

Southwark

Area Assessment

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oneplace

for an independent overview
of local public services

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Southwark at a glance

This independent assessment by six inspectorates sets out how well local public services are tackling the major issues in Southwark. It says how well they are delivering better results for local people and how likely these are to improve in future. If, and only if, our assessment shows that the following special circumstances are met in relation to a major issue, we use flags to highlight our judgements. We use a green flag to highlight where others can learn from outstanding achievements or improvements or an innovation that has very promising prospects of success. We use a red flag to highlight where we have significant concerns about results and future prospects that are not being tackled adequately. This means that local partners need to do something more or different to improve these prospects.

Green flags - exceptional performance or innovation that others can learn from

-  Green flag: Involvement of local people and the voluntary and community sector in enhancing Community Cohesion -

Red flags - significant concerns, action needed

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The local area

Southwark is an inner London borough that fronts the river Thames and is home to extensive commerce, business and entertainment. The north of the borough has been transformed in the past ten years. The centre has some of the most deprived communities in the country whereas the south, by contrast, is more residential with less diversity and most people on above average earnings.

The population of Southwark is growing and getting younger and more diverse with people from a wide range of different backgrounds. Three-quarters of pupils in Southwark schools are from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds. A very high proportion of people live in social rented housing.

Overall the health of people in Southwark is not as good as the England average, but is improving. Life expectancy is substantially lower for people living in more deprived areas in the borough, especially males.

The next section tells you how Southwark's public services are doing in each of their local priority areas.

How is Southwark doing?

Improving individual life chances - achieve economic well being

Partners have set up a range of good programmes to tackle unemployment in Southwark and they are making a difference. More Southwark residents have at least five GCSE level qualifications. The total number of young people not in education, employment or training is going down though it is still high compared with the rest of London. However not enough young offenders go into jobs, education or training. Partners have a number of well-established schemes to get more people working and off benefits. In response to the current recession, the partnership has focused on initiatives to support people into employment, and encourage the growth of local businesses. Partners have developed special initiatives such as 'Foot in the Door' and the Earn and Learn programme to help people find work.

This is an area that we will be looking at again next year as employment levels have been affected by the global recession.

Improving individual life chances - achieve educational potential

Children and young people have good opportunities to enjoy and achieve at most Southwark schools. However, the college is not as good. Children at the end of their first year at school are doing better than in the past, but still not as well as the national average. The achievement gap between those who do best and those who do least well has reduced, which is good. The standards reached by 11-year-olds in both English and mathematics have been going up steadily for the last few years and are now as good as the national average and better than in similar areas.

More 16-year-olds in Southwark are getting five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, and performance is now in line with similar areas. White children do less well than pupils from other ethnic groups at 16 but the gap is narrowing. Most schools have good arrangements for helping keep children safe. Southwark partners know they need to improve the achievement of looked after children and are taking a number of actions. These include providing one to one tuition for pupils in their GCSE years and running courses to help their carers to provide better support. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities mostly do well at school.

Improving individual life chances - be healthy

Southwark is one of 70 Spearhead authorities where health is worst, and

receives extra funding to help tackle health inequalities. Overall, the health of people in Southwark is worse than the England average but things are getting better. Southwark is one of the top 20 per cent of Spearhead areas for improving health overall and the best in this group for improving life expectancy.

The death rate from heart disease and stroke is broadly average when compared to London. Life expectancy for men and women has been improving significantly year-on-year. Women in Southwark can now expect to live the same as the national average, and for men the gap has been closed from 2.3 years to 0.6 years. However many challenges exist. The overall smoking rates in Southwark are higher than nationally although this year the target for getting people to quit smoking has been met. Obesity is a problem for many children in Southwark, and more teenage girls become pregnant in Southwark than anywhere else in England.

For people who need social care services, public sector bodies are working together to support their independence but further improvements are needed. People are facing increasing delays in moving from hospital into a community or residential setting. More people received direct payments to arrange their own care but the numbers are still lower than in other similar areas. The number of people with mental health needs using direct payments has reduced.

Improving individual life chances - be safe

Unlike other areas of London, Southwark residents don't include crime among their top three concerns. Most types of crime are decreasing faster in Southwark than they are nationally. In particular, gun and knife crime have both reduced during the last year. However crime in Southwark is still higher than in similar areas. Young people's involvement in crime is a particular worry. More are offending for the first time and more are being sentenced to youth custody.

Local public sector bodies are working well together to tackle particular crime hotspots on some of the housing estates. Safety of those who travel around and through the borough is also important for partners, for example they are promoting safer cycling through bike events.

Improving individual life chances - enjoy culture and leisure opportunities

Increased public investment in parks, leisure facilities and libraries in Southwark has been recognised by residents. They say they are more satisfied with services. More adults are playing sport and taking part in recreational activities. Many children have benefited from all-year-round competitive sports through the Southwark Community Games (SCG). Over £12.3 million is being put into improving facilities: Camberwell Leisure Centre will be modernised and the athletics track at Southwark Park will be restored.

Improving individual life chances - value diversity and be active citizens

Public sector bodies have been working together for sometime to improve community cohesion. Southwark partners have done well to help people get on better by being actively involved in their local communities. This is important in Southwark because a lot of different groups live side by side. People in Southwark are more positive about how well people get on together than the average for London. Many residents are involved in voluntary and community groups and are encouraged to talk to public partners about their needs. Large numbers of residents have attended events organised to celebrate different communities. These include the Latin American festival, Celebrating Peckham and Reclaiming St Georges Day.

Partners have worked well to bring people from different communities and faiths together to develop better understanding between them and to reduce any misunderstandings that may occur. Residents get involved in local activities and groups to increase understanding and create tolerance such as Reclaiming St Georges Day which was organised with local residents and helped change perceptions of people about each other in a positive way. Many other activities involving local people and the voluntary and community sector are organised to enhance enhancing community cohesion in Southwark which makes it a major strength in the area.

A better place for people - localities of mixed communities

There are ambitious plans to improve Southwark as a place to live with over 40 per cent of the borough currently being improved and re-built. Residents can already see some results such as a new library in Canada Water, a new park in St Mary's Churchyard, and the Spa Park in Bermondsey which includes 1,500 new homes.

Work has started on other projects like the Shard of Glass building in London Bridge, a project that will eventually include the tallest building in Europe, and the 43 storey Strata tower which will be finished in spring 2010 and will provide 408 flats, a third of which will be affordable. The largest scheme in Southwark is at the Elephant and Castle which will cost £1.5 billion. It is not clear when this project will be complete, as the agreement between the Council and their commercial development partner has not yet been finalised.

We will look at this area again next year to check what progress has been made and to see whether the recession has affected this.

A better place for people - sustainable use of resources

Public sector bodies recognise how important it is to look after the

environment in Southwark. They are doing a lot of work on this but the results are not yet clear. The Council's new building in Tooley Street meets high environmental standards and the building has been designed to reduce carbon emissions by up to 20 tonnes every year. There are also plans to ensure that the new developments use less water, electricity and gas.

The amount of rubbish recycled by households has been increasing every year, though it is still too low. A new recycling centre is being developed in the Old Kent Road to help improve this.

We will look at progress in this area again next year.

A better place for people - more and better homes

A very high proportion of people in Southwark live in council housing and housing is the second most important issue for them. Forty-five per cent of council homes, over 18,000 homes, do not meet the modern standards set out in the decent homes standard, in spite of significant investment by the Council. The Council and its partners are taking a number of steps to increase investment in its homes. For example, in 2008/09, they invested £73 million in works to achieve decent homes. However there remains a significant funding gap in order to improve the homes, partly because Southwark has decided to improve them to an even higher standard. There is not yet an updated picture of the condition of homes so improvement plans are not robust.

The quality of housing management is now improving, but from a low base. There have been some recent improvements in the time taken to re-let empty council homes and tenant satisfaction with repairs. However, performance is still comparatively weak in these areas and overall tenant satisfaction with the housing service remains low.

Southwark and its partners are making good progress in developing new and affordable homes, though, as in other areas of London, these are unlikely to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population. There has also been some good work to prevent people becoming homeless, but the council and its partners will have difficulty in meeting the target to halve the numbers of homeless people in temporary accommodation by 2010.

A better place for people - infrastructure for a vibrant economy

Southwark businesses are actively involved in helping to make the borough a better place to do business. Southwark partners have worked well to support local businesses over the past year of recession. They have invested money to help new businesses start up, and to encourage young people to become entrepreneurs. They are helping small businesses improve their cash flow by spreading their rent payment intervals more evenly and paying invoices more quickly. Since the economy has been affected by the global recession, we will be returning to look at this again next year.

A better place for people - a liveable public realm

Having clean streets and having rubbish bins emptied on time are two of the most important things for local people. The Council and its partners are performing well in this area and resident satisfaction has improved.

Southwark's community warden service helps to reduce anti-social behaviour on the streets of Southwark. They can tackle issues, such as under-age drinking and anti-social behaviour, on the spot without involving the police.

About Southwark

A recent survey shows that in Southwark 77 per cent of people are satisfied with their immediate local area as a place to live. This is higher than the average for similar areas and lower than the national average of 81 per cent.

Southwark is an inner London borough that fronts the river Thames and is home to extensive commerce, business and entertainment. Tourist attractions like the Tate Modern and Shakespeare's Globe in the Bankside area, sit alongside some large regeneration projects such as the Elephant and Castle (London's largest ever redevelopment scheme by a single borough, costing £1.5bn) and the Aylesbury Estate. The Rotherhithe and Bermondsey areas were previously dominated by manufacturing and the docks, but have been transformed in the past ten years with the building of over 3,000 new homes with a mixture of private and social ownership. In the centre of the Borough, Peckham, Nunhead, Newington and Camberwell have some of the most deprived communities in the country, with greater ethnic diversity, more social housing and many people on relatively low incomes although there are also pockets of affluence. Dulwich in the south, by contrast, is more residential with less diversity and most people on above average earnings.

The population of Southwark is growing at a faster rate than the national average and getting younger and more diverse. The population is transient, and a mix of mobile groups and more settled groups which has the potential to cause misunderstanding.

In the 2001 census, 47.8 per cent of residents were from black and minority ethnic (BME) and 'white other' communities which includes people from Ireland. Black Africans form the largest single group and Southwark is home to the largest Nigerian and Sierra Leonean communities in the country. In addition Southwark is home to communities of Caribbean and Irish origins as well as smaller Chinese, Vietnamese, Latin American, Eastern European, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Turkish communities. Three-quarters of pupils in Southwark schools are from BME backgrounds and over 170 languages or dialects are spoken in the schools. Southwark has historically been a place of refuge for asylum seekers and refugees and the Refugee Council estimates about 11,000 refugees and asylum seekers live in the borough but this figure could be much higher. It is also estimated that the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community of Southwark is higher than the national average.

Overall the health of people in Southwark is worse than the England average. Life expectancy is substantially lower for people living in more deprived areas in the borough, especially males. There are high rates of teenage conceptions and sexually transmitted infections. More than half of the children in Southwark live in poverty.

Just under half of all households live in social rented accommodation, compared with fewer than one in five in England as a whole and much of this is still owned and managed by the Council. There are high levels of homelessness in Southwark, and more than nine hundred households live in temporary accommodation.

How well do priorities for Southwark express community needs and aspirations?

Southwark's partners are good at listening to what residents have to say. They use many different ways of finding out their views which help to make sure a wide range of people are consulted. Nearly four in ten residents feel they can influence decisions in Southwark which is higher than the average in the rest of London.

Southwark's public services try to ask as many residents as possible about what is important for them and what they want to change most about their area. The Council organises a survey of residents every few years when they interview over one thousand residents, the most recent was in 2008. The Primary Care Trust (PCT) recently consulted residents on proposed changes to health services in Southwark, and let them know the results of the consultation at an event held at Millwall Football Club in July 2009. The voluntary sector in Southwark is well established and takes an active part in committees and panels that make a lot of decisions about the area. They help people such as refugees and asylum-seekers to give their views.

Public services work well together. Southwark has a history of strong partnership working and involves representatives from business and from voluntary groups in Southwark Alliance, the Local Strategic Partnership. This group is good at sharing information and making plans together, rather than separately. They have agreed on what is most important for local people and are working towards the same targets.

Southwark's public services have asked residents what is most important to them, and have made sure that their priorities reflect residents concerns. Before they agreed the main targets for the Southwark Alliance, they undertook an extensive consultation process asking many residents about their opinions on local issues, either directly or through voluntary and community groups. Over 50 forums, networks and agencies, including a number of minority ethnic and vulnerable groups and Southwark Youth Council were involved in giving their views.

In the most recent Residents Survey in 2008, people said that the things that are most important for the Council to get right are: facilities for young people, council housing services, local secondary schools, refuse collection and clean

streets. These are all priorities for the public services.

The public services know a lot about the social and economic make up of the borough, and where there are particular needs and inequalities. For example, they know where unemployment is higher among young people: the majority of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) live in the Peckham, Peckham Rye and Nunhead areas.

There are good plans to make improvements in some areas whilst other plans such as how to improve housing and how to deal with health issues are currently being updated. The public services have set themselves clear targets so they know what they want to achieve and so they can measure how well they are doing. These targets cover the right things. As well as the subjects that concern you, they include issues where performance hasn't been good enough, such as increasing the rate of recycling and reducing the number of teenagers who become pregnant.

Improving individual life chances - achieve economic well being

The skills of Southwark residents are improving. The proportion of the working age population qualified to at least GCSE level increased in 2007 by seven per cent to 74 per cent, higher than the London and England figures and most young people are getting better qualifications by the age of 19 than they were.

Partners have set up a range of good programmes to tackle the considerable levels of deprivation and poverty in Southwark. Many of these programmes are well established as partners have had a focus on worklessness for several years. In response to the current recession, the partnership has focused on initiatives to support people into employment, and encouraging the growth of local businesses.

Tackling worklessness is an important priority for partners and they have developed a good plan to get more people working and off benefits. They have set up schemes such as Southwark Works, a network of 20 employment advisers with expertise in different service areas including health, social care, housing, refugee mental health and offender support. So far a total of 700 people have been supported to get back into work. During 2008/09 125 people progressed into employment through Southwark Works, a further 192 people entered further education or training and 401 achieved qualifications.

During the same year, 162 people were employed through other employment projects, 88 people started further education or training and 486 people achieved qualifications. Following increased funding, the partnership has set higher targets to counter the effects of the recession.

Not enough young offenders go into jobs, education or training and the public services know they need to do more about this. The number of young people not in education, employment or training has gone down though it is still high compared with the rest of London. Partners recognise this and have developed specific projects to support this group into employment. These

include targeted work with pupils with poor school attendance at age 15 and the development of a work experience programme by Southwark College. The number not in jobs, education or training went down to 8.8 per cent of the age group from 10 per cent in 2007/08, easily meeting the target for 2008/09.

'Foot in the Door' brings together 15-18 year olds at school or college who are seeking part-time, weekend retail work with employers. They are given jobs supported by short term subsidised wages. The Council has an apprenticeship scheme which gives local young people, including many young people leaving care, a chance to gain the experience, qualifications and skills that will provide a solid foundation for a life of work. Apprentices benefit from work experience and training to achieve work-related qualifications and key skills in literacy and numeracy.

The Earn and Learn programme has been developed using a new grant from Government. The programme will teach new skills to 112 jobless people. Jobs in administration, tourism, events, the environment and community wardens will be provided by local businesses and public sector organisations.

The Council and its partners fund a number of housing associations and voluntary and community groups to offer advice and support to get people back into employment, especially those who need it most. For example, Groundwork London helps disadvantaged people find placements in horticulture or environmental organisations, and a housing association employs advisers to work with jobless residents.

As employment levels have been affected by the global recession we will look at them again next year.

Improving individual life chances - achieve educational potential

Most schools and other services provide good opportunities for children and young people to enjoy and achieve, however, provision is not as good in the college. Children at the end of their first year at school are doing better than in the past, but still not as well as the national average. The achievement gap between those who do best and those who do least well has reduced, which is good. The standards reached by 11-year-olds in both English and mathematics have been going up steadily for the last few years and are now as good as the national average and better than in similar areas. Although there are four primary schools which are in Ofsted categories of concern, all of these are making satisfactory progress. Children from low income families don't do as well at school as other children of the same age but the gap is narrowing, which is good.

More 16-year-olds are getting five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, and performance is now in line with similar areas. Southwark has sixteen secondary schools, nine of these are academies. No secondary schools are in Ofsted categories of concern. Overall, white children do not do as well as other ethnic groups at the age of 16, but this is improving. The persistent absence rate in secondary schools has gone down in 2007/08,

which is good. Overall, behaviour is good or better in almost all Southwark secondary schools. A higher percentage of children were permanently excluded from secondary schools last year than nationally, but there were fewer exclusions than the national average in primary schools.

Most schools have good arrangements for helping keep children safe, and are happy with the support they get from the public services. But not as many of the referrals that are made to children's social care services lead to an initial assessment as in other areas. The public services are working to make sure partners have a common understanding of which children need to be referred to social services. Once a child is the subject of a child protection plan their needs are reviewed regularly. One serious case review has been conducted between 1 April 2007 and 15 July 2009 and this was evaluated by Ofsted as adequate.

With small numbers of looked after children in each year group, overall attainment is likely to vary widely from year to year. Public Services know they need to improve educational outcomes for looked after children and are taking a number of actions. These include providing one to one tuition for pupils in their GCSE years and running courses to help their carers to provide better support. Children and young people who are looked after by the Council have too many placement moves within one-year. There has been a fall in the number of young people leaving care who go into a job or education or training and appropriate action is being taken to improve this.

Most children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well at school. In particular, at the age of 11, the gap in attainment between these and other children has reduced.

Improving individual life chances - be healthy

Public services in Southwark recognise that tackling health problems is very important; however this is a challenging task. Overall, the health of people in Southwark is worse than the England average but things are getting better. Southwark is a Spearhead area, one of the 70 areas out of 326 in England where health is worst, and receives extra funding to help tackle health inequalities. Southwark is one of the top 20 per cent of Spearhead areas for improving health overall and the best in this group for improving life expectancy.

Partners have a good understanding of what the main health problems are, for example, heart disease is the reason for nearly a third of all deaths in the borough, cancers account for a further quarter, and high blood pressure is the most common long term condition in Southwark. The partners' community health profile shows there are health differences within Southwark linked to location, gender, level of deprivation and ethnicity. For example, men from the most deprived areas live five years less than those from the least deprived areas. The highest incidence of high blood pressure is in Peckham and Camberwell.

The death rate from heart disease and stroke is broadly average when

compared to London. Life expectancy for men and women has been improving significantly year-on-year, faster than the national rate. Women in Southwark can now expect to live the same as the national average, and for men the gap has been closed from 2.3 years to 0.6 years. This year, the target for getting people to quit smoking has been met. London estimates for 2009 suggest that overall smoking rates in Southwark are lower than nationally though more men smoke than the average.

The public services are generally good at helping children live healthy lifestyles. Mental health services work well and a lot of mothers breastfeed, which is good. But obesity is a problem for many children in Southwark. Although this is improving slightly for 11 year olds, the number of overweight 5 year olds has gone up. There are more obese children in Southwark than in similar areas and in the country as a whole. A higher proportion of teenage girls become pregnant in Southwark than anywhere else in England. The public services have done a lot of work on this but, despite their efforts, and an overall reduction of 13 per cent since the starting point in 1998, teenage pregnancies increased at the last count.

Public sector bodies know that there is still a long way to go to improve the health of local people and have developed a plan to reduce health inequalities between areas and groups of people in Southwark. This concentrates on areas where outcomes are poor such as teenage pregnancies and children who are overweight. There is a good focus on prevention with a variety of programmes and projects to help particular groups and communities. For example support for people with mental health problems to improve their mental well being through physical activity. The Council and local health services are working together to encourage children to play actively to help reduce the number of overweight children. Partners know that it will take a while for the improvements to be seen

Public sector bodies recognise that lots of other factors contribute to improving health. For example they are providing more opportunities for people to use their leisure centres to exercise by providing free swimming to all young people under 16.

Over the past few years they have improved their parks so more people use them. Improvements include the upgrading of the skate park in Peckham Rye Park where a new state of the art outdoor gymnasium has also been installed. The plans to improve the state of housing in Southwark will also contribute to improving the health of local people.

For people who need social care services, public sector bodies are working together to support their independence but further improvements are needed. Delays in moving from hospital into a community or residential setting are relatively low but have increased in 2008/9. Although some intermediate care to promote faster recovery from illness and prevent unnecessary admission to hospitals is provided it has not been used as much over the past year. More people received direct payments to arrange their own care but the numbers are still lower than in other similar areas.

The voluntary sector is working well with the Council to provide a range of services and advice which is helping to keep people independent.

Southwark Works, the multi-agency employment programme in the borough,

provides a range of services to help disadvantaged people into employment. There has been some success in helping people with disabilities into employment, education and training.

The Council has reasonable arrangements to protect adults who require care or support from harm or abuse.

Improving individual life chances - be safe

The partnership has worked well together to reduce crime and most types of crime are decreasing faster in Southwark than they are decreasing nationally. However crime in Southwark is high when compared with similar areas and youth crime is still a concern.

Unlike most other areas of London, residents in Southwark don't include crime among their major concerns. Twenty-seven percent of people think the police and other public services are successfully dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour in Southwark. This is close to the average for similar places.

There have been reductions in almost all categories of crime over the past year. Personal robbery, knife and gun crime all show good reductions compared to 2007/08. Local information shows that overall levels of serious acquisitive crime have dropped with burglary, robbery and theft of motor vehicle all reducing since last year.

Youth crime is a major concern for the public services, who are working together to tackle problems like gangs and violence with weapons. This is a challenge. The number of first time offenders is still going up and is higher than in London as a whole. More offenders go into custody than in similar areas, and the number went up suddenly in 2009. Not enough young offenders go into jobs, education or training and the public services know they need to do more about this.

Tackling fear of crime is an important objective for local public sector bodies. Fewer people in Southwark feel safe during the day and at night than the average for London but things have improved. Since the Resident's Survey in 2006 there has been a 6 per cent increase in day time feelings of safety and an 8 per cent increase in night time feelings of safety across the borough.

Particular crime hotspots have been targeted well by the Safer Southwark partnership. For example, the Heygate estate is being redeveloped and residents are moving from their homes there. A warden and police team now covers the area to ensure that the residents still living there are safe. Early indications suggest that since the programme began, crime on the estate has reduced significantly. The Kingswood Estate is a large isolated council estate with high levels of deprivation compared with the surrounding area. After the murder of a teenager there in 2008, local people became very concerned about the knife and gang culture on the estate. Public sector partners worked well together to tackle violent crime on the estate. This led to a halving of violent crime against young people so that the great majority (77 per cent) of young people now feel safe on the estate. Most residents now consider Kingswood estate to be a good place to live.

The award winning Crack House Protocol is a good example of how partners are working together. Drug workers work alongside police raiding suspected crack houses and ensure active drug users are referred to treatment and housing services. Council enforcement officers talk to the users and explain the consequences if the drug users do not change their behaviour. This has helped long term addicts move away from their old lifestyle. The work has been successful in that there are now very few crack houses in the borough.

The partnership has worked well to improve and enhance the safety of those who travel around and through the borough. They have won a second award for innovation in promoting travel plans to business, and also won recognition for improving the local area for those on foot. Partnership initiatives to promote safety have included the development of a DVD to be used in schools targeting black children aged 9-14 as information shows that they are three times more likely to be killed or seriously injured on London's roads than the average. They also organised a series of Dr Bike events where experts are available to undertake minor repairs and offer advice on cycling, and held a Road Safety Quiz for the Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSO) who help and advise other pupils at their school on how to stay street safe.

Partners have also focused well on people who are at particular risk of becoming victims of crime. The SERVE (Southwark's Emergency Re-Housing Victims of Violence Enterprise) scheme supports residents who face a serious risk of violence due to their association with a suspect or victim of gang related violence. It is provided in partnership with registered social landlords and a temporary refuge and provides safe accommodation and advice. This scheme has been recognised by the government as very good.

Improving individual life chances - enjoy culture and leisure opportunities

Residents have recognised the positive effects of increased public investment in cultural and leisure facilities in Southwark.

Residents are more satisfied with the parks and open spaces in Southwark as a result of considerable investment of public funds over the last few years. Improvements include the refurbishment of Southwark Park where a replica of the 1833 bandstand from the Great Exhibition was replaced, a new bowling pavilion was built and a new children's play area provided. Bermondsey Spa Gardens has been improved and more recently Burgess Park has attracted £6 million of funding. Over four fifths of residents are now satisfied with parks.

Seven of Southwark's parks have been judged to be welcoming, safe and well looked after with the strong involvement of the local community. This includes Russia Dock Woodland in Rotherhithe and Paterson Park in Bermondsey which have been recognised for the first time, Peckham Rye, Dulwich Parks, and Southwark Park have been recognised for the past few years.

Investment in libraries has also increased residents satisfaction with their services. Satisfaction with libraries has increased since 2006 and over four

fifths of users are now satisfied with the service. The Peckham Library, opened in 2002, won a number of awards for architecture. The John Harvard Library is under refurbishment and a new library has been built in Canada Water. More than half of residents are using library services in Southwark.

Nearly three quarters of residents are satisfied with sports and leisure facilities and this year more residents have used these. The number of adults participating in sport and active recreation has increased by 3 per cent since 2006 and is now 21 per cent. This is the eighth highest in London. Southwark Community Games (SCG) is now in its 6th year of operation and provides an all-year-round programme of competitive sport for children in the borough. Over 10,000 children are regularly involved and the SCG operates in 56 primary and 8 secondary schools in Southwark. The Games are also delivered in out of school clubs, parks and open spaces, youth clubs and on housing estates through groups involving tenants associations, Housing Associations, the Primary Care Trust and youth services.

Over £12.3 million is currently being invested in leisure centres, which will see Camberwell Leisure Centre modernised and the restoration of the athletics track at Southwark Park.

Improving individual life chances - value diversity and be active citizens

Green flag: Involvement of local people and the voluntary and community sector in enhancing Community Cohesion -

The involvement of local people and the voluntary and community sector in enhancing community cohesion is outstanding in Southwark. Partners have worked well to bring people from different communities and faiths together to develop better understanding between them and to reduce any misunderstandings that may occur. Southwark has a diverse population with a mixture of well-established communities alongside much more recently-arrived or transient groups. There is potential for local tension which partners are working effectively to address.

Public sector bodies play an important part in encouraging residents to get involved in local activities and groups to increase understanding and create tolerance. Residents in Southwark are more active in their communities than in similar areas. Over one in five of local people become involved and participate in their area which is better than in London as a whole. Opportunities such as training on how to become a magistrate, a school governor, or in public speaking are offered to residents. Events organised by public sector bodies to bring people together include one of the largest Latin American festivals in the UK, a Lesbian and Gay History Month, St Georges Day celebration, 'Celebrating Peckham' week, and Black History Month.

Training to help public sector staff and voluntary and community groups to promote better understanding locally is widely offered. Up to 300 people each year attend workshops for active citizens and other groups (including Tenants

and Residents Associations). New staff at Southwark Council think about community cohesion as part of their induction programme. Training for school headteachers and governors focuses on practical ways for schools to meet their new duty to promote cohesion.

Partners have been working to improve community cohesion in Southwark for some time so their approaches are well established. Initially the work focused on Celebrating Southwark - promoting understanding between people of different faiths, different generations and different cultures. For example an inter-generational drama, *George*, focusing on the relationship between a white grandmother and her adopted black grand-daughter, was used to encourage mixed groups of residents to share their response. Over 400 people were involved.

The Sense of Belonging is an anthology of residents' views of identity. This was discussed at workshops, at which local residents discussed the issue of identity, and in particular the far right branding associated with the St George's flag. The workshops provided a safe space in which robust conversations could be held about identity, and prejudice. An outcome of this was the desire of participants to reclaim the celebration of St George's Day, and what it means to be English.

Activities organised by partners have had an impact on resident's perceptions. Reclaiming St George's Day in Rotherhithe and Bermondsey started as a way of involving residents in preventing extremists marching in Southwark. One of the most symbolic actions to encourage pride in the community was to reclaim the St George's flag from the far right. A resident-led group was set up to plan a St George's day celebration to involve the whole neighbourhood. Around 150 people attended the first event in 2006, and this has now become an annual event with over 350 people attending in 2008. As a result resident's views have become much more positive. The Southwark residents' survey in 2004 showed that only 42 per cent of people in Bermondsey and 51 per cent of people in Rotherhithe thought that people of different backgrounds get on well together against a Southwark-wide figure of 74 per cent. By 2008, this had changed and nearly 80 per cent of people in Bermondsey and 82 per cent of people in Rotherhithe thought that people of different backgrounds get on well together, against a Southwark-wide figure of 86 per cent.

Partners encourage groups from different backgrounds to meet, talk and learn about each other. For example, café conversations was set up in response to hate crime against people with learning disabilities and used to tackle harassment and bullying. At the first organised event twenty people from a mixed group of people including people with learning difficulties, met in a local cafe to talk about bullying and harassment. They found it much easier to put across their ideas in an informal environment. Since then, a total of sixteen conversations at cafés round the borough were jointly planned, facilitated and hosted by the people themselves.

Partners encourage people new to Southwark to meet and talk to service-providers and existing residents. At the Southwark Day Centre for Asylum Seekers, new arrivals hold coffee mornings and lunch time meals with groups such as tenants' associations and the police, where they learn about living in Southwark while the settled population understand more about why they have left their home countries. The events have challenged misconceptions on all sides and promoted better mutual understanding.

Partners support community projects that encourage young people to take an active role in delivering messages to others. Rerezent 87.7FM is a radio programme which is run entirely by young people for young people. Some 85 young people between the ages of 13 and 19 present and produce all the radio programs to share views such as their anti-gun and knife crime 'Peace on the Streets' message directly with each other.

Improving individual life chances - value diversity and be active citizens

Partners have worked well together to empower communities and bring local people together to reduce tension. Southwark is a place where communities generally get on well together. Nearly three-quarters of residents feel that people from different backgrounds get on well together, just below the regional average, and nearly half of residents think that people in the area treat each other with respect and consideration which is higher than the London average.

Public sector bodies have good links to voluntary and community groups who are well represented on the local strategic partnership. The chair of the Stronger Communities Partnership works for a voluntary organisation. This ensures that the views and needs of local people are taken into account at key decision-making meetings and continues the culture of engagement between public sector bodies and the voluntary sector which is well established in Southwark.

Partners make good use of community development to develop stronger communities and help communities to help themselves. Over the last 15 months, they have worked with over 700 individuals and 45 community groups to develop a number of forums to enable communities to express their interests. This has given public services in Southwark an excellent understanding of the local community.

Southwark's public services ask as many residents as possible about what is important and what needs to change the most in their local area. One hundred community wardens talk to residents out on the streets and estates and then take back information to the public services. Eight community councils in different parts of Southwark meet on a regular basis to allow local people to ask councillors, council officers and people from other public bodies questions about services.

A better place for people - localities of mixed communities

Public sector bodies, led by the Council, have ambitious plans to improve Southwark as a place to live. Through a number of large regeneration schemes they want to provide improved housing, schools, health care, transport, leisure facilities and employment opportunities. These will help develop more varied and stable communities.

Most residents are positive about these schemes. The 2008 Residents Survey

showed that most residents knew something about the plans and thought they would have a positive impact on Southwark.

Currently 40 per cent of the borough is being redeveloped through a number of high profile projects. These include the rebuilding and re-shaping of the Elephant & Castle area which includes the Heygate estate, new housing development at Bermondsey Spa, the creation of a new town centre at Canada Water, and the rebuilding of the Aylesbury estate. These large projects are at different stages of development. Spa Park, the centrepiece of the Bermondsey Spa redevelopment, was completed in February 2009 and includes an additional 1,500 homes, 500 of which will be socially rented. Plans for rebuilding Southwark schools have been agreed and good progress is being made.

The £1.3 million refurbishment of St Mary's Churchyard from a large churchyard to a park has been successfully completed; the 43 storey Strata tower which used to be known as Castle House, will be finished in spring 2010 and will provide 408 flats, a third of which will be affordable. Altogether about 1,200 residential units have either been completed, are being developed or have secured planning consent.

The redevelopment of Elephant and Castle is an ambitious programme costing £1.5 billion. The 170-acre programme includes the creation of a new pedestrianised town centre, market square, green spaces, new cultural and leisure facilities such as a cinema and swimming pool and new homes and jobs. Eighty-three per cent of households on the Heygate Estate have now been rehoused as a part of this project, allowing phased demolition to take place from 2010. It is not clear when this project will be complete, as the agreement between the Council and their commercial development partner has not yet been finalised.

Work on the Aylesbury Project has recently begun. It will deliver 260 new homes for Aylesbury residents, commercial units and an Aylesbury Resource Centre which will provide facilities for people with sensory and physical disabilities. The project has recently received government funding for the next phase of regeneration. This will finance the demolition and building of approximately 1,000 homes, as well as open spaces and additional facilities.

The foundations for the Shard of Glass building are currently being laid at London Bridge. This is one of a number of schemes at London Bridge Bankside, which represent £4 billion of investment to develop Europe's tallest building, the first railway station spanning a river, as well as new homes, offices, shops and hotels.

The recession is affecting the progress of these regeneration schemes with less investment available from the private sector. Partners are adjusting their plans accordingly. However, partners in Southwark have a good track record of making places better for local people from their successful work in Peckham and Bankside so prospects are good. We will look at progress in this area again next year.

A better place for people - sustainable use of resources

Public sector bodies in Southwark, led by the Council, have a strong commitment to promoting sustainable lifestyles. A number of initiatives have been developed, however, at this stage plans have not led to measurable outcomes. They have a good focus on reducing CO2 emissions and removing fuel poverty. There are several innovative schemes to improve the sustainability of new developments and to reduce use of CO2 by homes in Southwark. However the impact of most of these cannot be measured yet.

The Southwark Sustainable Environment Partnership (SSEP) is a new strategic partnership set up in September 2008 to ensure targets to reduce the local impact on the environment are met. They are initially focusing on workplaces which are responsible for 53 per cent of local carbon emissions and are bringing together the top 230 emitters to agree a joint reduction target.

The Council and its partners have received money to insulate and upgrade heating systems for council houses. This includes the replacement of boilers, cavity wall insulation for council owned blocks over four storeys, and energy efficiency advice to tenants and leaseholders.

The Council have set up a Multi-Utility Services Company (MUSCo), which is responsible for making sure the Elephant and Castle development is as sustainable as possible. The linked heating and cooling systems are designed to ensure no increase in carbon emissions compared to similar developments. The sustainable water strategy will use the ground water 100 metres below Elephant and Castle as the main source of non-drinking water. The aim is to reduce the borough's carbon emissions by 15,000 tonnes per annum, reduce the use of treated water by 30 per cent and deliver one of the best communications infrastructures in Europe.

The Council has moved to a new building in Tooley Street which meets high environmental standards. The building has been designed to reduce carbon emissions by up to 20 tonnes every year for example with automated lighting which only operates when required; biomass fuelled heating; solar thermal water heating; and rainwater harvesting.

The recycling rate is improving in Southwark. The rate has increased for the seventh subsequent year running to 20 per cent last year, but this is still below the London average of 27 per cent. Southwark have entered into a 25-year contract with a commercial partner to deliver higher levels of waste recycling. This will include the development of a new waste facility on the Old Kent Road, opening in 2011. This will have a number of advanced recycling options such as a Mechanical Biological Treatment Plant to allow most waste to be separated and recycled or used as fuel.

The prospects for reducing carbon emissions are good, as public sector partners have clear plans in place. A number of good initiatives have been developed by the Council and its partners to reduce their carbon footprint by 15 per cent by 2016. This includes the emitters club, 'Green Homes Concierge', eco-schools and the Environmental Business Awards, all of which aim to assist and encourage various local bodies to take action and focus more on sustainability.

We will be returning to look at the progress made in the area next year.

A better place for people - more and better homes

Red flag: Delivering decent homes

Nearly half the population of Southwark lives in social housing. Over 45 per cent of houses owned by the Council - more than 18,000 homes - still do not meet the modern standards set out in the decent homes standard. Too many tenants are living in poor quality housing and it is not likely that this will get better in the next two years. Despite significant investment in recent years, the funding needed to improve all the housing has not yet been secured. There is not yet an up-to-date picture of the condition of housing so improvement plans are not robust.

Many of the homes are in high rise blocks built in the 1960s and are expensive to maintain. In recent years the Council and its partners have made significant investment in improving the condition of homes but this is not been sufficient to deliver the scale of improvement required. For example, in 2008/09, they invested £73 million in works to achieve decent homes whereas double this figure was required to meet their targets. They aim to increase investment further by better contracting arrangements and the sale of buildings. Redevelopment of some estates will also help to tackle some areas of poor housing, leading to better quality homes for residents. But not enough has been done so far.

There remains a significant funding gap to bridge, and over 18,000 homes are still likely to be non decent in 2013. This is partly because Southwark has decided, in line with the wishes of residents, to improve homes to a higher standard. This will give more tenants new kitchens and bathrooms. However it also means that more tenants will continue to live in poor quality housing for longer. The lack of an up-to-date picture of the condition of council housing means that it is uncertain how much more investment may be needed and therefore how soon the improvements can be made.

What's being done in response?

The Audit Commission will be carrying out housing support work in Southwark. This will help to identify weaknesses in service delivery and will come up with a series of proposals to help the Council and its partners make improvements.

A better place for people - more and better homes

A very high proportion of people in Southwark live in council housing and housing is the second most important issue for them according to the 2008 Residents Survey. Southwark is making good progress on developing new homes and tackling homelessness. It is also improving the way it manages its homes, but performance is still weak in some important areas. Although the Council is making significant investment in improving the condition of its homes, nearly 18,320 did not meet the decent homes standard at March 2009 and this number will increase in the next few years.

The quality of housing management is now improving, but from a low base. There have been some recent improvements in the time taken to re-let empty council homes and tenant satisfaction with repairs. However, performance is still comparatively weak in these areas and tenant satisfaction with the overall housing service remains low. The collection of rent is also poor, resulting in a significant loss of income.

Southwark and its partners are making good progress in developing new and affordable homes, though, as in other areas of London, these are unlikely to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population. A large number of homes will be provided through the planned regeneration programmes, with a target to provide 2,453 new affordable homes over the next three years. However, much of this development will replace poor quality social housing, which means fewer additional homes will be built. The partnership knows that current plans will not meet the need for more homes, and has a number of initiatives to reduce demand by preventing homelessness and helping people stay in their homes.

The Council and its partners are doing some good work to prevent people becoming homeless, but they will have difficulty in meeting the target to halve the numbers of homeless people in temporary accommodation by 2010. A housing options centre to help and advise people with housing need opened in 2007, and the prevention of homelessness is now among the best in London. As a result, the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation has fallen from a peak of 1,367 in 2009/08 to 909 in March 2009.

A better place for people - infrastructure for a vibrant economy

Southwark partners have a good understanding of the local business sector and, led by the Council, have made efforts to support local small businesses in the recent recession.

Supporting business is an important priority in Southwark. The majority of all businesses in the borough are small businesses and a high proportion of local businesses are in areas that are vulnerable to the recession such as finance, insurance and hospitality. The public sector bodies are working closely with employers and have set up an Enterprise partnership to lead on creating a vibrant economy. This is chaired by an independent, business-led company, Better Bankside, one of three Business Improvement Districts in Southwark. Other members include the London Development Agency, the Learning and Skills Council and Southwark Chamber of Commerce.

Southwark partners understand that the economy will suffer as the recession bites and have worked well to support local businesses in the past year. They have invested money to help new businesses start up, and to encourage young people to become entrepreneurs. They are also working with people from communities who do not normally engage in business. For 2009/10, investment has almost doubled to continue the work that's already started and to make sure there is support for businesses which may have difficulties. The partnership aims to support over 764 local businesses and create 161 new businesses in the borough.

A Supply Southwark Group is helping local businesses use opportunities to supply services to the public sector. The Council's economic development team is running workshops for suppliers to explain how they can be included on the approved list of businesses. The Council is planning to hold 'Meet the Buyer' events for construction contracts where small local suppliers can meet with larger suppliers to form alliances and improve their chances of bidding for contracts.

Southwark partners, particularly the Council, are also taking positive steps to support the finances of small businesses. The Council has speeded up its payment times for services from 30 to 20 days. It is helping small businesses which are eligible gain rates relief and it is spreading the payment intervals for commercial rent payment more evenly. This will allow any rent due to be paid monthly instead of quarterly.

Since the economy has been affected by the global recession, we will be returning to look at this again next year.

A better place for people - a liveable public realm

Having clean streets and having their rubbish bins emptied on time are two of the most important things for local people according to the Residents survey of 2008. This is also an area where the Council has made some big improvements. Residents have recognised these improvements and satisfaction levels are the highest they have ever been. In 2008 over four fifths of residents were satisfied with the refuse collection, over four fifths were satisfied with the provision of recycling, and over three quarters were satisfied with the street cleaning.

Improved rubbish collections, a 24 hour street cleaning service, an education programme about the impact of litter and a robust approach to enforcement mean Southwark now has the fourth cleanest streets in London.

Southwark's community warden service makes an important contribution to reducing anti-social behaviour on the streets of Southwark. It patrols every secondary school at the end of the school day, distributes crime prevention literature and property marking kits. During 2008/09, the wardens have become the first local authority officers in Greater London to be accredited by the Metropolitan Police. This gives wardens the power to tackle issues, such as underage drinking and anti-social behaviour, on the spot without the involvement of the police.

For the past three years Southwark has achieved a Silver Gilt award in the London in Bloom competition. The competition judges horticultural achievement, environmental responsibility and community participation.

CAA looks at how well local public services, working together, are meeting the needs of the people they serve. It's a joint assessment made by a group of independent watchdogs about the performance of local public services, and how likely they are to meet local priorities. From 9 December you will find the results of Comprehensive Area Assessment on the Oneplace website - <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/>

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