



**Statement of Community Involvement
Consultation Plan
December 2021**

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Introduction

What is the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)?

1. The SCI is our commitment to you on how we will consult and engage with the community throughout the planning process. We want to hear from communities, residents, businesses and other stakeholders about how we can work together to shape and change areas in the borough.
2. The SCI aims to:
 - Put people at the centre of the engagement process and help to build strong relationships
 - Make things simpler and make sure people have a better experience when getting involved in planning matters
3. The SCI:
 - Gives details about the opportunities you have to help make plans, policies and decisions that can affect your community and where you live
 - Outlines our commitment to you and sets out how we will deliver the values in the New Approach to Community Engagement
4. The Development Consultation Charter (DCC) forms part of the SCI. It explains how developers are expected to carry out successful engagement for large scale developments (development is considered large scale if it involves over 10 homes). The charter provides the developer with guidance on how to engage effectively with the public.
5. The DCC:
 - Helps developers understand community need
 - Provides clear guidelines for consultation
 - Explains what successful engagement looks like
 - Provides a template of an engagement plan

Why are we consulting on the SCI?

6. The public consultation on the SCI is an opportunity for Southwark residents to have their say on how the community is engaged throughout the planning process. The responses received by the council during the process of the consultation will help to shape and improve the SCI for the benefit of the community. This is important to enable better engagement and collaboration between the council and the community during the process of planning decisions, regeneration preparations and creating strategies for the future of the borough.

What is a consultation plan?

7. A consultation plan sets out how you can expect to be consulted throughout this stage of consultation on the SCI. It details how you will find out about the consultation and how you can make your comments on this document. The purpose of this consultation plan is to detail how you will be consulted on the SCI and DCC at this stage. If you have further questions about the consultation or the SCI you can contact the planning policy team at planningpolicy@southwark.gov.uk

Summary of consultation to date

8. There is no statutory requirement to consult on the SCI. However, in order to write a SCI that responds to the needs of our local community and to continue to improve the way that we consult throughout the planning process we have carried out extensive consultation on this document.
9. As set out in the Consultation Report, the SCI has already been shaped by comments received during four workshops held as part of an informal consultation on planning. These Planning Workshops were held on March 25 2019 (76 attendees) and August 1 2019 (85 attendees). These events focused on how the public would like to be engaged on planning matters and the feedback received helped to shape the current draft of the SCI.
10. This feedback helped to shape the draft SCI that went out to consultation in January 2020. This consultation closed in May 2020 due to restrictions relating to COVID-19. This round of formal consultation aimed to implement the principles set out in the council's new Approach to Community Engagement as well as engage with those who do not usually engage with planning. Engagement throughout the consultation of the SCI has focused on reaching different groups of people from our diverse communities. This is set out in full in the Consultation Report.
11. Restrictions relating to COVID-19 meant that not all events were able to take place during the previous stage of consultation. However, regular updates were sent to MySouthwark users and regular Twitter updates reminded the public to take part as well as leaflet drops in the Old Kent Road area to let people know about the consultation.
12. The SCI and the DCC have been amended to reflect comments made internally by the planning policy and development management, as well as other relevant departments. It has also made improvements to clarity, flow and style of the document.

13. The SCI and DCC will go out to Consultation for a further 8 weeks.

The purpose of this consultation

14. The SCI and DCC have been amended to take on board the feedback received. The documents have also been updated to set out alternatives to consultation in exceptional circumstances, for example when face-to-face engagement was not possible during restrictions relating to COVID-19.

15. The purpose of the consultation is to receive feedback from the community on the changes made to the SCI and DCC. In particular, we want to know your opinions on the key proposed changes to the documents which include:

- Further information on Neighbourhood Planning;
- Further information given on how to get involved at different consultation stages;
- Further information given on how to register comments and find out about consultations or planning applications;
- The rewording of sections to be more clear and use plain English;
- The alternative methods to consultation when face-to-face engagement is not possible, for example during COVID-19; and,
- How the SCI reflects the work associated with the Southwark Stands Together Pledge.

How are we consulting?

16. This consultation plan sets out the consultation we are planning to carry out on the SCI and DCC. There is no statutory requirement to consult the community on the SCI. However, in order to produce a document that reflects the needs of the community we will consult on the proposed changes to the SCI.

17. The following sections set out how we plan to meet the minimum consultation requirements set out in the adopted SCI 2008 and how we will exceed these requirements where possible while maintaining the safety of the community by managing any COVID-19 related risks to council staff or the public. Alternatives proposed to the SCI in this consultation plan are in line with the council's gradual approach to returning to the office.

18. The engagement plan will ensure that we work with our community and voluntary sector partners and focus on our strengths to build effective engagement plans. We understand the reach the community and voluntary sector have into the community to help encourage and promote the consultation.

19. We will work to make engagement relevant and think about the reasons people may wish to take part. This will include updating our messaging and the website to show people why they should engage with planning.
20. Because of restrictions relating to COVID-19, this consultation will take place mostly online.
21. Focusing on online platforms provides opportunities for the use of different techniques. Online communication is a medium in which many people choose to communicate and by targeting residents via their preferred means, the likelihood of involvement is increased. Users can take part in an online consultation when and where they want. Because of its increased accessibility, online consultation has the power to reach new audiences – particularly the young. Online consultation also has the benefit of giving those who do not usually participate a chance to get involved. It will also allow those who may not be able to attend consultation events and meetings a chance to get involved in the conversation from home. We encourage participation from all attendees in online and public consultation meetings and endeavor to ensure everyone has a chance to speak.
22. We have previously written to many community groups and all Tenants and Residents Associations in Southwark to make them aware of how to sign up to receive email updates on planning policy consultations through MySouthwark. We will continue to encourage new groups to join the mailing list and publicise consultations through our website and where possible through council newsletters, council meetings (where appropriate) and social media. When the SCI consultation opens, local groups are welcome to invite us to join their meetings to discuss the consultation.
- We will engage with our partner organisations, including Community Southwark and the Forum for Equality and Human Rights in Southwark (FEHRS) who have good connections with many community groups in Southwark.
 - Local ward Councillors and a community champion in each multi-ward areas of Southwark as part of the Empowering Communities programme have regular meetings where neighbourhood issues can be discussed and residents can voice their concerns. All ward Councillors will be notified of the consultation, and will make announcements at these meetings if they are taking place throughout the consultation period.
 - An announcement will also be made at planning committee about the consultation.

23. We welcome opportunities that the voluntary and community sector groups may take to facilitate engagement using community platforms.
24. Inclusive engagement must be maintained while engaging remotely. Allowing for a mix of voices and perspectives remains important to engagement. To ensure that those who do not have access to the internet can engage with the consultation we will hold phone call and online sessions. Because the council is currently operating a gradual return to the office which means that there is limited in-person staff availability, phone and online methods of communication are the preferred option.
25. It is important that we use other platforms, social media and our community partners to help us reach those that have not previously engaged and those that we have yet to hear from.
26. We will also ensure that the presentations and materials used throughout any consultation event are accessible to all. We will aim to use visuals, graphics and flow charts wherever possible to ensure that the material is as easy to understand as possible.
27. Consultation will last for 8 weeks from 14 December 2021 – 7 February 2022. The SCI and DCC will be available to view in advance of the consultation period from 30 November 2021.
28. Comments can be made on the Consultation Hub or by email to planningpolicy@southwark.gov.uk
29. The tables below will set out how you can expect to be consulted during this consultation. We set out the minimum SCI requirements that we will carry out, and then the additional consultation we propose to carry out. We set out dates where these are already agreed.

This table is not exhaustive and throughout the consultation period we will look at ways in which to carry out different types of consultation with as many different groups as possible

Consultation Methods

TABLE 1: MINIMUM CONSULTATION AS REQUIRED BY THE ADOPTED 2008 SCI

Method of Consultation	Consultee	Comments
Send a mail out to all statutory consultees informing them of the consultation and inviting comments	Statutory consultees	Notification will be sent out through MySouthwark which all statutory consultees are signed up to
Display consultation documents at our offices As the council is currently operating a gradual return to the office, we will print one copy per person and send out it to individuals if requested	All	All documents are available online and everyone is encouraged to use this facility first. As staff have not yet returned to the council offices full time copies of the plan will need to be printed specially and posted and this will take time.
Upload the documents onto the council website for the public to view	All	All documents relating to this consultation are available here: https://www.southwark.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-transport-policy/consultation-and-updates/statement-of-community-involvement
Advertise the consultation in the local press	All	This will be Southwark News

TABLE 2: ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION

Method of Consultation	Consultee	Comments
Update MySouthwark users regularly of the consultation and where to find consultation documents	All	An email will be sent to the 16,000+ contacts signed up for planning policy email notifications and updates via MySouthwark.
Advertise the consultation through council social media such as Twitter. We will also use Facebook pages such as the Empowering Communities Facebook pages to reach a wider audience	All	Send out regular updates and reminders through council social media pages
Display the SCI and accompanying documents on the council's Consultation Hub with an online questionnaire available for comments	All	A link to the Consultation Hub will be sent in regular updates to MySouthwark users
Engage with groups such as Community Southwark and the Forum for Equality and Human Rights in Southwark (FEHRS) as well as the Empowering Communities programme to inform residents of the consultation	All	Engage those who we have not yet reached so that they can get involved in the drop in sessions that are planned. Community groups and organisations may be useful in reaching these groups
Phone call drop in: We will allocate timeslots for people to give feedback over the phone where they cannot write a letter/send an email/ access the Consultation Hub	All	This service will allow those who cannot access the internet or send a letter to engage with the consultation
Online meetings: If requested by local groups we will attend local	All	This service will allow those who have questions and comments to speak to an officer about their

Method of Consultation	Consultee	Comments
group meetings to discuss the SCI		suggestions from the SCI. Some online platforms can still be used with modifications for those who have internet access.

How to comment on the SCI

30. We welcome your comments on the SCI and DCC and in particular your comments on the proposed changes to the documents

31. Feedback can be given:

- On the Consultation Hub
- By email to planningpolicy@southwark.gov.uk
- By phone to 020 7525 5403
- By letter / post to:

Planning Policy,
Southwark Council,
PO BOX 64529,
London SE1P 5LX

For any queries or assistance, please contact: planningpolicy@southwark.gov.uk

What happens next?

32. All of the comments received during the consultation to date were considered and helped to shape the amended SCI.

33. The SCI has been amended to outline standards of consultation when, in exceptional circumstances such as COVID-19, face-to-face engagement is not possible. It is important that this is included in the SCI so the community can be aware of what type of engagement they can expect in different circumstances. This is also in line with current government guidance.

34. This amended SCI will be consulted on for another 8 weeks as set out above so that the community can give their opinions on any additional changes they would like to see made to the SCI.

35. Once this consultation is over, responses will be compiled and the SCI will be amended where necessary to take on board the comments received. This new SCI will then be formally adopted. The SCI will be implemented and monitoring will be ongoing.

36. Feedback from this consultation will be made available on the website and a link to this feedback will be sent to MySouthwark users.