



**Community Voices for Holloway
What People want on the Holloway
Prison Redevelopment**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY of a report by
Community Plan for Holloway
2021**

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Community Plan for Holloway is an independent organisation working to ensure that the community is at the heart of the redevelopment of Holloway Prison.

Executive Summary

The Holloway prison site in the London Borough of Islington represents a unique opportunity for Peabody Housing Association to provide an exemplary development, meeting Islington's pressing needs for social housing, green spaces and community facilities, alongside an iconic Women's Building. This research by Community Plan for Holloway expands upon existing understandings of these priorities by building upon previous studies that have reported on people's aspirations for the Holloway Prison redevelopment (Community Plan for Holloway 2017). This report is based on 217 community narratives collected online and offline in 2020, with street-level interviews and group discussions that enabled people to explain their views in detail.

This research builds upon previous studies in two specific ways:

It provides more up-to-date and greater in-depth information on people's views on the Holloway Prison redevelopment.

It provides vital information about whose voices are being heard or, conversely, whose voices have been missing, depending upon whether they were consulted by online surveys or via discussions individually and in groups, on the street and through community organisations.

Key Findings A: What people want on the Holloway site and why

People stressed the importance of social housing being provided at council rent levels, demonstrating their awareness of the problems inherent in the term 'affordable' rent. Additionally, there was opposition to the provision of shared ownership, which was not seen as an affordable option in Islington. People wanted quality homes to be built at liveable densities, without closed off, segregated private spaces.



People felt that the development should promote a sense of a community 'with a soul' on the site. This should be environmentally sustainable with green spaces and community facilities, including facilities for young people. There was specific interest in community spaces to foster social networks amongst residents and the wider community, such as community gardening and growing food. This could be part of strategies to tackle food poverty as there was widespread concern generally to address issues relating to poverty. There was very wide support for the Women's Building. It was generally agreed that the Women's Building should be a "special place" with sufficient space to provide supportive, progressive and safe spaces and a range of services for all women in the community, embedding the principles of social justice and enhancing women's well-being as an appropriate legacy to the prison.

The previous Peabody consultation process was widely considered to have been inadequate. This is important information, with significant implications for the next phase of the consultation process.

Key findings B: How to reach diverse groups during Consultation

In comparison with previous consultations, there was more evidence from the street interviews and group discussions about how participants' aspirations and needs were grounded in their own experiences, such as the implications of overcrowding, homelessness and food poverty.

The group discussions revealed more about the needs of specific groups, such as working-class women, Muslim women and people experiencing housing problems and poverty.

The street-level engagements also reached a wider range of ethnicities, age and social class groups than the online consultations, including a higher proportion of working-class residents living in the adjoining estates and a more even distribution of gender. Inversely, electronic forms of consultation were not reaching groups such as young people and working-class people effectively enough and disproportionately fewer male participants.

Recommendations

1. That the next consultation phase reflects and builds upon these findings about community priorities.
2. That the consultation process includes the use of inclusive and participatory methodologies that facilitate processes of dialogue and discussion, including the use of zoom meetings for housebound participants and if lockdown restrictions continue.
3. This should include reaching out to specific groups and organisations to ensure that those who are less likely to respond to online surveys get heard, in particular young people, working class residents and diverse ethnic groups, especially those living near the prison site.
4. That demographic data is collected to enable the consultation to be – and to be seen to be – genuinely inclusive.



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Placard Parade 2020. Source: Debbie Humphry

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