"Every Southwark resident to have access to a fast and stable internet connection, a device and the skills needed to participate in society and the digital economy by 2025."
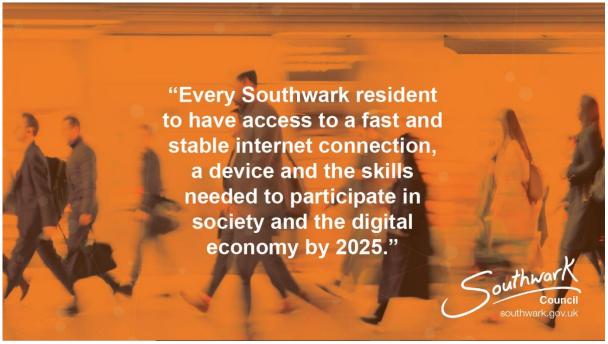
Southwark Council Technology & Digital Inclusion Strategy 2022 - 2025

Foreword

Having access to the internet, a device and the skills to go online should be considered the fourth utility - no different to gas, water and electricity. As technology evolves and more services move online, it is essential that our residents and staff are equipped with the right tools and resources to participate in society and the digital economy.

10 million people in the UK lack the basic foundation skills needed to participate in society. Nearly two million over 75 year olds in England are considered to be digitally excluded, according to analysis carried out by Age UK. 16,000 people are considered digitally excluded in Southwark and Lewisham, according to the 2020 ONS dataset on internet users. There are a number of factors that can influence digital exclusion - age, disability and socioeconomic status being some of them.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted inequalities in our Borough, including digital exclusion. Having access to devices and fast internet connection is key in ensuring people are not left behind – whether that is in education, business or keeping in contact with friends and loved ones.

Social Isolation was also an issue that affected our community during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Many of our community hubs and social venues were closed and for people who rely on them for social interaction, it was a significant loss.

There is a strong link between financial exclusion and digital exclusion. Only 51% of households earning between £6000 - £10000 having access to home internet, compared to 99% of households with an income of over £40,000. Some of the initiatives that we have implemented to help increase digital inclusion during lockdown includes the Laptops for Learning crowd funder campaign. With the support of residents and businesses in the borough this raised over £150,000, which was match funded by Southwark Council. We have also started a device loaning scheme for care leavers in the borough and in partnership with our broadband providers, have also provided free broadband for residents in need.

We are working to understand the digital accessibility needs of residents in Southwark by working with the London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI). This includes working on their digital exclusion mapping project, and developing a toolkit to target interventions more effectively.

The Technology & Digital Inclusion strategy sets out our ambitions for Southwark and is underpinned by our Technology & Digital Inclusion Delivery Pillars. Our overall vision follows the Greater London Authority (GLA)'s Digital Access Mission which is for **"Every Southwark resident to have access to a fast and stable internet connection, a device and the skills needed to participate in society and the digital economy by 2025"**.

This includes making sure there are several digital hubs across the borough where residents can access connectivity and devices. Working closely with cross-sector partners to ensure we are equipping our residents and businesses with the skills needed for tomorrow's technological advancements and provide the support they need to thrive in Southwark.

The plans underpinning this report will ensure residents are at the centre of what we do. Working collaboratively with our cross-sector partners including academia, charities and grassroots organisations is central to our work in ensuring **"Nobody Is Left Offline".**

Cllr Rebecca Lury

Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Democracy

Digital Inclusion Overview

Definition of Digital Inclusion

Digital Inclusion refers to activities necessary to ensure that all individuals and communities, including the most disadvantaged, have access to, and use of, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

There are a number of challenges preventing people from going online:

- **Access** – the ability to connect to the internet and go online. This usually covers broadband connectivity and devices;

- **Skills** – the ability to actually use the internet;

- **Motivation** – knowing why using the internet is a good thing;

- **Trust** – the confidence to use the internet without fear of crime or hacking.

Digital Exclusion in Southwark

Southwark compares well with the majority of other London Boroughs, but pockets of digital exclusion remain, especially in our most deprived areas. 16,000 people are considered to be digitally excluded in Southwark & Lewisham, according to the 2020 ONS dataset on internet users. There are a number of factors that can influence digital exclusion with age, disability and socioeconomic status being some of them.

Greater London Authority Commitments

Under the [Digital Access for All Mission](#), the GLA has committed to every Londoner having access to good connectivity to the internet, basic digital skills, and the device or support they need to be online by 2025. To facilitate this, the GLA are working in partnership with LOTI on the [Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme](#), a £1.36million programme to tackle digital exclusion.

The GLA will expect two outputs from the Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme:

- Validated solutions that help to tackle one or more of the overall objectives of the digital access mission; and

- A body of evidence for what works, and what does not, in improving digital access. This will be published and available to anyone working in this field.

LOTI will make progress in developing effective support measures for:

- **Residents:** By developing a 'minimum access package' based around a standardised approach to triaging digitally excluded Londoners' needs, for an essential device, data or digital skills. This can then be matched to a range of reliable and affordable options;

- **Public servants and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) practitioners:** By giving those who work with digitally excluded Londoners easy access to quality resources and peer support on digital inclusion, including an evidence base on what works and a range of mature, scalable interventions;

- **Businesses:** By making the evidence base on digital needs in London easily accessible and increasing the business community's understanding of it, including raising awareness of the impact of moving to online-only channels on digitally excluded Londoners.

LOTI will be using an outcomes-based methodology, drawing on the Design Council's Double Diamond approach. All projects will start by defining the real-world outcomes for Londoners first, before deciding what the project will do.

Projects will be prioritised that:

- Aim to achieve outcomes that will substantially benefit digitally excluded Londoners;

- Clearly add value to what already exists;

- Build on and create strong evidence through effective design and evaluation; and

- Have a credible route to large-scale adoption and financial sustainability.

Southwark Council's Vision

Our vision: For Southwark to become recognised as one of the best connected and leading digital boroughs in London. Being a Borough that is digitally inclusive where no-one is left offline.

Our objective: That Southwark takes a digital-first approach and is a Borough where residents, businesses and staff are supported with digital skills, connectivity and devices, empowering them to participate in the online world.

Southwark Council is committing to:

- All Southwark residents having access to an internet enabled device, along with a fast and stable internet connection; this includes subsidised and free broadband for eligible residents
- All Southwark residents and staff having access to the training and support to acquire the skills that they need to actively participate in a digital society;
- Southwark Council having the technology to support residents to resolve queries more quickly and easily.

Our approach: As we transition to online services, we will ensure residents are able to access support when needed. For residents that are digitally excluded or cannot access our services online, we will ensure that we provide alternatives.

In order to become a digital-first Borough, we will review the services we deliver as a council, and how we interact with our residents. This will require fundamental transformation of our approach to engagement, which cannot happen overnight.

We have developed Technology & Digital Inclusion Delivery Pillars to set out how we will do this:

- **Making Southwark one of the best connected boroughs in London and developing emerging technology**: Understanding how technology can be used to enable our residents, businesses and staff to become digital-first and innovating to ensure Southwark is the one of the best connected boroughs in London.
- **Tackling digital exclusion and ensuring our residents have the tools, skills and technology to be participate in today's society**: Providing fast, reliable internet availability throughout the Borough, and the skills to enable our residents to use digital.
- **Empowering local businesses**: Working with local businesses to ensure that they are making the most of a digital-first approach through training and commercial broadband.
- **Improving resident experiences**: Reviewing how we deliver services to allow residents to have a seamless digital interaction with us.
- **Supporting our staff**: Ensuring that Council staff have access to modern workplace technology, and the skills to enable them to deliver services as efficiently as possible.

The Power of Partnerships

Key to becoming a truly inclusive digital borough, is a strong partnership and collaboration between the council, local businesses, technology providers and organisations from the public, private, community and academic sectors. This collaborative approach will enable new innovative opportunities that maximise the use of digital technologies, and the skills and capabilities of our citizens and local businesses. This will allow our residents and staff to develop the right skills, and be provided with the right opportunities, in today's rapidly changing world.

For example, we have strong collaboration partnerships with the broadband providers, Community Fibre and Hyperoptic, who are working with us to deliver better broadband, and digital skills across the Borough. We are also working with Microsoft and Hitachi to connect our data and use technology to solve community challenges through Hackathons.

Southwark Council is also a member of Socitm, a professional network for leaders delivering innovation and modernisation of public services.

We have signed the Local Digital Declaration, a shared ambition for better local public services. We pledge to design services that best meet the needs of citizens, to challenge the technology market to offer the flexible tools and services we need. To protect citizens' privacy and security and deliver better value for money.

Continuing and growing these partnerships across London and wider will be essential to deliver this

report and associated action plans. This includes working closely with our voluntary sector, community groups, charities and academia.

LOTI and the GLA Partnership

We are working closely with LOTI and the GLA on their Digital Access for All mission.

LOTI Digital Exclusion Mapping Project

Southwark Council was awarded a share of £75,000 from the LOTI Covid Innovation Fund. This fund was put in place to help boroughs work together and address Covid-related challenges.

The Pan-London project in collaboration with Barnet, Brent, Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster councils, is to map digital exclusion across the five boroughs. In addition to the digital exclusion map, there are also the following deliverables:

- Public Map of Digital Exclusion across London – Working with the GLA to create a public map of digital exclusion with multiple layers, showing areas of digital exclusion, and a storyboard that provides a narrative to the map.
- Quantitative Analysis into the softer aspects of digital exclusion – A survey with over 800 respondents to understand the reasons why residents are digitally excluded.
- Qualitative research into interventions for key groups – Focus groups across three boroughs to look at the support offered during the Covid-19 pandemic, their awareness of current initiatives, and how easy it is to access digital support and training.
- Digital Inclusion Persona Bank – Archetypes that represent the digitally excluded, giving us a better understanding of resident's needs. The persona bank was created by interviewing residents across the boroughs, and segmenting them into specific user groups.
- Digital Inclusion Mapping Toolkit – A combination of the above that enables other boroughs and organisations to understand the outputs, the methodology, and replicate the map.

The deliverables of the project and all the outputs can be found at the below link:

https://loti.london/projects/cif-data/

The second phase of the project starts in January 2022 and will form part of the GLA/LOTI Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme – see below.

GLA/ LOTI Digital Inclusion Innovations Programme

To deliver the GLA's ambition for Every Londoner to have access to good connectivity, basic digital skills and the device or support they need to be online by 2025, the GLA are working in partnership with LOTI on the Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme. This is a £1.36million programme to tackle digital exclusion.

In addition to the Digital Exclusion Mapping Project, the first phase of the project also consists of the following:

- Encourage and help London's public sector organisations to upcycle their retired devices to benefit digitally excluded Londoners.
- Address the specific needs of digitally excluded individuals and families living in temporary accommodation.
- Supporting Dementia Carers and finding digitally-enabled ways to support the carers of people living with dementia.

Southwark will share the lessons learned with relevant stakeholders, attend workshops, and apply our findings to our own work on digital exclusion.

Digital Inclusion Working Groups

As Digital Inclusion moves up on the agenda, it is important to identify and engage with key stakeholders within the council, and externally, that have a role to play in the delivery of this report and associated action plans.

This needs a joined up effort to avoid duplication of resources, and ensure our communication is consistent.

There are three digital inclusion/skills working groups to help with this:

Pan-London Digital Inclusion Working Group

- Formed and chaired by the Digital Inclusion Team at Southwark Council. This working group is comprised of London Boroughs working on digital inclusion. It exists to share best practices, lessons learned and resources.

- Meetings are every quarter and invitation is open to all London authorities and external partners such as LOTI and the GLA.

Essential Skills Digital Inclusion Working Group

- Formed and chaired by the Local Economy Team at Southwark Council. This working group comprises internal and external stakeholders including the voluntary and education sectors, working together on the Digital Skills Action Plan.

- Meetings are every 6 weeks and the invitation is open to Southwark partners working in the skills sector.

Internal Digital Inclusion Working Group

- Formed and chaired by the Digital Inclusion Team at Southwark Council. This working group consists of internal stakeholders from Customer Services, Adult Learning, Libraries, Children & Adult's, Public Health, Local Economy, Digital Infrastructure, Events and Resident Involvement.

- The meetings are every month, with an open invitation to all internal stakeholders that have an element of digital inclusion in their work.

In addition to this, we will also continue holding focus groups with residents to understand their needs and develop more effective initiatives.

Links to other strategies and programmes

The Technology & Digital Inclusion Strategy outlines opportunities for cross-sector collaboration, and need to leverage our relationships with partners both within and outside the council.

As such, it takes both internal and external strategies, policies, and programmes into account. This will ensure we are not working in isolation, and we are all working towards the same objectives.

EXTERNAL

UK Digital Strategy

The UK Digital Strategy outlines its ambitions in creating a digital economy, which is resilient to change and fit for the future. Comprising of seven pillars, it focuses on building a world-leading digital economy that works for everyone including:

- Ensuring that we continue to tackle the root causes of digital exclusion, and that everyone can increase their digital capability to make the most of the digital world.
- Developing the full range of digital skills that individuals and companies across the country need in an increasingly digital economy, and supporting people to up-skill, and re-skill throughout their working lives.
- Strong collaboration between the public, private, and third sector to tackle the digital skills gap in a co-ordinated and coherent way. To ensure the sum is greater than the parts, and everyone, everywhere has better access to the training they want.

GLA Digital Access Mission

As part of the COVID-19 recovery mission, the GLA has an ambition for Every Londoner to have access to good connectivity, basic digital skills and the device or support they need to be online by 2025. To facilitate this, the GLA are working in partnership with LOTI on the Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme, a £1.36million programme to tackle digital exclusion discussed in more detail in the above section.

INTERNAL

Essential Digital Skills Action Plan 2020 -2022

The Local Economy Team are leading on the Digital Skills action plan and leading the 'Southwark Essential Digital Skills Group'. This is an informal partnership of local organisations that have an interest in working together to improve outcomes for Southwark residents who lack essential digital skills.

As part of the Digital Skills Action Plan, there are 3 objectives:

- Objective 1: A shared understanding of need and demand for essential digital skills in Southwark
- Objective 2: Collectively deliver sufficient, accessible provision that responds to learner needs
- Objective 3: A collaborative approach to innovation.

Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan

The climate emergency affects us all, and the Southwark Council action plan outlines how we will contribute to ending global warming, whilst delivering new green jobs. We recognise that digital can be an enabler for reducing our carbon footprint and waste such as the reduction of travel and the use of printed documents as we move to hybrid working. We will adopt a paper-light approach and review business processes in light of new tools and ways of working.

Under the 'Reduce unnecessary journeys theme', staff will be supported to choose appropriate locations prior to, after or between meeting customers to carry out work rather than travelling back to an office location if it is not necessary.

It will use the Digital Infrastructure Strategy to facilitate the provision of widespread Wi-Fi and high-speed internet, to less well-connected areas across the borough to facilitate agile/teleworking.

As part of the digital inclusion report and action plan, we are also committed to recycling and redistributing disused devices to reduce waste in the borough, and will work closely with LOTI to deliver this.

Southwark Stands Together

Southwark Stands Together is a borough wide initiative, in response to the killing of George Floyd, the injustice and racism experienced by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, and to the inequalities exposed by COVID-19.

Two of the themes focuses on education and communities and it is vital that when we reach out to these communities, we are not excluding those that may not be online. Part of this ambitions in this report is to work closely with the SST Programme Lead, to ensure digitally excluded residents are engaged with as part of the Southwark Stands Together engagement.

Exchequer Digital Strategy Refresh 2020 - 2024

One of the five building blocks of the Exchequer Digital Strategy Refresh is to promote digital inclusion by providing a consistent, assisted digital service that ensures no one is left behind. This includes:

- Working with colleagues at the council's service points and in other settings to ensure assisted self-service is fully available where required.
- Ensure that our contact centre staff have the necessary skills to identify and assist digitally excluded customers to access services online.

Southwark Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015 – 2020

Currently undergoing a strategy refresh, the existing strategy sets out its priorities with an overall vision of "Tackling root causes of ill health & inequality, best & fairest start, improving health & wellbeing, earlier intervention, promoting resilience & self-management of health, supporting most vulnerable". This also includes promoting positive lifestyle changes some of which can be done through digital technology such as the NHS Digital App.

Southwark Corporate Customer Access Strategy 2020-2024

The quality of service, behaviour, attitude, courtesy and more, by any Southwark employee or contractor is how our residents, clients and customers judge the whole council. We aim to get it 100% right, 100% of the time, but we're only human and we all make mistakes. So, when we do, we have to 'own up' immediately, say sorry straight away and put it right as soon as possible.

The strategy contains a number of clear commitments to our customers:

- Setting out maximum response times and service standards, they can expect when contacting the council.
- Training for all customer facing staff to ensure all residents receive a consistent and good customer experience.
- Up to date and easy to use on-line services so that residents can request a service at a time convenient to them and be able to track their request.
- Opportunities for customers to provide feedback. We need to know when we've done something wrong so we can rectify it.
- Commit to maintaining traditional service access (telephone and face to face) for those in our community unable to access digital services.
- Our ambition is to be a digital first council providing excellent services to residents in a cost effective way.

This strategy compliments the Technology & Digital Inclusion Strategy and the two will work alongside each other to deliver improved digital services and customer experience.

Technology & Digital Inclusion Delivery Pillars

In order to become a technologically-enabled resident-first Borough we will need to change the ways in which we currently operate as a Council, and how we interact with our residents. The five pillars below set out how we will do this.

Pillar 1 - Making Southwark one of the best connected boroughs in London and developing emerging technology

- **Expanding the broadband router pilot to any digitally excluded Southwark resident.**

- **Subsidised broadband offer to eligible residents.**

- **Commit to free wifi In public spaces.**

Our commitment

Understanding what our residents, businesses and staff require to enable them to become digital-first. Our vision for Southwark is to become one of the best connected and digital boroughs in London. We will use emerging technology and data to enhance our communities, and ensure that residents are able to connect to fast accessible broadband.

Objectives under the Technology & Digital Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025

- Improving connectivity in the borough and ensuring more residents benefit from the digital revolution by piloting free and affordable broadband on council estates and in a network of community buildings across our borough.
- Working with council departments to reimagine our services and make savings, using IoT (Internet of Things) and data in order to enhance and modernise the way our communities function.

We will continue our focus on:	Deliverables:
Connectivity Improve connectivity throughout Southwark for residents and the services we deliver.	• Continuing from the successes of Digital Infrastructure Programme, continue developing a free and affordable service for Southwark residents. • Support the investment of 4G and 5G around the borough from mobile networks operators through roof-top aerials and small cells on street furniture. • Building on our free gigabit-fast Wi-Fi solutions in community halls to deliver Smart Borough projects, Public Wi-Fi solutions and access for all.
Internet of Things (IoT) and smart technology Working with council departments to re-image our services and make savings, using IoT and data in order to enhance and modernise the way our communities function.	• Developing a digital street furniture strategy. • Small cells – working with neutral host operators on small cells on lamp posts. • Utilizing our LoRaWAN (Low-Range Wireless Access Network) gateway to collect real-time data on the high street and estates. • Developing platforms and data to support council services in making better decisions. • Trailing innovative smart solutions on our high streets and council estates through our living labs. • Creating an FAQs document to address technology myths and promoting it on various channels (e.g 5G).

Pillar 2 – Tackling digital exclusion and ensuring our residents have the tools, skills and technology to participate in today's society

Our commitment

Our ambition as a council to improve digital inclusion across the Borough focuses on providing fast, reliable internet availability throughout the Borough and the skills to enable our residents to adapt to evolving technology. We will work closely with the voluntary and community sector, leveraging existing partnerships and make sure we are working collaboratively. We will learn from initiatives such as the Community Support Alliance on working with the community and signpost relevant digital inclusion initiatives such as the free broadband for eligible residents.

This will be achieved via the five different channels below:

- **Affordable broadband:** Under the Fairer Future principle - Thriving Neighbourhoods - Southwark Council have committed to ensuring more residents benefit from the digital revolution by providing free and affordable broadband on council estates. Affordability has become a reoccurring issue concerning access to broadband. Citizens Advice found that 1 in 6 broadband customers struggled to pay their bill between March 2020 and January 2021. Affordable broadband is essential to ensuring Southwark residents are able to access council services, employment opportunities, education and more

- **Devices:** Digital poverty plays a key part of digital exclusion as many residents are unable to afford devices that allow them to connect to the internet. Providing access to smart phones, tablets, laptops or computers is an essential part of achieving the goals of the strategy overall. An Ofcom survey from Jan–March 2020 found that 9% of households containing children did not have home access to a laptop, desktop PC or tablet.

- **Jobs and Training:** A digitally inclusive society relies on individuals entering the profession, and having the right skills to be able to take forward the necessary work. It is predicted that 75% of jobs will require advanced digital skills by 2030. Current research shows 82% of advertised openings

requires some level of digital skills. This channel focuses on the promotion of jobs and training for our residents, helping to ensure nobody is left behind.

- **Digital Skills:** With many of our services shifting online, it's important to provide support for those that are not able to use the internet. The Lloyds 2021 Essential Digital Skills Report estimates that one-fifth of the UK population lacks essential digital skills for life. This includes the ability to connect a device to WiFi, and open an internet browser, to access websites. This aspect focuses on residents in the borough that are digitally excluded, lack basic digital skills, and the work we will do to support them.

- **Digital Education for All:** Digital education is a broad spectrum encompassing digital literacy, continuous learning and the cross-over between different departments and how digital impacts their services. There is an urgent need for digital education for residents, staff and businesses to understand current and upcoming technology.

Objectives under the Technology & Digital Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025

- **Affordable Broadband**
  - Signpost and promote existing affordable broadband schemes from broadband providers, such as the [Fairer Fibre Plan](#) and the [Talk Talk collaboration with DWP.](#)

  - Provide access to free broadband solutions through the provision of Wi-Fi in public spaces, expansion of the broadband router pilot to digitally excluded Southwark residents and promote subsidised broadband for the digitally excluded.

  - Inform and shape broadband policy by working with council departments and community services

- **Devices**
  - Provide free devices to those in need.

  - Work with LOTI on the Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme Device Upcycling Scheme.

  - Exploring the possibility of a device recycling service with local partners.

- **Jobs and Training**
  - Signposting relevant initiatives to residents, including the Microsoft AI Interviews and LinkedIn employment skills.

  - Highlighting the initiatives under the Southwark Economic Renewal Plan.

  - The Essential Digital Skills Action Plan sets out the Council's ambitions and activities towards raising levels of essential digital skills for work. An example of this is the essential digital skills for work courses at Southwark Works pilot, the results of which will be analysed to develop this offer further.

  - The Stride programme is supporting Southwark residents to enter higher-skilled careers in the digital sector through apprenticeships, training, mentoring and work placements.

  - Forging further commitments with Southwark's key partners to help deliver further jobs and skills related programmes, including Microsoft, Hitachi, Community Fibre and Hyperoptic.

- **Digital Skills for residents**
  The Digital Inclusion Team are working on a number of projects to improve digital literacy and raise awareness of digital literacy as an essential skill for life. This includes:
  - Producing digital skills guides to be distributed to partner organisations, libraries and residents in need. An e-copy can be found at the below link:

https://www.southwark.gov.uk/schools-and-education/internet-and-digital-skills/your-internet-skills

- o Creating digital how-to videos and hosting them on the Southwark website. This will empower and enable residents to self-learn certain tasks. These can be found here: https://www.southwark.gov.uk/schools-and-education/internet-and-digital-skills/our-skills-guide-and-videos
- o Promoting the Digital Champions Scheme in which residents can volunteer to become digital champions and receive training to support digitally excluded residents. Digital Champions will receive accredited training, support and more as part of this programme and can apply for the opportunity below: https://forms.southwark.gov.uk/ShowForm.asp?fm_fid=1864 For any further queries please contact Digital.Inclusion@southwark.gov.uk

- o Partnering with local universities such as LSBU and Goldsmith for the Digital Champions programme

- o Working with frontline services and local organisations to upskill their staff, giving them the tools to become Digital Champions and support their service users

- o Working with the Great Estates Team to survey residents on the Friary Estate and understand their digital skills level in order to provide support

- o Working with Libraries colleagues to put on a Digital Skills Day for residents to receive in-person support and find out more about the digital inclusion initiatives across Southwark.

- **Digital Education for All**
    - o Creating a glossary of terms that are commonly used in the sector but not widely known e.g. LoRaWAN, IoT and sharing with residents and internal partners.

    - o Create a Southwark Council Digital Standard curriculum which identifies the skills that all residents should possess.

    - o Developing an online one-stop-stop for all things Digital – The Southwark Digital Directory.

    - o Delivering a programme of workshops/hackathons with external technology partners for school children, to develop talent within the borough.

We will continue our focus on:	Deliverables:
Affordable Broadband	- Signpost and promote existing affordable broadband schemes and work with council services to engage digitally excluded residents with identified schemes. - Provide access to free broadband solutions and explore broadband organisations to supply subsidised broadband. - Identify potential recipients of subsidised broadband - Engage with policy makers to ensure the provision of broadband is incorporated into policy and procurement. - Produce suggestions for most appropriate

	connectivity options for each service.
Devices	• Donating devices to residents and organisations in need • Provide access to subsidised devices • Recycle disused devices and inform policy on reuse scheme • Work with the Shared Technology Service on the recycling of old devices as part of the device refresh cycle • Work with LOTI on the Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme Device Upcycling Scheme.
Jobs & Training	• Work with external organisations to promote job opportunities and employment initiatives • Signposting relevant initiatives to residents including the Microsoft AI Interviews and LinkedIn employment skills • Work with council job brokerage and other partners on an annual digital skills day
Skills for residents	• Continue to support digitally excluded residents in the borough through digital and in-person sessions • Pilot digital support in specific TRAs and community centres • Develop and promote digital inclusion learning resources on the website and through printed guides • Continue to run the digital champions scheme and expand to further organisations. Working with frontline services and local organisations to upskill their staff, giving them the tools to become Digital Champions and support their service users
Education for all	• Share best practices, lessons learned and identify opportunities for collaboration through working with external, internal and the voluntary community • Work with external partners to develop a high quality curriculum for schools and residents • Identify the baseline of digital exclusion in the borough and use the LOTI Bank of personas for a better understanding of resident needs • Identify the skills gap in the digital inclusion & skills offering and leverage partnerships in the borough • Working with external organisations and leveraging their expertise through Show & Tells and webinars.

Partnership Working & Resident -focused	- We will continue working with organisations, community groups, charities and academia to share best practices and increase cross-sector participation - We will continue to speak to our residents through focus groups, surveys and events in the borough to understand their needs better and make sure the services we deliver and tailored to their needs - We will engage with young residents in through workshops, hackathons and coding clubs.

Pillar 3 – Empowering local businesses

Our commitment

In order for businesses to participate in today's economy, they need to able to use new technology effectively. Access to fast and stable connection is also a key component for businesses and this pillar focuses on making sure the can access resources and training to transition online.

Objectives under the Technology & Digital Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025

- Southwark Council recently announced the launch of the Business Resilience Support Service, as part of one of its four key ambitions within the Council's Economic Wellbeing Strategy. Offering Southwark businesses access to fully funded business support, this new service is designed to help businesses survive in these challenging times and thrive long-term with grants of up to £5000. Further initiatives to support businesses can be found on the below page:

  https://www.southwark.gov.uk/business/business-support-and-advice/business- support.

- The Southwark Economic Renewal Plan lead by the Local Economy Team goes into further detail on the support available to businesses (See Appendix). The team will support by highlighting these to residents and sharing other opportunities available to businesses.

Pillar 4 – Improving resident experiences

- **Develop an online one-stop-shop for all things Digital and work with the different departments on their online channel shift.**

- **Deliver a programme of workshops with external technology partners for schoolchildren to develop talent within Southwark.**

Our commitment

Reviewing how we deliver council services to allow residents to have a seamless digital customer experience with us. We will consult residents on the issues that are relevant to them and ensure that no one is left behind by supporting residents with digital skills, connectivity, and devices. At Southwark Council, we recognise the changing needs of the citizen and will continue to promote a move to digital channels by providing online access to all services.

Objectives under Technology & Digital Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025

- We will review our services and online experiences to enable our residents to find the information and guidance they require, with an easy-to-use website that works on any device, to provide convenient digital services and personalised information.
- Digital engagement with residents will ensure they feel informed and listened to, in a world where public forums may not feel safe to them, or continue to be restricted. As council services digitalize, these improvements must be resident focused and accessible for all.
- As part of the Youth New deal, the council is developing a Youth Services Digital Hub, which will be easily accessible and ensure comprehensive, up to date and relevant information about activities and services in our borough for young people and their families. The new Digital Hub will create clear pathways for young people to access information around careers advice, emotional wellbeing and personal development. A specialist supplier has now been appointed to develop the solution and work is underway to create a flexible, user-friendly, interactive and future-proof portal. The development will include input from young people and it is expected to be ready to go live during the last week in March 2022.

In a series of resident focus groups, ideas around digital citizenship and smart borough were explored, which gave insight into resident attitudes and requirements.

The focus groups helped identified the following recommendations:

- Creation of community digital champions who can help introduce newer technologies to others in the community.
- Using digital to focus on community safety, well-being, and health, as these are aspects that residents place value on in Southwark.
- Developing an advocacy framework to provide support for residents who are not on-line.
- Access to connectivity and devices and skepticism around data sharing are seen as barriers to digital citizenship, and will be tackled through digital inclusion projects outlined in this report. Working with digital champions to develop an advocacy framework, to go alongside digital transformation of council services, will be key to including residents on our journey.

We will continue our focus on:	Deliverables:
Establishing a digital citizen programme	Working with customer services and the organisation transformation team we have identified **ten key services** that we will work to transform by; • Reviewing the customer experience end to end, to enable a seamless experience. • Reducing calls by automating and digitising processes. • Giving residents updates on service progress. • Ensuring payments can be made online. • Joining up technology to create a single customer record.
Transforming Southwark's website	• Introduce a revised web delivery model and conduct a complete review of website content. • To ensure improved customer journeys, implementation of guidance to remove PDF documents, data capture forms and telephone numbers. • Continuing with proof of concept work with housing solutions and service teams to introduce chat bot technology. • Implementing single sign on, personalisation, updates and notifications to reduce follow up calls.
Supporting Public Health, Adult Social Care and Supporting Families to utilize digital health technologies. Using technology to engage and empower citizens, to enable social action and support our residents to live independent lives	• Developing online service directory of health information. • Developing expertise and knowledge in assistive technology and Digital Health to promote early prevention and independence. • Developing a data strategy and predictive analytics through workshops and ideation using Power Bi.

Pillar 5 - Supporting our staff

Our commitment

Ensuring that council staff have the skills, devices and modern workplace technology to do their job, and to enable them to deliver improved public services across communities.

We will ensure that we make the required investment to keep our services accessible and secure. We will use technology to introduce new ways of working to reduce processes and to help us to improve and anticipate service requirements.

Objectives under the Technology & Digital Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025

Access to modern workplace technology – Staff have access to the technology and the skills to enable them to deliver services to residents as efficiently as possible. We will review back-office service functions to reduce processes, integrate, automate and use emerging technology to help us to improve and anticipate service requirements. By embracing emerging technology, data and new ways of working, we can deliver improved public services.

Data Enabled - our Smart Council and Smart Borough projects will enable us to experiment with data, to understand how our residents live and work in the Borough. We will work with partners to try to connect and share our data and to use operational data to enable early intervention and predict future council services.

We will continue our focus on:	Deliverables:
Delivering modern, reliable, secure and cost-effective access to technology and improved end user experience.	• Cloud Migration to the Microsoft Azure Cloud, exit of previous data centres. • Move to Windows 10 laptop estate for all office-based workers, to increase agility in working.

	• Full implementation of Office 365, including Exchange Online, Teams Telephony, move to SharePoint Online. • Introduction of a formal A 'Bring Your Own Device' policy, including security parameters to ensure staff can access their emails, calendar and Teams on their personal devices. • Move to a new Microsoft Licensing of E5, which gives all staff access to standard Microsoft applications including PowerBI and Telephony. • Introduction of softphone telephony using Microsoft Teams Telephony.
Developing a new front-line worker programme to provide technology solutions aims to address disconnected staff.	• Deploying new tools such as smartphones and access to corporate systems, such as booking leave and sickness, as well as access the intranet.
Embedding a digital culture to promote new ways of working	• A new programme of Digital Champions in each service to drive the culture of technology transformation and adoption. • Assessing and developing skills and confidence to adapt well to digital and new technologies and providing opportunities for colleagues to safely experiment and innovate.
To promote Technology Transformation as a strategic enabler:	• Supporting business process transformation, information management and business intelligence. • Through corporate technology solutions to enable automation; improved integration between front and back office. • Introducing 'fit for the future' and 'future proof' technology, identifying future trends and being ambitious in our technology offering. • Refresh our technology estate to ensure we are offering choice in areas of smartphones and accessibility to corporate applications or devices.
Working with external partners to implement a Cyber Security policy and implement recommendations.	• The implementation of the policy will be audited in 2021 to provide assurance around Southwark's infrastructure and technology desktop network.
Cyber protection including	• Real time email risk assessment • Incident management & training
Reviewing our IT disaster recovery and business continuity provision.	• Reporting on a monthly basis we will monitor the number of P1 incidents and review current response requirements.
To improve performance and provide greater reliability	• The upgrading of edge switches and increase in network capacity.
Data Centre improvements including;	• Shared Remote Desktop Session Host (RDSH) solution.

	• Robust backup of Data
To develop a data strategy focusing on;	• Automation to collect, store and data. • Retention/storage policy • Data collection policy • Predictive analytics • Data tools • Data sharing
Implementation of Dynamic CRM portals to join resident data	• Identify opportunities to rationalise and standardise the technology estate further to reduce disparate data sets and create one customer record.

Appendix

Southwark Economic Renewal Plan

https://www.southwark.gov.uk/business/economic- renewal-plan

Southwark Council Essential Digital Skills Action Plan
https://www.southwark.gov.uk/assets/attach/12143/Essential-Digital-Skills-Action-Plan

Southwark Council Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan

https://www.southwark.gov.uk/assets/attach/48607/Climate-Change-Strategy-July-2021-.pdf

Southwark Stands Together

https://www.southwark.gov.uk/engagement-and-consultations/southwark-stands-together

Southwark Health & Wellbeing Strategy

https://www.southwark.gov.uk/assets/attach/7208/Southwark-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy-2015_final.pdf

Southwark Council Customer Access Strategy

http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s92432/Appendix%201%20Corporate%20Customer%20Access%20Strategy%20Final.pdf

UK Digital Strategy

http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s92432/Appendix%201%20Corporate%20Customer%20Access%20Strategy%20Final.pdf

GLA Digital Access Mission

https://www.london.gov.uk/coronavirus/londons-recovery-coronavirus-crisis/recovery-context/digital-access-all

LOTI Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme

https://loti.london/projects/diip/

LOTI Digital Exclusion Mapping Project

https://loti.london/projects/cif-data/