

Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy

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Executive Summary

The climate emergency remains the challenge of our time, and time is running out. Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, Southwark has developed and is now delivering a climate strategy and action plan with an ambition to do all we can to be a carbon neutral borough by 2030.

But even if global greenhouse gas emissions stopped tomorrow, the climate will continue to change. We need to improve our resilience to the impacts of climate change and adapt to meet the challenges. Making changes now will help prepare Southwark for the future. Ensuring these changes are made the right way will also contribute to living more sustainably and reducing our impact on climate change.

Extremes of weather, flooding, water scarcity, food insecurity and new pests and disease which threaten our biodiversity are all impacts of climate change that we are experiencing in Southwark. This strategy forms a new section of our climate strategy and sets out our ambitions for tackling each of these risks. To achieve a carbon neutral borough which has adapted and is more resilient to climate change we will:

- Build resilience to overheating by cooling buildings, providing respite from heat and preparing for extreme temperatures.
- Reduce the risk of flooding by improving drainage, reducing the demand on the sewer system and improving our flood defences.
- Conserve more water and adapt our green spaces to be drought-resistant.
- Improve food security by reducing wastage and increasing local supply.
- Protect our biodiversity from new pests and diseases.

We will do this while remaining true to our values and our commitment to climate justice, reducing inequality and building a fairer borough for all.

We cannot achieve this alone and will only do so working with partners in London such as the GLA, London Councils and other boroughs. We will need to work with major organisations in the borough such as universities, schools and NHS trusts. We will partner with Government through DEFRA, the Environment Agency and others, and we will also work with local businesses, residents and all those committed to building a fairer and more sustainable Southwark.

This strategy outlines our five ambitions, which will inform the goals we set and the actions that we take. They will sit alongside the actions in the climate strategy, working together to tackle climate change and build our borough's resilience.

Introduction

The climate emergency remains the challenge of our time, and time is running out. Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, Southwark has developed and is now delivering a climate strategy and action plan with an ambition to do all we can to be a carbon neutral borough by 2030.

Working with our communities, we have already made progress decarbonising buildings, making walking and cycling easier and delivering projects across the borough to reduce carbon and invest in a more sustainable future. It is right that our top priority remains to reduce carbon to slow and eventually stop the warming of the planet and the catastrophic effects of climate change. However, too much damage has already been done. Even if the world stopped producing carbon and other greenhouse gases tomorrow, the increased carbon already in the atmosphere means the planet will continue to warm and it will take many thousands of years to return to pre-industrial temperatures.¹

While we need to redouble our efforts to reduce carbon and move to a net zero future, we also need to adapt for a warmer world and ensure we are resilient to the changes that are already happening. We also expect those changes to continue to intensify in the coming years.

The worst impacts of climate change will not impact everyone equally and will exacerbate existing economic and social inequity. Research from CDP in 2023 shows that 92% of low-income households are among those that will be most affected by climate-related risks including flooding and heatwaves. This is followed by older people (85%), children (73%) and minority communities (65%). Our commitment to climate adaptation and resilience must focus on these groups who are most affected but often have the least resource to mitigate against the impact. We also recognise that climate change adversely impacts those who have made the least contribution to the increase in carbon emissions.²

According to the Climate Change Committee (CCC), no single sector in England is prepared for the impacts of climate change, with the last ten years being a “lost decade” for government action.³

We recognise the challenge from the Climate Change Committee and have developed this resilience and adaptation strategy to ensure that in Southwark no more time is lost. This strategy should be considered alongside our climate strategy and shows how we plan to create a more resilient borough that can overcome the current and future impacts of climate change in a just, equal and fair manner. It formalises our approach through a list of clear and defined actions that will focus on how we best prepare the borough and its residents for a changing climate. It builds on work already taking place to adapt the borough in the face of a changing climate, through work on flooding, overheating, biodiversity and many other areas.

Our aim is to create a borough that does not passively endure climate change but acts to limit its impacts and do so in a way that contributes to a reduction in carbon emissions. Our aim is to do this working with our residents, businesses, schools, institutions and everyone who lives, works and cares about Southwark and its future. This strategy appends to the Southwark Climate Change Strategy “Tackling the Climate Emergency Together”. It contains new actions for our climate action plan and builds on the work we are doing to reduce carbon, to also ensure the borough is prepared and resilient for the effects of climate change. This strategy sets out a new dimension to our climate work, but does not change our overall approach or the values that drive us. We intend for this to be viewed alongside the Climate Change Strategy to give a complete picture of our ambition and plan to tackle the climate emergency together and build a more resilient future for Southwark.

What is resilience and adaptation?

The Mayor of London’s resilience strategy⁴ defines resilience as the capacity of communities and systems to survive, adapt, and thrive no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience. A recent example of where resilience was tested would be the COVID-19 pandemic, where communities and systems were under considerable pressure in the face of unprecedented changes.

Adaptation refers to communities and systems adjusting how they operate in response to actual or expected impacts of change. Both resilience and adaptation are important in relation to climate change. Our borough will have to be resilient to unexpected and unpredictable environmental conditions, and will have to adapt how it behaves and operates to ensure that it continues to thrive. There is also an opportunity to change in a way that creates a more just and equal Southwark.

The impacts from climate change are wide ranging and can affect both natural and human systems. We must consider how extreme changes in the weather will affect the lives, livelihoods and health of our residents, and the ecosystems and economy within our borough.

The impacts of climate change do not affect all people equally. Economic and social inequalities are exacerbated and sometimes even caused by our changing climate. It is therefore necessary to

implement preventative adaptation strategies in a way that is fair and proportionate to the impacts felt. In no way should adaptation to the way we live be to the detriment of communities already affected by climate change.

Why do we need this strategy?

As set out in our climate strategy, Southwark is already seeing the impact of climate change. All ten of our warmest years have occurred since 2002, whereas none of the ten coldest years has occurred since 1963. Summer heatwaves are now 30 times more likely than they would be without climate change.⁵ Climate change means UK temperatures are set to become more volatile with more extremes of both heat and cold.

We are already experiencing the effects of climate change in Southwark and this is set to worsen. Adapting the borough and strengthening our resilience is a crucial part of our response to the climate emergency.

Deaths due to heat are expected to rise by two thirds in the next decade, and increased death rate will also be associated with extreme cold. Burning fossil fuels in cars, heating and industry is also polluting the air we breathe as well as contributing to climate change. In Southwark, already around 72 deaths occur due to air pollution every year.⁶

60% of Southwark's residents live on land less than ten meters above sea level, any changes in sea levels will therefore have a direct effect on Southwark. Current flood defences will need to be renewed in the future.

An estimated 75,000 of Southwark's residents are food insecure.⁷ Climate change will increase food insecurity and we can expect this to affect prices and create greater food inequality in Southwark.

Southwark is a proudly global borough. This means many of our residents are connected to friends and families around the world who are affected by conflict and migration caused by food shortages, water shortages and extreme weather. Climate change and ecological damage will increase this forced migration that will affect residents here in Southwark.

Climate justice and health inequalities

We recognise that the impacts of climate change do not affect everyone equally. Shocks from emergencies and disasters exacerbate existing inequalities around poverty, race, gender, health and disability. Southwark is home to some of the most and the least deprived areas in the country.

Median household income in Dulwich at £74,000 is more than twice that of Old Kent Road at £33,000.

25% of residents in Southwark are Black, Black British, Caribbean or African backgrounds and 28% of these experience food insecurity, compared with 9% of white residents in the borough.

The Covid-19 pandemic laid bare the inequalities that exist in our society, and how these adversely affect those who experience social and economic hardships, as well as for older people or those who have health problems.

Climate adaptation and resilience is necessary to make sure our communities, services and infrastructure are able to withstand shocks from climate change. During the Covid-19 pandemic, local organisations, community groups and the council were able to mobilise to provide urgent support for those who needed it the most. This was possible because they were already embedded in communities across Southwark. To build resilience to climate change for our communities, we need to use these same networks and expertise and target interventions to benefit those who most need support.

Southwark's approach

Climate resilience and adaptation can cover a huge breadth of issues, from flooding to the impact of global migration. To ensure that this strategy is focused and actions can be delivered, it considers key areas where the actions that we take can make the borough more resilient. It ensures these actions also tackle factors that contribute to climate change. The strategy focuses on solutions that as a borough, we can deliver or influence and the partners we can work with. For example, the strategy does not try to tackle global food supply chains but looks at what we can do to ensure a greater use of locally sourced food.

Climate risk will increase as global temperatures rise from the levels we experience today through to higher temperatures at the end of this century. We will make sure we take the impact of these higher temperatures and increased risk into account as we deliver and plan new and existing services for our residents and invest in our buildings, places and neighbourhoods.

Whilst we recognise that there is a certain amount of uncertainty associated with future climate change projections, we have to plan for change. Every five years, the CCC produces an assessment of national climate change risk called the Climate Change Risk Assessment. The third and most recent climate change risk assessment, CCRA3, was published in 2022 and it assesses the urgency of adapting to the climate risk using our current climate and two future climate scenarios that model future temperature rises. These are:

(1) A +2°C increase in global mean temperature by the middle of the century (2050), representing a medium-high emissions scenario in carbon emissions. This would result in warmer temperatures with a greater number of hotter days and less rainfall in summer than today. Our weather would also be stormier with heavier rainfall when it does rain and higher chances of flooding.

(2) A +4°C rise in global mean temperatures at the end of the century (2100), which is the scenario that is consistent with the current limited global ambition for reducing carbon emissions. This scenario would result in more days above 40°C and summer mean temperatures being significantly warmer. Sea levels will have risen by at least 1 metre and this will require long term, collaborative approach within London. Peak river flows will be more extreme due to heavier storms, yet periods of drought will also take place with lower average rainfall in the summer.

The CCC advises that we should plan for the +2°C temperature increase by 2050 and assess risk for the +4°C temperature rise scenario by 2100. We will do this by taking an adaptive, flexible approach to the delivery of our strategy, where we will frequently review and update it as new data, technology and approaches become available. An example of being flexible is our planned major refresh of our Climate Change Strategy in 2025, which will enable us to review how we are adapting and take into account better data.

The strategy considers five themes, which are consistent with the latest national Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA, 2022): overheating, flooding, water scarcity, pests and diseases, and loss of natural capital. The sixth theme from this report, 'Thriving Natural Environment', has a dedicated section in the Climate Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan, so is not covered here. We will consider further themes through our adaptive approach.

Taking action

Our strategic approach to taking action is underpinned by the need to respond to the impacts of a +2°C global mean temperature increase by 2050. We are committed to the following principles:

Delivery

We want to ensure our borough is fair, equal and for everyone. As climate change will affect those who are most vulnerable, we will focus our efforts on working with the residents and neighbourhoods that are most at risk. Neighbourhoods at the centre of Southwark have been identified to be most vulnerable to climate risk (London Climate Risk Map, GLA, 2022). The red areas in the Figure 1 below illustrate this high climate risk coinciding with areas of income and health inequalities.

Improving climate adaptation and resilience will inform the decisions we take as a council alongside our other policies and priorities. We will ensure new plans and strategies consider climate risk at the earliest opportunity and seek opportunities to realise co-benefits and efficiencies.

We will continue to engage and collaborate with our residents and neighbourhoods through our programmes, stakeholder panels and other engagement methods such as our annual climate day.

In delivering the strategy, we will act at different scales within the borough. This means we will focus on people and the buildings that they live in and use, through to our public realm, our parks and neighbourhoods. We will also address risks that affect our entire borough. To do this we will work closely with our partners and neighbouring boroughs, as risks of this magnitude will require a coordinated approach.

We will leverage funding and investment to deliver the actions in this plan and make best use of the resources we have.

Data

We will continue to identify climate risks and their potential impacts so we can work out how will manage them in our decision-making and through our actions. We must be sufficiently flexible to ensure our decisions do not have long-lasting consequences that create obstacles for future adaptation. We will underpin our response and preparations for climate change by using the best available evidence and data to identify and tackle the climate risks. For example, we will continue the development of digital tools to inform our work and decisions by building on our partnerships within the borough and across London, such as the London Climate Risk Map.

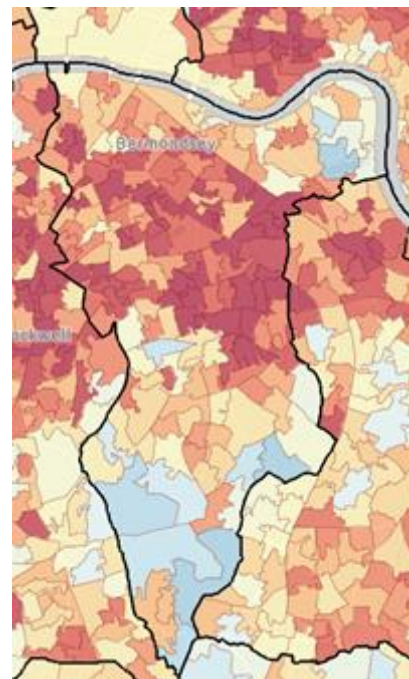


Figure 1: London Climate Risk Map showing Southwark (Source: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/climate-risk-mapping>)

Coordination

We will continue to take an integrated approach for the governance of this strategy within the council and work to align this with other council strategies. We will seek out opportunities to reduce emissions and climate risks at the same time. We recognise that although we do not own or manage important all infrastructure within our borough (e.g. the electricity grid, Rotherhithe Tunnel, the TfL 'red route' network) we are a key partner to those who do. We will work closely with our partners to futureproof infrastructure. We will continue to work collaborate with London Councils and other London boroughs to learn, establish and share climate adaptation and resilience best practice across London.

Themes

Our vision is for a borough resilient to climate impact. To achieve this, we have considered themes identified by the CCC and aligned our resilience and adaptation strategy with them.

Overheating

Southwark has a high risk of excessive heating, particularly in the centre of the borough. High heats are felt more significantly in areas with less tree canopy and a lower level of access to green open spaces. It is also felt more strongly in urban areas, due to the Urban Heat Island effect. Our borough is also warmed by waste heat from our heating sources, housing and transport.

Heatwaves

The average summer temperatures in London are predicted to keep rising. Dense urban areas also retain more heat which can result in the centre of London being up to 10°C warmer than rural areas.⁸

Wildfires

Wildfires are becoming a far more prevalent risk as temperatures soar during summer. The London Fire Brigade saw a 128% increase in grass fires in 2022 compared to 2021.⁹ Southwark had an 'exceptional' chance of fire risk during June and July 2022 and this is expected to occur again.¹⁰ As well as negatively affecting health, large wildfires also release carbon dioxide that exacerbates climate change.

Health impacts

Higher temperatures have resulted in adverse mental health outcomes, increased dehydration, pregnancy complications, kidney function loss, skin malignancies, and tropical infections. These health impacts all disproportionately affect the most vulnerable in society.¹¹ Increased temperatures may put additional stress on local health services, which in turn could lead to worse health conditions for Southwark residents. We will build resilience to overheating, by cooling buildings, providing respite from heat and preparing for extreme temperatures.

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Flooding

60% of Southwark residents live on land less than ten meters above sea level, and any changes in sea levels will have a direct effect on Southwark. Southwark is protected from tidal and river flooding by various flood defences including the Thames Barrier, but with increased sea levels these may no longer be effective and stakeholders in the borough must do more to reduce the future impact of flooding on our residents.

Surface water flooding

In July 2021, Southwark was directly affected by two serious flash floods in two weeks. Across London, some areas received more than twice the average monthly rainfall in just two hours.¹² Surface water flooding occurs after heavy rainfall, when water cannot drain away or soak into the ground. This is a particular problem in urban areas.

Tidal surges

Tidal surges occur when river levels rise, creating increased wind and low atmospheric pressure. London is currently protected from tidal surges by the Thames Barrier, but additional stress could weaken these defences.

Sewer flooding

Southwark has a mostly Victorian sewer network. This network was designed to serve four million people, but London's population is estimated to increase to 16 million by 2160.¹³ Currently, even light rain causes untreated sewage to enter the Thames and into surrounding streets and more intense rainfall will put further pressure on our sewage system.

Groundwater flooding

Flooding from groundwater happens when the level of water within the rock or soil making up the land surface rises significantly. Groundwater levels typically peak in Southwark during March, and if there is extremely heavy rainfall, basements and low-lying land can be flooded.

Action is already being taken, for example the council have planning conditions that developments must not increase flood risk on or off site by incorporating designs that are safe and resilient to flooding. Southwark Council is continuing to implement strategic sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) on highways and in parks. We have plans to increase the replacement of hard surfaced areas with permeable and green space, as well as increasing irrigation frequencies of newly planted trees to ensure their successful establishment. We will reduce the risk of flooding by improving drainage, reducing the demand on the sewer system and improving our flood defences.

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Water Scarcity

Extreme weather and an ageing sewer system threatens water security. The Environment Agency has warned that within just 25 years, the southeast of England, including Southwark, could run out of water. Without protecting our water sources, we would experience severe economic, social and environmental consequences. The Environment Agency produced its Water Stress Areas Classification in 2021, in which Thames Water was highlighted as having a 'serious' level of water stress. To remain sustainable, Southwark needs to reduce its level of water consumption.

Drought

Droughts are when there is a prolonged period of below average rainfall, which leads to low levels of groundwater and reduced river flows. These affect both people and wildlife, and in London can build over period of months and years. Despite increased understanding of how they work, they are often hard to predict. The London Risk Register ranks drought as a 'high' risk.

Aquifer depletion

An aquifer is an underground layer of permeable rock, which can hold and transport water to and from rivers and other water sources. In London, we have a large chalk basin aquifer. A key challenge for Southwark and across London is the impact of over-abstraction of water from aquifers. 'Over-abstraction', taking water faster than it can be replaced, risks not leaving enough water for wildlife. When there are water shortages, due to low rainfall or leaky pipes, water companies may increase abstraction to compensate which can lead to aquifer depletion.

It is essential that people in Southwark and across the country treat water as a valuable asset, reducing consumption and reducing waste. We need to find new ways to capture rainwater and other grey water for non-drinking purposes. This not only ensures our water is maintained, but also reduces the energy and carbon emissions associated with managing wastewater and supplying fresh water.

We will conserve more water and adapt our green spaces to be drought-resistant.

Trade and food security

75,000 of Southwark's residents are food insecure, which means they do not have enough money to buy food, must skip meals or cut down on quantities due to money, or do not have the money for a balanced diet. Climate change will increase food insecurity. The UK imports around 40% of its food¹⁴ so we will be affected by the changes happening in other countries. As food insecurity increases globally, we would expect to see price increases and increasing inequality in Southwark. Climate changes such as increased heat and flood risk will also affect businesses, so plans will need to be in place to protect our economy from the worst impacts of this.

Infrastructure failure

Extreme weather events will mean that our built infrastructure will be directly affected by the physical impacts of climate change. This will affect business and trade in the borough and could affect the ability of our residents to access their places of work.

Supply chain disruption

Supply chains both within Southwark and globally are being affected by our changing climate. Floods, heatwaves, droughts and windstorms trigger cascading impacts that can be felt locally, but also far away from where the actual event is taking place.

Reduced food production

Climate change can affect crops globally, which can affect food supply and cost in the UK. In 2020 weather patterns affected wheat production leading to reduced supply and increased cost.

Social vulnerability

Climate change is expected to exacerbate existing economic, social, and environmental challenges across the globe. Many of Southwark's residents have links to or come directly from these communities. Adaptation measures we undertake will need to take these experiences into account and support vulnerable residents who have been directly impacted by climate change overseas.

We will improve food security by reducing wastage and increasing local supply.

Pests and diseases

We will improve food security by reducing wastage and increasing local supply. London is experiencing an increase in pests and diseases as a result of a changing climate. This can affect human, animal and plant health. As temperatures rise and weather patterns become more unpredictable, pests and diseases can thrive in new and unexpected ways. This will also directly affect our borough.

Invasive non-native species

Species who are not usually found in the borough but are now found here can have a direct impact on our biodiversity. One of the most notable examples of invasive non-native species in London is the spread of the Oak Processionary Moth. This moth, which is native to southern Europe, is now able to survive and reproduce in the warmer temperatures found in the UK. It can cause severe allergic reactions which we are already seeing increase across London.

Climate-sensitive diseases

Diseases resulting for pests are also likely to rise. Warmer temperatures are allowing species such as the Asian Tiger Mosquito to survive and reproduce in the UK. This mosquito can transmit diseases such as dengue fever and chikungunya, which were once rare in the UK but are now becoming more common.

Plants pests and diseases

The changing climate is also affecting the spread of plant diseases in London. For example, the warmer temperatures and increased rainfall in recent years have led to an increase in the incidence of Sudden Oak Death, a disease that can kill a wide range of trees and shrubs. The disease is caused by a fungus-like organism that thrives in moist conditions and can be spread by wind and rain.

We will protect our biodiversity from new pests and diseases.

Wider benefits

Making a more resilient borough not only mitigates against the main impacts of climate change, it also potentially enables us to further reduce our carbon emissions and deliver other benefits to our residents.

Greener buildings

Improvements to buildings are needed to protect against extremes of hot and cold. Greater energy efficiency to enable people to stay warm will make our homes and residents more resilient but also reduce energy demand and fuel poverty.

Biodiversity and air quality

Through implementing greening measures to manage climate risks such as improved shade and canopy coverage, we will also support our local ecology and wildlife. Air quality can also be improved through greening our borough which impacts on health and wellbeing.

Water scarcity

By taking steps to reduce demand for water and preventing flooding, we reduce water run-off and risk of water pollution. We also reduce energy demands by using less water which reduces our overall carbon emissions.

Cost reduction and risk limitation

Steps to protect the borough from extremes of weather and flooding reduces risk for businesses, making the borough a more attractive place for them. This benefits the local economy and jobs and helps Southwark to thrive.

Health

Lessening the impact of climate change can improve health outcomes for Southwark. The shocks that climate change causes are a risk to mental and physical health which is reduced as we become more resilient. We are also better prepared to deal with new diseases that are introduced due to climate change.

Policy context

To deliver this plan, we will work with national and regional government and their plans for climate resilience. This includes understanding and working in the context of the latest National Adaptation Programme and also the London Environment Strategy (LES) and the London Resilience Strategy.

Within Southwark, this strategy forms part of the climate change strategy. We are currently working to ensure that all Southwark policies and strategies are aligned with the climate strategy. This will continue with the addition of this resilience and adaptation work. This will include:

- Streets for People Strategy, which includes our walking, cycling and electric vehicles plans
- Southwark Plan
- Buildings Strategy (upcoming)
- Southwark Economic Strategy
- Air Quality Strategy
- Cold Weather Plan
- Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
- Fuel Poverty Action Plan (upcoming)
- Southwark Heatwave Delivery framework
- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Partnership Southwark Health and Care Plan
- Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan
- Sustainable Food Strategy
- Waste Management Strategy
- Tree Risk Management Strategy
- Tree Management Policy
- Southwark Nature Action Plan, and the future Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Biodiversity Plan

Action plan

Work is already underway to deliver this priority area. The themes and goals below show what we need to achieve to reach our vision together with the immediate actions that we need to take. Alongside this work, we will continue to develop new actions to ensure we stay on track to reach our goals and reduce carbon emissions.

Themes and goals

We will build resilience to overheating, by cooling buildings, providing respite from heat and preparing for extreme temperatures.

To tackle climate change and be a better adapted and more resilient borough, our goals are that:

- Residents can get respite from the heat at times of excessive temperatures
- Buildings stay cool while minimising their carbon emissions
- The borough's infrastructure is adapted to cope with extremes of heat
- Support vulnerable communities are supported to be resilient to the impacts of climate change

We will reduce the risk of flooding by improving drainage, reducing the demand on the sewer system and improving our flood defences.

To tackle climate change and be a better adapted and more resilient borough, our goals are that:

- Reduce surface run off and increase the amount of land which drains water
- Reduce demand on the sewer system
- Improve flood defences with more sustainable drainage systems We will conserve more water and adapt our green spaces to be drought resistant.

We will conserve more water and adapt our green spaces to be drought resistant.

To tackle climate change and be a better adapted and more resilient borough, our goals are that:

- Improved water conservation, including greater use of rainwater and grey water
- Parks, gardens and green spaces are adapted to be drought resistant

We will improve food security by reducing wastage and increasing local supply.

To tackle climate change and be a better adapted and more resilient borough, our goals are that:

- Strengthened local economy, with an increase in local trade and reinvestment in our local economy
- Local food suppliers and local food production is maximised
- Capacity for communities to share food and reduce food waste is increased

We will protect our biodiversity from new pests and diseases.

To tackle climate change and be a better adapted and more resilient borough, our goal is that:

- Protect the local community from new and existing pests and diseases

Partnership

We cannot tackle the climate emergency alone and need to work with residents, businesses and other partners to reduce carbon emissions and deliver a more resilient future.

Business

Southwark has a thriving local economy, from small businesses to major global corporations, all of which contribute to Southwark and our future. We will work with businesses to encourage them to diversify their supply chains to be more resilient to shocks, as well as to decarbonise their supply chains. Businesses will manage buildings throughout the borough, and we can work with them to help make them cooler and more resilient and find sustainable solutions to overheating.

Residents

We will continue to work with our residents when planning changes to the borough to make it more resilient. Our residents have an important role to play in how we implement changes, from increased tree coverage to changing surfaces to aid drainage. As part of our overall engagement approach, we will ensure residents are central to the work we do.

Institutions

Southwark is home to many large, world leading institutions, from major hospitals to global universities. We have over one hundred schools and many other public and private institutions who as major employers and managers of large buildings and sites in the borough, are key to tackling the climate emergency. As they develop their own climate and resilience plans, we will work with them to encourage alignment and find opportunities where we can have greater impact by working together. We will explore how we can use public buildings differently to increase our resilience and how the activities in these institutions can contribute to tackling climate change.

Next steps

The list of goals above have been used to develop the actions we need to take. These have been developed incrementally, but there will also be further new actions that may become a focus in the future and will be considered accordingly as we take an adaptive approach. We will report on progress as part of our reporting on our main Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

Beyond the council's own actions, there must also be a focus on what other partners and stakeholders can action themselves, from central government through to residents. This highlights how important collective action will be. Central government need to significantly increase the level of funding available, and businesses need to help identify and maximise opportunities in this area.

¹ The Royal Society, "[If emissions of greenhouse gases were stopped, would the climate return to the conditions of 200 years ago?](#)"

² CDP, "[Building Local Resilience.](#)" CDP is a not-for-profit charity that runs the global disclosure system for investors, companies, cities, states and regions to manage their environmental impacts.

³ The CCC, "[Progress in Adapting to Climate Change 2023 Report to Parliament.](#)"

⁴ London City Resilience Strategy 2020, "[London City Resilience Strategy.](#)"

⁵ Met Office "[Chance of summer heatwaves now thirty times more likely.](#)"

⁶ JSNA, "[Air Quality.](#)"

⁷ JSNA, "[Annual Report 2022.](#)"

⁸ Greater London Authority, "[Heat](#)"

⁹ London Fire Brigade, "[Mayor joins the Brigade in urging the public to take extra measures as the impact of extreme weather conditions continue.](#)"

¹⁰ The Met Office, "[England and Wales Fire Severity Index.](#)"

¹¹ UCL, "[Feeling the heat? How climate changes affect our health and working lives.](#)"

¹² "[Mayor warns Londoners in basements about flooding risk](#)"

¹³ Tideway London, "[Why London needs a super sewer](#)"

¹⁴ DEFRA, "[United Kingdom Food Security Report 2021: Theme 2 UK Flood Supply Sources.](#)"