

CORSHAMSTREET
**AN EXPERIMENT ON PARTICIPATORY
WEBDOCUMENTARY**

Maria Court*

CorshamStreet

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Year: 2012

Country: London, UK

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Design: Matthew Lydiatt

Sound Design: Andres Silva

Videos: Maria Court

Neighbours' contributions: Tim Bergmeier, Simon & Nick, Sophie Riggs, Vj Eyeborg, David Marquez

Introduction

Corsham Street¹ is an experiment on participatory online documentary, reflecting on the topics of memory, local community and urban regeneration within a particular street in East London where I currently live.

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1) <http://www.corshamstreet.com>

My motivation for this project comes from my constant reflection on how cities are permanently being transformed in the pursue of private interests, provoking a feeling of helplessness in the citizens who witness how memory, the atmosphere, and aesthetics of spaces where people live, are destroyed without even stopping to think about what is being shattered.

The purpose was to create an online audiovisual album of the neighbourhood, focusing on the growing interactions within neighbours since the establishment of a local cafe, the physical and social impact of a series of commercial development projects on the street, and the collective memories of people living or working there.

This platform was thought as a tool to support and encourage relations and interactions within the local community, as well as making this community atmosphere visible, before the imminent construction of a new development that threatens to demolish a whole block of our street, forcing most of our community to move elsewhere.

Through analysing the filmmaking (offline) and web development (online) process of this project, this paper will describe all the stages of practical framework and theoretical research in which this project was developed.

The research of this paper was part of my dissertation for graduating at the MA in Creating Social Media at Goldsmiths University of London, 2011-12. The creation of this project was conceived within the belief that local communities' power should be the protagonist of changes in society. This platform appears as a way of empowering this community as a collective, generating an online intervention, which will leave a record of the past and present memories of the street, and hopefully will act as a tool to prevent the complete transformation of the community under commercial developments.

Urban Regeneration

My street is a quiet back alley, with an industrial warehouse look, just behind Old Street, in which a young dynamic community, small start-up offices, commercial stores, and now builders, come together. It could be a dreamed place to live in this city, quite central and well connected, but since I moved one year ago, I literally wake up every morning with the noise of construction work bursting my ears. A well known hotel chain, with more than 600 around the UK and Ireland, just built a new branch just around the corner, a massive Student Accommodation building is being finished in front of it, and another contractor is refurbishing a warehouse just a few feet away from mine. The problem is that this situation will not stop. The whole block in front of my flat will supposedly be demolished at the beginning of next year, destroying our local community atmosphere, and forcing us to move elsewhere.

The UK property business has been especially controversial in the past years, not only because of the big construction projects that were developed for the Olympics Games, but also, as Anna Milton analyses in her book *Ground Control* (2009), “more property is being constructed in Britain than at any time since the Second World War- but it’s owned by private corporations, designed for profit and watched by CCTV”. She questioned this idea of “regeneration” arguing that “gated apartment developments and gleaming business have sprung in cities all over the country” but they have not made people’s life better and they have intensified social divisions.

People who experience these changes are usually the most affected by their side effects: environmental pollution, noise pollution, destruction of formal and aesthetics canons of construction in their streets, a floating population that does not respect the environment and forced

migration of the spaces they inhabit. It is in this context that the purpose of this online web documentary comes to life: to make our community atmosphere visible before its imminent destruction, through its rebuilding and subsequent gentrification.

This online documentary plans to act as a tool of what Latour and Yaneva call “mapping of controversies”, referring on controversy as “points to the series of uncertainties that a design project, a building, an urban plan or a construction process undergoes; it is rather a synonym of ‘architecture in the making’”. (Yaneva 2009). Corshamstreet, as Yaneva sustains (2009) will act as a controversy mapping, understanding a building’s Actor Network Theory (ANT)² as “moving beyond the traditional two or three dimensional image, reaching out to represent additional human factors, and indeed reducing the need for distinctions between subject and object” in this case, between the community and the street’s context.

Local Community and Memories

Within this street and the community of people, an important actor that appeared one year ago is Commune Cafe. Roy Ballentine, an Irish emphatic man, who is in his 40s, owns this place. Like in old style cafes, the food is cooked and served by its owner, who is especially welcoming and loves to interact and speak with all his customers.

2) According to Latour, Actor Network Theory (ANT) claims that “the very idea of individual and of society is simply an artifact of the rudimentary way data are accumulated” (Latour, 2010: 9). In this sense a “given individual will be defined by the list of other individuals necessary for its subsistence”, thus “every individual is part of a matrix whose line and columns are made of the others as well” (Latour, 2010: 13).

This space is a place that embodies current memories and life in the street. Not only professionals, neighbours, passers by, gather here during the day, but also the builders who are working in the corner, they found in Roy's cafe the perfect place for their work's break. This is one of the reasons why I initially decided to focus my camera lens inside Roy's café, exploring the offline relationships of these groups of people, catalysed by this "warm" place and the owner who encourages human relations and direct interactions with people.

Lee & Newby (1983 cited in Day 2006) define aspects of community as "a set of social relationships which take place wholly, or mostly, within a locality". (2006: 38). In this sense, Day analyses that the majority of definitions of community take for granted a connection with a certain place.

In regards to this definition, in his book *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam (1996 cited in Florida 2005), observes that many aspects of community life declined over the last half of the twentieth century. "By this, he means that people have become increasingly disconnected from one another and from their communities. Putnam finds this disengagement in the declining participation in churches, political parties, and recreational leagues, not to mention the loosening of familial bonds". In this sense Florida (2005: 30) explains that Putman believes a "healthy, civic-minded community is essential to prosperity".

According to this, I would say that thanks to the establishment of Roy's café and his presence in the street, a once fragmented community that just shared a common space, without any form of interaction, has currently become more connected, and has suddenly realised that most of us share things in common: the frustration about the constant construction noise, the joy of having a cup of coffee in your local café, where you can share experiences with your neighbours, etc.

This idea of sharing frustrations, as Bruno Latour states in his text about the art exhibition “Making things public- atmospheres of Democracy”: “in the *people*, the *demos*, are made up of those who share the same space and are divided by the same contradictory worries” (Latour, 2005: 17), explaining that “we might be more connected to each other by our worries, our matters of concern, the issues we care for, than by any other set of values, opinions, attitudes or principles”. (Latour, 2005: 4).

In this sense, places, architecture and objects keep people’s memories, worries, values and opinions. The exploration into this physical spaces and objects through everyday life actions, and their audiovisual documentation as a way of mapping and evidencing them, is what interests me as a filmmaker in this project.

The filmmaker’s process

Corhsamstreet was conceived from its origins as a participatory documentary project reflecting on the topics of memory, local community and changes, creating an online audiovisual album of the filmmaker’s neighbourhood.

This offline space, the café, as a gathering place for the characters of this reality, was key for a fruitful process for this project. I started to get convinced with the idea that the most important work was, firstly, in this real space, having direct relations with my neighbours, discovering unknown situations that happened in this café and street daily, and then exploring which online interface would be the most suitable platform to tell this story.

Another good starting point was the confidence that this project would be developed as an experiment, where the process of making the

documentary and my open attitude towards the different paths that this exploration may embark me on, would fulfill a special role. There were no scripts or preconceived ideas, only the intuition that in this community there was a collective potential to develop, and interesting daily life moments and relations to map and document.

In my first day of shooting I shared my project plan with the people I encountered in the café I left the door open to any suggestion coming they may have. I pasted a message in all the tables inviting people to take part in the process.

Being with my camera in the café and street surroundings shooting for more than a month, allowed me to meet many of the builders that were working in the two construction's works. My good relationship with Roy, the café owner, remained during the process and he was really generous in allowing me to freely use his space as a hub and introduced me to many of the neighbours, helping me to explain why I was there. Thanks to this I was able to meet many neighbours that I had not seen before, and as time passed and people saw me working there, the project slowly started to catch the attention of the community.

In her PhD thesis, Sandra Gaudenzi explores digital storytelling and the different ways in which web-based documentary can be defined and analysed. As part of her study she observes that “what is interesting about the documentary form is not so much its attempt to portray a reality of interest to the filmmaker, but that the way the filmmaker chooses to interact with reality, to mediate it through shooting, editing and showing it, is indicative of new ways of thinking about reality, and therefore of forging it”. (Gaudenzi 2013: 1).

According to Bill Nichols, (cited in Winston 1995), there are different types of relationships between you, your subjects and your

audience. In this case, I explored into the type “I or We speak about us to you”.

This formulation moves the filmmaker from a position of separation from those he or she represents to a position of commonality with them. Filmmaker and subject are of the same stock. In anthropological filmmaking the turn to this formulation goes by the name of “auto-ethnography”: it refers to the efforts of indigenous people to make their films and videos about their own culture so that they may represent it to “us,” those who remain outside. (Winston, 1995:113).

It can be said that by documenting the daily life of my neighbourhood during this shooting process, I was doing an auto-ethnography exercise, whose exploration was taking more shape the more I got immersed in the process of making the documentary and the more people and neighbours asked what this was about and why I was doing it. In this sense, the conversations that I had with Roy, the builders, the neighbours, the people who work in the street, were as important in the process as the good images or sequences that I captured with my camera. I have become less anxious regarding the results, but more interested in the filmmaking process, knowing that at this stage my capacity to capture the atmosphere and life of this space was as important as to invite the neighbours to be part of this process, and that I would not find all the answers to this journey on my own, but with the combination of the different views of our community.

In light of the above, Gaudenzi (2013) reflects on how the documentary purpose in the last century has shifted from representing to negotiating reality and how interactive documentary is going one step further: “the act of negotiation now implies direct participation by the user to the construction of the world that is portrayed”.

Participatory documentary

An important part of this project is to be an experiment on participatory documentary, within a social local community, as a way of empowering them and making their voice and identity visible. It is inviting all the people surrounding the neighbourhood, starting by the ones encountered in Roy's cafe, to send a photo, video, sound recording or text about their memories or experiences living or working near here. The editorial line of the project is based on the belief that local communities power should be the protagonist of changes in society. This platform appears as one way of empowering this community as a collective, generating an online intervention, which will leave a record of the past and present memories of this street.

Gaudenzi (2013) observes the difficulty to map this emerging field because of the lack of definitions and taxonomies that confuses our understanding of the genre.

Terminologies such as new media documentaries, web-docs, docu-games, cross-platform docs, trans-media docs, alternate realities docs, web-native docs and interactive documentaries are all used without clear understanding of their differences. But a closer look at the form shows that all these types of interactive documentaries are substantially different because they all vary in degrees of interactions, in levels of participation, in logics of interaction and in degrees of narrative control by the author. (Gaudenzi, 2013: 3).

Accordingly, analysing all the characteristics of *Corshamstreet* online documentary project, I believe that defining it as a participatory documentary, is best suited.

In the draft book version shared in the web, *The participatory documentary cook book* (Weight 2012: 4), this genre is defined as one that

“tells a story about a community using the community’s own words. That story is disseminated back to that community via social media”.

According to Weight (2012), by disseminating the story back to the community, it means the documentary has engaged with it and has an ethical responsibility towards it. “It is dealing with an issue that the community is involved with, and therefore the community is vitally interested in the resulting work”. And the social media elements, he suggests, allow people to “communicate and publish their own media directly to each other without mediation”. Thus, the material for participatory documentaries are published via social media back to the community and also may be gathered or capture using social media.

Furthermore, through offline shooting work, talking directly with people about the project when encountering them at the café or the street, and also through online work, I am using social media elements to engage people with this online platform and with the theme. I decided to use already existent social media tools to make this contribution happen easily: flickr, vimeo, tumblr, twitter, facebook are the principal tools chosen, and all of them have been key to disseminating the material back not only to the local community, but also to the rest of the world.

Accordingly, as Weight (2012) observes, an important role of a participatory documentary is to allow the community to tell their own stories and its producer is “responsible for allowing or encouraging the story to be told, or issue to be explored, in the community’s own words”. In this sense, my role has been to provide the community with a proper interface to share their memories, being part of the community I contributed some memories myself, and expect for the rest of the data to be created with the neighbours’ contributions.

In the book *We-think* (2008) Leadbeater suggests the revival of the idea that sharing and mutuality within the web can be as effective as

producing private ownership and it draws on the long-established tradition in villages and communities, which used to share common resources.

The spread of the web invites us to look at the future from a different vantage point, to see that what we share is at least as important as what we own; what we hold in common is as important as what we keep for ourselves; what we choose to give away may matter more than what we charge for. In the economy of things you are identified by what you own: your land, house, car. In the economy of ideas that the web is creating, you are what you share: who you are linked to, who you network with and which ideas, pictures, videos, links, comments you share. (Leadbeater, 2008: 6).

This project is on the one hand appealing to the same spirit of sharing and building community that used to exist in the past and which Leadbeater talks about , and the on the other hand , is taking Latour's contemporary theory about the "politics of things" in which we preferently assemble because we share worries and frustrations.

Community generated content and the filmmaker's loss of control

Many people have a vague understanding of what an interactive or participatory documentary is. Even people that work in the audiovisual field do not know much about it yet, so trying to explain to the community what I was trying to do and engaging them to participate in it, was not that easy at the beginning. I had many conversations with people around the street, most of them not in camera, because many people did not want to be filmed and as soon as I turned off the camera the best conversations or moments happened! The fact is that the more they saw me in the street,

the more interested they got in the project, and the more they asked me about it.

There is a really interesting blog of the Open Documentary Lab of MIT University, there is an article that analyses what an easy task the “share your story” one seems, “but in the practice it can be anything but” (Edgerton 2012). She analyses the fact that there are some people that effectively do not share and cited the 90-9-1 rule of online participation established by Web consultant Jakob Nielsen (2006 cited in Edgerton 2012) who says that “in most online communities, 90% of users are lurkers who never contribute, 9% of users contribute a little, and 1% of users account for almost all the action”.

It can be said that this project comes quite close to what happens in reality. At the moment, in *Corshamstreet* online documentary, 7% of the community have already contributed with content and there is another 5% that are suggesting that they may collaborate.

As part of this experiment in participatory documentary, I decided to explore the idea of loosing some of the control in the whole creative process of the project, giving more control to the community from the start. The web platform gives the audiovisual creator the possibility to share projects since the very beginning, opening the process to the people before the final piece is ready.

Ben Moskowitz in “Tips or connected documentaries” (2012) says that it is clearly known that filmmakers used to polish their work until it was meticulously crafted and ready, and they are afraid to show things that are half done. He confirms that in the software world, creators should “always be shipping” and to adapt to the web, filmmakers have to test things in public, “if you are not embarrassed when you ship your first version, you waited too long”. (Moskowitz, 2012).

In the middle of the shooting process, making an effort to overcome my fear of showing a product in working- progress, I decided to create an online interface to invite the community and the rest of the world to an interactive experience in a web representation of this street, where the user would be able to navigate in the fragments of reality and humanity shared here, within my exploration in the cafe and the street's surroundings plus the local community generated content.

After I sent an email sharing the link of the web 1.0 project to all the neighbours whose emails I had recollected, I had some immediately positive response. It is a simple photo view of the street embedded in a tumblr website with an easy an interactive way of adding content to it. It has some examples of photos and texts shared in different parts of it, a short "about" of the project, an explanation on how to collaborate, and a link to follow it in twitter. Four days later I decided to paste some posters on the street's doors with the same photo of the website and a short explanation about the project and an invitation to collaborate.

This simple offline act of pasting physical posters in the street and in the cafe, got immediate response and the first contribution appeared the next day.

Up until the date this essay was written, even though the request for contributions was open for videos, photos, or audio files, people have just contributed with photos for the website and they have sent them by different means: posted directly to the two street's photos embedded in the web, by the twitter account and by email.

Remediation (online v/s offline)

It is incredibly interesting to analyse what effects may this project cause in an offline space and community, an online representation of it, and how this process started shifting between an auto- ethnographic one to a digital ethnographic experiment.

In the book, *Remediation: understanding new media* by Bolter & Grusin it is explained that “remediation is a defining characteristic of new digital media”, understanding it by “the representation of one medium in another”. (Bolter & Grusin, 1999: 45).

It is also defined that interactive applications are grouped in the “rubric of hypermedia”. In this sense, *Corshamstreet*, is a representation of one medium in another, where photo, video, text, sound are brought together within a remediation of the street represented in these two 3D images which show two sides of it, it resembles the most to the way people experience the street in reality.

I could test how during this process of mediation and remediation of our street’s context and interactions, people started to reflect more about the situation and started to feel its presence more. In this particular case it is more interesting because as part of the community you are experiencing both the real street and the online representation of it in a way that it was not done before. It is already an embodiment of history and memory of the community, and moreover you can now concretely see online how these memories and history are embedded in corners, windows, streets, etc.

I think this remediation somehow has created a more powerful sense of community. Many factors are mixing together in this project. It could be that summer finally arrived, or the enthusiasm for the Olympics or that people wanted to be together, but suddenly, after I started the

shooting process and the online representation of it, more community reactions and situations were generated.

In the prologue of the book *From Kodak culture to networked image*, Sarah Pink, a renowned visual anthropologist, talks about how nowadays photographic images are “produced and consumed as we move through and make the on-line/off-line environments of which we are part” (Pink, 2012). She also suggested that to understand “photography in this way then requires the study not of the image itself, but of how these stories, experiences and trajectories emerge”.

In this sense, the images and memories shared by the neighbours in this online platform, have to be analysed understanding that they come from people who share a common space, and have similar frustrations and experiences about living in London, specifically in Corsham Street. It is beautiful as well to see different representation of objects or human beings from different points of view, but sharing the same experienced memory of it. The case of Juno’s representation is an example of this.

Juno, Roy’s lovely and loving dog, has already been portrayed more than 4 times. She is already part of our community’s atmosphere and she represents the happiness of some really nice moments in that space. A snowy Corsham Street image has also been repeated. A special natural phenomenon that transforms the space, invites you to play with it, and then captures and leaves them in your memory by representing them in photographic moments. Here you can find similar memories, but from different points of view and that is one of the valuable aspects of this collective and interactive project, which Gaudenzi may also define as “Living documentary”.

By looking at interactivity as transformative, responsive and adaptive the interactive documentary will be re-defined as a Living Documentary. This is a living entity - living as conceived by Maturana

and Varela in Second Order Cybernetics where a living autopoietic organism is self-organized, autonomous and in constant relation (structural coupling) with its environment. (Gaudenzi, 2013: 5).

As its existence is represented in an online environment, and there are hypermedia systems connected between each other, this type of documentaries may never be finished, “the good news is, since it lives on the web, you can evolve it whenever you want”. (Moskowitz, 2012). Moreover in this case, the community can transform it whenever they want.

Non narrative experience: audiovisual memory album

As it has been stated before, from its very beginning this project was conceived for an online platform as its principal interface, primarily for its community based argument and the possibilities of interactivity that digital media gives, and for my personal desire to explore into new ways of digital storytelling.

The idea of an audiovisual memory album with a non-linear narrative structure comes at first into my mind. During the shooting process and after creating the first web draft, I get convinced that the best option to tell this story was with small fragments of reality that the user will freely navigate through, as a real life experience.

We are all exposed everyday to little moments that make up life, and somehow they are interconnected with each other. In the audiovisual treatment of this online documentary, I decided to edit small scenes that will enhance the daily acts that take place in this street. The constant work of builders in the construction routine, a neighbour on the street washing his car, the act of making coffee or cooking in Roy’s café, a pipe discovery reflecting the past layer’s of the street, and how people relate with one

another and with objects. In this sense, “each object gathers around itself a different assembly of relevant parties. Each object triggers new occasions to passionately differ and dispute. Each object may also offer new ways of achieving closure without having to agree on much else”. (Latour, 2005: 5).

The observation of moving images of these everyday acts shows how life is made up of little moments and how their interconnection in a common physical space generates community atmosphere. I did not want a sophisticated editing process on these pieces, following the idea of a family album, where independent moments are built together to keep them in our memory. By doing it in this manner, I also want to encourage neighbours to contribute by sharing memories, without feeling that it is a complicated task.

Citing the work of Chris Marker, a French documentary film essayist and multimedia artist, Rascaroli (2009) speaks about his CD-ROM work named *Immemory*, in which he made a mapping of the geography of his own memory, and shows how new media, in many senses, are closer approximations of the human memory. “In the introductory text to *Immemory*, Marker contends that the virtual architectures of cyberspace, which permit non-linear, multi-directional navigation at the user’s own chosen speed, are far closer to the aleatory, non-linear drift of actual human memory than the capabilities of older media”. (Lupton cited in Rascaroli, 2009).

This same idea of creating an interface that reflects about human memory within a physical space is what *Corshamstreet* is trying to do, and it is precisely using a non-linear, multi-directional structure that allows the user to navigate through this fragmented street full of shared memories, without a fixed temporal rate of a classical film, and allowing the connections of these fragments within the space. The sound design

generated for this project follows the same logic. It uses fragments of ambient sounds recorded in the process connected to the project's homepage working as a loop; every time the user goes to a specific category the sounds fade out, and every time the user goes back to the homepage they fade in.

Design and technical decisions

While the offline filmmaking exploration was happening in the café and street surroundings, an online space was created to open the process of the documentary project to the local community.

I needed two really specific elements within my webpage: a visual immersive representation of Corsham St. and an easy way of allowing people to add memories to it. In this sense, I thought of a tool that had the perfect characteristics for this project: *ThingLink*, (<http://www.thinglink.com>) a Finnish web technology that makes possible to create interactive images to share across the web, by directly embedding audio, video and rich media links to it. The web version 1.0 of the project was working quite well, and when I showed it to Roy and then shared it with all the community, people were really enthusiastic about it.

One of my inspirations for this platform was a Chilean website called MAFI (<http://www.mafi.tv>) a filmic map of a country. This site is a really interesting project in which a group of Chilean documentary filmmakers get together to portray and map short situations that happen in Chile everyday. The format is really simple, one fixed shot, about one or two minutes duration, with ambient sound recording and then added to the web within a specific category: politics, entertainment, technology etc. I really like the audiovisual style that they chose to unify the entire project.

Moreover, the web format is straightforward, easy to digest, really well shot in an HD format and looks for interesting situations that speak about Chilean identity. What I also find interesting is how you have the option, not only to share the whole website, but also to share the individual videos in facebook, twitter or anywhere in the web. This makes its dissemination through social media more exciting because people can share many videos and comment on them.

One key difference that *Corshamstreet* will have in contrast to MAFI, is that the generation of content is not going to be amongst filmmakers. The essential idea is to open it to everyone, in this case to the street's community, so they can share their own point of view and memories of our street. A great example of a good online documentary open to user generated content, is *Mapping main street*, a collaborative media project that creates a new map of the country through stories, photos and videos recorded on actual Main Streets, and is open to anybody who wants to share a video, photo or sound recorded in a street called Main Street. This project has a clear call for collaboration and it is quite didactic in the way they explain to people how to participate. You can see in the website how every video or photo shared there, is connected to a map that shows geographically, where in the US is this Main Street, who made the collaboration, and through which social media tool it was made.

With these two references in mind, I decided to ask a programmer and a designer to collaborate with my project, as I needed time to edit and organise the video work that I was doing offline and plan a strategy to engage my neighbours with the project. Also, I need them to help with the complex technological issues that I will have to encounter to create a decent webpage for the project. In our first meeting I showed them the webpage that I had at that moment. We discussed the positive aspects of having a Thinglink photo embedded to it. A key point, is the direct intervention

that anybody can make to this photo by tagging and adding information from the web to it (choosing the tool “edit photo” open to any user) and how people can also choose where to tag it and see the immediate effect reflected on this tag. Also, what worked really well was how fragments of daily life shared here, were embedded in all the street spaces where they were located, giving it a nice mapping an embodiment effect.

Conclusion

In this paper I have analysed and described the filmmaking and web development process of *Corshamstreet* an experiment on participatory online documentary project. This platform appears as a tool to understand the experience of inhabiting a space and making visible some of the social relations and atmosphere that many times goes unnoticed to these huge developments. The frustration that this community feels against the acoustic contamination generated by a non-stop construction site and the future demolition of a whole block of our street is shared, and even though many of them state that they are “used” to it, this project has evidenced that there are victims in the name of progress, and that communities sharing a common space generate identity and atmosphere, and is not worth destroying it.

The participatory element of this project and how the community slowly started to get involved was one of the most interesting aspects of it. The act of opening the creative process of the project to the community, from the very beginning, although it was not an easy decision coming from a “controlling” filmmaker, was the best decision ever made, and it has given the documentary a special spirit and spontaneity.

After finishing the first stage of the platform, I thought that the most interesting part was going to happen. Unfortunately when I came back from holidays, after a month and a half, by disappearing from that physical space, no other collaboration was received in the website. Moreover slowly more and more neighbours started leaving the street pushed by their landlords to evacuate the building. I keep recording those memories and how the street slowly became a sort of ghost.

One year has passed since the creation of the *Corshamstreet* project. I've recently moved one month ago to a new neighbourhood as soon as the developers confirmed that they would start the demolition at the end of August 2013.

This is not a project that speaks only about *Corshamstreet*. It speaks about the cities where we live and about the power of people to make them worthwhile. Unfortunately the creation of this project happened too late when all the decisions of the private interests were already taken. In any case, its social and participatory spirit could serve as inspiration to other communities threatened by private development controversies. Most importantly, in the future, communities facing a similar kind of ordeal could use this interactive platform as a means of expression and interaction.

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