



COMMUNITY PLAN FOR HOLLOWAY

Summary of Community Plan for Holloway External Evaluation - Sept 2024

Summary

This evaluation of Community Plan for Holloway (CP4H)'s work follows on from our previous evaluation in 2022. It covers the period from just before planning permission was granted by Islington Council for Peabody's plans for the Holloway Prison site in March 2022 to October 2024.

Since 2022, work has started on the site now known as Holloway Park. Phase 1 is under construction with residents due to move in Spring 2027 and the Women's Building due to open its doors at the same time.

In October 2024, Peabody employed new architects to redesign Phases 2 and 3 of the development. Consultation on the new plans will begin in early 2025 and the developer aims to submit the new plans to Islington Council during the Summer of 2025.

This is a summary of the evaluation report, highlighting achievements of CP4H and key areas for the organisation to develop further.

CP4H's Mission

CP4H's main mission is continuing to engage the community in matters concerning the Holloway Park development.

Most importantly, we do this by monitoring and holding the developer, Peabody, and the local authority, Islington Council, to account. This includes ensuring Peabody sticks to its commitments in the Section 106 agreement (or contract), and also to the rules around how construction can be carried out. Our role also includes commenting on the conduct of Islington Council and its impact on the affected local community and how it enforces National, London and Local planning policy.

We aim to ensure more and better information for the community about the site, both from Peabody and the council.

This has been a successful key focus since planning permission was granted in March 2022; staying close to our original aim of pressing for the best outcomes on site for the community, including fighting for an inclusive and accessible community space and supporting ways that new residents living on the site can have their say.

CP4H has continued to organise working groups focussed on different aspects of the development to advocate for community views with regular in-person and online meetings. CP4H has also established a local Residents' Group since planning permission was granted, offering opportunities for residents from local estates to come together and continue organising for what they need.

CP4H has facilitated welcoming and inclusive in-person meetings and events, including spaces where communities, the developer and the local authority can have conversations together. These were mentioned in the evaluation survey and interviews and were appreciated by all stakeholders. People would like more of these knowledge-sharing in-person forums. They would also like CP4H to continue to host the women's building working group, take part in local activities, especially in community centres, to reach out to residents, tenants and residents associations and young people.

"I think CP4H have done excellent work in holding Peabody and Islington Council to account. It has also helped explain the complex planning arrangements and technical content – this is far from easy. My background working experience in planning and housing may make it more accessible to me – although it is still today very technically complex – but it is a challenge explaining it to many others in the community and CP4H have done this, congratulations to them!" (Survey Response from a local resident)

CP4H's Achievements

In general, CP4H is seen as working hard to make contact with and understand the views of lots of people, particularly those affected by the development. CP4H has:

- Successfully involved the local community in new ways
- Worked effectively with Islington Councillors and the Local Authority across many departments
- Influenced the developer Peabody, bringing CP4H's knowledge to the table, developing a productive ongoing working relationship, with regular meetings
- Successfully monitored and held the developers and local authority to account on its commitments
- This high level of scrutiny and expertise that characterised CP4H pre-planning approval continues to be important in order to better understand how to influence post-planning decisions that are not consulted on or open to the same level of scrutiny and thereby ensure local communities have a voice in the development process

Our achievements include:

- Accountability and action around fire safety and the need for a second stairwell
- An ongoing public commitment by Peabody to retain 42% social housing
- Pressing for a residents' lounge open to all residents regardless of tenure
- Keeping green skills and women's construction training firmly on the agenda
- Promoting community involvement in the development of artworks on site to celebrate Heritage and History themes
- Developing and setting up a Youth Research Project with a specifically recruited Youth Project Officer. The project aims to share knowledge, find out the views of young people and ensure their views are heard, especially regarding what they would want to see on the site and in the neighbouring area and how to create a community that supports young people to thrive.
- Continuing to influence the development of a women's building on site. CP4H have succeeded in getting a place for a community representative on the Joint Steering Group for the Women's Building chaired by Peabody and Islington Council
- Fighting for high-quality and accessible social housing and challenging Peabody's reduction of large accommodation and wheelchair accessible flats

CP4H's next steps

The evaluation survey asked a number of questions about community priorities for the site, the organisation and ways that CP4H should work with stakeholders going forward.

The majority of survey respondents felt that CP4H should both concentrate on the build and site **and** share their learning and models of practice with other community planning groups.

Overall, the survey also showed strong support for working alongside stakeholders (Islington Council, Peabody), continuing to apply pressure, and to challenge Peabody. Specifically, suggestions for CP4H priorities going forwards included monitoring and ensuring high standards and best practice for the social housing, for the Women's Building and for the appearance of the whole area, making sure flats for larger families and disabled residents are delivered according to original proposals and ensuring there is a connection between the site and the wider neighbourhood.

People also said that CP4H could try to focus more on anticipating problems rather than being reactive, including fighting to embed the best services for tenants and residents into the development. The role of supporting community cohesion on the site was emphasised, as was retaining a record of good practice and contributing to wider debates and campaigns, such as on housing.

We also asked respondents to rank CP4H's priorities generally going forwards as the site is developed over the next two years.

All the items listed were regarded as highly important by the majority of respondents. This included:

- keeping people informed
- working in partnership with LBI
- giving voice to local concerns
- focusing on the Women's Building and community amenities
- supporting the Women into Construction scheme
- community building between new Holloway Park and existing local residents
- sharing learning with other relevant campaigns.

The following ideas have been suggested for CP4H to focus on in the future:

- Are there any groups or communities that CP4H are not reaching? And if so, what could CP4H do to reach them?
- Informing women about the future women's building and promoting the community's longstanding vision for the space
- Developing more and a variety of in-person events to include people who either don't like meetings, or face barriers to participate
- Working to reach the 'many neighbours who are seemingly unaware of the sheer scale of the development'.

Get in touch:

Please get in touch to discuss any of the points raised or to make any suggestions about our work. We would love to hear from you.

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