards providing cycle storage for every home that currently does not have one
- Deliver more pedestrian crossings including at the junction of Lordship Lane and Dulwich Common and push TfL to make all their roads in the borough 20mph
- Work with the Mayor of London to improve cycling infrastructure in Rotherhithe and campaign for a river crossing that connects Canada Water to Canary Wharf
- Campaign to extend the Bakerloo Line to Old Kent Road and introduce an active travel plan for the area
- Make the Old Kent Road opportunity area a carbon-neutral development
- Campaign for the reopening of Camberwell Station and promote active travel in the area
- Restore the historic Nunhead Cemetery East Lodge and boundary wall.

A green and fair economic renewal

Southwark has a thriving local economy and our businesses and employers are an essential part of what makes Southwark a unique place to live and work. We are committed to growing the local economy by supporting local businesses and tackling the barriers that hold people back from securing good work.

Over the last two years, we have made great strides in working towards making Southwark a full employment borough. We have supported almost 2,800 residents into jobs, created hundreds of quality apprenticeships and 66 more employers in Southwark are paying the London Living Wage. We have taken steps to address inequality and low pay and the council has been recognised as an excellent employer with accreditation from the Mayor's Good Work Standard.

The economy has been hit hard by COVID-19 and the impact on some local businesses and employment levels has been catastrophic. We have already distributed over £62 million in grants to Southwark businesses during COVID and set up a £2m Business Hardship Fund. We know that the biggest challenge our borough's economy will face over the next two years is recovering from the impact of the pandemic. We are committed to supporting local businesses through the period of renewal, and continuing to support residents into work, with an ambitious target of returning employment levels to what they were before the pandemic. We know that any economic recovery must contribute to tackling the Climate Emergency, with support for green businesses and an ambitious Green New Deal for Southwark with 1,000 new green jobs. Through the recovery, we will also seek to tackle the barriers which hold back individuals and businesses from playing a full part in our economy.

We will:

- Return employment levels to where they were before COVID-19
- Help 5,000 people into work and launch a Southwark Green New Deal to create 1,000 green jobs
- Create new quality apprenticeships and internships
- Establish a Southwark Construction Company that builds green homes and provides jobs to local residents
- Support Southwark BAME-led and women-led businesses to secure contracts with public sector anchor institutions
- Encourage all Southwark businesses with more than 50 employees to publish their BAME and gender pay gaps
- Make adult learning accessible for all, including basic qualifications in English, maths and digital skills
- Provide one to one support for residents who have lost their jobs because of COVID-19 to help them re-enter the workplace
- Protect, promote and support Southwark's creative and cultural sector
- Establish a Creative and Cultural District in Camberwell and Peckham
- Help Southwark's high streets and neighbourhoods to be thriving and vibrant, seek to achieve full occupancy and encourage residents to shop local to deliver a 15-minute city (where all key services, shops and leisure facilities are within a 15-minute walk or cycle).
- Back new and growing green business and social enterprises, with help to access business support, affordable workspace and finance to help to deliver the new infrastructure Southwark needs
- Ensure more residents benefit from the digital revolution by piloting free and affordable broadband on council estates
- Provide free fast Wi-Fi for all Southwark residents in a network of community buildings across our borough

Tackling health inequalities

In the Council Plan we set out our commitment to reducing health inequality, so that whatever your background you can live a healthy life. We want to break down barriers that prevent people from thriving in Southwark.

Over the last two years we have invested in mental health services, supporting over 6,000 people in the community through the Southwark Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub, and training 121 mental health first aiders. We've made it easier to cycle by delivering bikeability training for nearly 10,000 children and adults and building nearly 10km of new accessible cycling routes across the borough. Southwark has led the way with free swim and gym for all our residents and we have successfully introduced free swimming lesson pilots for adults. As our leisure centres try to recover from the significant impact of COVID-19, we are committed to ensuring our residents can continue to access high quality leisure services.

The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 has shown clearly that breaking down barriers that prevent people from living a healthy life must include tackling health inequalities that affect our Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. We are committed to closing the gap in health inequalities and tackling health issues that particularly affect our BAME communities. We know that COVID-19 will have a long-term impact on our borough and we will continue to deliver the public health response to the pandemic, and work to tackle issues of loneliness and mental health which have increased as a result. We will continue to support and protect our most vulnerable residents, and we will continue to do everything we can to make it easy for residents in Southwark to lead healthy and active lives.

We will:

- Work with the NHS, local community and businesses to stop the spread of COVID-19, including ensuring effective local testing and tracing
- Close the gap in health inequalities that affect our BAME communities
- Make walking fun, safe and accessible by continuing to develop green links
- Continue to protect adult mental health services
- Train even more mental health first aiders
- Create a network of accessible toilets and baby changing facilities
- Open two nursing homes
- Build extra care housing
- Introduce a Residential Care Charter that protects vulnerable residents and the people who are working to keep them safe
- Ensure that work continues to open a new, modern leisure centre at Canada Water
- Invest in our leisure centres and ensure our residents can continue to access high quality leisure services
- Work with the CCG to develop new health hubs, build trust and confidence in the health system and continue to ensure that every new development has enough GPs and parks
- Tackle obesity and food insecurity through a borough-wide Sustainable Food Strategy
- Work with the NHS to ensure a high take up of flu vaccinations
- Increase HIV testing to reduce late diagnosis, particularly in BAME communities

A great start in life

Every child deserves the best start in life. We want all children and young people in the borough to grow up in a safe, healthy and happy environment where they have the opportunity to reach their potential.

Schools in Southwark have improved significantly, with 94% of schools now rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. Since 2018 we've opened a new secondary school in Borough and rolled out free healthy school meals to school nurseries. We've closed roads around schools to make it easier for children and walk and cycle to school, and over half of primary schools in Southwark are now taking part in the '*daily mile*'. We have improved opportunities for young people, launching the Positive Futures Fund, re-opening the Blue Youth Club in Bermondsey, and working with young people to find solutions to knife crime. We have protected funding for mental health services for children and young people and Southwark was the first council to set an ambitious target to ensure that 100% of young people with a mental health condition receive the support they need.

Schools in Southwark have gone above and beyond during the pandemic, remaining open for vulnerable and key worker children and taking necessary steps to ensure that they can safely reopen for all students. We will support schools to ensure that children do not fall behind because of COVID-19, and to close the attainment gap between the most and least advantaged pupils. We know that the pandemic will have a huge impact on young people, particularly on those students leaving school this year. We will guarantee access to education, employment, training or volunteering for every school leaver, to ensure that the pandemic does not stop them reaching their potential. We will continue to protect mental health funding and open the new Mental Health Hub in Peckham for young people, to give all our young people the best start in life.

We will:

- Support schools to close the attainment gap and ensure children can catch up on education missed during COVID-19
- Guarantee access to education, employment, training or volunteering for every school leaver
- Improve air quality and road safety at every primary school and introduce 60 '*school streets*' to close roads at drop off and collection time to get more children walking and cycling to school
- Continue to provide Free Healthy School Meals to all primary school children and school nurseries
- Support 100% of children and young people with a diagnosable mental health need
- Guarantee education, employment or training for every care leaver
- Increase activity by introducing a '*daily mile*' in all primary schools
- Work with communities to find local solutions that protect young people from community harm and exploitation, including knife crime
- Mainstream the Positive Futures Fund so that every generation of young people can benefit from this investment
- Ensure Southwark's youth services meet the needs of young people

Southwark Together

Southwark is a unique, vibrant borough and it is the people that make it special. Our vision is to create a *Fairer Future for all* in Southwark and everything we do aims to ensure that the opportunities Southwark has to offer are accessible and open to all.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an unparalleled challenge, but the community response in Southwark has been incredible. The council, public services, voluntary sector, businesses and residents have come together in ways that should make our whole community proud. We will continue to build on the positive work of the Community Hub in supporting vulnerable residents during the pandemic. We will also build on the spirit of our community demonstrated so clearly throughout the pandemic, through volunteering and neighbourhood connections.

Although we are one borough, we have not all been equally affected by COVID-19. The pandemic, and recent events around the world, have shone a light on wider inequalities which persist in our society as a whole. As a council we have never accepted things as they are, and our ambition always has been and remains to improve the life chances of everyone who lives in our borough. We are committed to working with our communities to challenge ourselves and others to be better at every opportunity. Together we will identify and implement solutions to address entrenched racism and injustice and take positive action to ensure equality of opportunity. Not all our challenges are the same, but we share a commitment to tackling them together.

We will:

- Build on the positive work of the Community Hub by working with the voluntary & community sector and NHS to ensure strong support for vulnerable people during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Commit to root out inequalities by implementing the recommendations from the *Southwark Stands Together* work against racial inequalities and injustice
- Build on volunteering and neighbourhood connections during COVID to support communities and tackle loneliness
- Support the resilience, unity, and cohesion of Southwark's communities by working together to tackle radicalisation, extremism, and hate-crime
- Celebrate and promote the rich diversity of the borough in all areas including education, events, culture, transport and public spaces
- Secure a site for the Black Cultural and Heritage Centre and carry about consultation with residents and community groups to help shape the final plans
- Make Southwark a Borough of Sanctuary, working with community groups and partners to help and support refugee, migrant and asylum seekers in Southwark, and campaign to end the Hostile Environment
- Campaign to ensure the Windrush generation are compensated by the National government for past injustices
- Open the new library and heritage centre on the Walworth Road
- Celebrate and support Southwark's EU citizens and protect all local residents from the effects of Brexit
- Ensure Kingswood House continues to benefit the local community and improve facilities on the Kingswood Estate
- Ensure libraries retain a central role in our local communities, with continued investment and innovation.
- Restore the Walworth Town Hall with a new publicly accessible and protected community space
- Work with residents to agree an estate improvement plan for Brandon, including better facilities for young people

- Strive to ensure the council's workforce reflects the local community it represents including culture, ethnicity, disability and gender at every level of the organisation.
- Provide a responsive noise nuisance service
- Protect your finances, spend money wisely during a difficult financial period and only increase council tax to protect the most vulnerable