



Photo: Kinetika Bloco, Ivan Gonzalez

Creative Southwark

Cultural
strategy
2017 to
2022

“The source of art is in the life of a people”

Walter Crane floor design, 1891, South London Gallery

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Photo: Nunhead Art Trail, Mickey Lee

Foreword

The London Borough of Southwark has always been a centre of creative excellence with a vast cultural footprint that sets it on the international stage. All the way from its docks and bridges lining the River Thames, down to its greener edges in the south, there are world-class galleries, museums, colleges, and community libraries with busy events calendars. We are home to makers and creators, film sets and festivals, spaces and studios. The people living, working and studying in Southwark, and our growing visitor numbers, all contribute to this diverse, unrivalled cultural landscape.

Why, then, do we need this strategy? It is precisely because of Southwark's rich cultural and creative heritage that we have a strategy. Times are changing, and as with London and the rest of the UK, the borough is facing a new and ever-shifting set of social and financial challenges.

Examination of these challenges for the cultural and creative sector and the impact of regeneration in the borough have shaped this strategy as a response. Heralding unprecedented levels of co-operation and integration, our aim is to embed culture within our everyday priorities, developing a consistent cross-council approach to culture. It is a framework for us to work with stakeholders and partners across the borough to understand, promote and secure Southwark's cultural and creative landscape for now and for future generations.

With the aim of advancing access for all of Southwark's residents to the wealth of culture on their doorsteps, the borough's children to be able to consider a sustainable career in the arts, this strategy looks at ways of maximising on a strong creative economy through support for businesses and the growing night-time and digital economies. All this is underpinned by the vital recognition and protection of the strong sense of place, often driven by an area's artistic and cultural output, felt across the borough from Elephant and Castle to Peckham Rye.

What follows is a celebration of Southwark's cultural prosperity and a way for us to fully embrace the challenges ahead. "The source of art is in the life of a people" reads the marquetry floor design in the South London Gallery, founded in 1891 in Camberwell: the approach, aims and ambitions of this strategy looks to uphold this maxim. By recognising there is strength in sharing and exchanging our cultural experiences and heritage, we can safeguard the creative future for everyone in Southwark.

Cllr Johnson Situ, cabinet member for business, culture and social regeneration

Cllr Octavia Lamb, deputy cabinet member for cultural strategy



Photo: London School of Samba, Ivan Gonzalez



About this strategy

What we want to achieve

This cultural strategy sets out our vision until 2022. It continues to place culture and creative industries at the heart of our priorities, shaping the context and delivering a range of programmes that support our long term ambition of Southwark being the first choice for people to live, work, study and visit.

The strategy provides a framework for cross-council work in events, arts, heritage, libraries, regeneration, licensing, public health, education, planning and other partners. The focus is on brokering partnerships to achieve Southwark's enormous potential and securing our cultural and creative landscape for generations to come.



Photo: Janine Harrington 3x3, Rajvi Vaya

The aims of the strategy are to:

- > Ensure that Southwark continues to be a borough for cultural excellence
- > Access and harness the benefits of regeneration for the cultural sector
- > Embed a cross-council and partner approach to culture
- > Ensure that cultural priorities are reflected in emerging plans and strategies, including the new Southwark Council Plan
- > Further align the strategy to the Fairer Future promises
- > Protect, preserve and grow our cultural venues, spaces and provision
- > Ensure our cultural sector is resilient in the changing financial and political climate
- > Support the economic prosperity of the borough, including the night time economy
- > Enable our diverse community to have access to cultural opportunities
- > Collect, conserve and celebrate our local heritage for future generations

The strategy provides a framework for cross-council work in events, arts, heritage, libraries, regeneration, licensing, public health, education, planning and other partners.



Photo: Conrad Shawcross: Three Perpetual Chords, Max Maxwell

Fairer Future promises

The strategy is integral to delivering our Fairer Future promises. These include:

Promise 1 – Value for money by providing best use of the resources available to us

Promise 7 – Safer communities by bringing communities together to celebrate and share experiences

Promise 8 – Education, employment and training by guaranteeing education, employment or training for every school leaver, supporting 5,000 more local people into jobs and creating 2,000 new apprenticeships

Promise 9 – Revitalised neighbourhoods by animating public spaces and bringing communities together

Promise 10 – Age friendly borough by ensuring residents get the best out of Southwark whatever their age, including the delivery of an ethical care charter and an older people's centre of excellence

Where we are now

Southwark is a culturally innovative place with creative people, prospering businesses and organisations around the corner. We have achieved a great deal, some key milestones include:

- > **Huge growth in performing arts with seven new theatres** opening either through refurbishment or brand new facilities (including Theatre Peckham, Cervantes Theatre, Union Theatre, The Bridge, Southwark Playhouse, The Bunker and Mountview Academy).

- > **Employment and career support** through Southwark Film Office, working with Notting Hill Housing, when the feature film 'Daphne' was shot in Southwark.

- > **Increased studio provision**, for example Space Studios in Camberwell and Hotel Elephant on Spare Street, as well as protecting studio provision on the Rich Estate for a further 35 years.

- > **Tate Modern is continuing to thrive** with the opening of The Switch House.

- > **Increased use of spaces** for example Paperworks at Elephant and Castle, Secret Cinema in Printworks at Canada Water, Theatre Delicatessen in Old Wells Way Library and Bold Tendencies and Peckham Levels in Peckham multi-storey car park.

- > **Increasingly the diverse range of festivals and events in Southwark** including community days – Pasley Park Festival, neighbourhood events – Peckham Festival, cultural celebrations – Plaza Latina and one off spectaculars – Great Fire 350.

- > **Two new libraries** at Canada Water and Camberwell, with Canada Water becoming the second busiest library in London.

- > **Better access to arts and heritage** collections through our fantastic new heritage portal, meaning people can explore thousands of arts and artefacts collections, view images, explore the history and storytelling.

- > **Making culture accessible for all** of our residents with programmes like Southwark Libraries Summer Reading Challenge and London Bubbles Speech Bubbles.

- > **Supporting emerging artists and creative entrepreneurs** through our universities and organisations, providing affordable space and creative enterprise programmes.



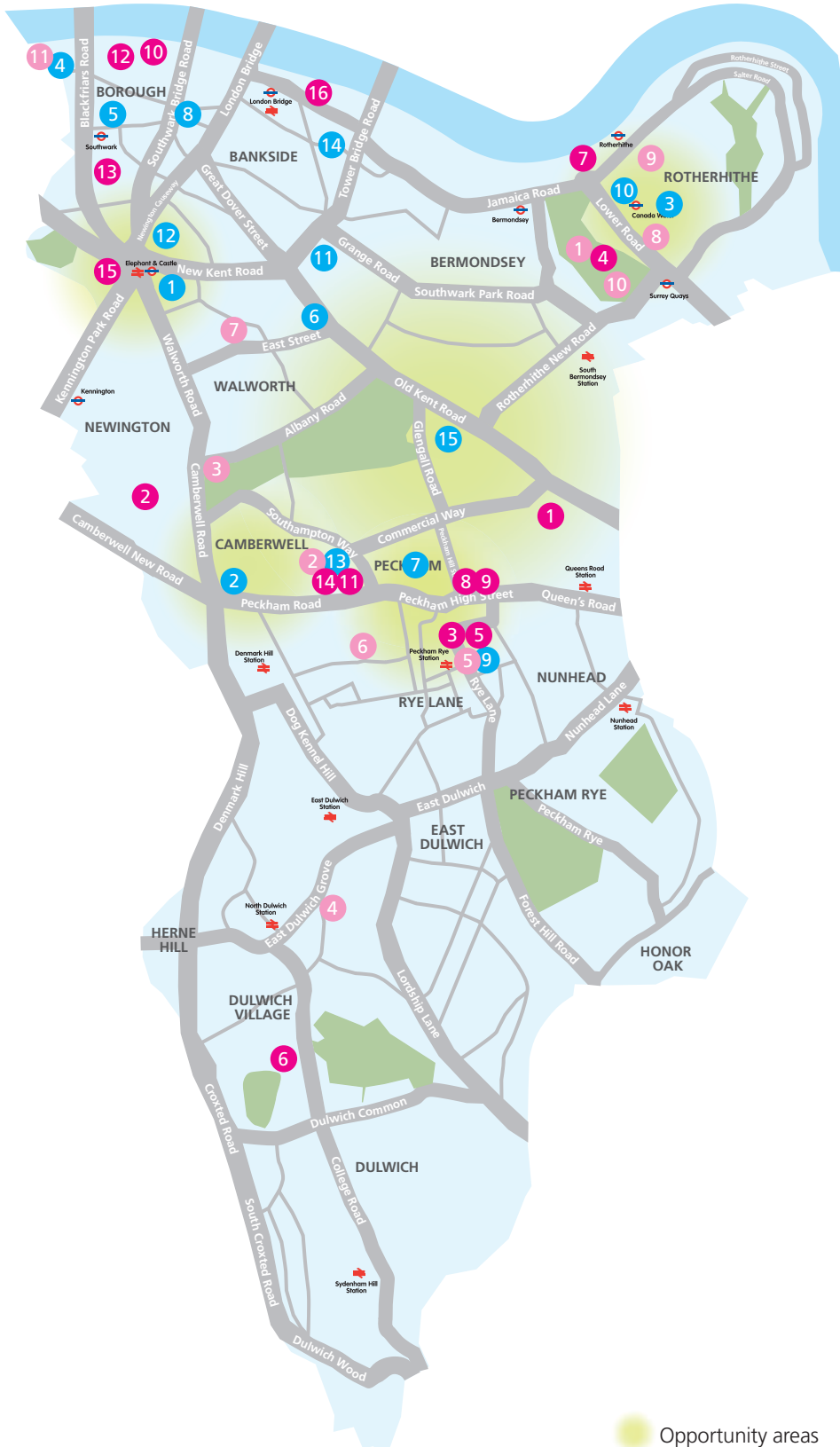
Photo: Burgess Park, Ivan Gonzalez



Photo: © Tate Modern

Culture in Southwark

This map is by no means fully comprehensive but illustrates how culturally rich and diverse Southwark is.



Festival and events

- 1 Bermondsey Carnival
- 2 Camberwell Arts Festival
- 3 Camberwell Fair
- 4 Dulwich Festival
- 5 Peckham Festival
- 6 Pexmas
- 7 Plaza Latina
- 8 Rotherhithe Festival
- 9 Scanmarket
- 10 Southwark Fireworks
- 11 Totally Thames

New and recent developments

- 1 Artworks
- 2 Camberwell Library
- 3 Canada Water Library and Culture Space
- 4 Central School of Ballet
- 5 Cervantes Theatre
- 6 East Street Library
- 7 Mountview Academy
- 8 O'Meara
- 9 Peckham Levels
- 10 Printworks
- 11 Rich Estate
- 12 Southwark Playhouse
- 13 Theatre Peckham
- 14 The Bridge
- 15 OKR Studios and Livesey Exchange

Cultural venues and organisations

- 1 Asylum Arts
- 2 Blue Elephant Theatre
- 3 Bold Tendencies
- 4 CGP London
- 5 Copeland Park & Bussey Building
- 6 Dulwich Picture Gallery
- 7 London Bubble
- 8 Peckham Library
- 9 Peckham Platform
- 10 Shakespeare's Globe
- 11 South London Gallery
- 12 Tate Modern
- 13 The Africa Centre
- 14 UAL: Camberwell College of Arts
- 15 UAL: London College of Communications
- 16 Unicorn Theatre

Opportunity areas

Strategy overview

Through our research and consultation we have developed a strategy consisting of three themes and a series of commitments, underpinned by an action plan, which will be collaboratively delivered with partners. The themes are:

Creative economy

Ensuring that Southwark continues to provide the right environment for the creative economy and enabling our residents to access opportunities for sustainable employment to support a strong, highly skilled local economy.

Creative growth

Ensuring that the cultural needs of existing and new communities are met, by retaining viable cultural organisations, and strategically developing cultural venues and creative workspaces.

Creative people

Ensuring that everyone has access to a high quality cultural offer regardless of their background, knowledge, skills, needs or experience. We need to work with partners in an unprecedented co-operative approach to address both real and perceived barriers to participation to drive higher engagement.



Photo: Thierry Noir street art, Matthew Couper

Creative economy

Southwark is an increasingly popular start-up location for the creative industries. The creative economy is a major growth area for the UK. At the time of writing this strategy, one in eleven of all UK jobs is in the creative economy¹. The night time economy in particular supports one in six jobs for people aged under 18.²

What are the challenges?

We know that our residents face challenges in accessing the opportunities offered by the creative industries, where half of all jobs are filled by those with degrees or equivalent³. Children born into low income families, with low levels of educational qualifications, are the least likely to be employed and succeed in the cultural and creative industries.

Recent changes in the education policy are expected to impact on the skills gap for the creative industries, where a principal concern of employers is the lack of suitable skills for the jobs available⁴.

We know that local businesses need support to thrive in changing environments, particularly around the upcoming business rates revaluation, adapting to digital consumption of cultural products, the reduction in public funding and uncertainty around the implications of Brexit.

What do we want to achieve?

We need to ensure that Southwark continues to provide the right environment to enable the growth and development of the creative economy and that our residents benefit from this. We must support our residents to have the right skills through our higher and further education and volunteering in order to access these employment opportunities. We also need to advocate for the cultural sector to employ more residents and that those who work in the creative economy are supported by the London Living Wage and proper rates recognised by unions in recognition of their professional status, skills and experience.

Who will make this happen?

We will need to work together with organisations around the borough to achieve the ambitions in this strategy, from large and small cultural organisations and individuals to various teams such as culture, planning, regeneration and local economy.



Photo: Nunhead Bite, Mickey Lee

1 DCMS 2016 Creative Industries Economic Estimates

2 www.almr.org.uk/facts-figures

3 Equality and Diversity Literature Review, July 2016, Arts Council England

4 The C Report, 2016-17, Creative Industries Federation

Working with our partners our commitments are to:

- 1** Improve the number of employment opportunities offered through the creative economy which supports our target of creating 5,000 jobs by 2018.

- 2** Deliver programmes which reduce barriers for Southwark residents to enter into cultural sector training and volunteering.

- 3** Advocate for the London Living Wage and union rates for artists in the creative economy.

- 4** Increase the amount of creative industry apprenticeships, which supports our target of creating 2,000 apprenticeships by 2018.

- 5** Support the skills and development needs of creative economy enterprises through training and capacity building.

- 6** Support existing networks and enable networking opportunities.

- 7** Support and enable businesses to overcome challenges and flourish.



Photo: Fistful of Sandwich, Phillippe Leone

Creative growth

During 2017 it is estimated that 40 per cent of the borough is currently under development, with a regeneration value across the borough totalling £4 billion.⁵ With a population of 307,000, it is one of the most densely populated boroughs in London. There are significant areas of regeneration at Elephant and Castle, Canada Water, East Walworth, Peckham, Old Kent Road, Camberwell and Blackfriars Road. The population of Southwark is expected to rise by 15 per cent in the next ten years as new homes in these areas are developed.⁶ Areas of Southwark have grown and developed because of a rise in the clustering of creative industries. Protecting and growing cultural venues and workspaces has allowed this creative output to drive places with strong identities and characters that are deeply felt by residents and visitors.

What are the challenges?

Increases in cost and rent of commercial and residential property can limit the amount of affordable premises, and impact on people's ability to live and work in the borough. This loss can be felt across cultural venues specifically across London's music, LGBTQI venues and artists workspaces. The predicted growth of Southwark's population creates a requirement for more facilities to meet demand. The cultural landscape is changing and there is an increased need for the use of space to support pop up and testing of new ideas.

What do we want to achieve?

Southwark will continue to play a part in London's cultural fabric on a local, national and international level. We need to work with partners to develop the right environment for the creative economy to thrive in and around our town centres. We recognise the value of retaining viable cultural organisations in the borough, and we continue to support new and emerging creative industries.

Key to this will be our work with universities, to enable our current and future business owners and workforce to thrive in the 21st century.

We want the cultural sector to enable residents to engage in, and benefit from, the social impact of regeneration, ensuring that cultural needs of existing and new communities are met.

Who will make this happen?

We will need to work together with organisations around the borough to achieve the ambitions in this strategy, from large and small cultural organisations and individuals to various teams such as culture, planning, regeneration, libraries and heritage, licensing and local economy.



Photo: Paradise over Pavements, Sam Welham-Gidney

⁵ <http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/200079/regeneration>

⁶ www.southwark.gov.uk/download/.../id/.../southwark_demography_bulletin_2015

Working with our partners our commitments are to:

- 1 Retain viable cultural venues (indoor and out) and creative workspace.
- 2 To strategically plan and work with partners to create new cultural venues and workspaces. This supports our target of achieving 500 new affordable business and creative spaces by 2018.
- 3 To work with developers to make informed decisions about the creation of cultural venues and workspaces.
- 4 Continue to use Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy to support the provision of cultural assets.
- 5 Provide opportunities for the cultural sector to engage in regeneration and planning processes.
- 6 Access and promote opportunities for the use of properties.
- 7 Continue to develop libraries, offer flexible working spaces, which can host wider cultural and heritage activity.



Photo: Canada Water Library, Tim Crocker

Creative people

Southwark's community is incredibly diverse, and this is one of our most valued assets. At present, 42 per cent of Southwark are 20 to 39 year olds. It is estimated that the over 65 age group will grow the fastest over the next five to ten years, making up 32 per cent of the population. The community is ethnically diverse; a trend which is predicted to continue into the future, with the BME population projected to grow the most in the next ten years. Southwark is the 41st most deprived local authority in England and the 12th most deprived borough in London. 10 per cent of children and young people and 20 per cent of adults in Southwark are estimated to have a mental health condition, most of which began in childhood. Mental ill health is linked to deprivation.

What are the challenges?

Recent studies have concluded that the two most influential factors for attendance and participation in cultural activities are educational attainment and socio-economic background⁷.

At a local level, our research shows that affordability and knowing what's on are the main factors hindering participation and attendance.

What we want to achieve

Everyone has the right to a high quality cultural offer regardless of their background, knowledge, skills, needs or experience. By coming together, sharing cultural experiences, celebrating the heritage of the borough, learning from each other and feeling pride in their local area, our residents will reap the social benefits of living in Southwark and its amazing cultural scene.

Access to culture is important for mental health and is a key part of the five ways to wellbeing⁸. It can make us feel happier, boost self-confidence and self-esteem and help us connect with others. This is particularly important to combat social isolation.

We need to work with partners in an unprecedented co-operative approach to address both real and perceived barriers to participation to drive higher engagement.

Who will make this happen?

We will need to work together with organisations around the borough to achieve the ambitions in this strategy, from large and small cultural organisations and individuals to various teams such as culture, community engagement, libraries and heritage, education regeneration, libraries, public health, licensing and local economy.



Photo: Tumble Circus, Tara Abidi

⁷ Equality and Diversity Literature Review, July 2016, Arts Council England

⁸ Five Ways to Wellbeing, October 2008, The new Economics Foundation

Working with our partners our commitments are to:

- 1 Deliver cultural opportunities through our libraries, heritage and events programme.
- 2 Deliver cultural opportunities for young people to engage with during out of school hours.
- 3 Promote digital inclusion and social media for creative means.
- 4 Support the development of cultural activities for, and by, all of our communities.
- 5 Enable access to culture for older people.
- 6 Support creative programmes that lead to healthier lives for our residents.
- 7 Improve our communication about cultural activities to residents, especially those which are free and low cost.



Photo: Canada Water Library, Tim Crocker

Methodology

Method of strategy development

Consultation has been important to the development of this strategy. We undertook a comprehensive literature review of recent papers, research and consultation for existing strategies where their content was closely interlinked with culture.

Consultation with the cultural sector 2012

The consultation for the 2013-2018 cultural strategy held six meetings with more than 100 partners. In addition, in 2015, we conducted a mid-term review of progress on the strategy. Together with our regular engagement with the cultural sector this meant that there was a strong pre-existing evidence base from which to work.

Consultation 2016/17

We tested whether the findings in 2012/13 and 2015 were still current (including an e-survey with partners).

Focus groups

Roundtable discussions were held with invited partners. These focussed on:

- > Equality, diversity and widening opportunities
- > Business, employment and training
- > Libraries and heritage provision

Internal council discussion groups

In order to continue and deepen the cross-council approach to the delivery of the cultural strategy we also held internal department groups with:

- > Local economy, regeneration, planning and property
- > Events and arts, libraries and heritage, parks and leisure and communications
- > Education, youth and play, community engagement and public health

Community consultation

The Audience Agency was appointed to design and undertake an in-depth survey, 263 face-to-face interviews were carried out over 60 hours with residents at a selection of Southwark Libraries across a range of days and times. It was also circulated as an e-survey via council databases and partners.



Photo: The Culture Cart, Hannah Maule-finch

We undertook a comprehensive literature review of recent papers, research and consultation of existing strategies where content was closely interlinked with culture.



Photo: Eye on the Road, Helen Marshall

Terminology

Throughout the document we have referred to the following terms:

Term	Definition
The creative industries	Businesses which have creativity as their core function such as museums, theatre and architecture ⁹ .
The creative economy	The creative industries plus non-creative support jobs which exist as a result of the creative industries, for example catering, cleaning and finance functions for a theatre. It also refers to creative jobs which sit outside of the creative industries, for example a graphic designer in a property development company.
The cultural sector	Creative industries, voluntary and third sector organisations.

The strategy does not encompass sport, education in schools or the peripatetic music services.

⁹ The Creative Industries in London, 2015, GLA Economics