

A COMMUNITY SPACE AT 100 TOWER GARDENS ROAD?

This is the first version of an evolving community dream. It briefly outlines the context, goals, engagement, and ideas for a revitalized 100 Tower Gardens Road that delivers for the community.

Summary

- Tower Gardens Estate, and White Hart Lane ward more generally, have no community space, and are often overlooked, including not featuring in the [Shaping Tottenham strategy](#)
- 100 Tower Gardens Road is a significant building that has been empty for a long time
- Driven by existing capacity and interest in creating a community space, a coalition of residents has come together to shape the conversation about the future of the building, and to build more community power and connection while doing so
- We have longer term proposals, but also ideas about short-term immediate use to prototype different uses of the space, and learn what provides the most value to the community
- We are trying to have a pragmatic conversation with the council about the best way to meet local community needs, realise the vision set out in Shaping Tottenham, and put White Hart Lane ward back on the map through the regenerative use of this historic building

Context

- The White Hart Lane ward is one of the most deprived in Haringey, and England more generally, by the Index of Multiple Deprivation metric
- Tower Gardens Estate constitutes about a third of White Hart Lane ward, and was originally known as White Hart Lane Estate. The ward's current boundaries largely overlap with the original London County Council land for the whole estate. See map below
- There is a lack of community space, both on the estate and in the wider ward
 - On the estate:
 - We have heard from many local older people that there used to be a real sense of community, but this has now gone, partly due to a lack of places to meet and the loss of the few places we had, including a former Club in Waltheof Gardens
 - The autism centre is bookable for meetings, but it is (rightly) not an open space, is expensive and is hard to find for many people
 - There is no space for non-meeting activities (like fitness classes, craft activities, etc.), crucial for local residents' mental and physical health
 - Residents used to have access to the building in the park (used by IntoUniversity) for meetings, but this has been refused in recent years
 - And across White Hart Lane ward:
 - There are limited other options for meeting space in the ward, and no dedicated community space
 - The closest hireable spaces are in places like Wolves Lane, the Selby Centre and Lordship Hub, but these are outside of the ward and do not meet very

local needs – there are a number of people on the estate who have reduced mobility and struggle to travel to other spaces

- We know that local people are wanting to create activities such as craft workshops and intergenerational coffee mornings but have no easily accessible space
- Local activities that provide much needed social, economic and environmental benefits are being limited, e.g.
 - Friends of the park – are being limited by a lack of space to store gardening tools and to grow plants for the park and the estate
 - Haringey fixers – are being limited by the lack of a space to store tools and electrics that they are fixing
- 100 Tower Gardens Road is a large and prominent building, and its current state of emptiness and disrepair is causing active problems:
 - It contributes to the perception of the estate being run down, especially when considered alongside the significant fly-tipping, maintenance issues, and numerous empty and boarded-up houses.
 - It attracts street drinking and drug use outside the building
 - The alleyway behind attracts dumping
 - It leads to further maintenance issues, e.g. if the heating is not on in winter
- Haringey Council has been working on a new Community Assets Social Value Policy for the borough, and has also been carrying out a survey of the state of the building

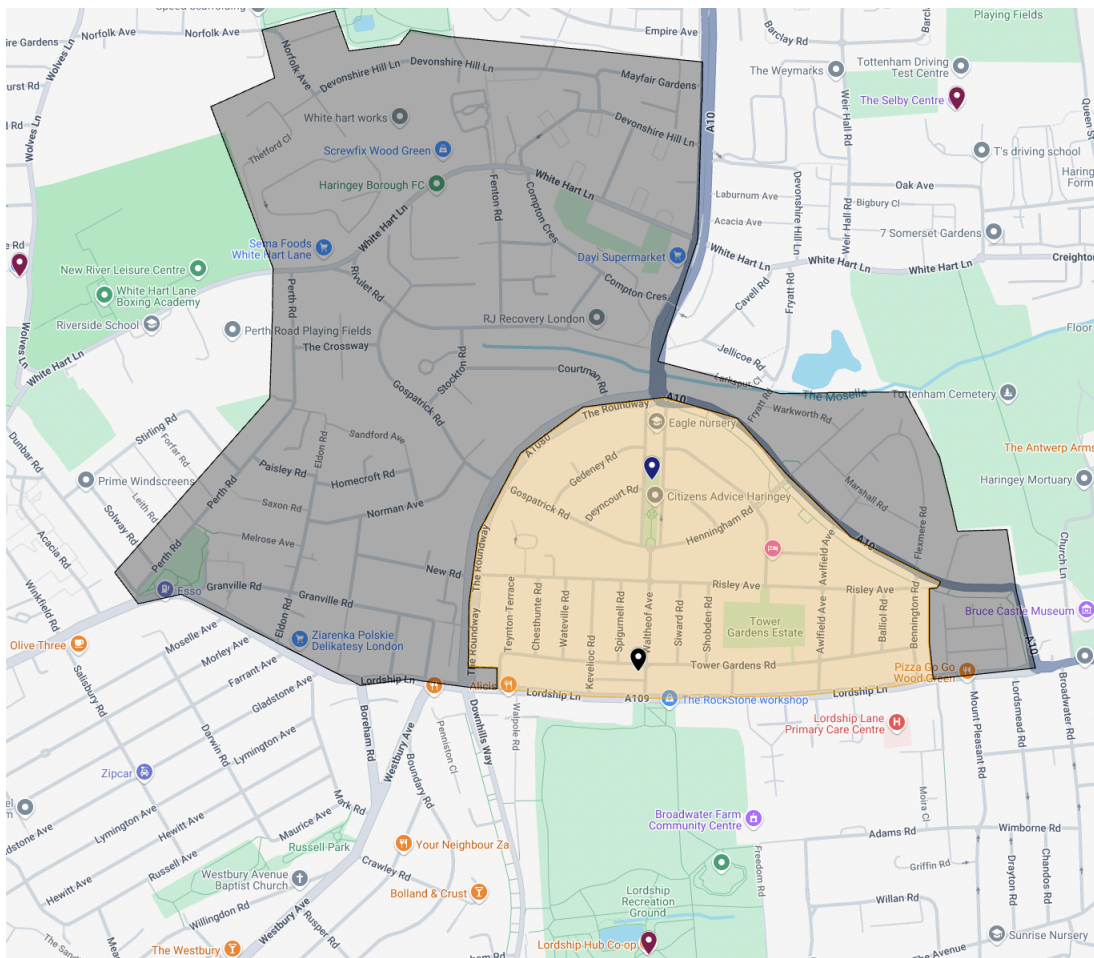


Figure: Map showing White Hart Lane Ward and Tower Gardens Estate, as well as The Chad Gordon Autism Centre (Blue), Wolves Lane Centre, Selby Centre and Lordship Hub (Red), and 100 Tower Gardens Road (Black)

An emerging vision for a community space

Our key goals for the immediate future are:

- To begin to animate the space in a way that is welcoming to all
- To gain access to the building for events
- To gain access to the yard and garage for gardening and storage

In the longer term our goals are:

- Be welcoming to all
- Create a multi-use space that is accessible to all, including people with disabilities, older people, and families with small children who may find it hard to access facilities further away
- Create a public living room style space with flexible opening hours to accommodate community needs
- Protect and enhance heritage of the building and Estate/Conservation area
- Act as a retrofit exemplar and hub, showcasing sustainable and cost saving solutions relevant to the area
- Promote environmental and sustainability campaigns on the estate, in conjunction with Friends of the Park and other groups

We are also clear that the space must:

- Not attract lots of cars
- Not be very noisy – *it's a residential area*
- Not be expensive to access
- Not exclude anyone through the regeneration of the building

Who we are

- We are [Tower Gardens Community Corner](#)
- We are a coalition of local residents that are active in the area, and have varied prior experience in community projects
- We are a constituted group, separate from Tower Gardens Resident Group, focused on creating a space for the community
- All of the coalition have a strong local track record of organising community activity, as:
 - *The Friends of Tower Gardens Park*: organise an annual community picnic with People Need Parks funding from Haringey; have written a conservation plan for the park and coordinate closely with The Conservation Volunteers (TCV); raised £1200 to plant a wildlife hedge around the playground; fundraised £400 for pollinator-friendly planting; carry out twice-monthly litter picks and gardening sessions; run resident surveys; etc.
 - *Tower Gardens Residents Group*: Hold quarterly meetings; have created and maintain a growing WhatsApp “community” with multiple groups; organise litter picks of the wider estate including this year's Big Spring Clean; carry out tree-planting and gardening, especially in Waltheof Gardens
 - [Haringey fixers](#): Hold repair cafés around the borough, saving people money and saving items from going to the landfill
 - We also organise annual events on the estate, including a Halloween trick or treat trail
- We have been running a survey about 100 Tower Gardens Road and held an engagement event in May 2025 – see below for the results

- We have been engaging with other local community groups and have the support of Lordship Hub Co-op



Figure: Photos from the May Community Engagement Event (17/05/2025)

Engagement and community views

- We're all local, so have knowledge of the area and talk to neighbours regularly
- We are running an [online survey](#) – which has received 76 responses so far, and is still open – and an in-person event in the corner outside the building, at which we spoke to 116 people
- People responding and coming in person varied in age, ethnic background, and with some having disabilities, which reflects the estate and ward diversity
- People say they like and feel proud of their neighbourhood, its history, green spaces, trees and general greenery, and that there is more of a sense of community than is common in London
- However, most prominent complaints are about: littering and how it is managed (lack of enforcement, street bins, etc.); anti-social behaviour and drug use; lack of a community space and limited community events; lack of investment in the area and confusion about how Council enforces Article 4 and manages buildings it owns; issues concerning cars ranging from potholes to speeding. See Figure below
- Lots of ideas from the community for potential uses of a community space. Lots of which could be accommodated by a flexible multi-use space. See word cloud below

Overview of the space

- 100 Tower Gardens Road currently consists of almost 400 m² of inside space, plus two separate yards and a garage. See floorplans below
- The old nursery is easily isolated from the rest of the building and accessible from the back yard. This area has a children's bathroom and a sink, meaning it has minimal facilities, but could provide toilets and water, e.g. for gardening
- There is a second space, denoted Space B below, which could be isolated together with the Nursery. This space would have an entrance that is separate to the yards. It would provide two adult toilets (both disabled and with changing facilities), as well as a kitchen

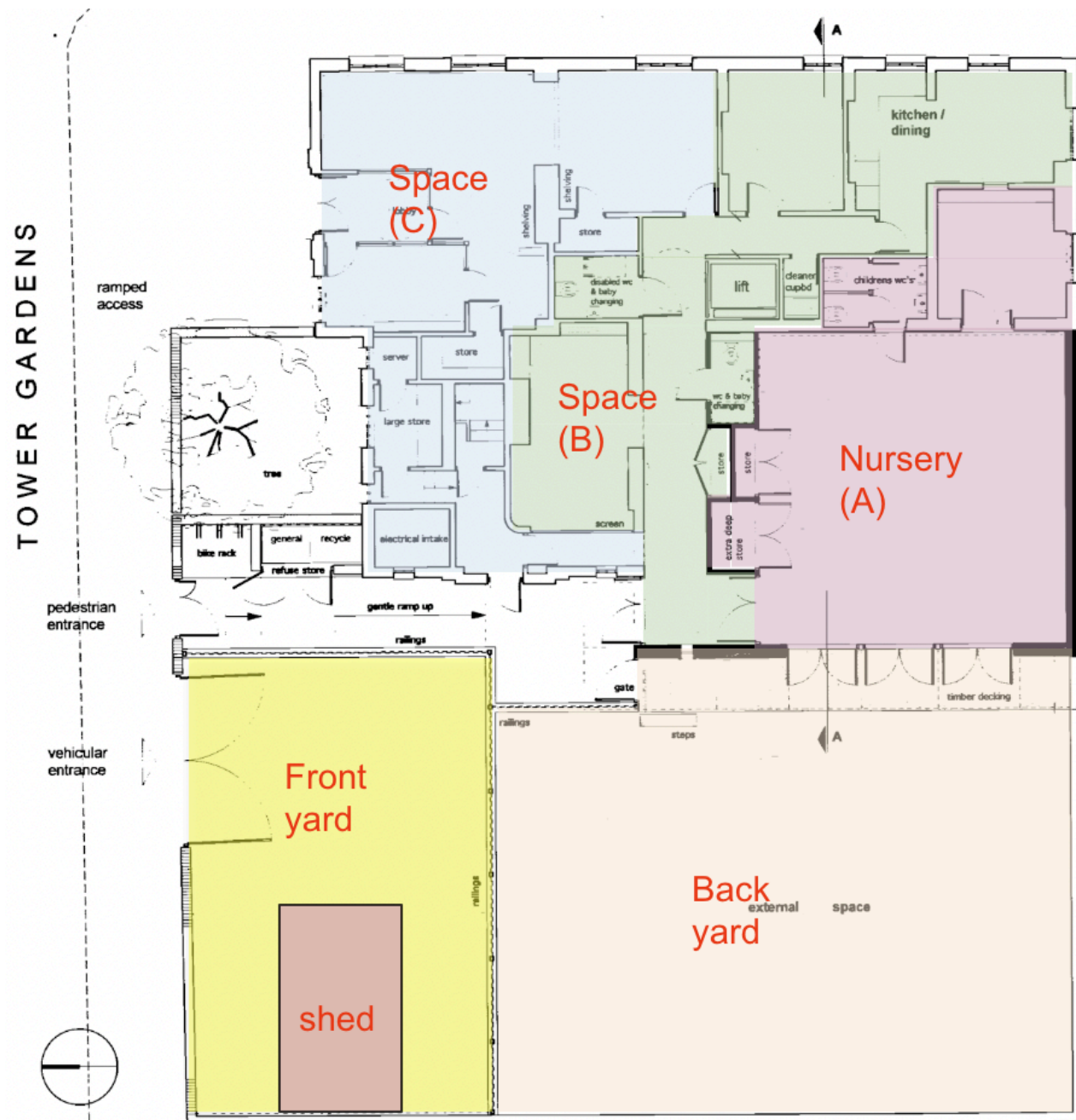


Figure: Floor plan of ground floor with clearly demarcated area. Taken from Haringey Public Register Planning Applications

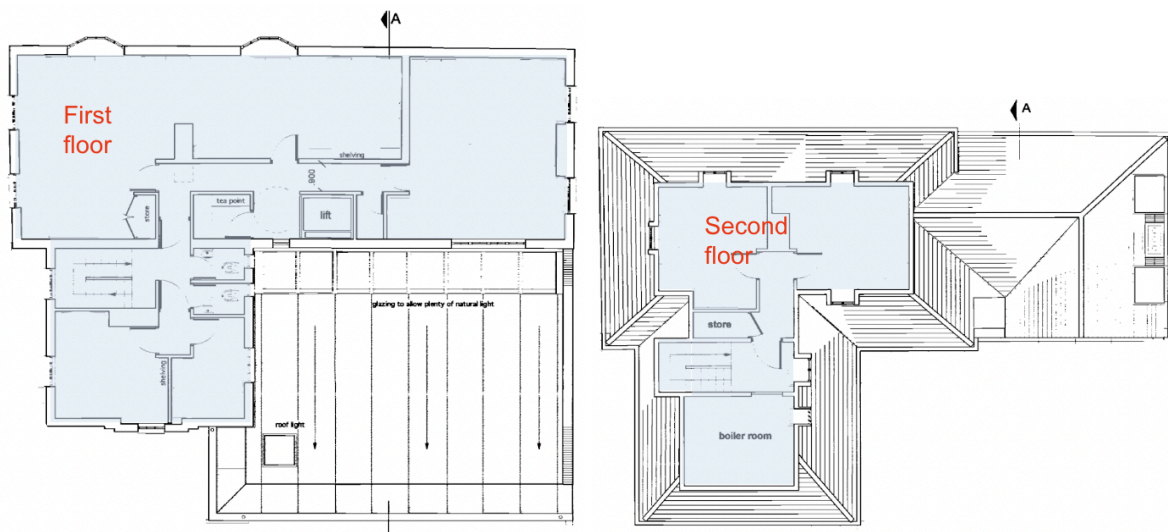


Figure: Floor plans of first and second floors

Possibilities for immediate use of the building

- The building has an energy rating (EPC) of G – the lowest possible – and needs significant maintenance work, but from the survey, it would otherwise seem that the building is structurally sound and safe.
- The building can be divided up easily, meaning parts of it could be used immediately
- Tower Gardens Community Corner has been limited by its lack of access and of an agreement with the council for the space, but has already raised £1850 for a Community Celebration event on the Mayor's Community Weekend in September, has run engagement sessions in the yard outside the building, and has been engaging with the council to clear the yard
- We collectively have a very broad set of skills, and are also confident we could raise necessary funds if we had the support of the council and, better still, an agreement to use the space immediately, even if temporarily
- We have insurance for public events, and volunteers with first aid training
- We believe that it is crucial to prototype different uses of the space, and learn through immediate use what provides the most value to the community. This approach will be significantly more helpful in determining longer-term opportunities, and can be mobilized quickly, ensuring the space is not left empty and is utilized effectively
- We propose finding solutions for immediately using:
 - The nursery as a meeting space for volunteer groups and Tower Gardens Residents Group
 - The nursery or parts of the ground floor for workshops and other activities
 - The ground floor as a cultural space, for example for temporary exhibitions of local artists or of the history of the area, or for small recitals and concerts
 - The yard for community activities and as a temporary, communal growing space, including for the park
 - The garage for tool storage for the Friends of Tower Gardens Park