

## **Brixton SPD Roadshow Comments Report**

### **1. Introduction**

A number of roadshows took place to raise awareness of the Brixton SPD consultation and to provide an opportunity for local people to have their say at a convenient location to them.

### **2. Methodology**

Roadshow locations were chosen to be in areas of high footfall and at a variety of times to appeal to a wide variety of audiences (both geographical and demographic). In addition, we wanted to target some audiences highlighted by the Equalities Panel – such as older people and younger people.

- Friday 8 February, Morley's department store (3pm to 6pm)
- Monday 11 February, Tesco, Acre Lane (11am to 2pm)
- Thursday 14 February, Ritzy (12 noon to 3pm)
- Wednesday 20 February, Brixton Recreation Centre (2pm to 5.30pm)
- Thursday 21 February, Accord Well and Warm Event (10.30am to 3pm).

Roadshows were staffed by officers working on the project who could respond to queries and encourage people to respond to the consultation via the questionnaire or general written comments. Comments made through discussion during the roadshows were also noted more generally and anecdotal feedback is included in this report.

Each roadshow involved two or three officers next to a Future Brixton pull-up banner. At the final two events a large Future Brixton banner that displayed a map of the SPD area was used also. Each roadshow also included copies of the SPD itself and lots of summary booklets.

Promotion of the roadshows was via:

- Posters and flyers distributed in Brixton town centre
- The summary booklet distributed through mailboxes in all Brixton wards
- The futurebrixton.org website
- The Future Brixton facebook page
- Tweets from @FutureBrixton @LambethRegen and @Lambeth\_council
- Email updates to the Future Brixton mailing list, linking to online detail of all activity.

Other promotion of the consultation more generally, included:

- Online banner advert on Brixton Blog
- Article and advert in Brixton Bugle
- Public notice in The Weekender
- Article in February edition of Lambeth Talk
- Plasma screen adverts in Lambeth Council customer centres
- Word of mouth and social networks via community stakeholders, local forums, re-tweets, and so on

### **3. Feedback and participation**

The roadshows proved to be effective at engaging with local residents. However, some of the roadshows were markedly busier than others. The Tesco, Morley's and Brixton Recreation Centre were particularly busy. Long conversations were more difficult at these locations though there were some occasional long discussions. Tesco was the busiest location and lots of summary booklets were distributed at this event. Everyone that exited the store had to pass us by.

The Ritzy and Accord events were quieter though engagement in these settings tended to lead to longer conversations. Long conversations about the proposals on average tended to last 5-10 minutes. The numbers indicated below are approximate and the emerging themes are anecdotal.

In general throughout these roadshows many people we talked to had already received the summary booklets through their doors at home. If this was the case we asked whether they had filled in the questionnaire yet and requested that they did so if they hadn't got around to it yet.

### **Morley's department store, Friday 8 February 2013 (3pm to 6pm)**

**Number of people handed booklets:** est. 180 and bulk quantities were left in the coffee shop within the store.

**Number of more in depth conversations:** 3

**Audience profile:** It was a very varied audience profile, with some changes throughout the period. Early on there were many mothers with small children; after 4pm there were quite a few high school pupils and later saw a number of post-work visitors to the department store. The demographic was largely female and very ethnically diverse.

**Location notes:** We chose this time slot as we were advised that it saw the highest evening footfall. Perhaps due to the poor weather, the store did not seem very busy on the day but the location of the roadshow (by the Mac concession) did seem to be the busiest part of the store. People appeared receptive of the booklet and seemed interested in the consultation but only three visitors wanted to have a more detailed discussion of the issues and one of these visitors had come specifically for the consultation.

**Themes and issues:**

- Concern was expressed about affordable retail rents – specifically in the market – and this probably related to local coverage and petition around the rent rises in Brixton Village
- There was discussion about high property prices and how this was related to the central London location and excellent public transport
- One visitor particularly liked the Windrush Square development
- Positive comments were received about the possibility of a new theatre coming to Brixton.

### **Tesco, Acre Lane, Monday 11 February 2013 (11am to 2pm)**

**Number of people handed booklets:** est. 325

**Number of more in depth conversations:** 5-6

**Audience profile:** It was a very varied audience profile. The demographic was a balanced mix of males and females and was very ethnically diverse. In terms of age there was a good mix of people with the majority being between the range of 25 and

75. There were slightly more people over 50 years than other segments. There were relatively few young people or young adults (below 25 years of age).

**Location notes:** We chose this time because of the likelihood of high footfall. This was affected slightly by poor weather in the morning period between 11-12 (light snow, heavy at times) but overall due to a high number of visitors travelling to the store by car the footfall was still high. The location could not have been better as everyone who left the store had to pass us by on their way out. However, there was not much space for long conversations because of this. In depth conversations were shorter than usual because of this fact (maybe 5 minutes maximum time for in depth conversations). There were 3 people who had specifically visited to talk to us.

**Themes and issues:**

- Concern regarding Brixton Recreation Centre and whether it would be retained and refurbished
- Concern regarding where investment would come from for improvements to existing facilities at Brixton Recreation Centre
- Concern regarding whether car parking for town centre visitors would be coming forward as part of future development on the Pope's Road site (currently a temporary ice rink)
- Positive comment was received about rooftop improvements to the Town Hall.

**The Ritzy, Thursday 14 February 2013 (12 noon to 3pm)**

**Number of people handed booklets:** est. 60-70 and bulk quantities were left in the coffee shop within the store.

**Number of more in depth conversations:** 2-3

**Audience profile:** It was a very varied audience profile, many bursts of visitors followed by quiet periods. The demographic was largely female (maybe at a ratio of 65% female, 35% male) and fairly diverse. There were also quite a number of older people throughout this event.

**Location notes:** We chose this time because of the likelihood of encountering older visitors to the cinema. The location was not ideal but the layout of the building does not endear itself to our requirements. As a result we had to move about away from our stand and SPDs to engage. Generally it was harder to get people to talk in this environment. Maybe because of all the locations this was the one where people will have paid already and were rushing to a showing or a meeting with a friend or family member in the coffee shop.

**Themes and issues:**

- Concern regarding Brixton Recreation Centre and whether it would be retained and refurbished
- Interest from South Korean media group 'Oh my news' International who interviewed us about the consultation
- Interest in Acre Lane and whether there was any scope for regeneration to come forward for this area
- Questions about the High Street and how busy it is. Was there anything we could do to improve this?

**Brixton Recreation Centre, Wednesday 20 February 2013 (2pm to 5.30pm)**

**Number of people handed booklets:** est. 280 and bulk quantities were left in the coffee shop within the centre.

**Number of more in depth conversations:** 5-6

**Audience profile:** It was a varied audience profile in terms of sex, however in terms of age the majority of attendees were between the ages of 25-45. There were some families including a few mothers with small children; there were quite a few high school pupils and post-work visitors later on. The demographic was very ethnically diverse. There were few older people. There were also quite a few young males.

**Location notes:** This was a very beneficial session. We distributed a lot of summary booklets and talked to a very varied demographic of people. This slot was chosen so that we captured both daytime and just after work audiences who attend the leisure centre. In the future an early morning or lunch-time slot may capture more pre-work or during-work lunchtime visitors. Many people reported that they had received the booklet already at home. Not all visitors had heard of what was planned though maybe because people travel from outside of Lambeth to use the Recreation Centre.

**Themes and issues:**

- Queries about the buses all terminating at the same place. A 'scrum' of people getting on and alighting in a small area.
- Some questions (though not as many as expected) about the future of the Brixton Rec and Ice Rink site next door.
- Question asked about the future of Southwyck House
- Support received about a theatre coming to Brixton
- Concern that artists retain space in any proposals coming forward in the future.

**Lambeth Accord Well and Warm Event, Thursday 21 February 2013 (10.30am to 3pm)**

**Number of people handed booklets:** est. 80-100 and bulk quantities were left in the the Accord building.

**Number of more in depth conversations:** 9

**Audience profile:** It was a targeted audience profile with not much change throughout the period. Almost all attendees were older people and some were people with disabilities. The demographic was a roughly even mix of male and female and was ethnically diverse. There were very few, if any young people.

**Location notes:**

**Themes and issues:**

- Difficulties for people with disabilities to use Atlantic Road because of how surfaced are currently.
- Many difficulties along Brixton Road for people with disabilities due to the amount of people and queues
- The council should improve the pavements as the paving slabs are very uneven.
- Celebrate Brixton's contribution from African and Caribbean communities and the unique offer from the outdoor market.
- Lambeth Council need to look after its residents who are going to be affected by the benefit cuts
- Preserve Rush Common
- Most people agreed with the content of the newsletter, but one lady refused to complete a questionnaire having seen the before and after photo on Somerleyton Road, she thinks the Council will make the area even worse.
- Question about whether East London Line would be coming to Brixton.
- Affordable housing questions regarding the splits of affordable housing and why 40% never seemed to be achieved.
- Questions about Brixton Square site and Barrat's involvement (affordable housing splits).

- Questions about within the 40% what the breakdown is between socially-rented and affordable housing.

#### **4. Evaluation**

This method of consultation proved to be an effective way of carrying out quite detailed engagement with a wide range of people. Comments were noted to include in this report but people were principally encouraged to complete a questionnaire to ensure their views were recorded in detail.

About 950 people were engaged with overall through the roadshows and, although based on anecdotal evidence, this formed a good balanced cross section of local people. Tesco and Brixton Rec Centre events were the best balanced in terms of demography. Where the Morley's event engaged more young women the Rec event engaged more young men. The Tesco, Ritzy and Accord events engaged many older people. There was not a good gender balance at each of the events but taken together a good balance was achieved.

We spoke to people from a broad range of ethnic groups. The people that tended to take more time to hold a conversation were older people. Most events attracted a mix of peoples from different backgrounds though the Tesco and Accord events tended to attract less affluent visitors in rented accommodation. Many of which may have been from local estates.

The locations achieved a good balance of visitors in general, some knowing a little or nothing about the programme and others being very well informed. Many had received the summary booklet already through their doors and so must have been local to the five Brixton wards of Ferndale, Coldharbour, Herne Hill, Brixton Hill and Tulse Hill.

The Ritzy location was least successful and in the future perhaps a busier time could be chosen for this roadshow event. The Morley's and Tesco events though successful were both hit by bad weather and may have seen more respondents had the weather or time of year been more accommodating.

The Tesco, Brixton Rec and Accord roadshows were successful in engaging with harder to reach residents.