

Bringing History to Life in Southwark

As part of their wide range of GIS services to clients, CDR Group has been making historic maps and drawings accessible for more than ten years. Their skills were recently called upon by the London Borough of Southwark. The GIS Manager at Southwark, Stuart Carter, had discovered an old archive of maps. Recognising the quality and potential interest of these maps Stuart realised that it was a shame if they were to remain hidden away. Stuart therefore engaged CDR Group to make this historic record of the Borough available both internally to the Borough and externally to the wider public via the internet.

The 82 maps Stuart had uncovered were Ordnance Survey maps from 1894 and 1922 but later amended by the London County Council between 1936 and 1952. The maps covered the whole of the Borough of Southwark and were each about A0 in size and were at a scale of 88 feet to the inch (or 1:1,056 for you younger people!).

CDR's task involved firstly scanning each of the maps using our large-format scanning equipment. Each of the images was then cropped along what is known as the "neat line". The cropped images were further manipulated to produce a true rectilinear image with the top edge of the map being horizontal. The fourth stage is to generate geo-referencing data for each image so that they can be loaded into a GIS such as MapInfo Professional. This was successfully completed and the public can view the finished data on Southwark's website under the "Maps" tab, along with the modern day mapping and imagery.