

## **A BUSINESS MANIFESTO FOR CAMBERWELL AND ITS RESIDENTS**

Successful local (second tier) shops always contribute to the liveliness and well-being of a community, but in Camberwell many businesses have been forced to close. It is vitally important to preserve "second tier shopping areas" outside centres as places offering rents low enough to encourage local entrepreneurs and creative Camberwell. Such businesses need to be attractive, safe and accessible both by foot and by car.

Some suggestions follow:

### **BUSINESS PARKING**

#### **Principle**

Insufficient parking for businesses has contributed to the closure of many Camberwell businesses

#### **Proposals**

1. Dedicated visitor parking for all businesses, equating to at least one visitor space per shop within a 1 minute walk (such spaces to be nearer than the nearest residents' spaces)
2. Protection for businesses from parking on pavements outside or near shop fronts.
3. Protection for businesses from residents and goods vehicles parking long-term on-street outside shop fronts.
4. One business vehicle permit per independent business to be issued to the owner at residential rates (excluding cab firms), and dedicated business permit spaces to be introduced within a 5 minute walk of businesses (current rates are £334.40 for business permits, and £99.30 for residents' permits)

### **RENTAL**

#### **Principle**

Property developers have purchased retail properties with a view to conversion to residential use, having previously demanded unrealistic rents.

#### **Proposals.**

1. A moratorium on all conversions from shop retail to residential, pending a full review by the Council of trading conditions (thus keeping rents lower)
2. Compulsory purchase of empty shops, reducing average rents for business
3. Forced advertising of all shops for which landlords seek conversion to residential on the Southwark Council website for 6 months minimum, with all rent and purchase offers coming through Southwark Council's rates team in order to establish true market demand at that location
4. Identification of specific areas for which the "market rate" of rent could be challenged direct to the Valuations Office, based on poor infrastructure, high crime and empty shops locally.
5. A commitment to highlight the injustice of "upwards-only" rent clauses in leases

## **TRADER INFLUENCE**

### **Principle**

Small traders need to be able to contribute to decisions about their locality.

### **Proposals**

1. Sole traders and business owners should be able to transfer their ward vote to the area they trade in.
2. Sole traders and business owners should have the right to be consulted directly prior to the installation of any street furniture, whether by Southwark Council, TfL or utility companies

## **SHOP FRONT GRANTS**

Grants should not be released until full compliance with planning rules including conservation by all parts of the building has been achieved.

## **SECURITY**

Well-functioning shops contribute to the security of a neighbourhood, and their own security needs should be better recognised and helped by the council.