

# ***Albion Street – Café Conversations***



# ALBION STREET – CAFÉ CONVERSATIONS

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Prussian nobleman Baron Charles Louis von Pöllnitz, who visited London in 1728, described coffeehouses as one of the great pleasures of the city. He describes how it is "a Sort of Rule with the English, to go to coffee-houses where they talk of Business and News, read the Papers, and often look at one another." Some very famous companies even started as coffeehouses. Lloyds of London, an insurance brokerage company, began as Edward Lloyd's coffeehouse on Tower Street around 1688.

Today the coffee house culture is gradually returning and it is in this context that the idea for a series of four ***Albion Street - Café Conversations*** was conceived. It was thought that the informal setting of a coffeehouse would encourage discussions amongst local people about their ideas and aspirations for the future of Albion Street. Funding for the conversations was provided by Southwark Alliance through the Area Management and Volunteer Centre Southwark through the Active Citizens Hub. The work was deemed to be an extension of the Canada Water Consultative Forum (CWCF) remit.

## 2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Albion Street, London SE16 was once a thriving, bustling retail street at the heart of the Rotherhithe docklands community. Today it is mostly a shabby, somewhat down at heel thoroughfare, surrounded by social housing and sandwiched between the multi-million pound Canada Water Regeneration and the historic Rotherhithe Village, with its expensive riverside dwellings. The street extends from the Rotherhithe roundabout across Swan Road to Canon Beck Road. The entrance to the Rotherhithe Tunnel runs behind the premises on the north west side of Albion Street. There is no vehicular access from Albion Street onto the roundabout.

Albion Street is the London home of two Scandinavian Churches. The Norwegian Church, by the Rotherhithe roundabout, is a listed building with an exquisite Viking ship weather vane on its spire. The Finnish Church, mid way along the street, is more modern building with a bell tower. However, apart from their Christmas and Easter Fairs there is currently little interaction between the large number of nationals who attend the churches and the local community. Opposite the Norwegian Church is well kept Business Centre. It is quite self contained and has little impact on the economy of the street. In front of the church is a disused and boarded up public convenience.

After this, mostly impressive start to the street the buildings and their uses go rapidly downhill with a few notable and encouraging exceptions. The London Borough of Southwark (LBS) is the freeholder of many of the properties in the street. It is therefore within the council's power to have a significant influence on the future of Albion Street. The architecturally bland and unattractive Rotherhithe Civic Building, which houses the library on the ground floor and BEC (an education and language training provider) on the first floor dominates the streetscape on the north-west side. It was built in 1972 and opened by Tommy Steele in 1975. The entrance, with excellent disabled access, is from a small, neglected square at the north-east side of the building. The empty plinth in the square once housed a statue of Tommy Steele. In Spring 2011 the library will relocate to a state of the art new building at Canada Water. LBS also owns the block opposite the library, which has sixteen retail units at street level with residential above. A number of the unit's leases are in the hands of one proprietor. Current uses include three takeaway food outlets and a double-

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fronted betting shop and the recently opened attractive Italian café, Deli Felice. The shops do little to cater for the diverse needs of the immigrant population and there are a number of empty premises. At either end of the parade of shops there are public houses. One is a going concern, the recently painted Albion, mainly patronised by people from the immediate vicinity. The other, The Little Crown, has been boarded up for many years. There is a third at the far end of the street, The Lord Nelson, which no longer operates as a public house.

The Albion Street Health Centre occupies premises mid way along the street. There are concerns that the viability of the health centre could be jeopardised by Southwark PCT plans for a polyclinic in the area. The Albion Street Job Centre building has been unoccupied since the very busy Job Centre relocated several years ago.

Albion Primary School has spacious grounds abutting Albion Street which are usually only used during school hours. The school's intake is predominately from the local housing estates which surround the school. Over 50% of the pupils are eligible for free school meals and are in the top 25% of children in LBS defined as 'obese'.

The street is often desolate in the evenings. Since the Canada Water tube and bus stations opened in 2000 the usage of Rotherhithe tube station and the footfall in Albion Street has steadily declined. Local young people tend to loiter on the pavement outside the bookmakers or the library as there is no where else for them to go. Café Silka, the Indian Restaurant and the dry cleaners attract some people from outside the immediate area, as there is usually space to park outside the shops. The closure of the East London Line has had an impact on the custom from Wapping.

The consequence of all of the above is that the majority of the footfall is made up of people travelling to and from Albion Street Health Centre, Albion School and the existing library. People from the wider community currently have few reasons for visiting Albion Street. Unfortunately, in many people minds the name Albion Street is synonymous with ' a place to be avoided'

The existing Southwark Plan Policy 1.8 classifies 22-52 Albion Street as having 'vitality and viability with a protected shopping frontage'. LBS has used this policy to refuse planning applications for retail use in other buildings in Albion Street.

The area around St Mary's Church, Mayflower Wharf and Brunel, Rotherhithe – a few minutes walk from Albion Street - is designated in the Southwark Plan as an area of strategic cultural area. The aim of this designation being to encourage visitors eastwards as stated in the London Plan and to protect and enhance the provision of arts, culture and tourism, which if successfully managed can stimulate investment, employment and improved business and public perception.

The emerging Canada Water Area Action Plan suggests, amongst other things, remodelling Albion Primary School to include a parade of shops in its front garden and promoting tourism.

### 3. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of the '**Café Conversations**' was to stimulate discussion about shaping the future of Albion Street. The four conversations provided local stakeholders with an opportunity to express how they visualise the long term prospects for Albion Street and its environs.

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It is important that the local community formulates its own vision and aspirations for the area. This will empower the community to have a voice and ensure that the Canada Water developers and the London Borough of Southwark listen and take on the tough issues and broker agreements between the different interests. The community will also be able to contribute to the shaping of the future, cohesive services and thus ensure that Albion Street remains at its heart and is not marginalised within the wider Canada Water re development.

The findings of each conversation are contained in Appendices B – E.

### 4. PROCESS

CWCF encouraged a number of local people with various levels of interest and expertise in the field of regeneration to volunteer and to help plan the conversations. The volunteers were also to act as hosts and facilitators. The 'Albion Street team' (AST) then joined forces with a group of predominately Bangladeshi young people from the Rockingham Estate who were also planning a series of conversations, for two days of training. There was apprehension amongst both groups as to whether shared training between two such disparate parties would be productive. To everyone's surprise and delight the two groups gelled and each hosted a training session led by a professional facilitator. Thus everyone was able gain insight into the issues.

After much debate, the AST agreed an over arching theme, namely :

**YESTERDAY has passed**

**T O D A Y will within 24 hours**

**But T O M O R R O W is forever**

A headline topic – with three strands - was then identified for the first three Albion Street – Café Conversations namely :

- Yesterday, Today and Obstacles to tomorrow
- Business, Retail & Public Futures
- Arts, Culture and Visitors

The fourth and final conversation was intended to consolidate the suggestions from the first three and hence was given the title :

- Vision for the Future

Which was discussed in the context of what is actually already happening at Canada Water, namely the new library with its performance space and 300 flats and retail on Site B (adjacent to Canada Water) and 600 flats on Site B (next to bus station)

The AST hosted and facilitated the four, two hour conversations. Guests sat informally around tables of their choice. Complimentary refreshments were provided.

The format for the conversations was broadly similar, namely :

1. General Introduction about the purpose of the conversations and signing up to code of Conduct.
2. A guest speaker to initiate the conversation on part 1

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3. Individual tables to continue the dialogue and the facilitator to take notes.
4. People moved tables
5. A fun quiz on Part 2
6. People moved tables
7. A guest speaker / reference material on Part 3
8. Individual tables continued the dialogue and the facilitator took notes
9. Brief review of everyone's ideas and suggestions

Initially it was thought formal invitations to the major stakeholders in the area would be best approach. However as the project evolved it became apparent that in order to give all the local residents and stakeholders an opportunity to participate it would be necessary to hand deliver invitations to all dwellings and businesses in a prescribed area. A geographic area bordered by Moodkee, Canon Beck, River Thames and Elephant Lane was 99.9 % covered. People were asked to RSVP on a first come, first served basis, as the chosen venue and the whole idea of a conversation is only possible with about 20 people. Extensive personal networking was also undertaken by the team to encourage people from all walks of life and all ages to attend.

Deli Felice @ Albion, a recently opened Italian delicatessen on Albion Street was identified as being the ideal venue to host the four conversations. With the best will in the world, it was never going to be possible to select a time and day that suited everybody. Tuesdays, 4 – 6 was seemed to be the most suitable for the majority.

### **5. OUTCOMES / FINDINGS**

The overwhelming message from all four of the well attended conversations was that people want Albion Street to :

- be revived and integrated into the community
- regain its former status of a desirable and useful place to visit
- host a cultural / arts activity in the Civic Centre once the library relocates.
- Be a major player in realising the area's enormous arts, culture and visitor potential.

Doing nothing and sitting back allowing further decay is not an option as it was felt this would lead to further social fragmentation. Nor did people want 'quick fix' activities like street fairs, which are in essence expensive, one-minute wonders – soon forgotten. People want a series of strategic, viable and sustainable long-term initiatives to be implemented, with particular emphasis on youth provision and training and employment opportunities. It was felt that a more inspirational LBS lettings policy was a key to the future. LBS, being the major freeholder does not need to evoke compulsory purchase powers to make successful revival possible. It was people's view that time was of the essence and that there must be positive action taken before Rotherhithe Station and the East London Line re opens in Summer 2010, so that when people start to re form their routes they will include Albion Street. Comprehensive plans for the use of the library building after Spring 2011 must also be well advanced when the Rotherhithe library does relocate, so that the Albion Street building is not empty for a long period.

There were a very wide range of ideas about what form the revival could take and how it would be sustained. A vision for the street follows and lists of everyone's ideas and thoughts are contained in Appendix B –E.

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The feedback forms were complimentary about the format and content of the conversations. The negative comments were focused on the acoustics and ventilation of the venue. It had been envisaged that the same people would attend all four sessions. However, it transpired that although willing, many people were unable to commit so much time.

Despite the team's best endeavours and many verbal promises, the demographic mix of the actual attendees was not as varied as had been hoped. There was a noticeable lack of young people and of people from ethnic minorities.

Commitment from the local community and partnership working is critical to the success of any revival of Albion Street. Local stakeholders including the Norwegian and Finnish Churches must be encouraged to interact more with Albion Street and provide it with a degree of economic and cultural stimulus. The nearby Swedish Mission could also play a part. The National Day festivities of the Scandinavian churches attract many thousands to the area, but very few locals know about the events and even fewer local businesses benefit from this influx of people.

The informal setting, with the complimentary drinks and cakes, encouraged many people to take part who had not previously engaged with public consultation nor the regeneration process. A very positive by product of the **Café Conversations** was that many people got to know each other and the local area. There was even talk of continuing the network by forming a 'Friends of Albion Street' .

### 6. VISION FOR THE FUTURE

A vibrant, busy, attractive and well-maintained street, with a range of retail, leisure and specialist provision that meets the needs of the diverse local community and which attracts visitors from a wider area.

**Targets to be achieved before the East London Line re opens in 2010 and Site A (adjacent to bus station) obtains full planning permission.**

- Raise awareness of the new transport links to encourage potential employers to set up in the area and stimulate the local economy.
- High quality, distinct, well-lit and safe pedestrian and cycle links to Canada Water, Rotherhithe tube, Southwark Park, Thames and buildings of interest.
- Deal Porter Way to be permanently established as a continuous, wide,- with attractive and unhindered sight lines and 24 hour access - pedestrian and cycle route linking Canada Water and Site A with Swan Street and Surrey Water.
- Comprehensive and clearly visible signage for locals and visitors.
- LBS to be proactive at promoting vacant properties and usage mix.
- LBS to review its bureaucratic lettings policy so as to reflect markets forces and be more conducive to the time scale of potential and desirable quality tenants.
- Identify a specialism to make the street a destination. Be it for art materials; a street market, with complimentary shops; London Scandinavian Centre; a colony of language schools; specific interest book shops; quality ethnic food; artisans.

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- Provision which attracts a range of people to the street i.e. shops / café / delicatessen / specialist shops all with attractive and active frontages.
- Varied opening hours of the shops and activities, so as to meet the needs of visitors, workers en route home, young people and day time footfall.
- Working in partnership with the Scandinavian Churches, the Business Centre and other employers to stimulate the economy and raise the profile of Albion Street.
- BEC, the Business Centre and others to further develop their training provision and initiate employment and life chances.
- BEC to re-launch its evening classes
- All LBS buildings given a facelift and kept in good order.
- Library to be instructed to improve the appearance of its Albion Street windows
- High quality public realm including regularly cleaning and pruning the civic square and all the other public spaces, repairing street surfaces and painting street furniture and re-instating the Tommy Steele statue.
- Satisfactorily resolving the impasse regarding the former public toilets.
- Dialogue with the owners of the former Job Centre to use the building.

### **Targets to be achieved immediately the library re locates in 2011**

- Continue to refine the former to ensure a healthy and cohesive community.
- A comprehensive long-term business plan for the future of the Civic Centre building. Setting out whether the current building is to remain or whether it is to be demolished and re built. BEC must be a major contributor to the plan as it is – and must remain – a significant stakeholder in Albion Street.
- Whatever the building on the site, it must have an active, attractive frontage.
- If the current building remains, its use must attract a significant footfall and serve the demographics of the area, i.e. a musicians, artisans, cultural centre, life long learning classes. Offices which closes at 5.00 would be the street's death knell.
- Uses of the Albion Street building must not replicate those at Canada Water.
- A well-known patron to raise the profile of the facilities, the street and the area.

Many people were not aware that the first floor of the current library building contains a stage and a projection room. The conversations heartily endorsed BEC as much valued local resource. The vast majority thought it was highly desirable that the organisation should remain in Albion Street. Building on this and the enthusiasm from all the conversations for some sort of 'cultural / arts centre' in the library building, a number of people held a 'fifth conversation' to explore the idea of BEC moving to the ground floor and the first floor stage etc etc being utilised. The Bubble Theatre currently has no performance space and the Southwark Playhouse new build at The Elephant & Castle is sometime away.

## 7. CONCLUSION

Re affirming Albion Street's identity, possibly as London's Scandinavian Cultural Centre and ensuring its successful inclusion in the Canada Water regeneration, as per CWC's Vision, is of paramount importance to the well being of the whole Rotherhithe area.

Many of Albion Street's current complex ills can only be resolved by LBS being committed to working in partnership with the local community. Only by drawing up and delivering a bespoke skilled, creative and cohesive agenda is Albion Street likely to be successfully revived. LBS can, by imaginative use of its planning and land ownership powers, investing in public infrastructure, improving the local environment, addressing public safety, supporting the skills and development of young people and adults who live in the area, transform Albion Street.

Albion Street is in the Council's gift.



**APPENDIX A**

**1. INVITEES**

Albion Primary School  
Albion Street Health Centre  
Albion Street – Rotherhithe Library  
Albion Street Shopkeepers / Restaurant proprietors

Organisations : City Business Centre / BEC / Brunel / Sands Films / Bubble / T & T

Churches : Finnish / Norwegian / St Mary's / St Peters / Free

LBS : Surrey Docks and Rotherhithe Cllrs; SBP - Darryl Telles; Carles Miralles;

Publicans : The Albion / The Mayflower / The Ship / Adam & Eve / The Angel

Residents : All people in an area bordered by the Thames, Elephant Lane, Canon Beck Road , Moodkee – Lower Road.

Youth : Time & Talents youth club / Bacons College

Val Shawcross GLA, Simon Hughes MP

Royal Society of Arts

**2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

***Speakers :***

Hilary Satchwell – Town Planner  
Carole Walsh – Southwark Tour Guides  
Stephen Humphries – LBS Local History Library  
Craig Dove – LBS  
Tim Cutts – LBS  
Community Wardens  
Renato D'Aiello – Musician

***Funders :***

Volunteer Centre Southwark Active Citizens Hub - Natasha Plaistow  
Southwark Alliance / South Bermondsey Partnership - Darryl Telles

***Trainers, Facilitators and Volunteers :***

Julia Honess  
Rockingham Estate Youth  
John Taylor; Marion Weatherhead; Amanda Squires; Pauline Adenwalla;  
Ann Clayton (CWCF)

***Reference Materials Used :***

Broadway Market  
Greenfields – Lower Marsh  
Lordship Lane  
Canada Water Regeneration pamphlets  
Trail Around Rotherhithe, LBS History Library photographs

***Venue :*** Felice & Maddalena of Deli Felice @ Albion

**APPENDIX B**

**CONVERSATION 1 (5/5/09) – Yesterday, Today and Obstacles to tomorrow**

About twenty local residents and stakeholders were joined by :

Val Shawcross GLA; Tim Cutts LBS; Stephen Humphries LBS Local History; Natasha Plaistow Volunteer Centre Southwark; Julia Honess Consultant; Sultana and Mujhib Rockingham Young People

**1. YESTERDAY**

Stephen Humphries – local Historian, spoke for a few minutes describing Albion Street of yesteryear in its heyday. The people at the four tables then discussed

*3 things they miss from yesterday*

**FINDINGS**

- ◆ Butchers, wet fish shop, green grocers, bakers and the Church stall.
- ◆ Pie and mash Shop
- ◆ Caryatids
- ◆ Market – Farmers/Bric-a-Brac
- ◆ People walking on the street, make it easier to walk into the street from any direction
- ◆ Sense of community
- ◆ Specialist shops reflecting community diversity
- ◆ Council to encourage people to set up new business by financial assistance on charges

People moved tables

**2. TODAY**

Fun 12 question Quiz to establish how well people know today's street. People were surprised at the things they had not known / observed.

Guests were then asked to identify three things they would like to retain

**FINDINGS**

- ◆ The library
- ◆ The Betting Shop
- ◆ Scandinavian Christmas Fairs and restaurants
- ◆ Scandinavian Churches
- ◆ Cafes/Restaurants / chip shop & takeaways
- ◆ Public services (health centre, school )
- ◆ Business Centre
- ◆ BEC and link to local unemployed
- ◆ Job Centre sorely missed
- ◆ Selling points proximity to river and historical aspects

### 3. TOMORROW

People were asked to identify what obstacles they foresaw to a (successful) tomorrow

#### FINDINGS

- ◆ Loss of visitors from outside with closure of library and job centre
- ◆ Lack of input from REAL local people i.e. from the estates – survey them ..involve school
- ◆ Not a replica of anything at Canada Water – needs to be unique
- ◆ No bus .. better access to Brunel Road
- ◆ Use library as a theatre
- ◆ Funding
- ◆ Get Community involved
- ◆ Accessibility –both pedestrian and vehicular
- ◆ A direct route to Canada Water
- ◆ Better access to main roads
- ◆ Area needs more identity
- ◆ Need to overcome perception of the street ‘not being safe’
- ◆ Bellenden Road – Artist’s regeneration
- ◆ Class Issue
- ◆ Good market to bring people in
- ◆ Appearance of shop / pub fronts
- ◆ Derelict buildings blighting the area
- ◆ Improve parking
- ◆ Poor signage
- ◆ Need for cohesive culture/ character/identity i.e. clear strategy plan
- ◆ Reputation of the street impacts on late opening BEC had to discontinue evening classes because people reluctant to visit premises in the evening.



**APPENDIX C**

**CONVERSATION 2 (12/5/09) - Business, Retail & Public Futures**

About 16 local people were joined by :

Craig Dove , LBS ILRE , Laura Blunt RSA, Natasha Plaistow VCS, Stephen Humphries LBS

**1. Business**

Craig spoke for few minutes about his new post with LBS, namely responsibility for improving local retail environment.

*People were then given brochures on the successful Broadway Market, and asked what they thought would work / not work in Albion Street*

**FINDINGS**

**WOULD WORK**

- ◆ If market has to be unique as well as serving the local population
- ◆ Should be an evening offer to draw working professionals
- ◆ An attraction needed to replace library
- ◆ An initial magnet e.g. boutique is needed round which others could cluster
- ◆ Perhaps church stalls be a nucleus
- ◆ Broadway Market too 'up market' for Albion Street
- ◆ Southwark Park too far from Albion Street unlike London Fields
- ◆ Market stalls maybe twice a week
- ◆ Specialist shops

**WOULD NOT WORK**

- ◆ Too expensive for Albion Street
- ◆ Shops closing early e.g. 5.00pm as not many people in Albion Street in the day time Broadway market

**2. Retail –**

*A fun exercise SHOP 'Til you drop ..everyone given £ 50 to spend in Albion Street*

- ◆ Café food
- ◆ Glass of wine
- ◆ Piece of art work, speciality food, clothing
- ◆ Books
- ◆ Coffee
- ◆ Grocers veg / fruit / essential ... buy on way home from work
- ◆ Café Silka meal for 2
- ◆ Bakery / specialist food shops
- ◆ Hardware / DIY / garden centre / plant shop / book shop
- ◆ Saturday food shopping -- specialist shops ..picture framing craft, 2<sup>nd</sup> hand books

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- ◆ Pub selling lunch ..particularly Sunday lunch
- ◆ Card shop
- ◆ Theatre / gallery / pre / post theatre dinners
- ◆ Flowers from an independent florist
- ◆ Lemonade and pastry in café
- ◆ Fabric from an independent sewing shop
- ◆ Imagine a REAL parade of shops .. selling useful, practical items yet pleasant enough to stop to have lunch or a snack ..Leigh on Sea ( Broadway Parade)
- ◆ Unlikely that youths would congregate as popular in day time ..no night time youth attraction
- ◆ Specialist food ethnic foods ..later closing

### 3. We are the FREEHOLDERS

Each table was a specific sector freeholder and had to attract a mix of leaseholders to Albion Street and raise the profile of the street.

#### Retail & Business

Given pamphlet about Lower Marsh and a very successful mini market Greenfields, containing a Bakers, Cheese shop , Waterloo wines, vegetable shop etc etc etc .. stays open 'til 8.00 in the evening to catch people going home from work.

#### Churches / Baltic Connection

Given pamphlet about Norwegian Day 17<sup>th</sup> May, a very big Norwegian event in the Church and Southwark Park . Many locals totally oblivious of this local event.

#### Leisure

Presentation by a local resident .Renato D'Aiello [www.myspace.com/renatodaiello](http://www.myspace.com/renatodaiello) international jazz musician / lecturer at Goldsmiths wants to convert the library into a music centre

#### Public Sector

### FINDINGS

much as part 2 ....

- ◆ Overwhelming consensus that the library must have an interesting use to make Albion Street unique. Much interest in Renato's proposal for a music or an Arts Centre
- ◆ Marylebone Lane retail mix achieved by the deWalden Estate being very careful to whom they lease properties.



### CONVERSATION 3 (9/6/09) - ARTS, CULTURE AND VISITORS

About 16 local people were joined by :

Cllr Nelson, Cllr Noblet, Julia Honess, Carles Miralles

#### 1. Arts

#### Lydia Fraser Ward from The Bubble Theatre spoke about their work

Exercise –

LBS have asked you to put together a proposal to use the Library Space as a Centre for Arts. What would you like to see there and what do you perceive to be the obstacles that would need to be addressed

#### FINDINGS

- ◆ Use the library as a community space for courses for the community
- ◆ Local organisation / local churches
- ◆ Working lease with organisation
- ◆ Community events / apply for funding
- ◆ Publicity and advertising
- ◆ Community centre to attract people to the area
- ◆ Multi use to maximise use and maximise funding revenue
- ◆ Theatre , Aerobics , Gallery
- ◆ Consider adult education – use 1<sup>st</sup> floor – BEC could move to alternative suitable accommodation .... Even within the current building
- ◆ Funding issues – LBS needs to sell to help fund the new library
- ◆ Joint funding / income generation / commercial rent
- ◆ East London Line improving access
- ◆ Liase with Brunel about new space
- ◆ Appearance needs to be more inviting
- ◆ Replace old adult education sites such as Tabard Street
- ◆ Adult Learning service ( also fund family learning ) may move to Albion Street from Cator Street
- ◆ Multi purpose building for education – to replace lost schools
- ◆ Theatre – Arts Centre / Performance space (nucleus / anchor)
- ◆ Southwark cultural centre
- ◆ Theatre centre ( nearest equivalent Peckham Variety) connection
- ◆ Arts college for adults eg ceramics, life drawing, upholstery etc etc
- ◆ Adult / community education in arts and crafts , photography etc etc
- ◆ Gallery – local artists can exhibit can also be used for education in art – could offer support to local artists e.g. cheap studio space, advice etc etc
- ◆ Multi functional theatre, cinema, screening live events e.g. sport, opera, community events, weddings, school plays, could also be hired , concerts etc etc by people outside the community
- ◆ Space for young people to practice video / film making and music studios
- ◆ Shop for local artwork to be made and sold
- ◆ Snooker hall

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OBSTACLES ...money can become too focused on making money ...lose original purpose

### 2. Culture Speaker – from Southwark Tour Guides

Mentioned enormous potential for the area. There is a lot of interest in the history, architecture walks and talks etc etc etc. LBS have closed all tourist offices and appear to be only interested in promoting Bankside. There will be a few people on bicycles handing out information leaflets.

**Fun Quiz:** 'on our doorstep' *People were surprised about the wealth of things in the immediate area.*

Visitors – Albion Street once linked to Southwark Park, Knot Garden on River, Sunny statue garden on the River, St Olav's Square, Adams Gardens currently have a planning application for a cage play area

How can open spaces help revive Albion Street and how can Albion street help open spaces. Consider connectivity/accessibility between them

### 3. Visitors

An exercise for each table 'You have visitors coming to stay with you. They are a Mum and Dad with two children, a boy of 12 and a girl of 7 and they have brought granny along with them.

What would you take them to see and do locally, bearing in mind their different ages and possible interests'.

### FINDINGS

(NOTE ... unfortunately the wording of the exercise was ambiguous – hence exercise generated lists as opposed to pros and cons for various age groups etc etc)

- ◆ St Mary's Church , Norwegian Church
- ◆ Brunel Museum, Lavender Pond / Pump House -- needs to open more
- ◆ Need for a tea room , Surrey Water ( needs a wild life board)
- ◆ Walking along the river
- ◆ Sands Studios ... ( recent very good Musical Hall exhibition – looking for a permanent home – serves good lunch when exhibitions on )
- ◆ Restaurants – Rainbow, Café Silka, Simplicity
- ◆ Time & Talents, Southwark Park / Bandstand
- ◆ Café Gallery – needs activities for the young
- ◆ The Farm / Stave Hill / Eco Park / Russia Dock Woodlands
- ◆ Ferry to Canary Wharf , Mayflower / Angel pubs
- ◆ Surrey Quays Leisure centre
- ◆ Surrey Docks Water sports Centre



**CONVERSATION 4 (16/6/09) – Vision for the future**



About 16 local people were joined by :  
Simon Hughes MP; Tim Cutts LBS; Joe Agius LBS; Darryl Telles LBS

**1. Where other streets have been successfully revived**

Hilary Satchwell gave a presentation on the pros and cons of Lordship Lane.

Exercise on 3 good and 3 less good aspects of Lordship Lane.

**FINDINGS**

- ◆ LBS not the freeholder of Lordship Lane retail properties.
- ◆ Much family housing in the immediate vicinity, hence more footfall during the day.
- ◆ Distance is no object to people when they patronise a quality / specialist shop. (butchers in Lordship Lane / Mucky Pups at Rotherhithe Roundabout)
- ◆ Good mix of shops
- ◆ The fact that Sainsbury's Dog Kennel Hill is near .. but not totally detrimental to the survival of the local shops. The two can co exist.
- ◆ Price of some items prohibitive

**2. Albion Street in the context of the new CW library, Site B and Site A**

The Community Wardens also spoke briefly about the public safety issues relating to Albion Street – both past and present.

Exercise : Identify 3 good and 3 negative issues the new developments will have on Albion Street.

**FINDINGS**

- ◆ The CW library is an exciting building hence Albion Street must not replicate what is on offer there.
- ◆ There must be good links throughout the area. Albion Street and its environs must not be marginalised.

**3. The Vision**

Simon Hughes spoke of his belief that the successful future of street lay with maximising the potential of the existing Scandinavian links. He could envisage Rotherhithe being the vibrant Scandinavian Quarter of London. Many people supported this view.

People reviewed the wording of the overall vision for the area

**APPENDIX F**

**REPORT CIRCULATION**

**Albion Street Stakeholders**  
**Bermondsey Rotherhithe Development Partnership (BRDP)**  
**Canada Water Developers**  
**Canada Water Consultative Forum (CWCF)**  
**GLA Val Shawcross**  
**LBS Regeneration**  
**Rotherhithe Councillors**  
**Simon Hughes MP**  
**Southwark Alliance**  
**Surrey Docks Councillors**  
**Trainer & Facilitators**  
**Volunteer Centre Southwark**