

Fresh Thinking about Golden Lane Community Centre

Report of an online consultation carried out by Golden Lane Residents Association and goldenlaneestate.org

Background

The Golden Lane Community Centre is currently closed. The City of London has carried out a number of face-to-face consultations with residents of the estate to establish a way forward for managing and financing the Centre. An outline approach based on drawings made by the City Surveyor was presented at a meeting held with residents in November. This meeting, externally facilitated by Southwark Mediation, raised many questions and comments, which have now been documented and passed to participants and the City of London. The consultation was discussed at the GLERA meeting in November, which decided that further, more detailed discussions should take place seeking the views of a wider range of estate residents. This survey was organised as part of the response.

Approach

1. The online survey was conducted for 9 days between 12th and 23rd December 2015
2. It was promoted in the following ways:
 - goldenlaneestate.org website homepage for the period of the consultation
 - Three mailings were sent to the 478 members of goldenlaneestate.org mailing list
 - Posters were placed in lobbies on the estate and a paper copy available in the Estate office
 - goldenlaneestate.org twitter feed was used twice
3. 112 survey forms were completed

Key observations

1. The response was large and enthusiastic
2. Nearly half of respondents said they would be interested in helping in one way or another
3. Residents want events and activities for the whole community, particularly for the elderly and children
4. There is considerable interest in healthy living but not sport
5. There is little enthusiasm for moving the Estate Office into the building and concerns that this would make staff appear to be cut off from the running of the Estate
6. The general question (9) indicates considerable concern about the maintenance of the fabric of the whole Estate
7. This survey indicates that there is time, energy, enthusiasm as well as a great desire for the community to be nurtured and developed. The challenge for all of us is to harness this commitment for the benefit of all who live and work on the Estate.

Next Steps

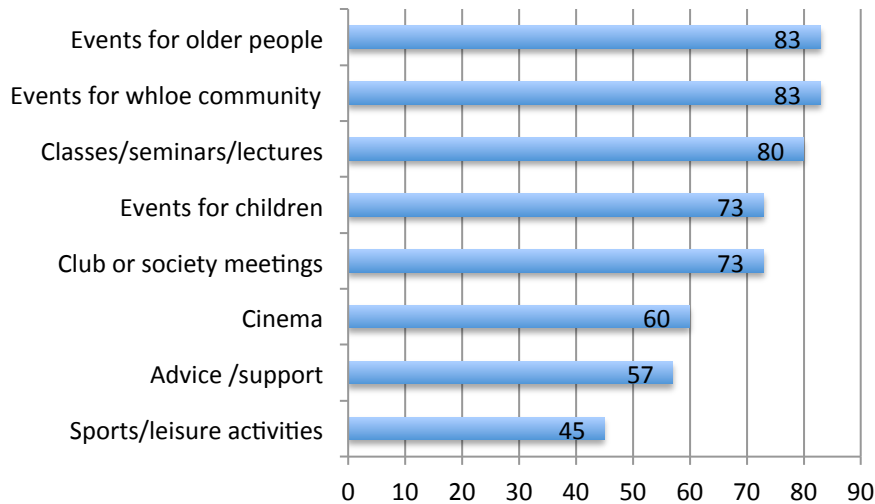
1. A working group is proposed to embrace the offers of help and build on the wishes of our residents to rebuild a vibrant community centre fit for the 21st century.
2. The working group's remit will be to:
 - a. build on the survey to define a vision and brief for the community centre
 - b. explore a range of potential partnerships for funding and management;
 - c. meet with our common councilmen and engage with the housing department and a wide range of other community, social service, arts organisations and other external bodies; and
 - d. create together a valued community centre.
3. A second working group will look at social activities and organising community events.
4. Those who offered help will be contacted but those who did not complete their contact details and want to be involved will be invited to contact the GLERA secretary.

The Results

This report summarises the main outcomes and makes a number of observations.
Full details of the survey are available from the GLERA secretary: glera.secretary@gmail.com

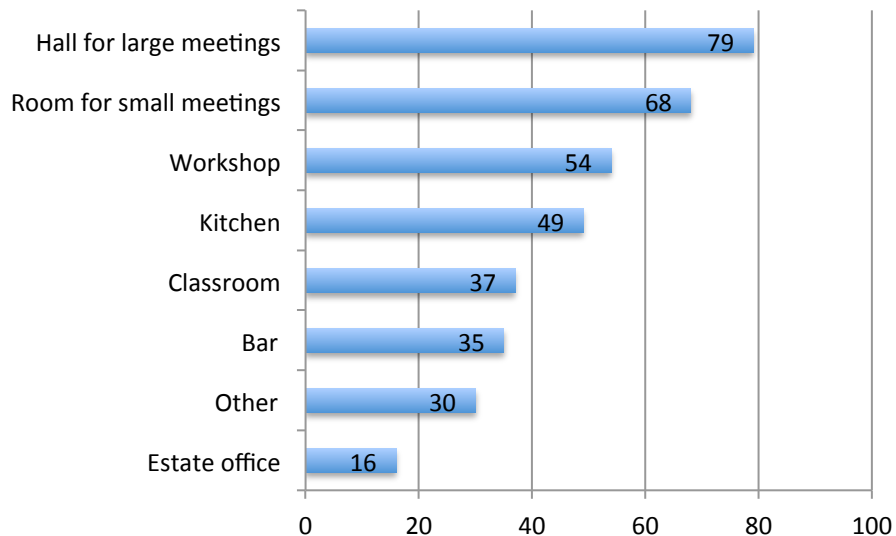
1. What types of events or activities would you like to see in the Community Centre?

Answered: 111



2. Which facilities would you most value in the Community Centre?

Answered: 112



Additional comments included workshops and facilities for children. The space was not considered suitable for offices by a number of respondents.

3. I would be interested in helping to run the Community Centre (EG by being on a committee or organising events)

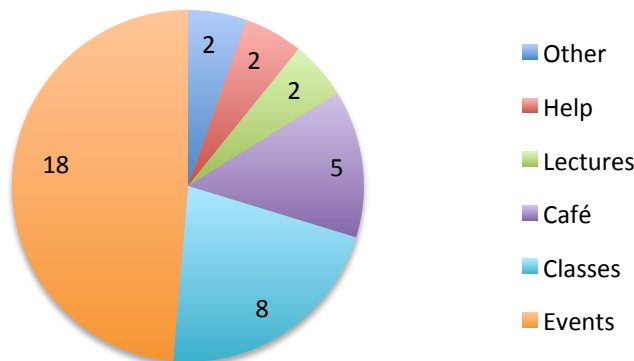
Answered: 92

44 Answered: **Yes** 48 Answered: **No**

4. I would be willing to help organise the following events or activities.

Answered: 40

A wide range of suggestions were received which can be loosely categorised under the following themes.



5. Contact information

Answered: 41

Of those who provided contact information the breakdown was:

Great Arthur House, 8. Basterfield House, 8. Hatfield House, 7. Bowater House, 5. Crescent House, 3. Cuthbert Harrowing House, 3. Bayer House, 1. Stanley Cohen House, 1. Four respondents did not live on the Estate.

6. Tenure

Answered: 111

Leaseholders, 64. City of London tenants, 30. Private tenants 13. Other, 4.

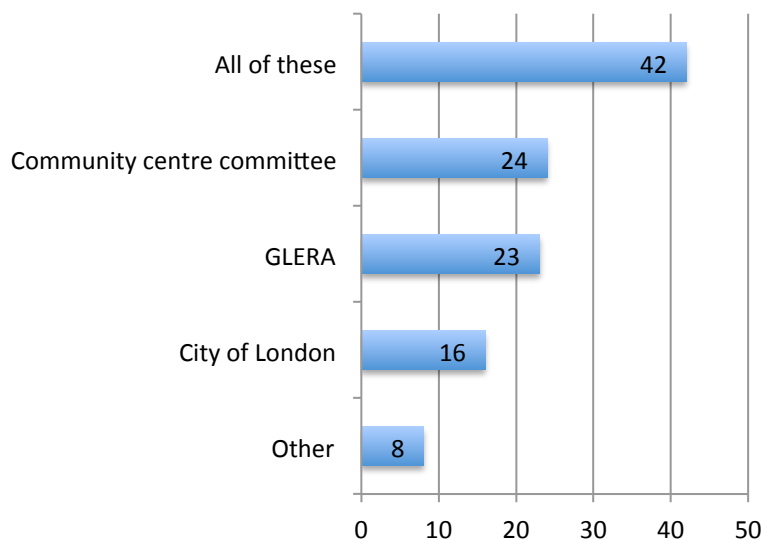
7. Can you suggest organisations of any type (public, voluntary or commercial) that might be good partners to be involved in running the Community Centre?

Answered: 41

Over 40 suggestions were received, St Luke's Community Centre being mentioned several times. These will form the basis for further research by the Community Centre Working Group.

8. Who should run the Community Centre?

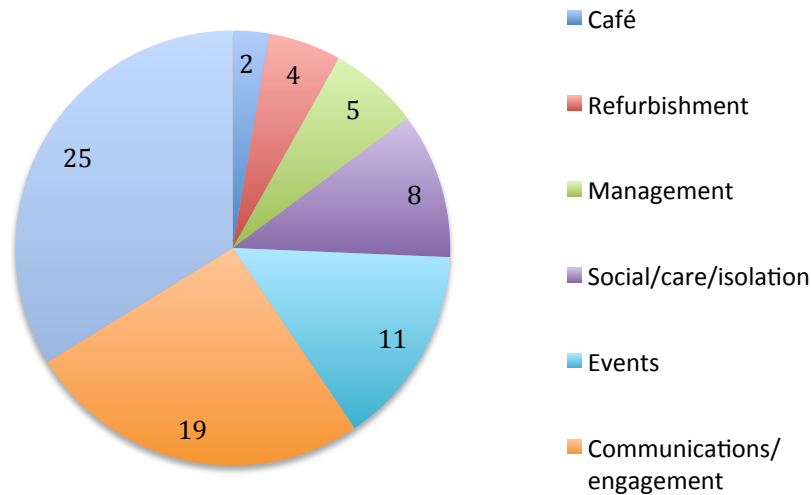
Answered: 113



9. Separate from the debate about the building, what one thing would make a difference for the community living and working in Golden Lane?

Answered: 75

The written responses can be categorised under the following themes:



A major area of concern is the physical condition of the Estate, which is now seen to be in a serious state of decline. This is followed by a desire for better maintenance of the gardens with increased horticulture. There is also a call for a regular programme of events for the community recognising the different audiences on the estate. There is concern about communication between the Housing Department and residents, specifically a request for more transparent processes around consultation.

10. Please add any further comments

Answered: 39

A range of comments were received many with very positive points about their ideas for the future of the Community Centre.

“I think this is a unique opportunity for us to develop a new community resource that is genuinely of the whole community, engaging with a local population that is more culturally diverse than in the past, that contains many people who have strong artistic and creative interests.”

“The community centre is an enormous asset to the Golden Lane Estate and the wider community. Residents need somewhere to meet, including vulnerable residents, those with children etc. This building has the potential to become a focus for residents.”

“The community centre should be the social heart of the estate. It is also architecturally important and should if possible be taken back to its original concept but renovated to include the technical possibilities of a 21 century sustainable building.”

19 January 2016