



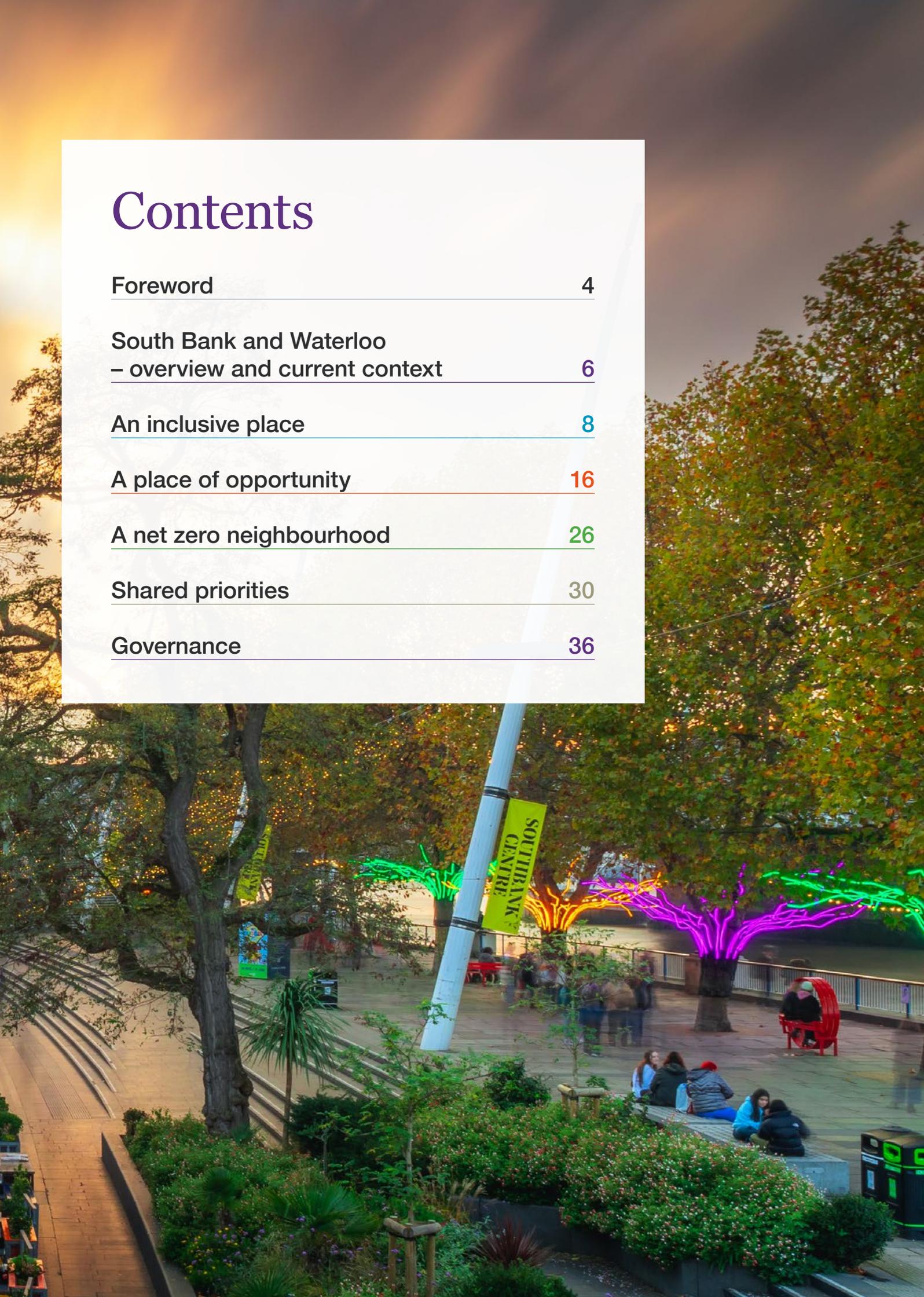
Image: South Bank BID

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WeAreWaterloo, Morley College London



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# Foreword

South Bank and Waterloo is one of London's most vibrant areas, home not only to world-renowned cultural venues and the UK's busiest train station, but global corporations, iconic attractions, eminent academic, research and healthcare institutions, hospitality and independent businesses. It is an area which welcomes and nurtures new ideas, innovation, and creativity and which thrives because of its diversity. International and UK students rub shoulders with workers and visitors coming into the area for work and tourism, while for around 12,000 people, South Bank and Waterloo is the place they call home.

At the heart of this thriving area is a commitment to community and working in partnership which brings people together in various ways to tackle challenges and take collective action that benefits the area and the people who live, work, study and visit here. Since 1995, South Bank and Waterloo Partnership has been overseeing efforts to transform and improve the area. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Partnership developed a detailed [Recovery Plan](#) for the area, providing clear structure on priorities and actions to support a safe, successful and sustainable recovery. By working cooperatively, partners were able to share information and resources, limiting the impact of lockdowns where possible, and together planned for a mutually beneficial reopening through schemes such as the Mayor's 'Let's Do London' campaign.

South Bank and Waterloo is an economically successful, culturally rich, progressive, diverse, and inclusive neighbourhood. While the area is recovering well from the pandemic, it must remain attractive, safe, clean, and welcoming for everyone.

The last three years have been exceptionally hard for everybody. Many local businesses, especially our world-famous cultural institutions, as well as residents and visitors are still experiencing the ongoing negative impacts of the pandemic. And we are increasingly facing the impacts of global systemic challenges such as the cost-of-living crisis and the climate emergency; we cannot address them on our own, but South Bank and Waterloo can and must play our part.

As a community we know that meaningful change doesn't happen overnight and it relies on everyone to contribute. The South Bank and Waterloo Vision 2030 projects a longer timeframe than previous Partnership Manifestos to align with other critical London-wide and local programmes, all of which are working to a 2030 timeframe. These embrace plans under development as well as those already available, including the recently published Lambeth 2030 Borough Plan and the emerging Southwark Borough Plan due to be finalised in late 2023. Other plans and strategies central to the South Bank and Waterloo Partnership Vision 2030 include; [Net zero for Waterloo and South Bank: A fairer, greener Future Neighbourhood by 2030](#),

*Our collective vision of a green and **thriving South Bank and Waterloo for everyone** is based around three pillars which provide the foundation for a transformation of our area: **an inclusive place, a place of opportunity and a net zero neighbourhood.***

CAZ Futures Action Plan, London 2030  
Tourism Vision, the Waterloo Station  
Masterplan, South Bank and Waterloo  
Neighbourhood Plan (to 2032) and the  
evolution of the SC1 Life Science District.  
A longer timeframe provides longevity  
over political change with clear priorities  
signposted for all partners but enough  
flexibility to enable us to adapt to changing  
circumstances as needed.

Our collective vision of a **green and thriving South Bank and Waterloo for everyone** is based around three pillars which provide the foundation for a transformation of our area: **an inclusive place, a place of opportunity and a net zero neighbourhood.**

Let's take this opportunity to look forward together to 2030 and commit to action which will make South Bank and Waterloo a better, healthier, greener and safer place to live, work, study and visit.

**We call on all our partners to adopt and endorse the South Bank and Waterloo Vision 2030, and to support our vision for the area and its future.**



**Florence Eshalomi**

*Member of Parliament for Vauxhall*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Florence Eshalomi".



**Neil Coyle**

*Member of Parliament for  
Bermondsey and Old Southwark*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neil Coyle".

# South Bank and Waterloo – overview and current context

South Bank and Waterloo covers a wide and varied geographical area south of the River Thames from Lambeth Bridge to Blackfriars Bridge down to St George’s Circus. The area has national and international significance for arts and culture, tourism and hospitality, is home to a diverse resident population, is the site of the UK’s busiest train station and, prior to the pandemic, played host to 30M visitors every year.

## Contribution to London’s Economy

South Bank and Waterloo is an economic driver for London, accounting for 53% of Lambeth’s Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2019 (£6.8b).<sup>1</sup> The area is within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ) and is identified as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan which outlines potential for an additional 1,500 homes and 6,000 jobs between 2019 and 2041. In addition, Lower Marsh, The Cut and Leake Street have been designated a Special Policy Area to acknowledge and protect the area’s specialist character and role as a long-standing and unique cluster of smaller, independent retailers, restaurants, bars, and event spaces.

The area is home to a world-class cultural cluster which makes a significant contribution to the London and UK economy. Research undertaken in 2021 demonstrated that prior to the pandemic, five of the area’s arts organisations contributed a remarkable £510 million in (GVA) and 8,100 full-time equivalent jobs.<sup>2</sup> For every

direct job within the five institutions a further 2.5 were supported in the national economy. Visitors to these institutions accounted for about £1 in every £25 of spend by leisure visitors in London. Yet the impact due to Covid was stark. It is estimated that due to their closure in 2020/21, the UK economy lost £330 million GVA and 5,500 jobs.



Image: South Bank BID

<sup>1</sup> Urban Solutions team at Hatch, “Socioeconomic Insights: Waterloo Station Masterplan”, 20 January 2023

<sup>2</sup> Engine of Recovery report. <https://engineofrecovery.org>



Image: South Bank BID

## The Changing Face of the Area

Development in the area continues apace with several large-scale sites slated to be built over the remainder of this decade bringing more offices, retail space and homes to the area. Partners, brought together by Lambeth Council and Network Rail, have funded a new Waterloo Station Masterplan to improve access to the station and permeability between areas north and south of the train lines.

Ensuring that South Bank and Waterloo benefits from this development and retains the appropriate level of investment and funding to address the needs of those who live, work, study and visit here, now and in the future, is vital.

South Bank and Waterloo is home to central London's leading health and creative economy clusters as well as being a popular location for information and communications businesses and is seeing growth in life science and low carbon jobs.<sup>3</sup> The area is popular with established medium and larger businesses but lags behind other London neighbourhoods in hosting micro and smaller businesses.

## Affordability

Also growing is the resident population which increased 13% between 2015 and 2020, comparable with the rest of the CAZ but higher than Inner London, Greater London and Lambeth borough.<sup>4</sup> House prices rose 102% in South Bank and Waterloo in the decade to 2021,<sup>5</sup> effectively pricing many people out of owning property in the area with a House Price Affordability Ratio of 23.4 (compared to 14.5 for Inner London generally).<sup>6</sup>

Meanwhile high inflation and rising prices have squeezed the disposable incomes of families in the area with 12% already in fuel poverty by 2020.<sup>7</sup> Businesses are facing the twin challenges of wage rises and increasing costs of supplies combined with problems recruiting staff to fill vacancies, meaning some are struggling to keep their doors open. And councils, after a decade of austerity and deep cuts to public spending, face financial challenges on many fronts.

The following sections: **an inclusive place, a place of opportunity** and **a net zero neighbourhood**, look at the current context in more detail, addressing progress made since the 2018 South Bank Manifesto, and exploring present challenges.

3 Urban Solutions team at Hatch, "Socioeconomic Insights: Waterloo Station Masterplan", 20 January 2023

4 Ibid

5 ONS, House Price Statistics for Small Area, 2022 – Hatch

6 ONS Housing Affordability Ratio in England and Wales based on Workplace-based median earnings, 2021

7 Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, "Sub-regional fuel poverty data 2022", 28 April 2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-regional-fuel-poverty-data-2022>

# An inclusive place

## Safety and security

**South Bank and Waterloo attracts people from all over London, the UK and the world. While many come here to work, study or for tourism, others are just passing through and for many, this is their home.**

Ensuring the safety and security of everyone in this diverse area is paramount. Economic confidence will suffer if there is a perception that the area is not safe and while the physical presence of police and trusted security teams is one way to improve community and visitor confidence, resources are stretched.

### Progress Since the 2018 Manifesto

Despite this, since the publication of the 2018 Manifesto, partners have delivered on their commitments to increase resources dedicated to safety and security. In addition to South Bank Patrol and Waterloo Patrol, the area now has Night-time Marshals boosting security presence on weekend nights and early mornings, supporting those leaving the cultural venues, bars and restaurants late at night.

The long-standing Business Watch group continues to bring together the security leads from the major organisations in the neighbourhood and other partners to collectively combat crime. The group pools intelligence gathered by its members allowing a better-informed response to security threats that makes best use of available resources. WeAreWaterloo are in the process of establishing the Waterloo Strategic Security Group for a similar purpose specific to their BID area.

Two new Metropolitan Police Neighbourhood Superintendents have been appointed for Lambeth and Southwark as part of the Metropolitan Police's 'Turnaround Plan'. South Bank BID funds two Metropolitan Police Partnership Plus Officers, and Partnership remains committed to ensuring a fully equipped room is made available for the police in Southbank Place, ensuring all local police officers have a base in the heart of the area.

Image: WeAreWaterloo

## Safety and Security Challenges

National and international events inevitably impact central London and therefore the South Bank and Waterloo area, from annual New Year’s Eve fireworks to the recent once-in-a-generation Lying-in-State for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the subsequent Coronation of King Charles III. By collaborating across our established networks, we have ensured that these prominent and complex operations have been delivered smoothly while keeping everyone safe.

Likewise, a prolonged period of anti-social behaviour centred on Jubilee Gardens in summer 2021 as Covid lockdowns were eased has not reoccurred thanks to extensive partnership working between Jubilee Gardens staff, South Bank Patrol, Lambeth Council and the Metropolitan Police.

Protecting vulnerable groups is a particular ongoing focus of all partners with significant work taking place in and around Waterloo Station, as can be seen in the Focus on Safety in Waterloo Station case study below. In March 2023, South Bank BID, alongside the Police, community partners and charities, including Lambeth Links, and the wider LGBT+ community, supported a local workshop dedicated to LGBT+ Hate Crime Awareness as

a safe space to learn, raise concerns and feedback about what more can be done to help people feel safer on South Bank. Violence involving young people, and violence against women and girls continue to be priority areas for the Metropolitan Police and both Lambeth and Southwark councils.



Image: Jubilee Gardens Trust

### Case Study: Focus on safety in Waterloo Station

*During the pandemic Partnership members Network Rail, South Bank BID, and British Transport Police Waterloo, along with the Safer Business Network, worked together to establish Waterloo Station’s inclusion in the successful Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) scheme that was already operating in the South Bank area. The Station’s inclusion in the BCRP addresses business crime such as pickpocketing, shop theft and antisocial behaviour by providing retailers with a radio network, intelligence sharing information, security news alerts and training and development support, and creating a community to help tackle crime and anti-social behaviour across the station. The BCRP scheme also connects Waterloo Station to many of the larger businesses in the wider South Bank business community.*

*A specialist Outreach Officer has been employed to identify and work with homeless people in and around Waterloo Station and help provide them with the support they need. This position is funded by South Bank BID and South Western Railway and employed by homelessness charity Thames Reach, in partnership with Lambeth Council.*



Image: South Bank BID

*In December 2022 Network Rail, British Transport Police, South Western Railway, The Samaritans, South Bank BID and the Railway Children collaborated to create a Safe Space in Waterloo Station to ensure vulnerable or worse for wear travellers got home safely during the festive period.*

## A quality and attractive environment

South Bank and Waterloo has a unique position in London. The proximity to the Thames, combined with substantial open-air space, particularly along the river but also cutting through the area along some of its main arteries, means there is a significant proportion of public realm.



Image: WeAreWaterloo

While the wellbeing effects, both physical and mental, of walking and meeting outside help make the area popular, much of this public realm has been updated piecemeal around new developments or is due an upgrade or comprehensive enhancement. As a result, there is no cohesive design for the area and much of the public realm is left looking tired as well as having little greenery, water permeability or space for nature. WeAreWaterloo's Placemaking Strategy is a step-change in addressing that for the southern part of the area, as is the South Bank Spine Route Masterplan for the north, along with the Waterloo Station Masterplan.



Emma Cons Gardens concept. Image: Bourne Capital



Image: WeAreWaterloo

### **Case Study: A new placemaking strategy for Waterloo**

Allies & Morrison completed the [Waterloo Placemaking Strategy](#) for WeAreWaterloo Business Improvement District, which proposes over 150 public realm and marketing-based projects to enhance the area for residents, workers, and visitors. The strategy will guide long-term development and action in Waterloo and will be used by the BID and other institutions as a framework for intervention.

## Case Study: Waterloo Station Masterplan



Image: Lambeth Council

Partnership members including Lambeth Council, Network Rail, South Bank Employers' Group, South Bank BID, WeAreWaterloo BID and developers have been working together to develop a vision for the transformation of Waterloo Station and surrounding environment including through routes and neighbouring streets. This masterplan will set out how investment and transformation of the station and neighbourhood can be achieved in the short, medium and long term, with proposals for how this can be financed.

## Public Realm Projects

Important public realm projects are already happening. The 'Spine Route' of Belvedere Road and Upper Ground has suffered serious degradation since the last major improvement project in 1997. A new masterplan for the Spine Route has been completed, commissioned by Lambeth Council, with the aim of achieving a world class urban environment. Phase one was completed in 2022, and the remaining sections are now phased for delivery across the entirety of the route, starting with the pedestrianisation and transformative investment at Concert Hall Approach.

Plans to redevelop Emma Cons Gardens, an open square at the heart of Waterloo Central, have been under consultation. The existing mature trees will be retained under the proposals and new planting will increase biodiversity whilst preserving the openness of the space. The proposed improvements, which also include increased seating and upgraded paving and lighting, seek to celebrate Emma Cons, a Victorian social entrepreneur who founded the Royal Victoria Coffee and Music Hall, known today as The Old Vic.

## Case Study: Spine Route improvements



Image: Lambeth Council

The South Bank Spine Route public realm project is improving Upper Ground, Belvedere Road and their connecting streets with an £8m injection of investment from Lambeth Council. It is a main crossing point from Waterloo Station to the many cultural institutions along the South Bank and serves a diverse mix of pedestrian, public and private vehicle users. The current upgrading of the Spine Route, originally completed in 1997, will make it easier to walk and cycle in the area and will greatly improve footpaths, road surfaces, lighting, and greening including rain gardens and green walls. The first portion of the work, which involved Belvedere Road behind Jubilee Gardens and Chicheley Street, was completed in Summer 2022, with phase two scheduled for Winter 2023-24.



Image: South Bank BID

## Precious Green Spaces

For the 63% of local homes that do not have access to a garden, the area’s green spaces are essential and were a lifeline during the pandemic. New developments have focused heavily on hard landscaping, which in an area with only 7.1m<sup>2</sup> per resident Average Green Space (63% Lower than the London average),<sup>8</sup> puts additional pressure on already stretched parks which also have to cope with the daily influx of workers and visitors to this busy area. The CAZ Futures Action Plan<sup>9</sup> acknowledges the economic and inherent value of green space as an important feature of post-pandemic success and part of a wider environment which is clean, green and attractive.

Our local green spaces are extremely varied and face intense use, yet the area’s busiest green spaces are managed by charities and other local organisations, leading to uncertainty about long-term funding. The quality of these green spaces is acknowledged by the astounding achievement that all South Bank and Waterloo green spaces are recipients of the prestigious Green Flag Award, or have been in the last three years, despite the current challenging financial situation. Current award holders include Archbishop’s Park (Lambeth Council), St John’s Churchyard, Waterloo Millennium Green (Bankside Open Spaces Trust), Jubilee Gardens (Jubilee Gardens Trust), Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park (Southwark Council) and the pocket parks and community initiatives created by WeAreWaterloo BID.

Finding ways to help local people connect with their green spaces to gain the physical and mental health benefits of being outdoors in nature through volunteering, is one way to help mitigate some funding challenges experienced by these organisations, however, ongoing management and maintenance costs require long-term solutions.

Partners are committed to fundraising to deliver improvement plans for the North park of Bernie Spain Gardens. Coin Street Community Builders as custodians of the park are committed to future revenue costs. The planned extension to Jubilee Gardens, which would provide an unprecedented new green space in Central London and increase the size of the Gardens by 40%, has capital funding, but the Jubilee



Image: Bankside Open Spaces Trust

Gardens Trust cannot take on its management without secure, additional, sources of revenue, meaning creative ways to raise this funding are required.

With many of our parks and green spaces due for renewal, refurbishment and upgrading, local green space projects have the potential to enhance health and wellbeing, improve accessibility for those with a disability or who are neurodivergent, expand amenities for children, boost biodiversity and contribute to net zero commitments.

### Case Study: De-paving part of Hercules Road to create a new green space



Image: WeAreWaterloo

It is possible to create new green space in a densely built urban area. WeAreWaterloo is repurposing 300m<sup>2</sup> of former road space into fertile land for growing trees, fruits, vegetables and herbs as well as incorporating a sustainable drainage system to help minimise flood risk.

The newly established green space, funded using a grant from the Grow Back Greener Fund, will help improve air quality for residents, pedestrians and cyclists by absorbing the high levels of air pollution currently found on Hercules Road. The removal of the heat emitting tarmac will also reduce the area’s relatively high temperature while also providing space for community gardening projects.

8 ONS Access to gardens and public green space in GB, 2020

9 Central London Forward – CAZ Futures Action Plan <https://centrallondonforward.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/CAZ-Futures-Action-Plan-FINAL.pdf>



## Case Study: Boosting biodiversity in Bernie Spain Gardens

A re-landscaped design of Bernie Spain Gardens by West 8, with strong engagement and support by



Image: Coin Street Community Builders

local residents, will create new flowerbeds with 80 new pollinator plant species providing a haven for butterflies, moths and bees. An additional 22 trees will be planted, including new varieties, providing all-year colour and improving air quality as well as providing an ideal habitat for birds and insects. A new Gardeners' Pavilion will provide a base for a new head gardener and deputy, trainee gardeners and apprentices, and for community volunteers, while improved lighting, pathways and seating will help people feel safe while enjoying the Gardens.



Image: Jubilee Gardens Trust

## Air Quality

When traffic levels fell dramatically in London during the pandemic one of the universal benefits was the reduction in air pollution. South Bank BID are working with local partners to install air quality sensors throughout the South Bank, which will be part of a high-density network of air quality monitoring sensors integrated into the Breathe London Network. The network will provide measurements of air pollution across a range of urban environments in the area in the context of Defra's Daily Air Quality Index (DAQI). The resulting data will help identify problem areas, benefit future planning decisions, and support progress against net zero plans.



Image: South Bank BID



Image: Coin Street Community Builders

## Accessible to all

South Bank and Waterloo is at the very heart of London. It is a cherished meeting place and gathering point thanks to its central location and excellent transport links, including the recently reopened Night Tube which supports a thriving night-time economy of international and national significance as identified in the London Plan.



South Bank and Waterloo has a diverse resident, visitor, student and worker population with many differing needs and experiences. Workplaces in the area employ more women and BAME people than the London average, and the workforce is youthful with 20–24-year-olds studying or just starting their careers disproportionately represented.<sup>10</sup>



### **Case Study: Live Events Access Platinum Award for Southbank Centre**

The Southbank Centre has become the first UK venue to be awarded disability-led charity Attitude is Everything's highest possible accolade in its efforts to improve access and inclusion to live events. The Live Events Access Platinum Award recognises the art centre's commitment to providing the best possible experience for audiences and understanding of the potential access requirements of Deaf, disabled, neurodivergent and people with health conditions. To reach Platinum level, the Southbank Centre demonstrated how access and inclusion is at the core of how the organisation operates. This includes considering customer journeys, artists working at Southbank Centre venues, engaging and developing staff and setting minimum standards for companies and brands using their spaces.

Image: South Bank BID

<sup>10</sup> Urban Solutions team at Hatch, "Socioeconomic Insights: Waterloo Station Masterplan", 20 January 2023

South Bank is now London’s leading location for accessibility information, ensuring Londoners and visitors have equal access to places and opportunities to work and to socialise. The ‘Accessible South Bank’ project, completed in 2019 with disability organisation AccessAble, saw over 50 venues, cultural attractions, hotels and public spaces assessed by highly skilled accessibility experts, to provide detailed information for visitors with a wide range of accessibility needs. There is now an imperative to expand this information to cover the Waterloo area, and of course we must ensure that existing details remain current and correct to provide an accurate, seamless experience for all visitors.



Image: South Bank BID

### Case Study: South Bank and Waterloo Neighbours



Image: Sam Harris

South Bank and Waterloo Neighbours (SoWN) is the formally designated Neighbourhood Forum that represents residents, workers, businesses, not-for-profits, and voluntary organisations in the area. SoWN was established in 2014 when local people and organisations joined together to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan that was approved by the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark in February 2020. In representing the local community, SoWN leads on several initiatives, and monitors how the Neighbourhood Plan is implemented. It organises the South Bank and Waterloo Forum – which is held quarterly and is chaired by the area’s two Members of Parliament. The Forum brings together residents, businesses, and local organisations to discuss issues that are relevant to the neighbourhood.

### Ensuring Everyone Has a Chance to Participate



Image: Coin Street Community Builders

Meanwhile the area has a thriving network of community organisations and opportunities to engage with local issues, but some groups are underrepresented and may not feel their voice has been effectively heard. There are barriers to participation, not least the complexity of the many organisations working locally and the volume of activity with information from multiple sources. However, we all benefit when multiple perspectives are involved and it is important to ensure that everyone has agency to shape the place where they live and work.

Finding ways to encourage increased partnership and support SoWN to grow community participation and engagement across the broadest spectrum of residents is central to helping make the area accessible, welcoming and desirable for everyone. Work is already underway to identify underrepresented groups and ways to target their participation, including reviewing the format of interactions through SoWN and potentially the South Bank and Waterloo Forum.



Image: Coin Street Community Builders

# A place of opportunity

## Economic prosperity

The overall picture for South Bank and Waterloo is one of economic resilience despite the impact of the pandemic and the subsequent challenges. This is largely due to the rich ecology of employers and businesses which exist in the area from retail, education and the arts and creative industries, to healthcare, tourism, hospitality and green technology.

This diversity is important and a key reason for the area's success. These clusters of economic activity span Lambeth and Southwark, with major employers located in both boroughs, alongside a varied range of smaller businesses and start-ups.

Partnership working has been a vital ingredient in the economic success of the area, exemplified during the pandemic by the swift and collaborative development of the Covid-19 Recovery Plan by the Partnership. This plan detailed steps partners agreed to take to manage and mitigate negative impacts of Covid lockdowns and to support businesses, residents and visitors as restrictions were lifted.



## Case Study: Lower Marsh Retail Strategy



Image: WeAreWaterloo

A retail strategy for Lower Marsh was commissioned by SoWN, supported by WeAreWaterloo BID and Lambeth Council. Data showed that customer visit frequency to Lower Marsh is improving year on year, with three times as many businesses (67% vs 20%) reporting their customers are visiting more frequently or at the same frequency as last year.<sup>11</sup> However, medium-term trend performance (i.e. pre-pandemic to end 2022) was more mixed, with half of businesses down in sales and half reporting increases. Typically, businesses on Lower Marsh were down at higher levels than market traders or businesses nearby. While footfall on Lower Marsh is now above pandemic levels it is still 9-12% less than 2019.

The new retail strategy aims to address trading challenges as well as support local businesses around changing trends and with an improved environment and marketing.

### Lower Marsh Business Type

39% RESTAURANT, CAFÉ, BAR

26% RETAIL SHOP

22% MARKET STALL

6% GAMBLING

4% SERVICE PROVIDER CONSUMER

3% HOTEL, B&B, GUEST HOUSE

3% COMMERCIAL OFFICE

<sup>11</sup> Lower Marsh Future Retail Strategy, March 2023, <https://wearewaterloo.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Lower-Marsh-Future-Retail-Strategy-Final-Report-1.pdf>



Image: South Bank BID

## Case Study: Shopfronts grants



Image: WeAreWaterloo

In summer 2023, several small, independent Waterloo businesses were able to upgrade their shopfronts thanks to grants from WeAreWaterloo BID. These renovations were aimed at increasing sales through improved street presence, thereby attracting new visitors, ensuring repeat customers and contributing to a positive perception of an attractive, safe and enjoyable area. Improvements included new signage, awnings, window displays, lighting, fresh paint and plants. Grant recipients were encouraged to use local contractors where possible to help boost the local economy.

## The 'New Normal'

But delve deeper and there are industries that are struggling or slow to recover and sectors that have not yet returned to normal. Transport for London journeys only returned to 90% of pre-pandemic levels in April 2023,<sup>12</sup> but patterns of usage have significantly changed to see fewer commuters and many more leisure and shopping trips.

There continue to be many unknowns. Both employers and workers are navigating new working patterns which mean that London is adjusting to working from home and flexibility expectations which are quite different to those in many industries pre-pandemic. It's likely the trend of existing businesses reducing their office needs will continue which frees up space for other firms, possibly start-ups and smaller organisations. The greater demand for hybrid, mixed-use and co-working spaces as well as live/workspaces is expected to remain, with flexibility being the most important and desirable factor.



Image: WeAreWaterloo

### Case Study: Work/Place: London Returning



Image: WeAreWaterloo

A major representative long-term survey being carried out by Kings College London of 2,015 London workers aged 16+<sup>13</sup> looks at the future of work and the working-from-home (WFH) revolution.

Data so far shows that three-quarters of London workers think we will never return to the pre-pandemic way of working where most people come into their workplace five days a week.<sup>14</sup> The lack of a commute is seen as the top benefit of WFH,

followed by being able to manage home or social responsibilities. Given the choice, most London workers (54%) would like to WFH three or more days a week – but one in six say they'd rather not WFH at all.

Despite this preference for WFH, 57% of London workers say they feel positive about working from their workplace in the capital. Among those who are in their London workplace at least a day a week, only 13% say they're finding it difficult to work from there, with the cost and length of their commute the top reasons they are struggling. However, the consensus is that WFH will have a greater negative impact on younger people's careers and experiences of work than those of older workers.

12 BBC, "London Underground: Journeys reach 90% of pre-pandemic levels", June 2023, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-65821633>

13 Kings College London, Work/Place: London Returning <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/policy-institute/research-analysis/work-place>

14 Kings College London, The WFH Revolution: How new ways of working are changing London. <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/policy-institute/assets/wfh-revolution-how-new-ways-of-working-are-changing-london.pdf>



Image: Dan Weill Photography



Image: South Bank BID

## Cultural Sector Under Pressure

The arts sector in South Bank and Waterloo represents many national institutions and serves communities across the UK through regional partnerships, cross-regional programming and community outreach. It was hit hard by Covid shutdowns, relying on grants and loans to survive. Audiences have been slow to return with levels, especially older demographics, still lower than pre-pandemic.

### Case Study: Pandemic impact on five arts institutions

Co-commissioned by Lambeth Council and South Bank BID, the *Engine of Recovery*<sup>15</sup> report demonstrates the economic and societal importance of five of South Bank and Waterloo's foremost cultural institutions – the Southbank Centre, the National Theatre, the Old Vic, the Young Vic and Ballet Rambert.<sup>16</sup>

The report includes a detailed economic study of each of the cultural institutions in July 2021, comparing data from pre- and during the pandemic, showing cumulative economic losses amounting to £330m of GVA and an estimated 5,500 FTE jobs in the UK because of the pandemic and the associated restrictions. Collectively, the institutions had lost at least £130m, seven out of eight staff were furloughed, and on-site visitors were projected to be less than 50,000 in 2021. The five organisations received £35.8m of emergency funding from the government's Culture Recovery Fund. Of that, £30.6m was in the form of loans and £5.2m in grants.

The *Engine of Recovery* report illustrates not only the role culture plays in our society in terms of wellbeing and spiritual enrichment, but the essential economic role it plays in job creation, retention and growth, not only within the culture sector itself, but also in hospitality, tourism, retail and professional services. Culture serves as a powerful magnet to bring new businesses into an area, and in encouraging inward investment, much of which stalled during the pandemic.



15 Lambeth Council, South Bank BID, *Engine of Recovery* report, July 2021, <https://engineofrecovery.org>

16 The British Film Institute (BFI), another centre of cultural and economic excellence, was excluded since it was not possible to separate BFI Southbank's local impact from its wider virtual and international activities.

## Inequality Impacts – Poverty and Hunger

Economic inequality is a growing issue for residents with the cost-of-living crisis forcing many more local families into poverty. Figures from 2021/22 show that one in four children live in absolute poverty before housing costs in Waterloo and South Bank Ward (then Bishop’s Ward).<sup>17</sup> That’s 210 children (24.7%) aged under 16, versus the Lambeth borough average of 14.2%. In the Southwark wards of Borough and Bankside and St George’s, both of which cover parts of the South Bank and Waterloo area, significantly more children live in households claiming out of work benefits than the borough average, 23.2% versus 18.5%.<sup>18</sup> Child poverty in St George’s is 25.2-28.8% while Borough and Bankside is up to 31.7% before housing costs, while it is estimated that after housing, both Lambeth and Southwark boroughs would experience 43% child poverty.

Across Lambeth 22.2% of children are eligible for, and claiming, free school meals.<sup>19</sup> Before the pandemic, the GLA estimated that a quarter of the Southwark population, around 75,000 people, experienced food insecurity, significantly higher than the London average.<sup>20</sup> This is a London-wide problem with 16% of adults in London experiencing low or very low food security,<sup>21</sup> and is further illustrated by the enormous increase in people relying on foodbanks. The Lambeth Foodbank Partnership, a collaboration between foodbanks across Lambeth including the Waterloo Foodbank, has seen an increase in use of 25% between January and April 2023 and is now supporting over 2,000 people with emergency food parcels every month.<sup>22</sup>



Image: Eleanor Bentall



Image: WeAreWaterloo

17 Lambeth Council/Department for Work and Pensions 2021/22

18 Southwark JSNA Annual Report 2022, <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/health-and-wellbeing-in-southwark-jsna/southwark-profile>

19 Lambeth 2030, Our Future Our Lambeth [https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/Lambeth\\_2030-Our\\_Future\\_Our\\_Lambeth.pdf](https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/Lambeth_2030-Our_Future_Our_Lambeth.pdf)

20 Southwark Council – Southwark Economic Strategy 2022-2030 (draft)

21 Survey of Londoners 2021-22, Greater London Authority, <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/survey-of-londoners-2021-22>

22 Lambeth Foodbanks Partnership, June 2023



Image: WeAreWaterloo

## Unemployment and Deepening Inequalities

Likewise, the economic impact of the pandemic did not fall evenly, with those in the most vulnerable or disadvantaged groups particularly likely to lose their jobs.<sup>23</sup> This included low paid workers, young people, and Londoners from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds and led to a further deepening of inequalities within the capital.

In Lambeth unemployment is rising again, having stabilised after more than doubling during the pandemic.<sup>24</sup> While the number of people in receipt of out of work Universal Credit benefits never returned to pre-Covid figures, by April 2023 it was 5.3%. For older workers the trend is slightly worse, with 6.9% of over 50s unemployed in April 2023. Likewise, youth unemployment remains higher than pre-pandemic with 415 more young people aged 16-24 out of work and claiming benefits than in January 2020, despite youth unemployment being slightly lower at 5.2% than for the overall Lambeth population. At the time of the 2021

Census, 2-7% of Southwark residents in St George's Ward and Borough and Bankside Ward were unemployed but available to work or waiting to start a job already secured, while the borough average was 6%.<sup>25</sup>

Immediately prior to the pandemic, in December 2019, Black and ethnic minorities in Lambeth had only a small employment gap versus white people. However, by December 2022 this had grown significantly to 13.4%.<sup>26</sup> Data also shows that Black/Black British women in Lambeth are becoming more economically inactive since the pandemic. Almost 75% of Lambeth Universal Credit claimants are from Black and ethnic minorities (41% Black/Black British and 33.68% other ethnic minorities).

A growing trend in Lambeth is an increase in people with jobs who are also needing to claim Universal Credit to top up their income, despite the overall number of Universal Credit claimants declining. Claimants in employment rose from 34.2% in January 2020 to 40.6% in December 2022.

23 CAZ Futures Action Plan: <https://centrallondonforward.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/CAZ-Futures-Action-Plan-FINAL.pdf>

24 Skills and Employment Team, Lambeth Council, Economic Context (presentation) April 2023

25 Census 2021 Results: Labour Market and Travel to Work, Southwark Council, <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/health-and-wellbeing-in-southwark-jsna/census-2021?chapter=8>

26 Skills and Employment Team, Lambeth Council, Economic Context (presentation) April 2023

## Growth and development

South Bank and Waterloo remains a popular area for new homes and offices due to its central location and excellent transport links. These factors will ensure the area endures even as other areas of London continue to struggle post-pandemic and post-Brexit.

Large scale developments are planned which will increase office space for established firms, start-ups, charities, and women-led businesses as well as expanding opportunities for cutting-edge innovation in medical technology and life sciences research. Trends are showing that modular and flexible space is increasingly desirable as working patterns continue to change, and mixed-use live/workspaces are also sought after in this highly creative area.

A total of 775 net additional homes have been added in the Waterloo and South Bank Ward since April 2019 with a further 265 expected to be built by 2030 in the development pipeline at the end of 2021/22.

Creating more homes and jobs in the area, along with shopping and leisure destinations like The Sidings in the old Waterloo International Terminal, will also help retain people in the area, rather than simply passing through the station, further cementing South Bank and Waterloo as the place to be in central London.

### Case Study: Sustainable office space



Image: Mark Field Photography

Lambeth Council's *Sustainable Spaces, Flexible Futures* report highlights the dynamics of office space in the borough with one of its focus areas being promoting South Bank and Waterloo as a business district by supporting office development and affordable workspace with a wide range of unit sizes, which can be sub-divided to encourage flexible use. Lambeth has the largest pipeline of new office space to be delivered in London over the next decade, a significant proportion of which is in South Bank and Waterloo.

The report promotes co-working and workspace suitable for small and medium enterprises and inclusive, high-quality workspace that will support growing digital, creative, life sciences and low-carbon sectors. Sustainability is central, with employers and workers seeking positive experiences focused on their health and wellbeing, opportunities to use the office for collaboration, and increased emphasis on environmental credentials and net zero.

These new developments will bring an influx of jobs to South Bank and Waterloo. One Waterloo alone, on the site of the old Elizabeth House, will create 11,000 jobs, meanwhile, the Royal Street development is part of the SC1 Life Science District which will create 50,000 jobs across Lambeth and Southwark by 2050. The redevelopment of the Royal Street site will deliver between 6,440 and 8,730 jobs in addition to the commercial, office, leisure and retail space created and 133 new homes, including 46 affordable homes.

## Challenges and Benefits

Development brings new facilities and services, improved access and public realm, while the funding provided by developers through Section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) can help to transform the area. However, there is inevitably also a cost, most notably the very real disruption of construction. Developers work in partnership with local stakeholders and residents to mitigate this disruption, something partners have sought to facilitate through a focus on construction coordination across the area, funded by South Bank BID and the Council.

The Neighbourhood Plan was developed by South Bank and Waterloo Neighbours following extensive consultation and adopted after a referendum in 2019. It has a statutory role in the planning process when considering ways to improve the area, particularly in relation to planning applications and public spaces, but also with regard to a range of community interests, including use of funds from large developments.

The joint approach to the allocation of London Eye S106 revenues is an undoubted success, and points to the many benefits that revenues raised in South Bank and Waterloo can bring to the area. As a primary economic driver for both Lambeth and Southwark it is imperative to invest appropriately in South Bank and Waterloo to maintain and maximise the benefit of this growth both for the area and the city as a whole.



Image: Stanhope



Image: South Bank Employers' Group

### **Case Study: Innovative funding**

When the planning permission for the London Eye was negotiated Partnership member South Bank Employers' Group (SBEG) and its own members were involved in the consultation. Due to the unique nature of the Eye – a major visitor attraction in an area which was undergoing regeneration – an innovative financial arrangement was agreed and put in place through a S106 agreement, whereby 1% of revenue accrued from the Eye is returned to the area to fund core neighbourhood services including safety and security, cleaning and the management and maintenance of Jubilee Gardens. For many years, SBEG has managed the services that are funded through the S106 revenues, on behalf of Lambeth Council and Merlin Entertainments, who operate the Eye.

## Jobs, Skills and Learning

Many businesses in the South Bank and Waterloo area, especially those in the hospitality and health sectors, are facing workforce shortages and vacancies post-pandemic and post-Brexit. At the same time, unemployment is running at 40% among some resident groups.



Image: South Bank BID

Lambeth and Southwark have diverse populations with pockets of poverty and deprivation throughout the boroughs. As a result, both councils have established Employment and Skills Boards to support residents while tackling these issues and reducing inequalities in economic opportunity. Partnership members, including all our educational bodies, are represented on these boards, and are working together to support local people, and those across London, to develop skills, especially those needed in sectors across the two boroughs.

Pioneering work has been done on encouraging businesses to pay the London Living Wage in South Bank but there are still too many people facing the challenges of precarious work and zero hours contracts.

The area has a diverse range of good jobs, with committed employers who are prepared to invest in relevant skills-oriented programmes, and an abundance of world-leading education providers and research institutions who are well placed to support this ambition, as well as providing insight on how work is changing more generally in our new normal environment. From September 2022, a new statutory duty was introduced on colleges to demonstrate how they meet local learning needs, while local businesses are keen to support an employer-led approach to addressing labour market shortages, and to support developing the skills of residents.

### ***Case Study: Non-profits support skills and development for vulnerable people***



Image: WeAreWaterloo

Young people and those facing disadvantages are supported by local charities and social organisations to gain skills and work experience. The Bridge at Waterloo offers employability and resilience courses which help get local people into jobs by providing help with CV writing, interviews, benefits and money management plus cooking, nutrition and life skills. Coin Street Community Builders' programme of youth mentoring and tutoring sessions helps people get ready for employment and supports those who want to take their business to the next level. They also provide small enterprises with the space and support they need to grow. Meanwhile, Oasis Waterloo provides advice on issues such as debt, benefits and immigration, all issues which underpin a person's ability to study or work successfully.

## Developing skills locally

The Institute for Employment Studies and Central London Forward Local Skills Improvement Plan<sup>27</sup> (LSIP) for the 12 central London boroughs supports themes emerging from the South Bank and Waterloo area: Across London employers are struggling to recruit skilled and experienced workers, with 79% of employers surveyed in the CAZ during December 2022 having vacancies and 66% of these struggling to fill them. The main reason given was due to a lack of applicants with the required skills (39%). This pattern is seen across South Bank and Waterloo with, as identified in the report, health and social care, hospitality and retail, arts, entertainment and recreation and the digital sector all being areas where businesses are struggling to recruit staff with the relevant skills and experience. Leading local education institutions are already working closely with partners including Lambeth and Southwark councils and employers in the area to support skills development and lifelong learning in line with the LSIP.

There is collective agreement locally on the need to tackle the specific challenges of the labour market, with the twin dynamics of recruitment and skills shortages. Similarly, there is a recognition that South Bank and Waterloo acts as an economic engine as part of the CAZ while also providing opportunities across Lambeth and Southwark, a theme recognised in Lambeth Council's Economic Resilience Strategy.

## Wider Implications

The implications of jobs, skills and learning are much broader than just South Bank and Waterloo and intersect with the rest of Lambeth and Southwark as well as the surrounding boroughs and wider London area.

South Bank and Waterloo is a centre for the SC1 Life Science District founded by King's Health Partners, Guy's & St Thomas' Foundation, and Lambeth and Southwark councils. SC1's ambitious plans to create significant new spaces for health and life sciences will not only increase employment opportunities but demand a highly skilled workforce.

Southwark Council is driving the establishment of a new Hospitality Skills Centre that will see South Bank and Waterloo education institutions King's College London, London South Bank University and Morley College, team up with local hospitality business including Sea Containers and others to offer hospitality training for residents from Lambeth, Southwark and beyond.

Similarly, London South Bank Technical College, the UK's first purpose built technical college for a generation, will be a London South Bank University STEM campus in Nine Elms offering students technology, construction, engineering and science in hi-tech classrooms and workshops. While outside of South Bank and Waterloo, this new college, developed by one of our area's world-class educational institutions, is close enough to have a significant impact on residents, employers and students in the area over the short and long term.

### Case Study: Southwark 2023 Skills Delivery Plan



Image: WeAreWaterloo

*The new Southwark 2023 Skills Delivery Plan sets out the shared priorities of the Southwark Skills Partnership for improving the local skills offer in support of the council's vision for a greener, fairer and more resilient borough. At the heart of this is an economy that works for all, underpinned by a first-class and accessible skills offer, supporting every resident – regardless of age, circumstance or background – to pursue and progress in their career of choice. The aim of the delivery plan is to ensure such a skills system exists, putting more residents into well-paid, secure jobs. The delivery plan is structured around six sector-focussed themes: digital, hospitality, green, health and social care, life sciences, and creative and cultural skills; and three that are cross-cutting: apprenticeships, careers information, advice and guidance, and essential skills. The focus is on the skills-system within Southwark, however, interrelated initiatives with a broader geographic focus are also addressed such as alignment with the LSIP and the emerging employment and skills action plan for SC1.*

27 Central London Forward - Local Skills Improvement Plan Report 2023 (draft)

# A net zero neighbourhood

The environmental challenges facing London, and the South Bank and Waterloo area, are significant and rapidly coming into focus. Its riverside location means it is susceptible to flooding from the Thames and the lack of canopy cover and green space means the urban heat island effect poses a real danger to at-risk residents. High levels of traffic mean that poor air quality remains a major issue, particularly harming older, younger and disabled people.

Both Lambeth and Southwark Council have declared a climate emergency, committing them to act drastically to reduce carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions. Extensive work has been done on developing the Net zero for Waterloo and South Bank: A fairer, greener Future Neighbourhood by 2030<sup>28</sup> strategy which sets out how we collectively aim to tackle the effects of the climate crisis in the area and develop a “*net zero and resilient neighbourhood where local communities will be inclusive, greener, healthier and thriving*”. Figures within this section are taken from this strategy unless otherwise noted.

Tackling the climate crisis cuts across all other priorities outlined in this strategy from up-skilling for green jobs, growing cleantech industries and supporting the building of low emission developments.

Image: Jubilee Gardens Trust

## Cutting emissions

The current cost-of-living crisis has exacerbated the existing problem of 12% of households in South Bank and Waterloo being in fuel poverty, while energy inefficient buildings continue to pose a challenge to residents and businesses alike. Gas remains the primary fuel source for 77% of properties but there are a number of large heat users in the area which may provide opportunities for heat networks. In addition, 779 potential sites for solar panels have been identified. Moving away from gas and towards more locally sourced, renewable energy and energy efficient buildings will reduce carbon and improve affordability though there are challenges for tenants where properties are not owned, and pressure on the electricity grid from the extra demand.



Image: WeAreWaterloo



Image: St John's Church, Waterloo

### Case Study: Solar power

The extensive renovations of St John's Church included the retrofitting of 80 solar panels installed on its Grade II listed roof, making it one of the most sustainable historic landmarks in London, capable of generating 30 kilowatts per hour in bright sunshine. Over a year this would be enough to power 7.6 average households<sup>29</sup> and avoid up to 13.1 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. The solar panels will meet the light and heat needs for the crypt as well as providing enough power to light the church above although there will not be quite sufficient to heat St John's vast open nave. Renovation work has included infrastructure for air-sourced heat pumps to heat the nave in anticipation of technology improvements which will make this viable. The solar panel project was made possible by a grant from the Mayor's London Community Energy Fund.

28 Net zero for Waterloo and South Bank: A fairer, greener Future Neighbourhood by 2030 [https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-11/Waterloo%20and%20South%20Bank%20FN2030%20Strategy\\_Final%20-%20Copy.pdf](https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-11/Waterloo%20and%20South%20Bank%20FN2030%20Strategy_Final%20-%20Copy.pdf)

29 Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, the average household uses 3,731 kWh per year

30 ONS Access to gardens and public green space in GB, 2020

## Healthy and thriving communities

People in South Bank and Waterloo are 46% closer to a park than elsewhere in London but the spaces they have access to are 87% smaller than elsewhere in the capital,<sup>30</sup> limiting how they can be enjoyed. With 72% of addresses in the area not having access to a private outdoor space, tree canopy coverage lower than the Lambeth average, and most of Waterloo being classed as an Area of Deficiency for Access to Nature, more needs to be done to ensure everyone has equitable access to safe, quality green spaces which deliver biodiversity and help to alleviate climate risks.



Image: Coin Street Community Builders

### Case Study: Expanding green space



Image: Jubilee Gardens Trust

Jubilee Gardens is one of central London's busiest green spaces used by approximately 8m people per year prior to the pandemic. Plans to extend into the land currently used as Hungerford car park will see a 40% increase in the size of Gardens, an additional 6,760 square metres. New trees and pollinator friendly planting will support local biodiversity, while potential renewable energy or energy storage facility opportunities in the new space are being explored.

### Case Study: Greener streets



Image: WeAreWaterloo

Additional street trees are being planted in autumn 2023, targeted to streets with little or no canopy cover on Lower Marsh, Baylis Road and Hercules Road. Managed and maintained by WeAreWaterloo in partnership with Lambeth Council this is thanks to a grant from the GLA, secured by SoWN, for up to 30 new trees which supplement the council's existing plans for new trees in the area, helping provide shade, absorbing pollution and offering habitats for insects and birds.

## Greener and cleaner

Air quality is of particular concern in South Bank and Waterloo with World Health Organisation limits being exceeded in areas, particularly along major roads such as Stamford Street, York Road and Waterloo Road.



Image: WeAreWaterloo

Across London 30% of dangerous particulate matter comes from construction emissions<sup>31</sup> and with so much development in South Bank and Waterloo this remains a significant issue.

Despite this, active transport is popular, with 60% of adults in the wider Lambeth area walking or cycling at least 3 times per week, compared to 55% within Inner London and 46% nationally.<sup>32</sup>

Meanwhile options for freight consolidation and using the Thames for freight are being explored to reduce carbon emissions and traffic disruption in the area.

### Case Study: Transport on the Thames



Image: Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

A river freight pilot is underway exploring how deliveries to St Thomas' Hospital via the river can support the organisation's sustainability targets. Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust became the first in

the country to pilot a daily riverboat delivery service running twice a day, five days a week. Electric cargo bikes deliver from the boat to the hospital. The Trust's three delivery trucks usually travel around 1,500 miles per week, for each truck removed from the road, approximately 708 kgs of CO<sub>2</sub> could be saved per week.

### Case Study: Traffic-free



Image: WeAreWaterloo

Following a trial to support social distancing during the pandemic, traffic restrictions on Lower Marsh have been made permanent, creating a timed closure allowing pedestrian-only access. This creates a traffic-free space for market stalls and outdoor café and restaurant seating, improving safety and air quality as part of Lambeth Council's Healthy Route network.

Traffic filters at The Cut and Greet Street, also introduced during the pandemic, will become permanent in October 2023. Blocking through-traffic has seen cycling journeys double on this route between 2019-22 while creating more space for pedestrians and businesses through pavement extensions, parklets and cycle parking.

31 Reducing air pollution from construction sites, Impact on Urban Health, 14 October 2022, <https://urbanhealth.org.uk/insights/reports/reducing-air-pollution-from-construction-sites>

32 Department for Transport, Walking and Cycling statistics, England, 2021

# Shared priorities

## An inclusive place

South Bank and Waterloo is a uniquely vibrant and diverse area at the heart of London that is safe, green, welcoming and accessible for everyone.

Image: South Bank BID

*South Bank and Waterloo Partnership members have agreed the following shared priorities to achieve our vision of a green and thriving South Bank and Waterloo for everyone by 2030.*

### Safety and security

#### | *Everyone should be safe in South Bank and Waterloo*

Together, we have addressed many challenges and issues relating to safety and security in our neighbourhood. But we can't be complacent, and our work must continue. Partnership working is our great strength: sharing intelligence, pooling resources and acting in cooperation will remain central to everything we do.

People's safety and security is a priority and members commit to working together to ensure that our services are effective and are properly resourced. We shall:

- Prioritise safety and security and work together to ensure resources are made available to tackle key issues
- Invest in reliable and accurate data and insight to inform priorities and action
- Invest in and prioritise partnership activity through the work of both Councils, the Metropolitan Police – including our Safer Neighbourhoods Team, British Transport Police, Business Watch, Business Crime Reduction Partnership, and both BIDs

## A quality and attractive environment

### *Safe, green and pleasant public spaces for everyone to enjoy*

A quality environment creates an enjoyable place to live, work and visit, deters crime and can contribute to climate resilience. Due to the complexity of landownership in the area, much of the public realm has been updated piecemeal around new developments or is due an upgrade or comprehensive enhancement. The importance of green space has never been clearer with people relying on parks and open spaces during the pandemic, yet most of the area's parks are managed by charities and other local organisations. By working together, we can ensure a cohesive approach that will create an attractive and accessible public realm and secure the future of our green spaces, bringing benefits for all. We shall:

- Work collaboratively to secure long-term funding to maintain, improve and expand our parks and green spaces
- Build on work already done with the Waterloo Placemaking Strategy and ensure there is a coherent public realm strategy across the area
- Complete the Spine Route public realm project
- Implement key recommendations of the Waterloo Station Masterplan to improve the public realm and accessibility around the station and the links to other parts of the neighbourhood

## Accessible to all

### *A welcoming and inclusive place for everyone*

South Bank and Waterloo has a diverse resident, visitor, student and worker population with many differing needs and experiences. Workplaces in the area employ more women and BAME people than the London average, and the workforce is youthful with the 20-24 age group over-represented.<sup>33</sup> In 2019 the Accessible South Bank project was the first in London to thoroughly map accessibility information. Meanwhile the area has a thriving network of resident and community organisations and opportunities to engage with local issues, but some groups are underrepresented and may not feel their voice has been effectively heard. There are barriers to participation, not least the complexity of the many organisations working locally, but we all benefit when everyone is involved. We shall:

- Enhance reach of AccessAble across South Bank and Waterloo
- Support opportunities for voices of local people to be heard including:
  - Seeking ways to broaden representation of everyone in the South Bank and Waterloo area
  - Supporting SoWN as the neighbourhood forum
  - Ensure that accessibility for local communities is incorporated into design of public realm and/or transport improvements

<sup>33</sup> Urban Solutions team at Hatch, "Socioeconomic Insights: Waterloo Station Masterplan", 20 January 2023



Image: WeAreWaterloo

## A place of opportunity

South Bank and Waterloo is a place of fairness, with economic prosperity and resilience for all, and where everyone's lives are improved through access to good jobs, training and business opportunities.

### Economic prosperity

#### | *Economic opportunity for everyone*

The overall picture for South Bank and Waterloo is one of economic resilience despite the impact of Brexit, the pandemic and the subsequent challenges including the cost-of-living crisis. But not all sectors are flourishing and the economic situation is having a prolonged impact on local people and businesses. To build a fairer, more equal South Bank and Waterloo we need economic opportunity for everyone. We shall:

- Advocate at national and London level for support for struggling sectors, with a particular focus on the arts and cultural sectors, SMEs, and independent operators
- Collaborate to ensure South Bank and Waterloo remains an attractive place to work, with employees, freelancers and other workers all boosting the local economy
- Continue to work in partnership to deliver long-term aspects of the Covid-19 Recovery Plan
- Maintain the vibrant, rich tapestry of the area with a mix of multi-national businesses, SMEs and independents
- Ensure that support is effectively signposted so those people who need help can access it

## Growth and development

### *Development which benefits everyone in South Bank and Waterloo*

South Bank and Waterloo remains a popular area for new homes and offices due to its central location and excellent transport links. There are a number of large developments proposed over the coming years which could bring benefits in terms of jobs, services, facilities and homes, but which will also cause disruption during construction, increase demand on resources and inevitably change the area to some extent. We must ensure that development benefits everyone with the minimum of disruption. We shall:

- Work in partnership to identify opportunities to invest in South Bank and Waterloo through CIL and s106 monies from development activity in the area, to both support future growth and to mitigate impacts of growth
- Provide effective construction coordination, limiting disruption from building works and improving communication

## Jobs, skills and learning

### *Everyone should be able to access quality jobs and learning opportunities locally*

Businesses across London, especially those in the hospitality and health sectors, are desperate for staff post-Brexit and the pandemic, with many vacancies unfilled, meanwhile the working environment is radically changed since Covid. The South Bank and Waterloo area is replete with world-class academic institutions and there is a real opportunity to use this to transform the life chances and tackle social inequality for people living in the area and the wider boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark. We shall:

- Support skills and learning development of local people
- Help residents from both Lambeth and Southwark benefit from employment and career progression opportunities available for all
- Support businesses and employers to access the skills and talent that they need from within Lambeth and Southwark

# A net zero neighbourhood

Extensive work has been done on developing the Net zero for Waterloo and South Bank: A fairer, greener Future Neighbourhood by 2030 strategy, which sets out how we aim to tackle the effects of the climate crisis in the area and develop a net zero and resilient neighbourhood where local communities will be inclusive, greener, healthier and thriving. The following shared priorities are a summary of the key objectives outlined in that document which can be [read here](#).



Image: Coin Street Community Builders

## Climate resilience

*Improve energy efficiency of existing buildings and create a decarbonised, smart and integrated energy system*

The current cost-of-living crisis has exacerbated the existing problem of 12% of households in South Bank and Waterloo being in fuel poverty, while energy inefficient buildings continue to pose a challenge to residents and businesses alike. Gas remains the primary fuel source for 77% of properties but there are a number of large heat users in the area which may provide opportunities for heat networks. Moving away from gas and towards more locally sourced, renewable energy and energy efficient buildings will reduce carbon and improve affordability. We shall:

- Retrofit homes, commercial and public buildings so they are energy efficient, alleviating fuel poverty and reducing energy bills
- Explore options for reusing buildings and reduce emissions for new buildings and construction
- Increase the use of renewable electricity, preferably locally generated, and move away from gas heating
- Ensure local infrastructure supports the electrification of transport and buildings

## Healthy and thriving communities

### *Our neighbourhoods are climate adapted, resilient and green for everyone*

People in South Bank and Waterloo are 46% closer to a park than elsewhere in London<sup>34</sup> but the spaces they have access to are 87% smaller than elsewhere in the capital, limiting how they can be enjoyed. With 72% of addresses in the area not having access to a private outdoor space, tree canopy coverage lower than the Lambeth average, and most of Waterloo being classed as an Area of Deficiency for Access to Nature, more needs to be done to ensure everyone has equitable access to safe, quality green spaces which deliver biodiversity and help to alleviate climate risks. We shall:

- Improve access to safe, quality green space
- Enhance the natural environment and the biodiversity of the area
- Increase community resilience and support those most exposed and vulnerable to climate risks

## Greener and cleaner

### *Improving air quality and the circular economy*

Air quality is of particular concern in South Bank and Waterloo with World Health Organisation limits being exceeded in areas.<sup>35</sup> Likewise cycling safety and traffic levels are also key issues along with low residential recycling rates, particularly for food waste. We shall:

- Shift away from cars to more sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport
- Reduce pollution and emissions from freight and switch to electric cars and taxis
- Adopt circular economy principles and develop greener products
- Buy less, prioritise sustainable options and implement sustainable procurement policies
- Reduce waste through supporting reuse and repair
- Support increased recycling

<sup>34</sup> Urban Solutions team at Hatch, "Socioeconomic Insights: Waterloo Station Masterplan", 20 January 2023

<sup>35</sup> Ibid

# Governance

South Bank and Waterloo is a diverse and complex area with many different actors who all have a role to play in delivering this strategy.

South Bank and Waterloo Partnership, chaired by the two Members of Parliament covering the area, coordinates these groups and informal networks. The diagram below illustrates the links and connections between Partnership and the many different local organisations.

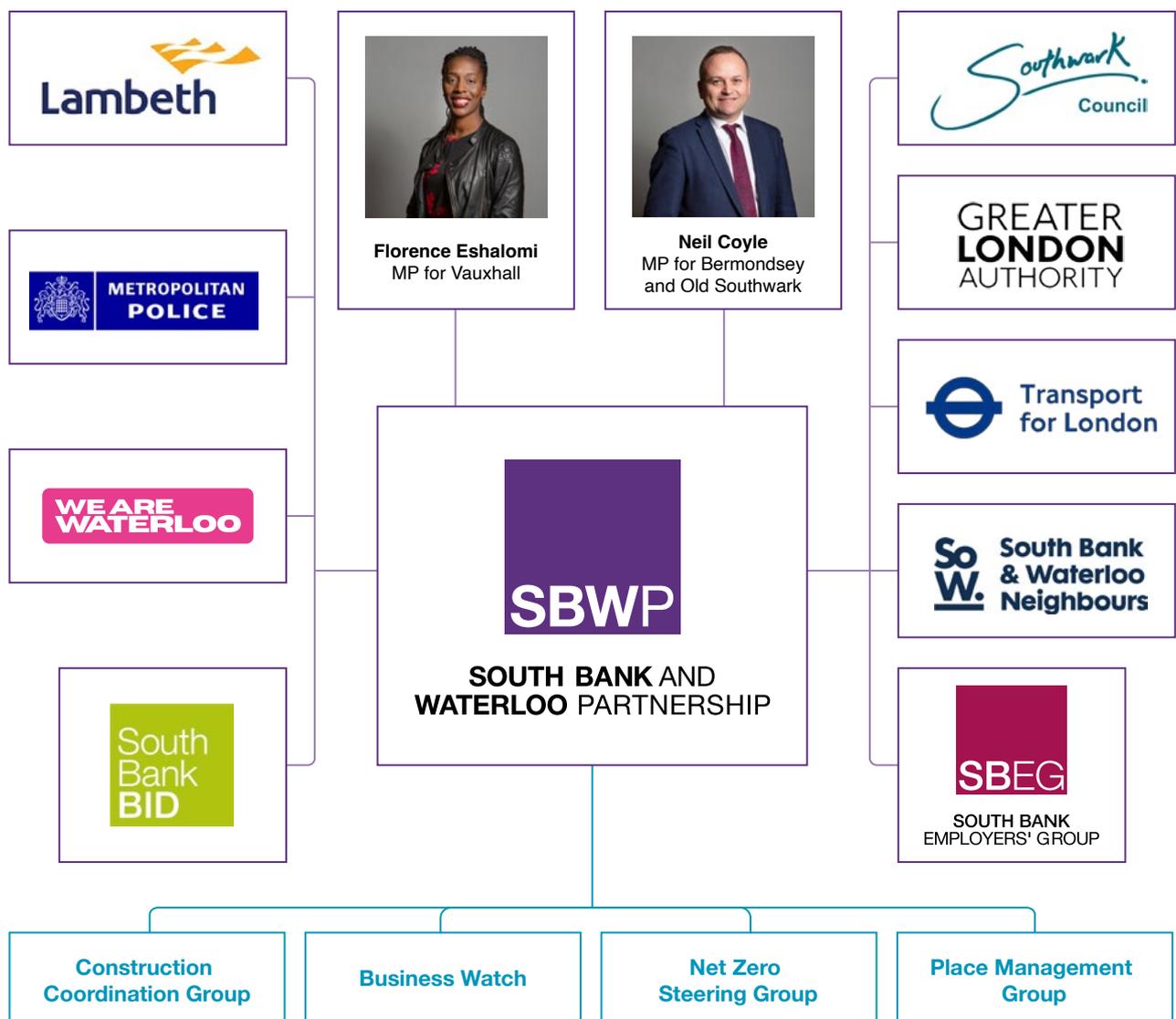




Image: WeAreWaterloo

*The purpose of this strategy is to establish shared priorities for all members of South Bank and Waterloo Partnership to 2030 but it does not set a fixed plan of how to achieve these.*

Partnership currently meets quarterly and will use one of these meetings each year to forward plan as a group for the following 12 months. Progress against the strategy will be monitored at this session and any additional coordination of progress will be managed at the remaining quarterly meetings. Sub-groups, comprising members with relevant expertise, will be convened as appropriate to oversee the delivery of various aspects of this strategy and will report back to the wider Partnership group in much the same way that the South Bank and Waterloo Management Group convened to deliver the Covid-19 Recovery Plan in 2020. Related groups already exist which will have a significant role in supporting delivery of the strategy including Business Watch, the Construction Coordination Group, Net Zero Steering Group and the Place Management Group.

A new South Bank and Waterloo Partnership website will host information on the strategy and updates and news on progress as well as links to all Partnership members for transparency.



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