

# **Hackney Central Area Action Plan (Phase 1) - Masterplan**

## **Consultation Report**

**October 2009**

London Borough of Hackney

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The following (summary) consultation report sets out how Hackney Central has involved the community and key stakeholders in the preparation of the Hackney Central Area Action Plan (Phase 1) - Masterplan (known as the Phase 1 AAP from this point forward).
- 1.2 The Phase 1 AAP has been prepared as a Development Plan Document and more specifically a masterplan. Once adopted by Council, the Phase I AAP will provide interim planning and policy guidance for the town centre, be a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications and will designate land use.
- 1.3 Once the Core Strategy is adopted, the Phase 1 AAP will be taken forward as a Phase II AAP through the formal adoption process for DPDs, requiring adoption by the Secretary of State to become part of the Council's Local Development Framework. The Phase 2 AAP will be reviewed to conform to the adopted Core Strategy and further statutory consultation will occur. Consultation feedback from earlier stages and baseline information will form part of the evidence base for the production of the Phase 2 AAP.
- 1.4 This report describes how organisations and persons were consulted in the Phase 1 AAP preparation, the methods of consultation, the main issues raised during consultation and how these issues have been addressed in the revised document.
- 1.5 The consultation strategy outlining the consultation programme was approved by Hackney's Cabinet and Full Council, together with the consultation draft of the Phase 1 AAP in November 2008. The Lead Cabinet Member and other Members were given the opportunity to feed into the consultation programme, which was approved by the Cabinet Member. It was developed in close liaison with the Council's Corporate Communications and Consultation Team and was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (amendment) Regulations 2008 (the Regulations), Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) as well as following best practice detailed in CABE's 'Creating Successful Masterplans'.
- 1.6 Statutory Consultation in line with Regulation 25 (Public Participation) of the Regulations was carried out on the Phase 1 AAP from 9 March 2009 until 15 May 2009.
- 1.7 To guide and shape the Phase 1 AAP, community engagement occurred in the early stages of developing the document. This was carried out through advertisement and street stalls reach out and seek the views of the community and stakeholders on their needs and aspirations for the town centre.

## **2.0 THE CONSULTATION PROGRAMME**

- 2.1 The consultation programme was extensive and rigorous in order to engage with a cross-section of the community, offer different opportunities for the public to make comments, and to proactively encourage participation in the Phase 1 AAP process.

- 2.2 The Phase 1 AAP has been prepared in accordance with the Regulations and the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The regulations set out the minimum requirements with which local planning authorities must comply. The SCI sets out the Council's standards for community involvement including the range of techniques that should be used to inform, consult and involve the community in the development of an AAP.

### **Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2004 and 2008 Amendments Requirements**

- 2.3 Community consultation on the Phase 1 AAP has followed best practice by adhering to the requirements of Section 25 of the Regulations relating to 'Public participation in the preparation of a development plan'. Sections 26 and 27 of the Regulations will be adhered to when the Phase 1 AAP is taken forward as the Phase 2 AAP. Section 25 of the Regulations require the Council to carry out the following when consulting on an AAP Development Plan Document:

- Notify specific consultation bodies as the local planning authority considers may have an interest in the subject DPD;
- Notify general consultation bodies as the local planning authority considers appropriate;
- Consider whether it is appropriate to invite representations from persons who are resident or carrying on business in their area and if considered appropriate must make arrangements for the purposes of inviting representations from these persons; and
- The local authority must take into account representations made to them in response to the above mentioned invitations.

### **London Borough of Hackneys Statement of Community Involvement Requirements**

- 2.4 In addition to the requirements of the Regulations, the SCI also requires Council to undertake the following where appropriate:

1. Public exhibitions / displays / stalls / community surgeries;
2. Workshops;
3. One-to-one meetings with selected stakeholders;
4. Focus groups;
5. Formal written consultation / referenda / community surveys / leaflets / newsletters;
6. Letters to statutory bodies (as listed in the Regulations);
7. Documents available for inspection at Council offices during the set consultation period;
8. Meeting presentations (if requested);
9. Establishing a steering / advisory group;
10. Advertising in the local media;
11. Provide a dedicated webpage for the Phase 1 AAP; and
12. Provide a hotline / contact number / contact email / contact address.

### **How was the community consulted?**

- 2.5 A ten week public consultation was carried out from the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009 until 15<sup>th</sup> May 2009 and invited members of the public to comment and provide

Statutory consultation involved the following:

- Joint Dalston / Hackney Central **Statutory Notice** – In accordance with the Regulations, an advertisement was placed in Hackney Today and local ethnic minority press (Hamodia and Olay Gazette) detailing what documents were available for inspection, the places and times at which they could be inspected, and the procedure for making representations on the Phase 1 AAP;
- Notification in writing to **Statutory Consultees** (General and Specific bodies) as set out in the Regulations;
- Notification (via email or mail) to contacts on the Borough wide Local Development Framework Consultation Database;
- **Drop in sessions / street stalls** in various locations in the Borough throughout the consultation period;
- **Public launch** by Mayor and Lead Member of the Phase 1 AAP with key stakeholders on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2009;
- **Meet the planner sessions** available by appointment which provided the public with the opportunity to speak directly with a council planning officer in relation to the draft AAP;
- A Hackney Central consultation **feedback form** was made available at all consultation events and exhibitions. This form invited the public to provide comments and feedback on the content of the draft AAP. It also contained a number of questions to encourage feedback and assist people in providing comments;
- The draft AAP and associated documentation including (the summary brochure / Sustainability Appraisal / Equalities Impact Assessment / feedback forms / Baseline Report) were available in the following formats:
  - Online via the Council website;
  - Paper sources of all documentation, supporting material in all the Borough Libraries and available on request;
  - CD version of all the documentation available from Council's Planning Reception at 263 Mare Street, the Town Hall and all the consultation events;
  - The documents could also be sent via the post or email upon request.
- **Targeted groups:** Meetings, presentations and workshop sessions with targeted groups (typically hard-to-reach groups) including older people and youth groups e.g. Age Concern, Cityzen, Youth Parliament;
- **Statutory consultees:** Meetings and correspondence with statutory consultees including strategic parties, such as the Greater London Authority (GLA) family, and service providers such as the City and Hackney PCT and Hackney Learning Trust, and Hackney Metropolitan Police;

- **Key stakeholders:** one to one meetings, presentations and correspondence with a number of key stakeholders and landowners including presentations to the Town Centre Partnership Forum and the Neighbourhood Forum, consultation with the Conservation Area Advisory Committees and various Tenants and Residents Associations and Committees for Estates;
- Internal Consultation with other Council Directorates and Departments and Members of the Council (including ward and lead members) through ongoing **Steering Group and Members Advisory Group meetings.**

### 3.0 THE RESPONSES

#### Number of Responses Received

- 3.1 A total of 205 feedback forms were received through the consultation period. Within these responses 871 issues were raised on the Draft Phase 1 AAP. Each of these issues has been considered by a Planning Officer. Above and beyond this, numerous one-to-one meetings with various stakeholders occurred in which issues were raised, recorded and subsequently considered.
- 3.2 The submissions were made by a number of individuals and a range of organisations. The organisations included statutory consultees such as Natural England, Metropolitan Policy Authority, Great London Authority (GLA), Network Rail and Thames Water. Other organisations and bodies including community groups, other public sector bodies and site owners/occupiers.
- 3.3 In terms of joint responses, one signed petition was received from 32 residents in relation to the Horton Road Character Area and approximately 100 letters were received regarding pedestrianisation of the Narrow Way.
- 3.4 Respondents were invited to complete the service user / resident monitoring information section at the back of the feedback form to enable equalities monitoring to be completed. Appendix 1 shows the results to this in graph format profiling respondents by demographics (gender, age and ethnicity), disability, where they live and religious beliefs.
- 3.5 All contact details, feedback received and officer responses have been entered into the Consultation Database using Microsoft Excel. This Database is available on the Council's website [www.hackney.gov.uk](http://www.hackney.gov.uk) from 16 November 2009. The key issues raised through the consultation and how these have been addressed in the revised document is detailed in sections 4.0 and 5.0 of the Consultation Summary Report.

#### Street Stalls

- 3.6 Four street stalls were held in various locations throughout the borough providing members of the public with the opportunity to drop in and discuss the Phase I proposal with Council officers. All events were well attended.
- 3.7 The details of these street stalls in provided below:
  - The Narrow Way (10:30am – 2:30pm) - Friday 3 April 2009
  - The Narrow Way (4:00pm – 7:00pm) - Wednesday 15 April 2009

- Broadway Market (11:00am – 3:00pm) - Saturday 21 March 2009
- Somerfields Supermarket, Amhurst Park (11:00am 3:00pm) - Tuesday 7 April 2009

### **Targeted consultation**

- 3.8 A number of special interest groups (including typically hard-to-reach groups) were invited to take part in targeted consultation on the Phase 1 AAP.
- 3.9 This consultation was the form of structured workshops, presentations and general discussions and was carried out upon acceptance by those groups listed below:
- CityZen
  - Hackney Youth Parliament
  - Age Concern
  - Building Exploratory (Senior Bees)
  - Older Persons Reference Group

### **Key Stakeholder / Landowner Consultation**

- 3.10 Correspondences were emailed to a range of key stakeholders including landowners and public sector bodies identified in the Council's LDF database, to notify of the Phase 1 AAP process and invite these bodies and persons to become actively involved throughout the Phase 1 AAP preparation.
- 3.11 Meetings were also held with key stakeholders and landowners to discuss the draft AAP and encourage them to make a submission. The meetings were extensive and from the outset, providing the opportunity to discuss both general and site specific issues and identify opportunities and aspirations of both stakeholder and the London Borough of Hackney. Some of the key one-to-one meetings with stakeholders (other than opportunity site landowners) are as follows:
- Hackney Community and Voluntary Services (HCVS), Community Empowerment Network (CEN), Hackney Co-operative Development (HCD);
  - Metropolitan Policy Authority;
  - Conservation Area Advisory Committee;
  - Transport for London;
  - Homerton Neighbourhood Forum;
  - The Learning Trust etc

### **Meet the Planner Sessions**

- 3.12 Throughout the formal consultation period, the Council provided the public with the opportunity to speak directly with a council planning officer in relation to the draft AAP through various 'meet the planner' sessions available by appointment.
- 3.13 Sessions took place at Council's planning reception with seven people taking advantage of this opportunity to raise issues regarding the draft AAP or comment on the document.

### **The Steering Group and Members Advisory Group**

- 3.14 The Phase 1 AAP was guided by a Steering Group of Council officers and representatives from the GLA, TfL and the LDA. The Group met generally every two months at key stages during the production of the Phase 1 AAP.
- 3.15 The Members Advisory group consisting of Ward Members and the Cabinet Member of this Group also met every few months at key stages to help guide the document.

## 4.0 KEY ISSUES RAISED DURING PUBLIC CONSULTATION

4.1 Comments received in relation to the Draft Phase 1 AAP covered a broad range of topics and cannot easily be summarised for the purposes of this report. However, the key issues raised throughout public consultation are as follows:

### 4.1.1 Urban Design

Legibility: comments were generally positive and enforced the objectives of the AAP. Some were concerned that the strategic and local views identified were not achievable following development and some respondents wish to safeguard views to the church.

Heritage and Conservation: significant response received namely, there was a concern the document did not make enough of this aspect and requests were received to ensure listed buildings are protected.

Building Heights: building heights were not a significant issue, however responses received relating to this topic did not want tall buildings within the town centre. Others were relating to specific proposals (eg Tesco) and some wanted to ensure the building height strategy was both represented accurately and/or had better justification for the heights proposed.

### 4.1.2 Public Realm

Principle public spaces: strong support received for maintaining the St-John's space and also a desire to recognise the important role it plays in the town centre.

Management and maintenance: concern about the process after projects are implemented in terms of ensuring there is longevity and maintenance.

Playable spaces: general support for more playground facilities for young people and a desire from older people to incorporate spaces for them. Some concern about possible attraction of anti-social behaviour.

Anti-social behaviour and safety: respondents identified the need for more police presence in the town centre, particularly around the Narrow Way and also a general concern about anti-social behaviour occurring in public spaces.

Sustainability: some respondents would like to see more emphasis within the AAP on addressing the provision of green infrastructure.

### 4.1.3 Ensuring a functional town centre

Employment: providing for and supporting creative and cultural industries and third sector employment was an important theme from comments.

Community infrastructure: in general there is a desire to see provision for young people in the form of both indoor and outdoor provision and more public toilets (of particular concern to older people).

Retail strategy: respondents expressed concern about the effect of such a large Tesco store on the remaining retail within the town centre. There was support for the use of the arches for retail.

Housing: generally people require more information, although of those that commented on this topic, there is a desire for affordable family housing.

#### **4.1.4 The movement network**

The Narrow Way: comments received expressed general concern about bus congestion along the Narrow Way. Many thought that re-routing buses down Amhurst Road may not be feasible and/or could effect congestion elsewhere (people need more information). Significant support for pedestrianisation (approximately 100 individually signed letters were received in addition to general comments)

Pedestrian movement: support was received for the station interchange and re-opening of the old ticket hall. In general, proposals to increase the priority of pedestrians within the town centre were supported.

Crossings and junctions: general approval to improve crossings and junctions and make it easier for people to get around.

Cycle routes and facilities: a wide range of detailed comments were received on this topic supporting the intention to support borough-wide cycle links and enhance those through the town centre.

#### **4.1.5 Character Areas**

Mare Street East: concern was expressed regarding the height, scale and design of Tesco shown within the AAP, although no details were suggested regarding any alternatives. The effect of a large store on existing retail within Hackney Central was also mentioned and in relation to the bus depot, most commented that an underground option is not viable and development would have a detrimental impact on the churchyard. The new town square and utilising the arches for access was supported.

St John-at-Hackney Churchyard and Gardens: significant support was received for a café. Significant concern for maintaining current character of the churchyard with respondents expressing a desire to retain the blank frontages from the bus depot. Concern regarding building heights around the churchyard.

Civic Heart: responses received were both in support of and against a pedestrian-oriented Town Hall Square.

Horton Road: residents submitted both a signed petition (32 signatures) and individual responses to the Horton Road Character Area opposing development behind existing houses on Horton Road. There was some support for the refurbishment of the Great Eastern Buildings. Residents expressed that any development would result in a loss of light, privacy, existing parking rights and biodiversity. Other concerns included: an increase

in traffic in an area already oversaturated with vehicles, significant noise increase, costs of engineering works and infrastructure necessary for the plan to go ahead, the need for the mains junction box to be relocated, contravention of existing legal agreements between Newlon and residents of the flats – specifically the original transfer of freehold 1988 stating access must be retained for regarding access and parking.

Residential Estates: the incorporation of the Pembury Circus site into the AAP as an opportunity site was requested.

## 5.0 HOW THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REVISED

5.1 The following is a summary of how the key issues raised by the community and stakeholders during consultation have been addressed and taken forward within the Phase 1 AAP. Other detailed and smaller changes have been made to the draft Phase 1 AAP based on consultation and a review of the document. Below are the key areas of change to the draft Phase 1 AAP.

### 5.1.1 Urban Design

Legibility: The AAP identifies that proposals should retain and respect strategic, local views or view settings. At the local level 'view cones/settings' are identified where important buildings are located in open space and not just viewed from a corridor - St Augustine's Tower is identified as one such view cone/setting. The AAP has considered both the building height strategy and potential development in the identification of these views and as such it is considered that views are already appropriately managed. No change has been made to the document.

Heritage and Conservation: The AAP has been amended to give greater prominence to this aspect (see Chapters 3, 4 and 5). In terms of listed buildings, generally LBH seeks to preserve Listed Buildings, their settings and any features of architectural or historic interest - the AAP is consistent with this approach and as such no change is necessary.

Building Heights: Policies within the AAP suggest appropriately siting tall buildings to ensure sensitivity towards Conservation Areas and St John-at-Hackney church and garden setting; reinforce key strategic and local views; support the proposed urban structure and coherent public realm strategy; and respond to development pressure. Within the AAP area no buildings are suggested to be greater than 10 storeys. The AAP has amended the Building Heights Strategy to provide more of the rationale for location and height of taller buildings.

### 5.1.2 Public Realm

Principle public spaces: St John-at-Hackney churchyard and gardens are important contributors to what makes Hackney Central unique. The Phase I AAP Vision and framework has been amended to include greater references to this space to enhance and support the use and management of this space (see Chapter 3).

Management and maintenance: Strategies for this have been included in the Delivery and Implementation Chapter within the AAP to establish long term plans areas such as the public realm (see Chapter 10).

Playable spaces: Submissions are consistent with the AAP so no amendments are necessary.

Safety and anti-social behaviour: The Phase I AAP provides a framework for development within the town centre advocating building and environmental

design which increases surveillance over public spaces. The Phase 1 AAP complements programmes and projects to deal with community safety and has been amended to highlight these within the Implementation Plan (see Chapter 10).

Sustainability: The AAP has been amended to include interim environmental sustainability principles within the Public Realm Chapter and energy section has been amended to ensure the energy/Co<sup>2</sup> targets for development are clear (see Chapters 5 and 8).

### **5.1.3 Ensuring a functional town centre**

Employment: The Phase I AAP has been amended to reflect the importance of CCIs and the Third Sector more holistically (see Chapters 3 and 6).

Community infrastructure: Community infrastructure is addressed in Chapter 6 of the AAP where it recognises the need for the Council to work with stakeholders to increase the provision of community facilities to service the increased growth (see Chapter 6). The Phase I AAP has been amended to include youth social facilities and a multi-ethnic community hall within the Implementation Plan in the short-medium term (see Chapter 10).

Retail strategy: The Phase 1 AAP advocates improvement of the retail offer whilst maintaining the high street character of Mare Street, the distinctive shopping environments such as the Narrow Way and creating unique retail experiences such as in the arches. Following adoption of the Core Strategy, it will be necessary to complete a retail study on the existing and future retail offer. The AAP has been amended to include this study as a short term project in the Implementation Plan. The development of an Economic Development Strategy is also included (see Chapter 10).

Housing: The Vision and current objectives within the Phase I AAP aspire for a mix of dwelling types and sizes appropriate to the town centre location and historic context whilst providing high standards of architectural and urban design and meeting current policy in affordable housing. As such, it is considered not necessary in this Phase to amend the document.

### **5.1.4 The movement network**

The Narrow Way: The pedestrianisation of the Narrow Way requires examination of the technical and operational evidence to determine the impacts of pedestrianisation on the wider transport network. Other traffic management schemes are also being explored in conjunction with TfL such as the Route 38 project which will be examined as part of a holistic approach to traffic management of the area. The AAP has been amended to reflect this approach (see Chapters 7 and 10).

Pedestrian movement: The Hackney Downs / Hackney Central Interchange project for a direct interchange connection between the two stations aims to significantly reduce the interchange time platform-to-platform. The project is identified as a Strategic Interchange in the draft Mayor of London Transport

Strategy and initial feasibility work has been undertaken. No amendments to the AAP are considered necessary.

Crossings and junctions: The support for improvements to crossings and junctions is noted. No amendments necessary

Cycle routes and facilities: Approval of the cycle-way enhancements is noted. As outlined above, many detailed comments were received relating to a range of locations. These comments have been responded to individually within the Consultation Database and incorporated into the Cycling Strategy where appropriate.

### **5.1.5 Character Areas**

Mare Street East: The AAP recognises the relationship between Tesco and existing retail and subsequently facilitates a balance between improvement of the Tesco site whilst encouraging expansion and improvement of retail within the rest of the town centre. No substantial change has been made to the Tesco site in the AAP.

In terms of the bus depot site, the AAP has been amended to remove the underground option due to feasibility. Relocation of the bus depot remains the longer term aspiration (see Chapter 9).

The new town square, utilising the arches and greater north-south connectivity via the arches remain as aspirations within the AAP.

St John-at-Hackney Churchyard and Gardens: The AAP has been amended to indicate support for St Johns café. The AAP has also been changed to maintain or enhance the character of the churchyard. The AAP suggests quieter uses (office/residential) of a smaller scale adjoining the churchyard to provide surveillance night and day. Building heights are required to scale down towards the churchyard and respect St Augustine's tower (see Chapter 9).

Civic Heart: The AAP suggests different pavement treatments to prioritise pedestrian and cyclist movement over vehicular. Closing Wilton Way and Reading Lane remains an option within the AAP which is a long term strategy for improving the town centre and subject to more design and public consultation with local residents by Council.

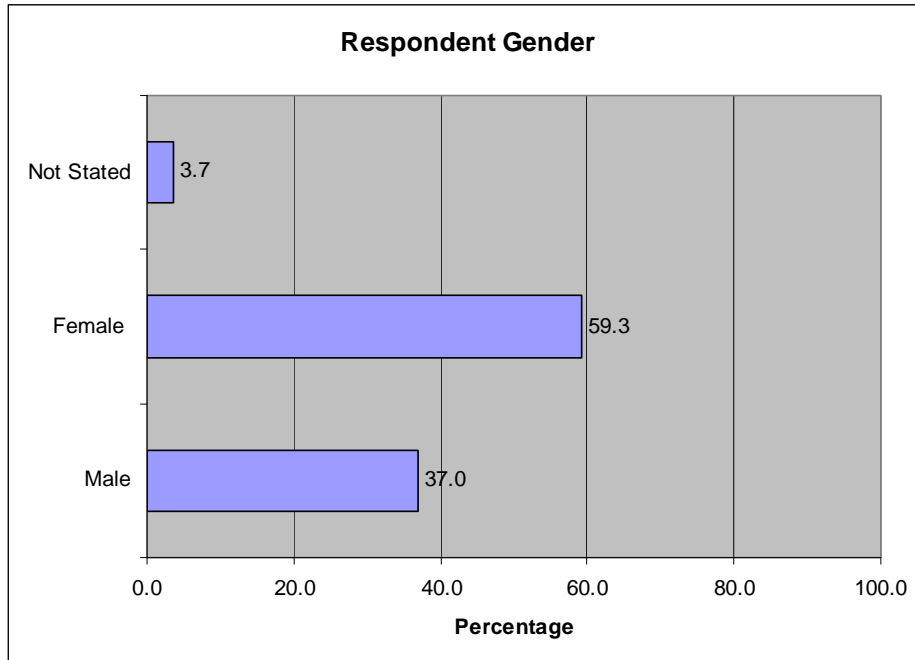
Horton Road: The Horton Road proposal was re-examined and considered to unfeasible. The AAP has been amended to remove this area from the AAP and the proposal confined to the Council-owned Great Eastern building at 29-39 Horton Road (see Chapter 9).

Residential Estates: The AAP has been amended to incorporate Pembury Circus as an opportunity site and encourage a comprehensive and co-ordinated predominantly residential scheme with community and retail uses (see Chapter 9).

## Appendix 1: Hackney Central Service User / Resident Monitoring Information

### Respondent Gender

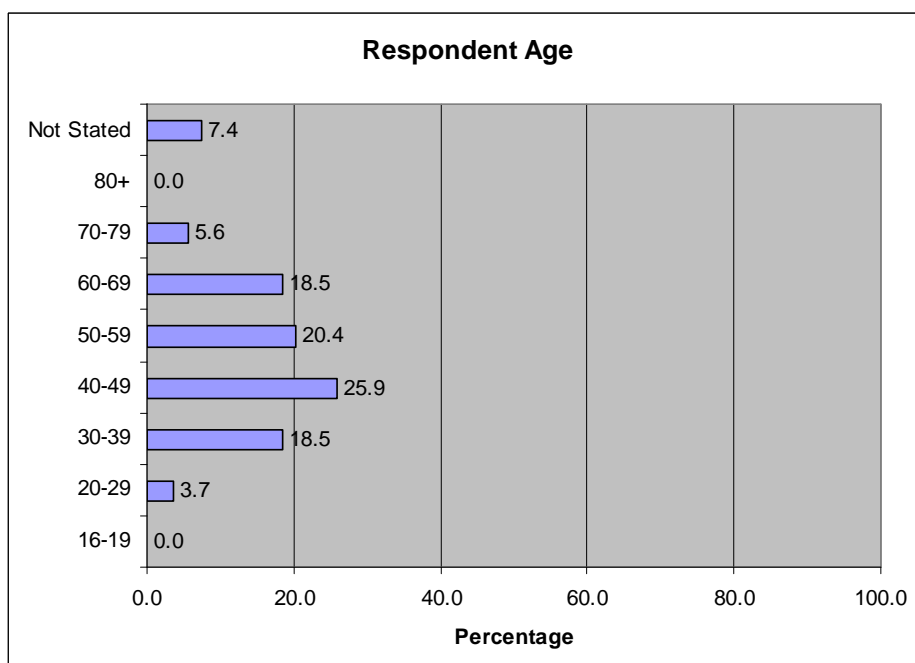
The majority of respondents were female (59.3%) with 37.0% being male.



Base: 54 Respondents

### Respondent Age

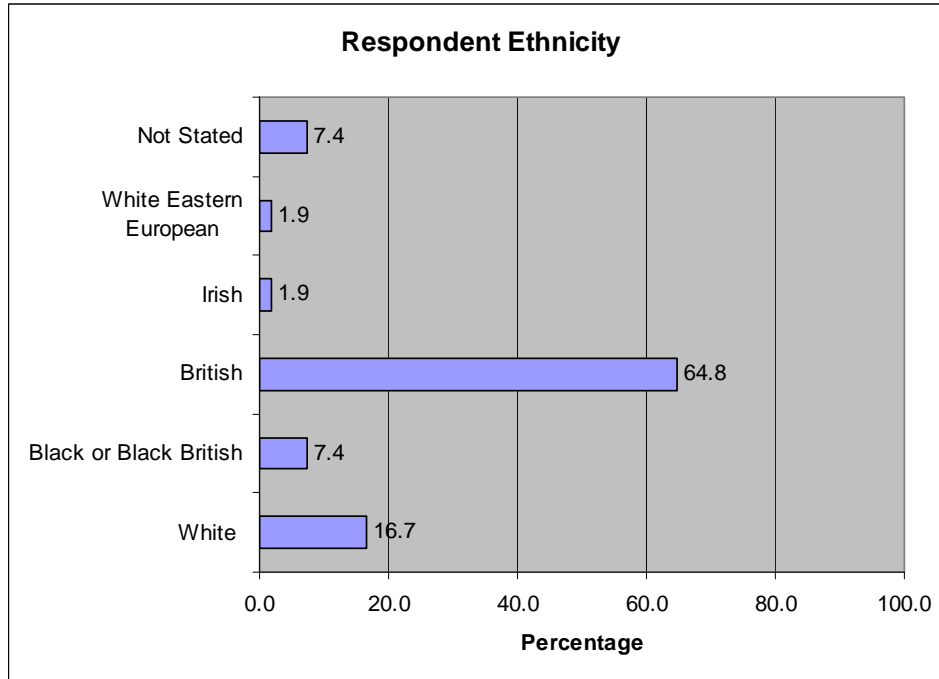
The most common respondent age group was 40-49 (25.9%), followed by those aged 50-59 (20.4%). Identical proportions of respondents aged 60-69 and 30-39 commented on the draft AAP. No responses were received by those aged over 80 or below the age of 16 (excluding feedback received through workshops with the Senior Bees, CityZen etc).



Base: 54 Respondents

### Respondent Ethnicity

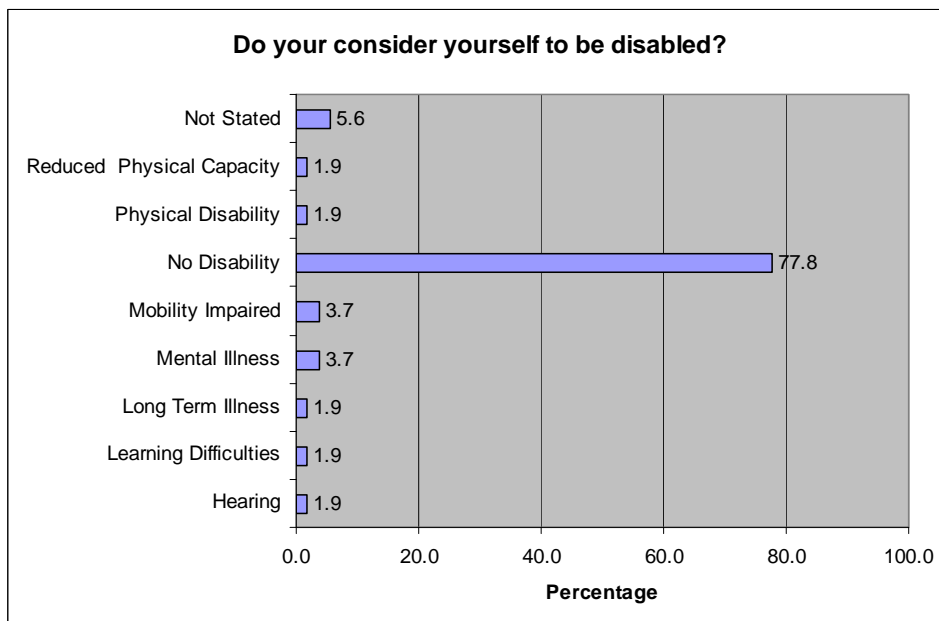
The majority of respondents (64.8%) identified themselves as British, while 16.7% indicated that they were White. 7.4% described their ethnic background as Black or Black British and similar proportions (1.9%) of respondents indicated that they were Irish and White Eastern European.



Base: 54 Respondents

### Respondent Disabilities

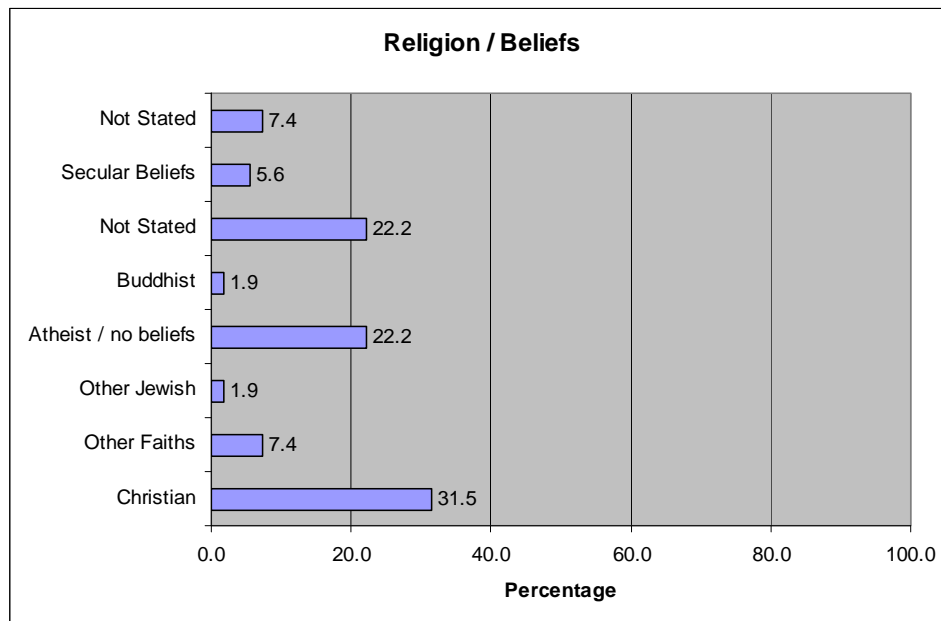
16.9% of respondents indicated they have some form of disability.



Base: 54 Respondents

### Respondent Religion and Beliefs

The highest proportion of respondents indicated that they were Christian (31.5%), followed by those who have no beliefs / Atheists at 22.2%. The lowest percentage of respondents were Buddhist or of Other Jewish faith.

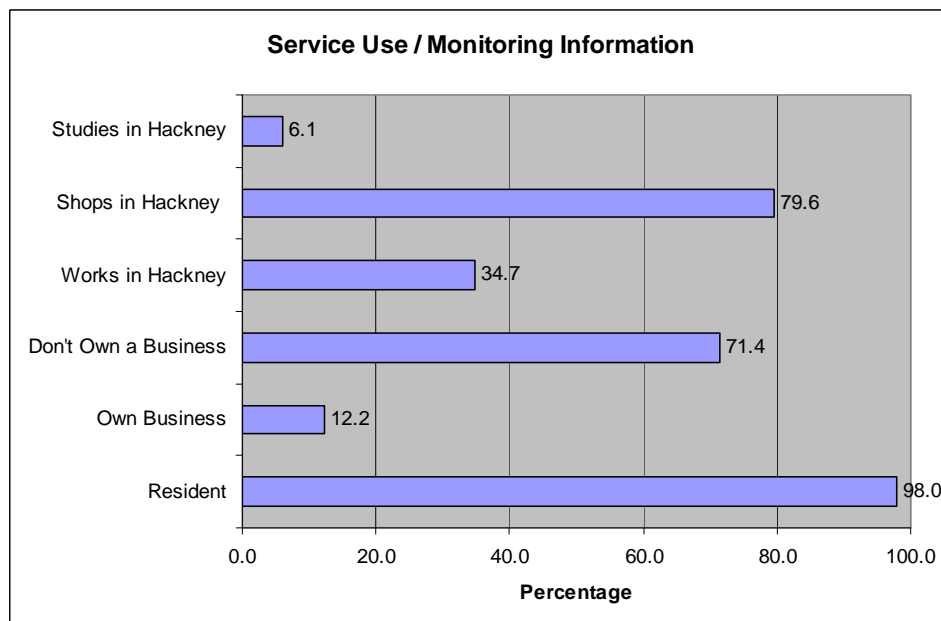


Base: 54 Respondents

### Service Use / Monitoring Information

Nearly all respondents (98.0%) reside in Hackney and 79.6% indicated that they shop in the Borough. 34.7% of respondents work in Hackney with only 6.1% of respondents indicated studying in the Borough.

Please note: Percentages in below chart do not add up to 100% because respondents were allowed to provide more than one response to this question



Base: 49 Respondents