

A TALE OF TWO SOUTHWARKS

A needs analysis of the London Borough of Southwark

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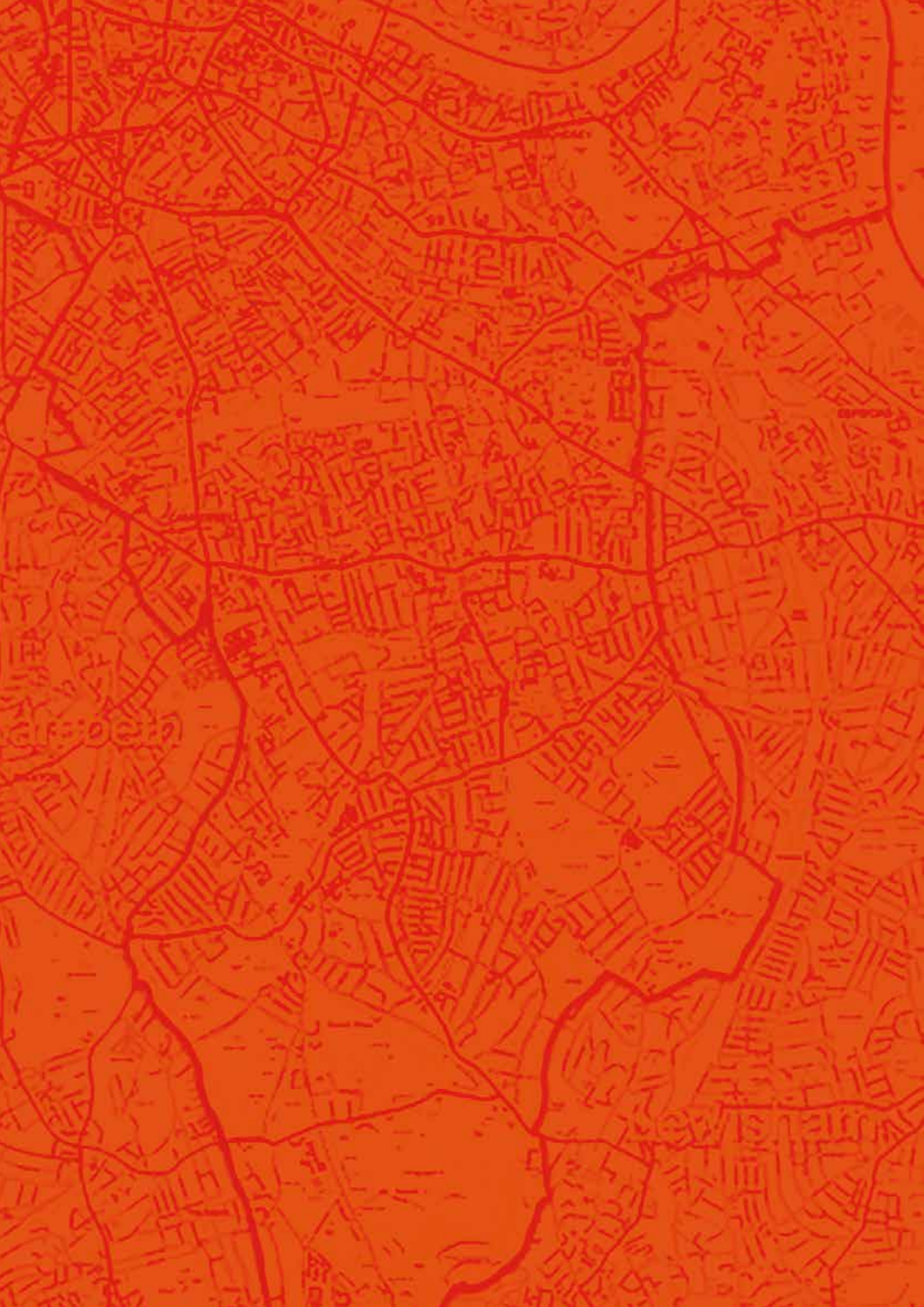
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Life in the London Borough of Southwark

Southwark is the third largest inner London borough in terms of population (over 310,000 residents in 2016). The population is expanding, with a particularly high birth rate, low death rate, and high inflow of immigrants, compared to the rest of London. Similar to many London boroughs, Southwark has a young population (average age: 34.2 years). It is a multi-ethnic borough with almost half the community (47%) belonging to an ethnic minority, including the largest Black African population in the country. Over a hundred languages are spoken by children living in Southwark. The docks have always brought in large numbers of immigrants, and today Southwark is home to an increasing number of refugees and asylum seekers from around the world.

The London Borough of Southwark (LBS) is a product both of its rich history and a modern makeover: Once the Thameside 'larder of London' and home to brothels, immigrant workers and theatre people, Southwark is now home to the glittering redevelopment More London Riverside, including the capital's City Hall and thriving business sector. Southwark is, however, a borough of contrasts with high levels of inequality leading to the conclusion that there are two Southwarks – one where people have better life chances and one where they have worse.



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LOCAL CHARITIES SAID: *The difference between affluent and deprived areas is becoming more prominent in Southwark, with areas on or near the river and in the south becoming increasingly unaffordable whilst the areas in the middle of the borough are becoming more deprived.*

The two Southwarks don't have a geographical basis. Rather than a dividing line, Southwark has pockets of poverty and deprivation. The borough contains eight neighbourhoods which are classified as being in the bottom 10% most deprived in the country (in East Walworth, South Bermondsey, Rotherhithe, Nunhead, Livesey and Camberwell Green). It also contains some of the least deprived areas in the country (e.g. Riverside, Surrey Docks and Dulwich Village).

Redevelopments and new businesses attract higher-salary workers to some areas which lifts the local economy but leaves other areas stagnating. While average earnings in Southwark have risen with the influx of new industries, this has not benefitted all workers. Nearly one third of households in Southwark earn less than 60% of national median income after housing costs; this is the fifth largest proportion of households in inner London boroughs. 4,509 individuals received help from the Southwark Foodbank in 2013/14 (roughly 1.6% of the borough's total population).

Photo by Stef / CC BY

Poverty is not the only decider of life chances and opportunities. Other issues can divide Southwark's residents into 'two cities' based on: gender, age, ethnicity, income, housing, health, wellbeing, education, employment, and membership of a minority group.



47%

of people in Southwark belong to an ethnic minority.

A Southwark Snapshot

Child poverty in Southwark is worse than the England average



27.6%

of children under 16 in Southwark are living in poverty, compared to an England average of 18.6%.

In 2015 Southwark was among eight London boroughs which continue to rank in the top twenty most deprived areas for children in the country. While undernourishment is an issue for some, Southwark also has the highest rate of childhood obesity in the country at age 10–11 (27.8% compared to an England average of 19.1%).

Southwark has higher than average reporting of all mental health issues



13.4%

of the population in Southwark reported depression and anxiety in 2014/15 (higher than the London average of 11.7%).

Southwark also has issues with high teenage pregnancy rates, drug and alcohol misuse, HIV and acute sexually transmitted diseases diagnosis rates. Southwark has a particularly high level of older people living in income-deprived households (34.3% receive pension credit – ranking Southwark sixth worst in the country for this).

Southwark is facing a housing crisis with not enough affordable homes



15.7%

of Southwark households were overcrowded, compared to a London average of 11.6% in 2011.

It has the highest level of social rented housing in London (43.5% of overall dwelling stock), much of which is in the process of being redeveloped. Many long-term residents claim that gentrification of Southwark areas, including the redevelopment of social housing into luxury homes, is destroying their communities, changing the face and character of Southwark and driving out lower income residents.

Environment

Southwark is one of the greenest boroughs in London with 24.9% greenspace coverage compared to an inner London average of 21.7%.



Education

Southwark has excellent educational attainment up to age 19.

Renowned arts institutions

It also boasts some of the UK's renowned arts and cultural institutions, e.g. Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, Borough Market and the Tate Modern. Michael Faraday was born in Southwark, as were John Harvard, Isambard Kingdom Brunel, Charlie Chaplin, Boris Karloff and Rio Ferdinand.

Methodology

Southwark borough needs were assessed using the following methods:

- A review of the literature and figures available on Southwark's existing needs.
- An online survey of 847 local Southwark voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations who are members of Community Southwark (94 organisations took part in the survey).
- Four focus groups with invited local VCS representatives of different issue areas (children and young people; older people; mental health and a mixed group representing community centres, CAB and a community activist).
- Interviews with 13 local VCS representatives covering issue areas such as health and wellbeing, specific BME groups, tenants and residents' associations, refugees and asylum seekers.

Southwark's Voluntary and Community Sector

The voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Southwark is very vibrant and diverse. Most local VCS organisations surveyed felt that Southwark's voluntary and community sector is currently doing better than average in this respect. Just over two fifths (42%) feeling the sector is doing 'well' or 'really well' although just over one quarter (27%) feeling things are going 'not so well' or 'really badly'.

The sector also has a great deal of resilience, with just over half (55%) feeling that things have 'stayed the same' over the last 12 months. However, a significant one third (31%) feel that things have got 'worse' in the sector in Southwark in the last twelve months.

Those who felt that things have worsened tended to be from organisations which dealt with some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in society: single issues groups, women, carers, disabled people, faith communities, forces and ex-forces, people with addictions, prisoners and ex-offenders, trafficked people or sex workers.

The top 10 needs and issues in Southwark

The views of the local VCS in this research not only provide a benchmark for future measurement but also act as a proxy measure for community needs, particularly needs which may be hidden, unmet or emerging.

The wheel below shows how the local VCS thinks things are going in

the borough of Southwark in the following areas. Issues are ranked from the area where they feel there is most need upwards, with 1 being the area perceived to be of most need.

Each summary in this report provides a brief analysis of a select number of these needs.



Housing & Homelessness

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LOCAL CHARITIES SAID:

The increase in building flats and homes seems focused on removing people from the borough. For example, taking the Aylesbury estate area and flooding it with high income residents excludes those on low income, or experiencing unemployment.

Local VCS organisations rated housing as the number one issue for Southwark residents. There is more council housing in Southwark than in any other London borough, with 43.5% of the overall dwelling stock in Southwark being ‘social housing’. About half the households in the borough live in a property owned by the council (as either tenants or leaseholders), and the rest of the population live in close proximity to a council housing estate or development. In 2013, 31.3% of Southwark residents made claims for Housing Benefit, compared to a London average of 25.2%.

Emerging Need: Gentrification

The major regeneration projects underway in Southwark, particularly those which are redeveloping social housing as mixed housing, have been characterised as ‘gentrification’, as they tend to lead to the raising of average rents and the subsequent displacement of lower income residents. This, for some, has been seen as a leading contributor to a loss of community and a lack of shared and affordable spaces.



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LOCAL CHARITIES SAID:

Some areas in the borough, such as inter-war estates, are intimidating and require major changes, although this seems to be excluding low income people.

Housing of all types is becoming less affordable in Southwark, with average rents for a two-bedroom property representing just under 70% of monthly earnings for those in the lowest income bracket of full-time earners. This is the tenth highest ratio across London. The median price for a house in Southwark in 2014 was £420,000, compared to an average for London of £365,000. Southwark has also experienced an increase in house price disparity (between the top and bottom quartile house prices) between 2004 and 2014, currently the tenth largest inequality ratio across London.

Southwark has one of the highest overcrowding rates in London (with a population density of 108.2 people per hectare, compared to a London average of 55.7). In 2011, 15.7% of Southwark households were overcrowded, compared to a London average of 11.6%.

Southwark has the seventh highest rate of statutory acceptances as homeless, and the sixth highest number of homeless, across London. 5.8 families in 1,000 are homeless in Southwark (compared to an England average of 1.8).

86% of local VCS organisations surveyed felt that things are going ‘not so well’ (36%) or ‘really badly’ (50%) in the area of housing; while 70% also felt that the housing situation had ‘worsened’ over the last 12 months.



43.5%

of the overall dwelling stock in Southwark is ‘social housing’.



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LOCAL CHARITIES SAID:

There is an increasing divide opening up in the borough between the well off and those on low income.

Employment & Unemployment

In the last decade (2004–2014) the share of individuals in higher-skilled occupations in Southwark increased by around 7–8%, the fifth highest gain across London.

This may point to an influx of new, more highly-skilled workers attracted to working in inner London and Southwark. On the other side of the fence, however, the proportion of lower paid jobs among residents of Southwark has also increased since the year 2000 (from 17% to 22%), the third highest proportion in inner London, amidst fears around insecure employment, low wages and zero hours contracts.

While the perception among Southwark's VCS organisations is that the employment situation is poor, across the borough, 80.6% of the population are registered as economically active (compared to a London average of 77.7%); with 74.2% in employment (compared to a London average of 72.9%).

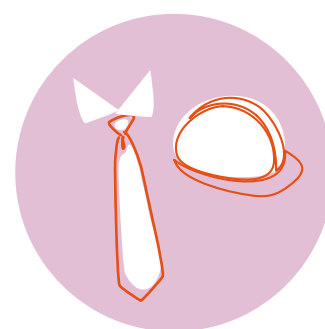
The job density in Southwark is relatively high compared to the London average (1.27 versus .96). The disconnection between the perception and the average employment figures is likely to indicate that unemployment is unevenly distributed across the borough and between different groups of people in Southwark.

There are pockets of high unemployment with 6.9% being unemployed (compared to a London average of 6.1%). At least 8% of households in Southwark have never worked or are in long-term unemployment.

When surveyed about employment, 55% of local voluntary and community organisations felt that employment in Southwark was doing 'not so well' (46%) or 'really badly' (9%); and one quarter (26%) felt that things had 'worsened' over the last 12 months.

Emerging Need: unemployment in the over 50s

The proportion of over 50s claiming out-of-work benefits in Southwark is higher than the London average (3.2% versus 2.2%). The proportion of individuals with no qualifications is highest among those age 50 to retirement age (33.3%).



74.2%

of people in Southwark are in employment, compared to a London average of 72.9%.

Older people

While there are relatively fewer older people in Southwark, they suffer greater inequality of opportunities and outcomes. In 2016, 7.9% of Southwark's population were over 65, compared to an inner London average of 9%.

Southwark has a particularly high level of older people living in income-deprived households (34.3% receive pension credit), ranking Southwark sixth worst in the country for this. Many older people feel isolated with more people of pensionable age in Southwark living alone (60%) when compared with London (52%). These conditions may contribute to the fact that older people die at a younger average age in Southwark. Life expectancy for men is 83.4 years (the seventh lowest life expectancy in London), and for women is 86.7 years (the fourteenth lowest in London).

Emerging Need: care home crisis

There is a nationwide crisis in end-of-life care, according to Age UK. In 2013/14 Lambeth and Southwark had above England rates of permanent admissions to care homes and yet a higher proportion of older people dying in hospital. In 2012 only one care home in Southwark had achieved gold standard framework accreditation despite a four-year improvement programme, 2008–2013.

37% of local VCS organisations surveyed felt that care of the elderly population is going 'not so well' or 'really badly'; and nearly one third (29%) felt that things had 'worsened' over the last 12 months.



7.9%

of Southwark's population were over 65, compared to an inner London average of 9%.



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LOCAL CHARITIES SAID:

The Standard and quantity of statutory support for older people has dramatically decreased, meaning that demand on our services has increased.

Children & Young People

Many children in Southwark get a poor start which can compromise their health and wellbeing in later life.

- 22.1% of children live in out-of-work households (compared with an inner London average of 19.9%).
- 30.3% of children live in households receiving benefits (the seventeenth highest level in the country).
- 29% of children receive free school meals (versus a London average of 23.6% in 2013).
- 82 in 1,000 children are in care in Southwark (against an England average of 60, putting Southwark in the lowest (worst) 25% of local authorities in the country).

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LOCAL CHARITIES SAID:

There are fewer opportunities for many young people as so many projects and communities are ceasing to exist.

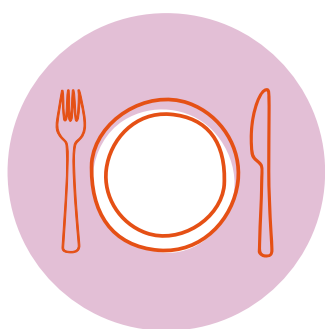


Emerging Need: Child Poverty

Child poverty in Southwark is worse than the England average, with 27.6% aged under 16 living in poverty (compared to an England average of 18.6%, this scores in the lowest (worst) 25% of local authorities in the country). In 2015 Southwark was among eight London boroughs which persistently rank in the top twenty most deprived areas for children in the country.

Emerging Need: Childhood Obesity

Southwark has the highest level of childhood obesity at age 10–11 in the country (27.8% compared with an England average of 19.1%); obesity levels at age 4–5 years are also high (12.9% versus 9.1%).



29%

of children receive free school meals, versus a London average of 23.6% in 2013.

Emerging Need: Childhood and youth mental health

Hospital admissions for mental health conditions amongst 0–17 year olds in Southwark is higher than the England average (136.1 versus 87.4 per 100,000) putting Southwark in the lowest (worst) 25% of local authorities in the country.

Emerging Need: Childhood food poverty

While many of the official statistics talk of childhood obesity, those families and young people using Southwark VCS services are more often reported to be suffering from food poverty and undernourishment.

Emerging Need: 'Chequebook children' and dispossessed youth

There is felt to be a general lack of aspiration and a sense of hopelessness and apathy amongst some young people in Southwark, particular in more deprived areas.

This can manifest in many ways, but seems to take two primary forms:

- Staying in – this is a hidden issue as these youths stay at home, often engaging in gaming or other online activities, and generally becoming more insular.
- Acting out – young people hang around on street corners in groups ('gangs') with nothing to do. This can lead to getting involved in drugs and alcohol, sexual exploitation of girls, violence and petty crime.

36% of the VCS organisations surveyed felt that opportunities for children and young people are going 'not so well' or 'really badly'; and nearly one third (30%) felt that things had 'worsened' over the last 12 months.



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LOCAL CHARITIES SAID:

[The] Brexit debate has led to negative rhetoric and climate for migrants. Many of our beneficiaries are EU citizens who will be affected by changes to access to welfare and so will face even more poverty.

Diversity

Southwark has particularly high numbers of certain minority and needs groups: **Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME); refugees and asylum seekers; and Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans and Other sexuality (LGBTO);** and high needs amongst other groups, especially: **disabled people**, and **carers**. These contribute to Southwark's particular profile of need.

The borough of Southwark is home to the largest Black African population in the country (16.1%). Over one quarter (27%) of residents identify as 'Black'. Other BME communities in Southwark include: Bangladeshi, Caribbean, Eastern European, Indian, Irish, Pakistani, Turkish, Vietnamese, settled travellers and more. Recent arrivals include people from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. There is also a significant and growing Latin American population. Southwark had the fourth highest

LGBTO population in the UK in 2015 at 8.16% of the population and the second highest in London (after Lambeth). The percentage of people claiming Employment Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefits for disability in 2013 in Southwark was 6.1%, compared with a pan-London average of 5.5%. 7.2% of Southwark residents were classed as a carer in 2011.

Each minority and needs group has its own specific needs, but all may also face some common issues:

- Isolation
- A lack of integration into the community leading to segregation and 'ghettoisation'
- Stigma, prejudice and discrimination leading to poorer opportunities
- Poorer health and mental health
- Under-representation in the mainstream

London's Latin Americans are predominately young, highly skilled individuals with large numbers in work, but unable to obtain jobs commensurate with their professional skills. Along with many other newer migrants, large numbers are concentrated in low-paid and low-skilled areas of the economy that often offer little labour protection and frequently expose workers to unacceptable levels of abuse and exploitation.

No Longer Invisible, The Latin American Community in London, Trust for London, 2011.

While statistics are hard to come by for these groups, some particular themes and issues came out of the research:

Emerging Need: BAME

High prevalence of FGM (female genital mutilation), HIV diagnoses and other sexually transmitted diseases, also language and cultural barriers.

Emerging Need: Refugees and asylum seekers

'The system' is struggling to cope with the numbers and needs, while once highly-qualified professionals are now working as cleaners or are unemployed due to language and cultural barriers.

Emerging Need: LGBTQ

A rise in 'chemsex' issues, HIV diagnoses and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Emerging Need: Disabled people

Struggling with changes to benefits and services.

Emerging Need: Carers

A population of hidden (young) carers.

Emerging Need: A lack of safe public spaces

The perception of a lack of safe public spaces adds to social isolation.

Emerging Need: Poor transportation links

Isolation was also felt to be made even worse by poor transportation links for some in Southwark, especially for those with particular needs (including the elderly and those with health or disability issues).

41% of local VCS organisation felt that opportunities and support for minority groups in Southwark are worse than average; while nearly one third (30%) felt that things had 'worsened' over the last 12 months.

Research that shows that LGBT people experience significant health inequalities compared to the wider population, from high rates of physical and emotional bullying, and risk of homelessness in childhood, through significantly higher rates of suicide and self harm, substance misuse and smoking in adulthood and social isolation and extreme vulnerability in old age.

Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive of Public Health England, PHE Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Health Outcomes Framework Companion Document.





Emerging Need: Isolation

While traditionally thought to be an issue for the elderly, social isolation was raised by almost every individual and VCS organisation spoken to as part of this research. It can therefore be surmised that it applies to most, if not all, vulnerable individuals and groups across all ages, genders and cultures in Southwark.

While this is becoming a national issue, loneliness and isolation was felt to be exacerbated in some parts of Southwark by particular conditions. Studies have also shown that social isolation is greater in areas of higher deprivation, and that the built environment can have a significant impact on whether or not a person becomes socially isolated.

Emerging Need: STI diagnoses

Southwark has an above-average rate of diagnosis of acute sexually transmitted infections (over 2,000 per 100,000 in 2011 compared to less than 800 per 100,000 across London) e.g. Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Syphilis.

Health & Wellbeing

According to ONS measures, compared to other London boroughs, Southwark scored generally low-to mid-table in 2014/15 for subjective personal wellbeing (happiness), ranking 14/32 for 'happiness', 20/32 for 'things you do in life being worthwhile', 22/32 for 'life satisfaction' and 6/32 for 'anxiety'. At ward level Southwark experiences wide differences in wellbeing, with areas such as Dulwich Village scoring most highly in overall wellbeing (ranked thirty-first across all 658 London wards), while the lowest scoring ward, South Walworth, ranks twenty-fourth lowest of all London wards. Issues and needs tend to group together in pockets where vulnerable groups of people experience multiple deprivations while others thrive, adding more weight to the 'two Southwarks' analogy.

Life expectancy also varies quite widely from ward to ward within Southwark. Nunhead ranks 610th out of 624 wards for life expectancy, compared with Village ward which ranks forty-second across all wards in London.

Emerging Need: Drug and alcohol misuse

45% of the Southwark population drink more than the recommended daily alcohol intake on one or more days of the week. Southwark has a higher than average number of people in treatment for drug misuse (6.7 per 1000 compared to a London average of 5.1).



45%

of the Southwark population drink more than the recommended daily alcohol intake on one or more days of the week.

Emerging Need: Domestic Violence

2,843 cases of domestic violence were reported in Southwark in the 12 months to April 2016, and the borough detection rate has been acknowledged as being far too low.



2,843

cases of domestic violence were reported in Southwark in the 12 months to April 2016.

Emerging Need: Mental Health issues

Southwark has higher than average reporting of all mental health issues. 13.4% of the population in Southwark reported depression and anxiety in 2014/15. This is higher than the London average of 11.7% and ranks sixth across London. Rates of diagnosis for depression in adults is rising in Southwark more quickly than across the rest of London and nationally.

Emerging Need: Hoarding

Hoarding is an increasing issue in the UK. Southwark VCS organisations who deal with this issue, felt that hoarding might be a coping mechanism, or arising as a result of not having the time or money to get rid of things, perhaps as a result of feelings of helplessness or lack of agency.

Emerging Need: HIV diagnoses

The new diagnosis rate for HIV (persons aged 15 and above) is the second-highest in London (behind Lambeth) at 76.2 per 100,000 (compared to a London average of 36.5 per 100,000).

Emerging Need: Teenage pregnancy

The teenage pregnancy rate is higher than the England average with approximately 31 under 18s becoming pregnant per 1,000 females aged 15–17 in 2013, versus an England average of 24.3 per 1,000.

Socio-economic challenges such as unemployment and poor housing result in a relatively higher rate of child poverty and social exclusion which subsequently contribute to poor physical and mental health manifesting in health inequalities.

The Southwark Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015–20

Local Economy

Southwark has a thriving business sector. It boasts the fifth largest number of large businesses located in London; the fourth largest number of medium businesses, the fifth largest number of small businesses; and the twelfth largest number of micro businesses. However much of this is concentrated in the Riverside and London Bridge area, meaning that not all of Southwark feels the benefit.

This is reflected in the perceptions of local voluntary and community organisations. 45% of local VCS organisations felt that the local economy in Southwark was doing 'about average'; and while 63% felt that the local economy had 'stayed the same' over the last 12 months, nearly one quarter (23%) felt things had 'worsened'.



Learning & Education

Performance in Southwark schools is generally considered to be excellent, with results exceeding London and national performance at GCSE level. However, **two fifths (41%) of local voluntary and community organisations felt that learning and education in Southwark was doing 'about average'** which probably reflects the fact that the academic achievement averages for Southwark are not distributed evenly across the borough.

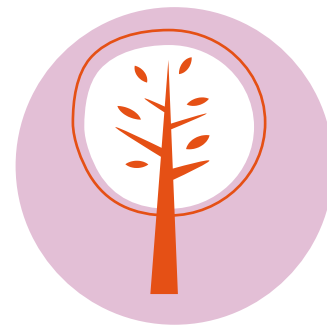
There may be some issues with language which contribute to poorer school performance for areas with large BAME communities: 79.1% of school children in Southwark are from a minority ethnic group, and 41.9% of pupils in Southwark don't have English as a first language. At age 19, Southwark performs among the 8 worst boroughs in London for level three qualifications (similar to A-levels) with just 40–43% of 19 year-olds having attained these.

Seven out of ten (71%) of local voluntary and community organisations felt that the situation pertaining to learning and education in Southwark had 'stayed the same' over the last 12 months.

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LOCAL CHARITIES SAID:

The changes in the ownership of education within Southwark requires monitoring, with a strategic need to bringing education, communities, the arts and voluntary sector together to support jobs and training so as to combat crime, low incomes, illness and depression.



Environment

Southwark is one of the greenest boroughs in London with 24.9% greenspace coverage (compared to an inner London average of 21.7%). It has 130 parks and open spaces and won four Green Flag awards (for the best parks and green spaces in England and Wales) in 2015, making 23 in total since 2006.

Nevertheless, Southwark has very poor air quality. Along with Westminster and Tower Hamlets, Southwark has the highest number of secondary schools in breach of legal limits of Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) levels. Hospital admissions for asthma for 0–18 year olds is also higher than the England average (278.1 versus 216.1 per 100,000) putting Southwark in the lowest (worst) 25% of local authorities in the country.

37% of local VCS organisations felt that things are going 'well' or 'really well' with regards to the environment, (e.g. green spaces, cleanliness), and 23% felt that the things had 'improved' over the last 12 months.



Future Trends

In most areas things are becoming more challenging in Southwark. In particular:

A growing population putting added pressure on already stretched resources (Southwark is forecast to have 50,000 more residents by 2030); **reduced employment** (employment trends are projected to continue to move in a downwards direction); **more welfare benefit changes** (the government has already introduced £18 billion of welfare savings as part of its austerity programme over the last five years and has suggested there may be £10 billion more to come); **more cuts to funding** (central and local government cuts are projected to continue to increase for the foreseeable future).

These factors are likely to lead to an increase in **poverty and inequality**; and **worsening health and wellbeing**. Evidence from previous economic downturns suggests that there will be short-term and long-term health effects and an increase in mental health problems, including depression,

and lower levels of general wellbeing. Inequalities in health according to socioeconomic group, level of education and geographical area are also likely to widen. This could lead to a decrease in life opportunities for some people.

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LOCAL CHARITIES SAID:

Our caseload has become increasingly complex which has led to pressure on staff and other participants.

Increasing ‘gentrification’ (regeneration and gentrification seem set to roll out on an ever-grander scale in Southwark, meaning less affordable housing); **an ageing population** (pressure on end of life care in Southwark will increase, with a predicted growth in demand of 17% by 2030) and **increased immigration** (immigration levels are set to continue to increase at least in the short-term) are likely to lead to an exacerbation in the perception that there is a **loss of a sense of community** in Southwark.

78% of voluntary and community sector organisations in Southwark see the overall situation faced by the people they support getting ‘worse’ (56%) or ‘much worse’ (22%) over the next five years; while demand for both ‘traditional’ and new services is increasing, putting extra pressure on an under-resourced system.

Taken together, these future trends seem set to widen the gap between those who have better life opportunities in Southwark and those who do not, creating an ever more distinct sense of ‘two Southwarks’ – a future scenario which would be even more divisive than the present-day situation.

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LOCAL CHARITIES SAID:

There will be more and more people living in denser and denser accommodation. Schools and parks and youth facilities are not being built to accommodate. Social care and services are labour intensive. Blue sky thinking is needed to make connections and solve intractable and entrenched problems.

Community & Opportunity

Underlying, and being reinforced by, many of the issues Southwark is currently facing (and will face in future) are some common themes which cluster around issues of **community** and **opportunity**:

Community

Social isolation is increasing alongside a loss of 'community' (the loss of familiar places, people and family) decreasing a sense of belonging. Research has shown that those most likely to feel a high sense of life satisfaction are those who feel they belong to their neighbourhood. Southwark has, for centuries, been a vibrantly diverse community, with immigrants from a large variety of countries settling here and forming communities within communities. The current programme of regeneration and gentrification, alongside other changes, may result in a greater homogenisation of Southwark's population, pockmarked with ghettos of difference rather than an integrated whole.

Opportunity

People living in Southwark experience different levels of life opportunities which are largely governed by the issues outlined in this report. Opportunities vary according to which of the 'two cities' of Southwark you live in.

These differences are exacerbated mainly by increasing levels of poverty and inequality. Poverty – literal poverty and poverty of opportunities and choices – clearly plays an important mediating role in many of the issues faced by Southwark residents, while inequality may act on a more psychological level. The **community is becoming more polarised into the 'haves' and the 'have nots'**, particularly in London, and particularly in Southwark where increasing 'gentrification' and poverty inequalities widens the gaps both in reality and in perceptual terms. This can increase misperceptions and mistrust between communities.

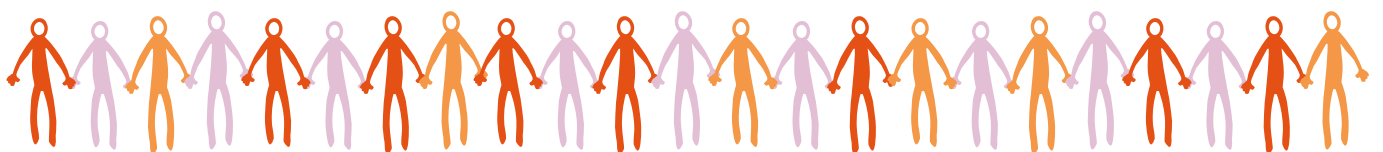
The picture presented here, along with the projected future trends, threatens to undermine some of Southwark's distinctive and positive qualities, with its rich history of diversity and vibrant communities, driving difference underground, and creating a hidden Southwark where those with poorer life opportunities struggle to survive.

Many of the issues outlined here are not purely Southwark phenomena, but particular conditions in Southwark combine to make the 'perfect storm'. The fact that Southwark is 'two cities', with huge inequalities, and with a number of different communities and groups thrown together with a lack of

integration, makes it a melting pot of frustrations and anxieties. These conditions have been exacerbated by the economic downturn and ensuing austerity measures which have trimmed back the edges of the support network for citizens and left them more exposed to these elements; combined with a regeneration programme which is literally building walls between richer and poorer.

In summarising the research we would argue that **a poverty of opportunities for some leads to a weaker community for all**. Therefore, it is in everyone's interests, whichever of the 'two cities' they find themselves in, to try to give better and more equal chances and opportunities to every individual in Southwark, to ensure that the borough is not left trailing behind its London borough neighbours and national comparators.

While regeneration is firmly on the Southwark agenda the time is right to question and shape the vision of Southwark's desired future. Research shows that attachment to people's local area remains fiercely strong across the UK, and it is this strength of feeling which, if supported appropriately, can help people to build a better, more resilient and integrated community which offers better choices and opportunities for all.



Southwark Giving

As we have demonstrated through this report, in the current adverse economic climate, individuals, community groups, volunteers and charities are increasingly expected to deliver more with less. One potential solution to this complex and challenging environment is to invest in the development of a local place-based giving scheme following in the footsteps of the successful Islington Giving and Hackney Giving. It is widely recognised that people have a natural affinity with their local working and living environment. Giving campaigns capitalise on this local interest by offering easy-access opportunities for people to invest in their community by giving time, talent or money.

This needs report was commissioned by Community Southwark, with funding from United St Saviour's Charity, Team London Bridge, The Wakefield and Tetley Trust and City Bridge Trust as a first step in setting up the place-based giving scheme: 'Southwark Giving'. The aim of Southwark Giving is to drive additional support to the borough outside of traditional funding sources. The scheme will hope to achieve this by developing cross-sector partnerships, leveraging additional resources from local businesses, and inspiring active local community engagement and volunteering. The principle aims of the research project were to provide information that will underpin Southwark Giving's strategic priorities and business model to ensure that it focuses its attention on priority areas.

Community Southwark is the umbrella body for the voluntary and community sector, volunteers and social action in Southwark. We want Southwark communities that have the ability and opportunities to fulfil and exceed their potential. We are determined to achieve this by creating strong foundations that support all voluntary and community organisations, communities and individuals in Southwark to work together to improve practice, shape futures and change lives. At the core of this ambition lies social action. To us, it means supporting and enabling others to take steps to change things in Southwark and to introduce new ideas and ways of working that benefit everyone.

The Researchery is an independent research consultancy for the voluntary sector. Founder, Dr. Cat Walker, has worked in the UK voluntary sector for the last 17 years, from running small community organisations to working with two of the leading infrastructure bodies in the sector: Charities Aid Foundation where Cat was Head of Research from 1999–2006, and Directory of Social Change where Cat was Head of STEAM (Sector Trends Evidence Analysis & Metrics 2010–2015). Cat is an experienced freelance researcher with particular expertise in the funding environment for the UK voluntary sector.

The full report will be available from www.southwarkgiving.org with full references and further sources of information.

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