



Glass Castle Foundation at Wapping Hydraulic Power Station

Public Exhibition: Survey Findings Report

By MAKE Associates

For Glass Castle Foundation

JUNE 2026

CONTENTS

1	BACKGROUND	4
2	OBJECTIVES.....	5
3	ABOUT THE CONSULTATION	6
3.1	Communications approach	6
3.2	The survey	6
4	FINDINGS	9
4.1	At a glance	9
4.2	Q1. Gifting The WHPS to Glass Castle	10
4.3	Q2. Glass Castle's overall plans for the building	11
4.4	Q3. Glass Castle's proposed licensing amendments.....	12
4.5	Q4. Improving the local area & community	14
5	CROSS-CUTTING THEMES.....	16
6	CONCLUSIONS.....	18
7	APPENDICES	20
7.1	Appendix 1. About MAKE Associates.....	20
7.2	Appendix 2. The Survey	21

The team at MAKE would like to thank all of you who gave your views at the public consultation, and who allowed us to take your pictures alongside your thoughtful pinboard comments. (For privacy, we have anonymised all the children and young people's faces).

SUMMARY

Two consultation events were held on 5th (Friday evening) and 6th June Saturday daytime) at the public exhibition inside the Wapping Hydraulic Power Station. The exhibition set out the overall plans for the building's conversion into an arts institution by its new charitable owners – Glass Castle Foundation, as well as the specifics of its application to vary its longstanding licence.

Overall, 316 (mainly Wapping-based) residents attended the two events. This was in addition to two earlier information giving events at Go East Vintage Markets held in March/May 2026.

Across the two-day public exhibition, **124 people** (nearly all 'hyperlocal' or 'local' residents) completed the consultation survey. Sentiment toward the project was strongly positive on each question asked, with small variations depending on the specifics.

Question	Positive / Yes	Neutral / Don't Know	Negative / No
Gifting of the Wapping Hydraulic Power Station to Glass Castle Foundation	94%	6%	<1%
Glass Castle's high-level plans for the building as set out at the public exhibition	89%	10%	<2%
Response to proposed licence amendments as set out at the public exhibition	80%	15%	5%
Will Glass Castle's plans improve the local area?	83%	16%	<1%

Percentages are of those who answered each question (Q2 and Q3, n=123; Q1 and Q4, n=124).

A clear community mandate. More than nine in ten respondents welcomed the building being gifted to the charity to be brought back into use - the strongest signal in the dataset.

Heritage and the arts drive the enthusiasm. Responses repeatedly framed the project as filling a cultural void in Wapping and rescuing a landmark of London's industrial history, with frequent, fond references to the former Wapping Project.

Licensing plans are well-received. Support remained the overwhelming majority view on the amended licensing application, but there were a small number of concerns around potential noise, late-night activity, crowd dispersal and traffic that Glass Castle will need to address.

Inclusivity is the recurring condition of support. Many supportive respondents attached a caveat: the space must be genuinely accessible and affordable to the whole community — not an exclusive or purely commercial venue.

A hyperlocal audience. 72% of those who came to the event and completed the survey live in the immediate E1W (Wapping) area, giving the findings significant weight as a measure of local opinion.

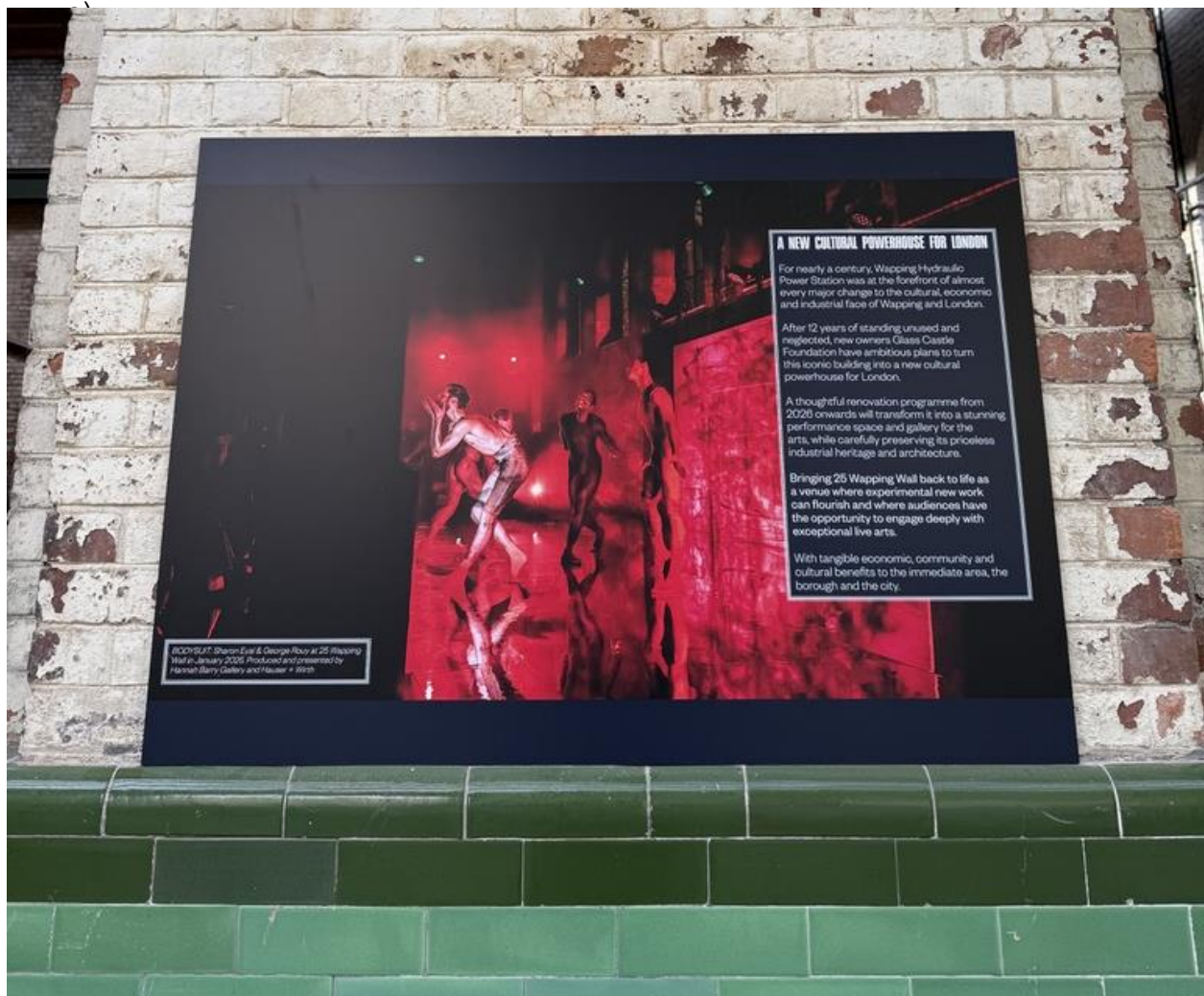
1 BACKGROUND

1. MAKE Associates (see below) were asked by the Glass Castle, the recently founded charity and new guardian of the much-loved Wapping Hydraulic Power Station, to capture the feedback from public consultation events on the 5th and 6th of June 2026, which set out the future plans for the building as an arts institution and proposed changes to the existing licence to facilitate this next chapter in its storied history.
2. These two consultation events complimented previous engagement that had taken place at two separate Go East Vintage Markets events in March and May 2026. These events informed locals and visitors about the project and invited them to the June 5th and 6th consultations. It also gave them the option to sign up to receive communications about the progress of Glass Castle's refurbishment of the Wapping Hydraulic Power Station and its developing plans for this new world class arts institution.
3. It is important to note that a longstanding planning consent is in place for Wapping Hydraulic Power Station to allow the building to function as a home for artistic, event and hospitality use. It has, since its closure as a power station in 1977, been a long-term home for various artistic organisations. In the 1970s it became a rehearsal space for Sir Neville Mariner's famous orchestra - The Academy of St Martin in the Fields, and then for The Wapping Project, Jules Wright's much-loved innovative use of the building to host experimental art, events and a highly respected café-restaurant.
4. Therefore, this was *not* a planning consultation. Rather it was a consultation that would allow locals and any other interested parties the chance to see the latest plans (which are still in the early stages of development), to feed into these plans, as well as to view the specific licence application that was submitted by Glass Castle on 29th May 2026 to Tower Hamlets Council to vary the existing longstanding licence.
5. In summary, these proposed licence changes are: an increase in overall capacity for events to 500 (previously the capacity was 200 upstairs and 250 in the downstairs space) / the licensing of some of the outside space and the removal of some arcane conditions.



2 OBJECTIVES

6. The consultation specifically addressed the following objectives:
- a) To engage with 'hyper local' residents (within 100m), 'local' residents (the wider Wapping area) and art and industrial heritage loving Londoners.
 - b) To provide information about Glass Castle's plans for the building and its operation.
 - c) To test if these ideas for Wapping Hydraulic Power Station are supported by residents, as well as to capture any concerns with the building plans and licence application, so they could be addressed by Glass Castle.
 - d) To gain insight from residents and others on Wapping more generally and the role Glass Castle and Wapping Hydraulic Power Station could play in both the neighbourhood and Tower Hamlet's future.



3 ABOUT THE CONSULTATION

3.1 Communications approach

7. In addition to giving out approximately 2,150 flyers at the March and May 'Go East Vintage Markets' held at the Wapping Hydraulic Power Station (to locals and visitors alike), an independent distribution agency (Jogpost) was contracted to undertake a tracked leaflet drop of 6,000 flyers advertising the public exhibition of the closest residential and business properties (mapped using GPS and Address Point software).
8. The vast majority of properties within 400m from the Wapping Hydraulic Power Station will have received a leaflet inviting them to the events on the 5th and 6th of June. Only if their building was inaccessible (e.g. some gated developments) or if the distributors were asked *not* to deliver leaflets by residents (e.g. 'No junk mail' signs), would they not have received one. This inability to access specific addresses is noted by the distribution company.
9. The open day public exhibition events were also publicised on a number of local What's App groups and 20 posters advertising the events (with QR codes to sign up for more information) were put up around the building and perimeter to encourage attendance. Glass Castle now has a database of 480 (mostly local) residents who expressed an interest in receiving updates about the development of the building, learning more about Glass Castle itself and hearing about the licensing plans.



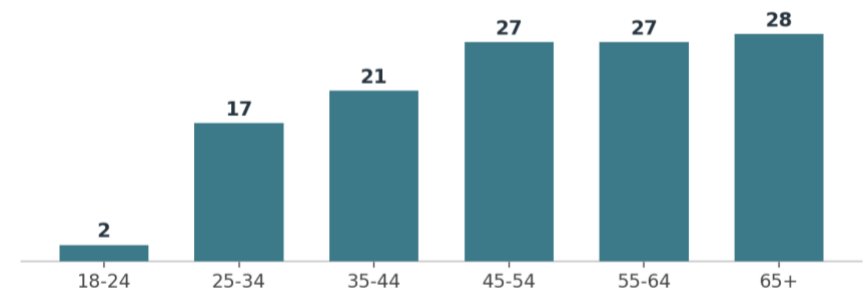
3.2 The survey

10. The survey was conducted in-person by MAKE's trained social researchers at the public exhibition for Glass Castle's initial plans for the Wapping Hydraulic Power Station over two three-hour sessions on Friday 5th and Saturday 6th June

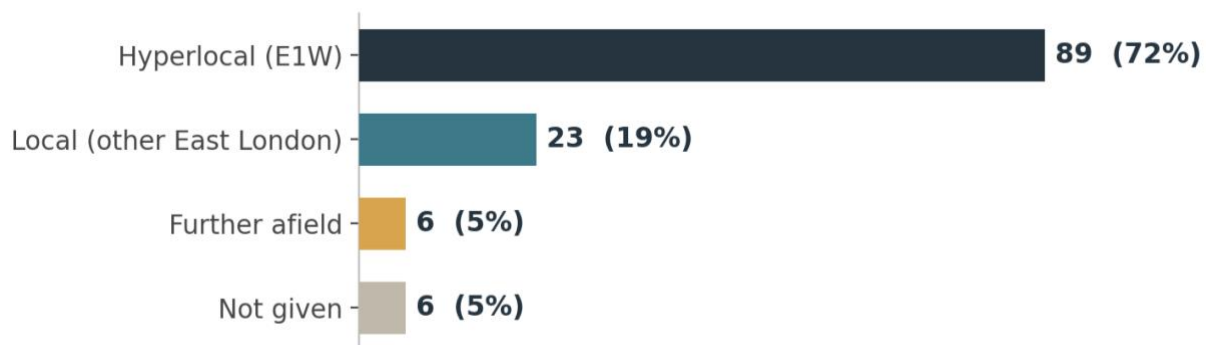
2026. Visitors were able to tour the former Power Station and view wall panels with fascinating historic information and future plans and to ask as many questions as they wanted of the Foundation's CEO, other staff and its licensing consultant. They were then invited to view the licence application at the end of the exhibition and fill out the survey.

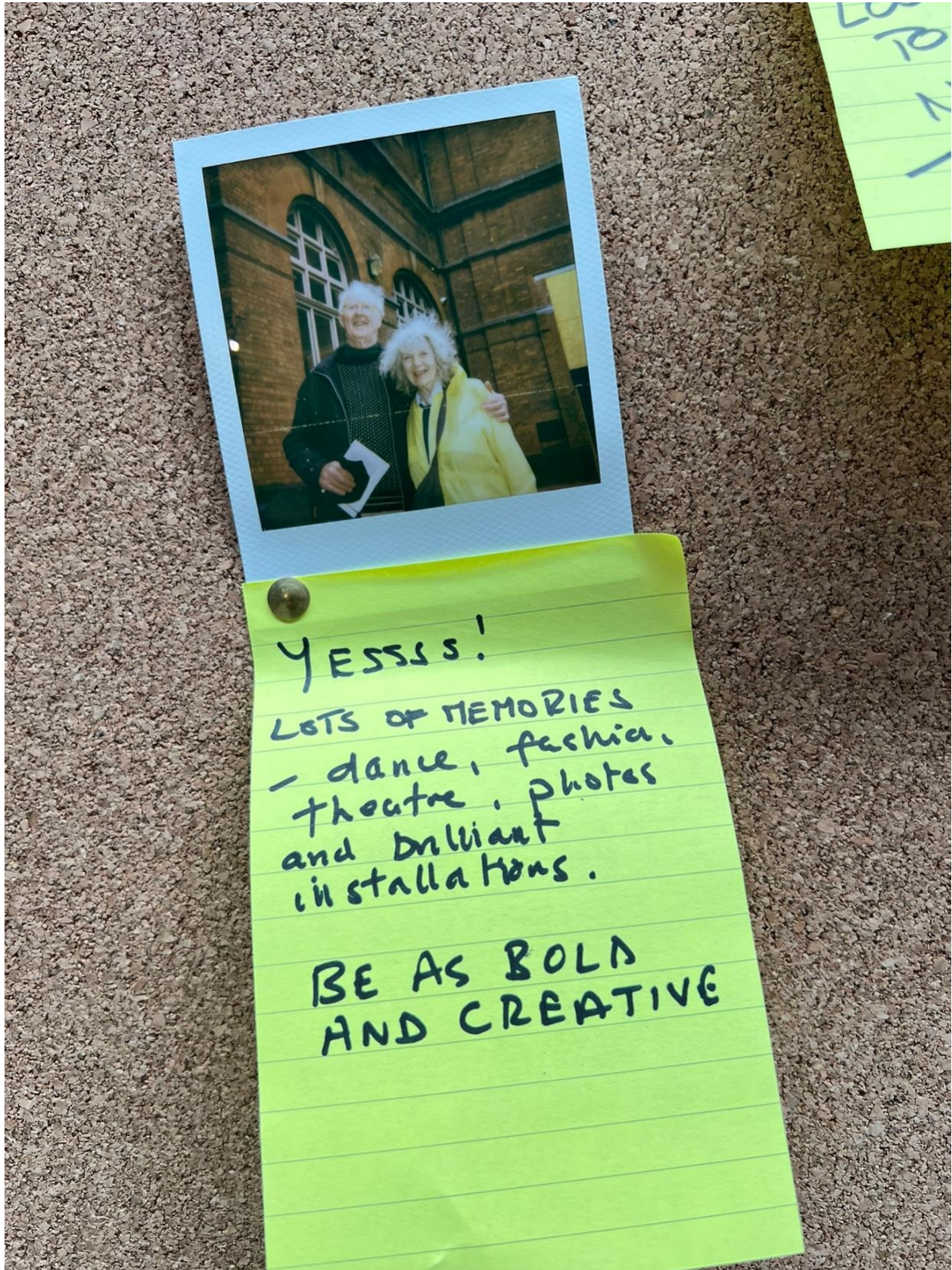
11. The survey (see *Appendices*) consisted of seven questions: four sentiment questions (each with space for an open comment), an optional request for contact details and a whether they were prepared to offer a statement of support, and two demographic questions: firstly *age* (to understand if there were any differences between younger and older residents) and secondly, *postcode* (to be able to analyse responses by street level).
12. All of the surveys have been anonymised and any use of the quotes in this report have been de-coupled from their authors. No personal information has been used in this report.
13. There were a total of **124 responses**: 53 on the Friday and 71 on the Saturday. Free-text comments were left on most of the surveys (Q1: 78 comments; Q2: 69; Q3: 59; Q4: 80), giving a rich *qualitative* picture alongside the *quantitative* ratings.

14. The exhibition reached a wide range of ages though the 45-64 and 65+ groups were most strongly represented (see chart). However younger adults (25-44) also turned out.



15. The consultation was overwhelmingly hyperlocal: 89 respondents (72%) gave an E1W (Wapping) postcode, with a further 23 from elsewhere in East London and only a handful from further afield (see chart). This makes the dataset a strong proxy for the views of the immediate neighbourhood which the plans will most directly benefit but also impact upon.



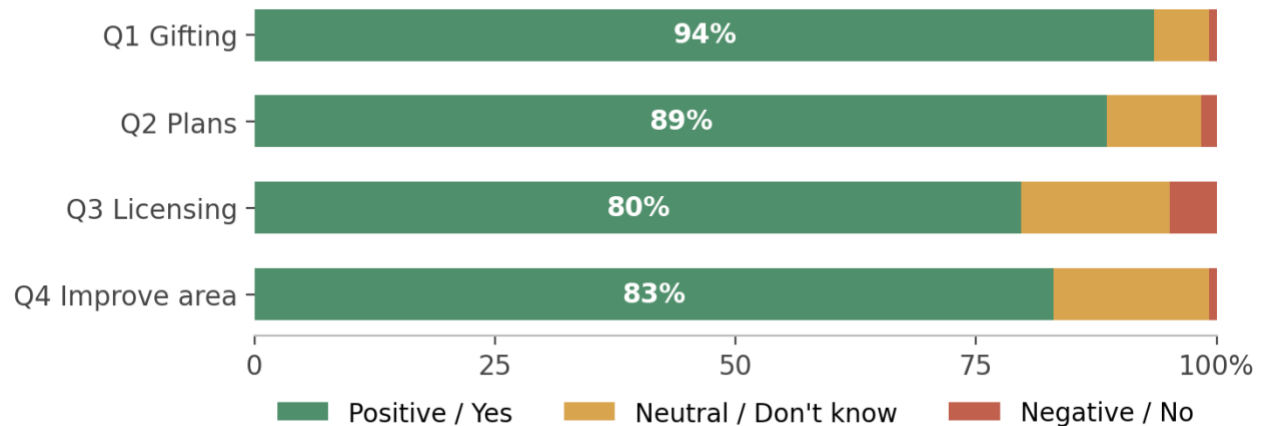


4 FINDINGS

4.1 At a glance

16. Overall positive sentiment dominated every question to an unusually significant degree in MAKE's experience of running such consultations. The gradient across the four bars in the chart below tells the story: near-unanimous support for the principle of saving the building, extraordinarily strong support for the plans for turning the Power Station into a cultural institution and arts events space, with a café-bar-restaurant, and a similar (80%) level of positive support, for the licensing plans.
17. Overall, there were very few negative comments, but even so, these are explored below so that Glass Castle can decide how to engage with the issues raised.

Sentiment across all four questions



4.2 Q1. Gifting The WHPS to Glass Castle

4.2.1 The numbers...

“How do you feel about Wapping Hydraulic Power Station being gifted to the charity - Glass Castle Foundation - to be brought back to life?”



18. **Almost universal approval.** 116 of 124 respondents (94%) felt positive, just 7 neutral (6%) and a single negative.¹ This was the most positively rated question in the survey. The dominant emotion was relief and excitement that a striking, long-dormant building will be used again, coupled with a strong local appreciation for a charitable rather than commercial business model for its future.
19. **A very small minority** did not oppose the gift so much as ask for reassurance. Neutral comments sought more detail on the Foundation, its trustees and how a charity model will be funded sustainably and concern about reliance on a single individual or benefactor. These are requests for transparency rather than objections.

4.2.2 Representative comments

“It’s fabulous that this amazing building will be in use again.” 65+, E1W

“A thrilling prospect and one much overdue. This would dramatically improve cultural provision in an area presently underserved.” 35–44, E1W

“It’s great to see that some wealthy individuals are putting money back into the community and the arts (rather than superyachts and rockets!)” 55–64, E1W

¹ Note. On occasion the percentages shown will not total 100% due to the rounding of decimals into whole numbers.

4.3 Q2. Glass Castle's overall plans for the building

4.3.1 The numbers...

“How do you feel about the overall plans for Wapping Hydraulic Power Station that you’ve seen at this exhibition today?”



20. **Strong endorsement of the direction.** 109 respondents (87% of those answering) were positive, 12 were neutral (10%) and 2 negative (2%). Respondents praised the plans' sensitivity to the building's architecture and heritage, the ambition of a mixed arts, music, theatre and food programme, and the prospect of the much-loved café returning.
21. **Where people held back,** the theme was detail rather than disagreement: several felt the plans were still very high-level (*“loose ideas,” “early days,” “not enough details to form a view”*) and asked to see firmer specifics, a clearer business model and concrete plans for local and school engagement. A recurring constructive request was for more community-led input into how the space is ultimately used.

4.3.2 Representative comments

“I’m really pleased that the architectural history of the building and its features are being carefully considered...” — 35–44, E1W

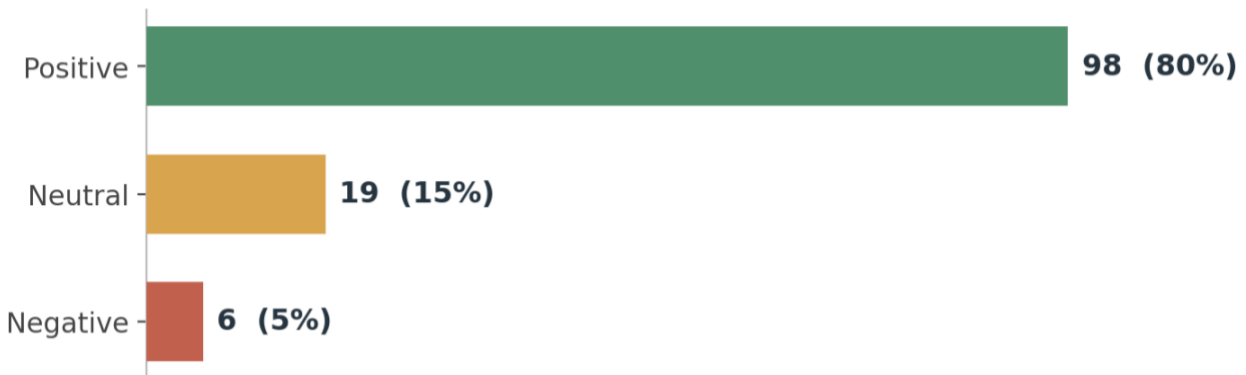
“Respectful use of the space, celebrating the history and creating something new and exciting and positive for local community.” — 35–44, E6

“Great to hear it will be mixed events - arts, music, theatre. Would LOVE the café to return.” — 45–54, E14

4.4 Q3. Glass Castle's proposed licensing amendments

4.4.1 The numbers...

"How do you feel about the proposed amendments to the licensing of Wapping Hydraulic Power Station?"



22. **Vast majority support, but with a few reservations.** 98 respondents (80%) were positive, 19 neutral (15%) and 6 negative (5%).
23. Supporters viewed the hours applied for (which are the same as the venue is already licensed for) as “*sensible*” and understood that evening hours as essential to the venue’s viability. They also pointed to the long-established pubs nearby as evidence that the area already accommodates evening licensed activity. In particular, there was a widespread realisation that the re-activation of the Wapping Hydraulic Power Station could provide the answer to a problem cited by many hyperlocal residents – “*a lack of things to do in Wapping*”. Residents made clear that this was particularly true in the evening.
24. A small number of reservations were expressed. These clustered around operational matters that the Glass Castle has addressed but could provide further detail on, including the potential for late-night noise, the dispersal of crowds after events, mitigating traffic, and the pavement impact of rental bikes.
25. Within these reservations, there were one or two niche comments questioning the need for alcohol sales (it should be noted that Wapping Hydraulic Power Station has maintained a licence until midnight for several decades), and the proposed event capacity increase from 250 to 500. (Note: The independent capacity report commissioned by Glass Castle says that the building *could* safely and comfortably operate with 562 attendees. This was made available at the consultation event).
26. **Insight:** For nearly all of the small number of residents with concerns, the detail was about management, not opposition. Several residents who flagged noise still rated the question positively, on the explicit condition that soundproofing, curfews and crowd

management are handled effectively. A clear, visible operational and noise-management plan would likely convert much of the neutral group.

4.4.2 Representative comments

“Evenings are meant for events, and the proposed hours are sensible, grown up and will help the space thrive and survive.” 55–64, E1W

“The Prospect of Whitby has been around since 1520 and [there are] no issues there!” 35–44, E1W

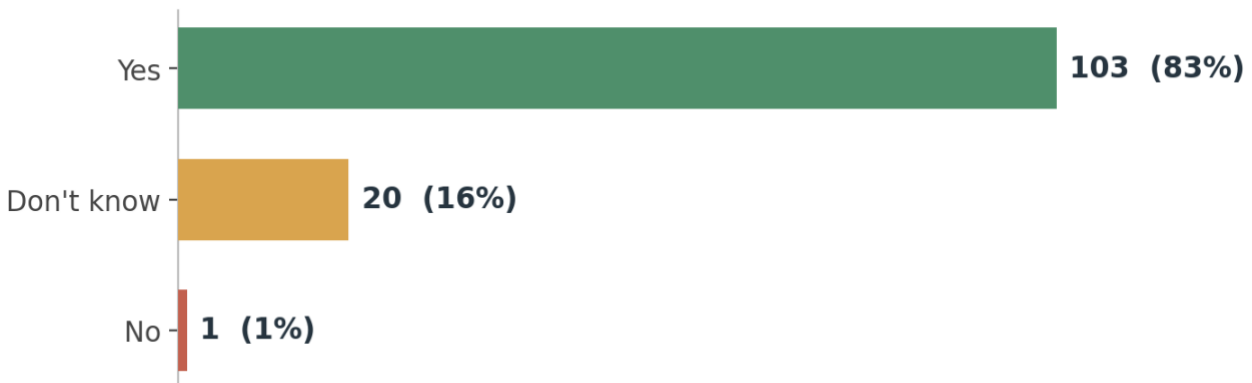
“Hugely supportive - would love this building to serve as a special and inclusive third space for community.” 45–54, E1W

“Modifying from 250 to 500 is fine. Would want to ensure that the sound levels are assessed post installation of baffling.” 45–54, E1W



4.5 Q4. Improving the local area & community

“Do you feel that the plans for Wapping Hydraulic Power Station will improve the local area and community?”



27. **A strong yes, with thoughtful conditions.** 103 respondents (83%) answered ‘Yes’, 20 (16%) ‘Didn’t know’ and only one said ‘No’. Respondents anticipated cultural, social and economic benefits: a gathering place for a *“tight community,”* renewed footfall for surrounding businesses, and the return of a venue that draws visitors from across London.
28. **The condition of support — inclusivity.** The ‘Don’t know’ and conditional comments reveal the project’s defining challenge in residents’ eyes: making sure the benefit is genuinely shared. Several raised the area’s social and economic diversity and asked how Glass Castle will reach beyond an arts-going audience to young people, local schools, non-English-speaking residents and those for whom *“art events feel out of reach”*.

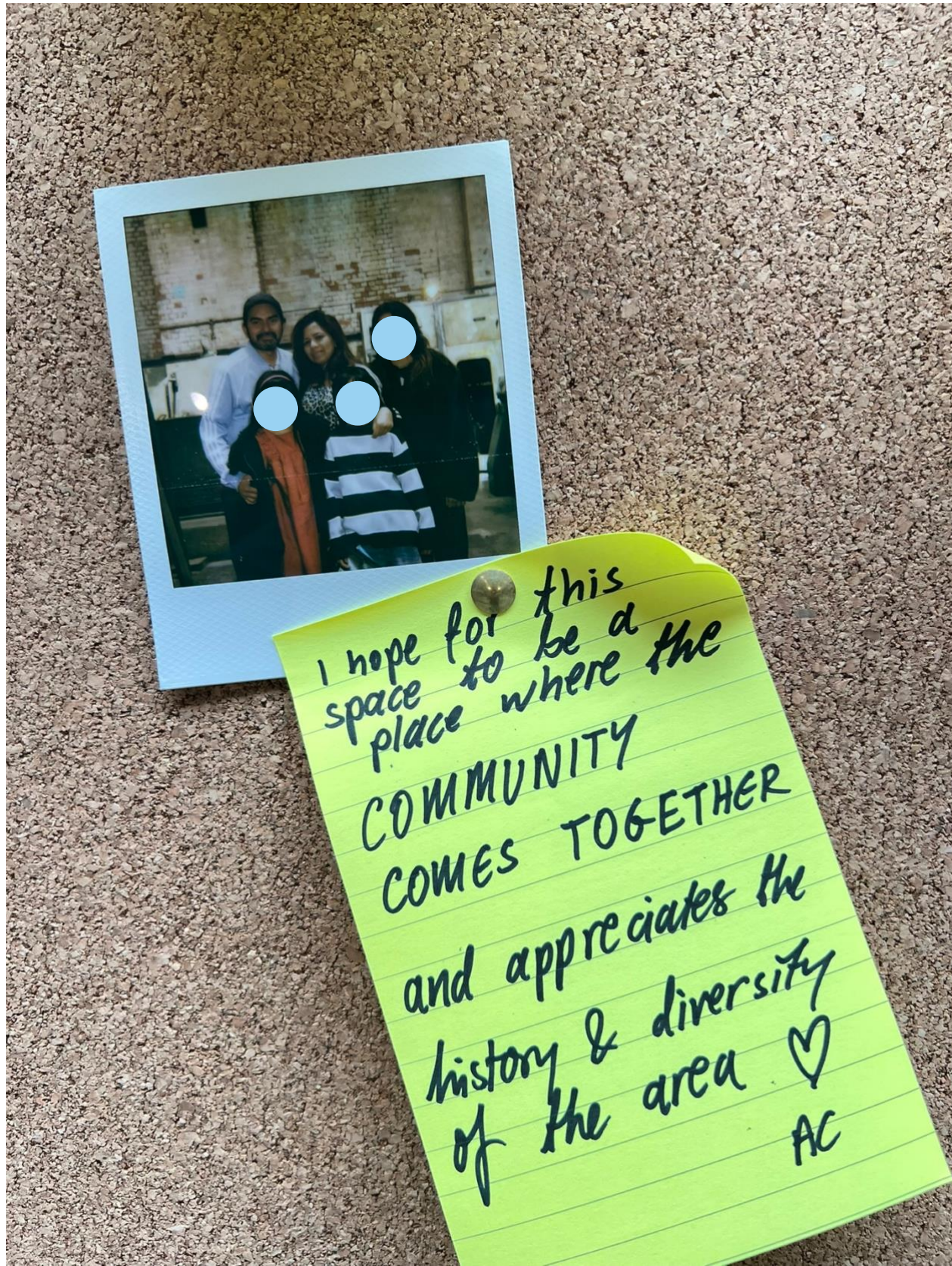
4.5.1 Representative comments

“It’ll bring new people in - but most importantly be a real place to bring locals together. We are a tight community and a facility like this will be a huge asset.” 45–54, E1W

“Drives footfall for all venues in Wapping.” 55–64, E1W

“Wapping has an ethnic and class divide. I am not sure the Foundation [currently] has a plan for this.” 18–24, E1W

“It will be important to engage communities whose native language is not English, and young people.” 35–44, E1W



5 CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

29. Six themes recur across the open comments and explain the sentiment behind the numbers. These are summarised below.

5.1.1 *Heritage rescued*

30. The strongest emotional driver. Respondents described the building as an important piece of London's industrial history and welcomed its sensitive, adaptive reuse after years dormant: “[the plans are] power and pure electricity”, “[it’s been] dormant for too long”, “[it must be] brought back to life”.

5.1.2 *Filling a cultural void*

31. A widely shared sense that Wapping lacks arts and cultural (as well as hospitality) provision. The area is described variously as “culturally starved,” a “dead zone,” and “underserved”.

5.1.3 *Nostalgia for The Wapping Project*

32. Many respondents were former visitors to the building in its previous life as The Wapping Project, recalling its exhibitions, café/restaurant and atmosphere with huge affection, and explicitly hoping the new venture continues “Jules’ legacy.”

5.1.4 *Community access and inclusivity*

33. The most important condition attached to support: the space must be affordable, welcoming and genuinely offer something for the whole, diverse community - with specific calls to engage local schools, young people, graduates and non-English-speaking residents.

5.1.5 *Operational impact — noise, crowds, traffic*

34. Licensing plans are strongly supported, but there are a small number of areas that require detailed solutions: mitigating later evening noise, managing crowd dispersal after events, limiting traffic and deterring the dumping of rental bikes - framed almost entirely as “Get the management right” rather than “Don’t do it.”

5.1.6 *Detail, transparency and sustainability*

35. A constructive request running through the neutral responses were clearer specifics on the programme, the charity’s funding model and governance, and a visible management plan, so this small number of excited but tentative residents can move from “wait and see” to active support.

5.1.7 Some concluding comments from residents...

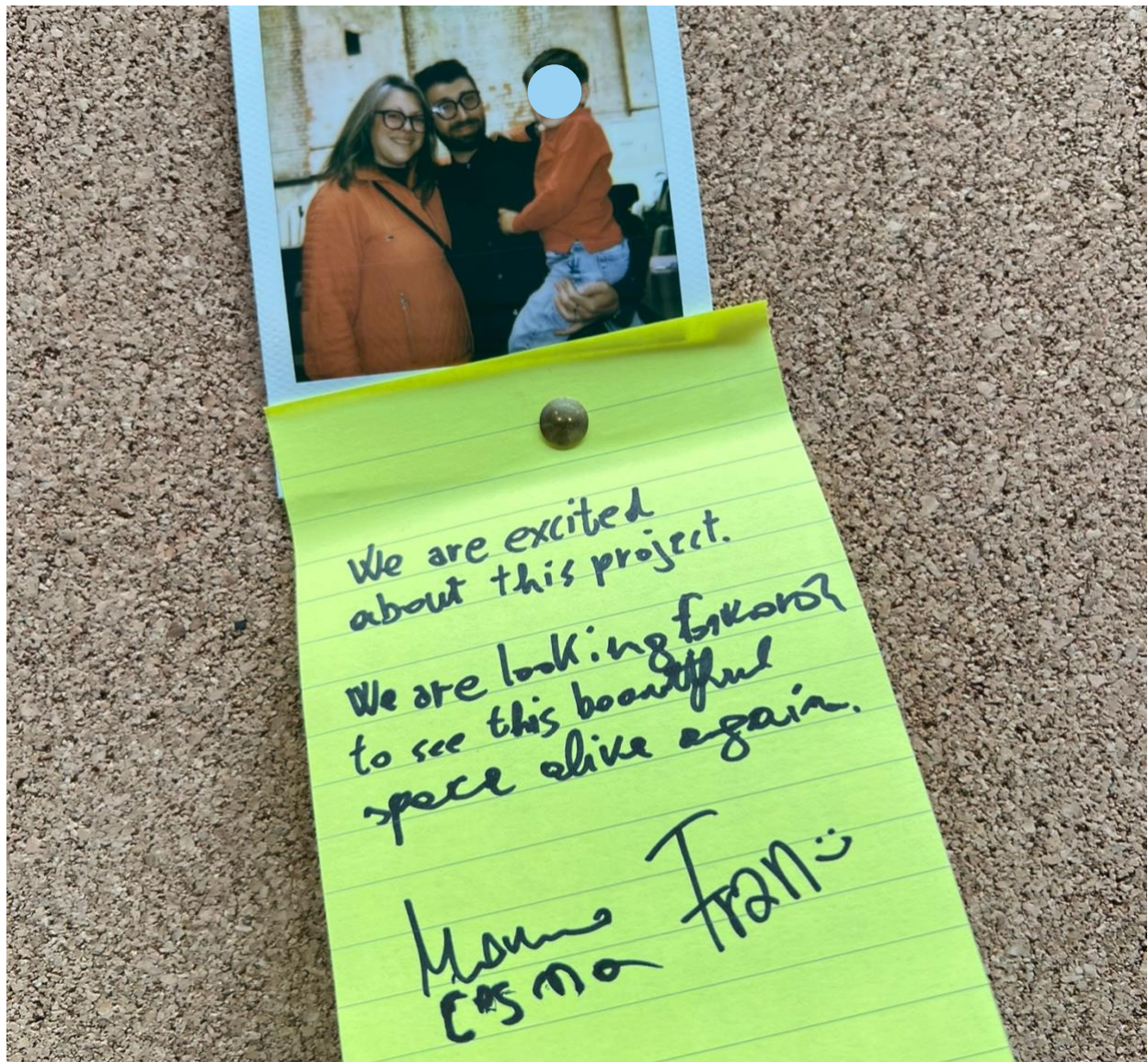
36. Some comments really captured the spirit of the consultation:

"I think it is the greatest news for Wapping and London I have seen in a long time."
55–64, E1W

"Hugely supportive - would love this building to serve as a special and inclusive third space for [our] community." 45–54, E1W

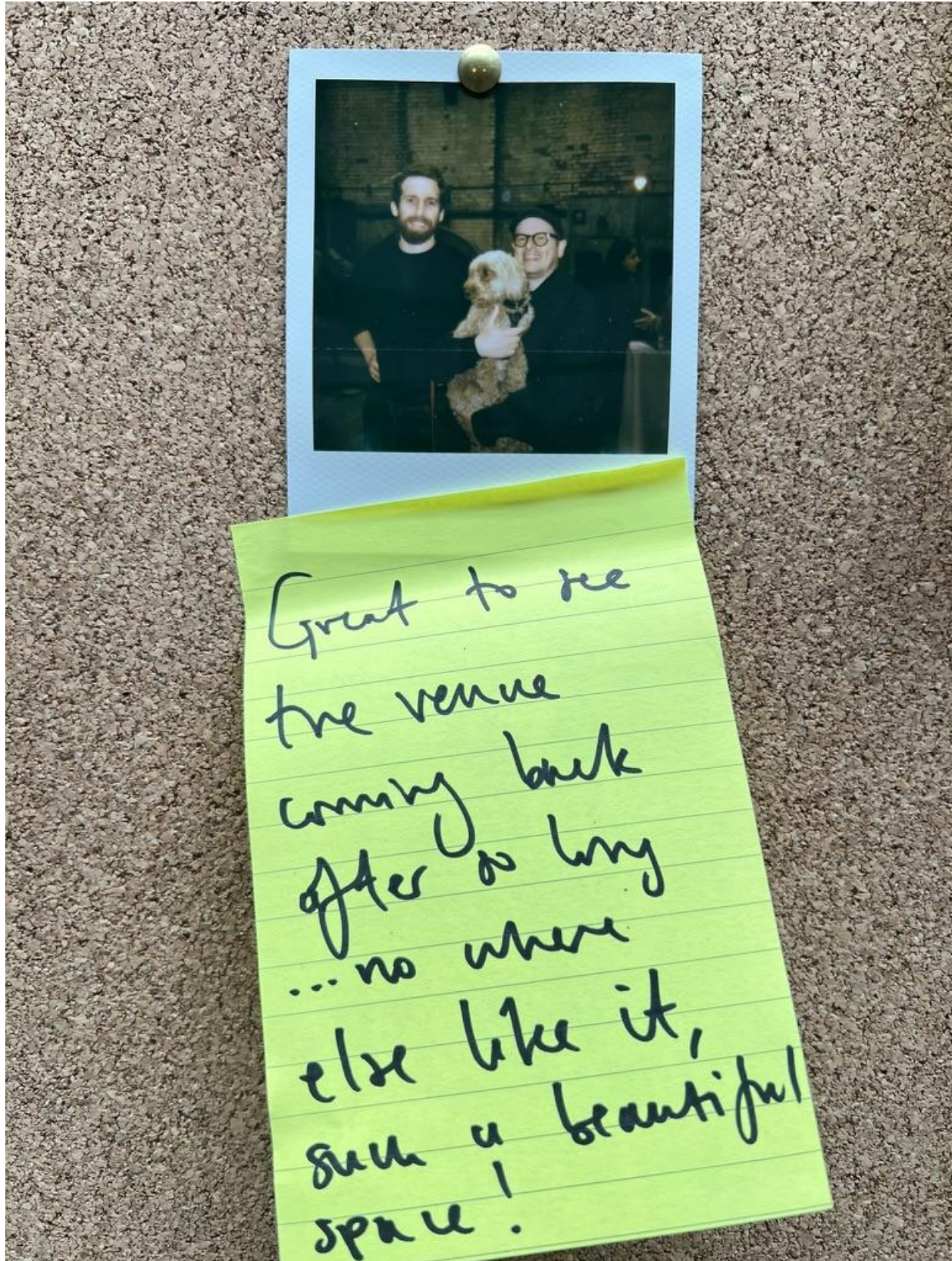
"Remembering the past, hoping for the future." 65+, E14

"Front-runner of pioneering rebirth of this creative venue." 55–64, E1W



6 CONCLUSIONS

37. The consultation returns a clear and well-evidenced community mandate for Glass Castle's charitable ownership and plans for a new artistic institution for Wapping, Tower Hamlets and London. Support was strong on every measure and strongest of all for the founding principle: saving a landmark and returning it to cultural and community use. The plans themselves were warmly received, with particular appreciation for the care being taken over the building's heritage and for the breadth of the proposed programme.
38. Two things should guide the next stage. First, the one area where a small number of residents needed greater reassurance was on the evening licensing. This was about management, not opposition: a clear, visible plan for noise, curfews, crowd dispersal and traffic would address most of the hesitation and would convert much of this small neutral group into active support.
39. Second, the condition attached most often to people's enthusiasm is inclusivity - demonstrating, concretely, that the space will be affordable and genuinely open to the whole of Wapping's diverse community will be central to sustaining the goodwill this consultation has captured.
40. **Statement of support:** 30 respondents (24% of the total) additionally registered consent to provide a statement of support to be shared with Tower Hamlets Council - a useful base of advocates to draw on as the proposals progress.



Great to see
the venue
coming back
after so long
...no where
else like it,
such a beautiful
space!

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1. About MAKE Associates

41. MAKE Associates are a leading placemaking, evening and night-time economy research and community engagement consultants. We work globally with central governments, city mayors, councils, community groups, venue owners and property companies. Our reports are objective and independent and not subject to approval by clients. Our surveys are undertaken to the standards of the Market Research Society Code of Conduct.
42. Our team have been undertaking community consultations for public and private organisations for more than 20 years. Our consultation experience over this time includes over 100 resident / user / visitor surveys and 250 focus groups, workshops and design charrettes for councils, community organisations, the NHS, government departments, business improvement districts (BIDs) and organisations such as Visit Britain, English Heritage and the National Trust.
43. MAKE has been based in London since 2008, so our team are familiar with Tower Hamlets and Wapping and its genesis from a former docks and warehouse area into a residential and business neighbourhood.

7.2 Appendix 2. The Survey

1. How do you feel about 25 Wapping Wall being gifted to the charity - Glass Castle Foundation - to be brought back to life?

Positive ☐

Neutral ☐

Negative ☐

Why did you give this response?

2. How do you feel about the overall plans for 25 Wapping Wall that you've seen at this exhibition today?

Positive ☐

Neutral ☐

Negative ☐

Why did you give this response?

3. How do you feel about the proposed amendments to the licensing of 25 Wapping Wall?

Positive ☐

Neutral ☐

Negative ☐

Why did you give this response?

4. Do you feel that the plans for 25 Wapping Wall will improve the local area and community?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Don't know ☐

Why did you give this response?

5. Please could you share an email address for news about 25WW and our future events? (We comply with GDPR and will not use it for any other reason or pass it to any other individuals or organisations).

If you would be willing to submit a short statement of support for us to share with Tower Hamlets Council, please also tick this box to register your consent to be contacted by us about this: ☐

6. Which age group do you fall into?

Under 18 ☐

18-24 ☐

25-34 ☐

35-44 ☐

45-54 ☐

55-64 ☐

65+ ☐

7. So that we can quantify how many respondents are hyperlocal, local or live further afield, please provide your SIX (or SEVEN) digit postcode: