

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Women's building workshop.

This is a fayre-style event in which local groups and individuals with a special interest in the future of the Women's Building can present their plans.

We have asked the groups to demonstrate their plans, and to broadly consider the questions below:

- 1. What are your aspirations for the Women's Building ?**
- 2. What do you think would be appropriate services for the Women's Building to host?**
- 3. How have you responded to the brief as set out in the Supplementary Planning Document produced by Islington Council?**
- 4. How do you see the services run from the building being funded?**
- 5. Any further supportive information**

You can leave your feedback on each of their boards or if you have any general comments, please leave them below.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to ask.

WOMEN'S BUILDING WORKSHOP DECEMBER 2019:

WHAT DOES THE SPD SAY?

The SPD discusses the women's building/centre in two places within the document, they are detailed below:

Paragraph 3.1:

"The provision of a women's building/centre that incorporates safe space to support women in the criminal justice system and services for women as part of a wider building that could also include affordable workspace to support local organisations and employment opportunities."

and paragraphs 4.20-4.25:

4.20 Given the services and support networks that operated from the site, there would be a shortfall in Islington/north-east London if this is not re-provided. The continued presence of a base for women's services, including female offender services, should therefore be provided as part of any future development proposals for the site in order to ensure equivalent levels of provision and access.

4.21 In addition to space to provide support for women in the criminal justice system, it will also be important to provide space for support and services for women more generally. Estimates suggest there are around 40 organisations in operation in the borough providing support and activity specifically for women. There are also other organisations who now operate outside the borough but that still have strong local connections. The long standing connection between the presence of a women's prison and the growth of locally based specialist women's voluntary and community groups should continue to be supported.

4.22 The purposeful location of a number of women's services into one building would be beneficial in assisting and enabling the rehabilitation and integration of hard to reach groups of women beyond those in the criminal justice system; including those that are vulnerable, homeless, and those that fall between services and agencies.

4.23 There is currently work taking place around violence against women and girls, supported by Islington's Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy (2017-2020). Whilst some services are provided, there is no comprehensive service provision in place to address all of the issues around VAWG. This can be addressed through the provision of a safe space in which multiple services can be accessed. Safe spaces have been evidenced to foster an environment which makes it easier to come forward and report issues and, together with a simpler more accessible range of services in one place, can help to avoid women remaining in high risk situations.

4.24 The need for a women's centre/building is something that has been identified by a number of stakeholders as part of the consultation process, including the voluntary and community sector, local residents, and public sector bodies. In developing future proposals for the site, it will be important to engage with the Planning Service, the Council's Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) team, MOPAC and other key stakeholders to help assess the extent of what is required. This will be secured through a legal agreement attached to a future planning application. It will be important that a safe, women only space, with separate and secure access and outdoor amenity space, is provided as part of a high quality flexible facility that can allow multiple services to operate from the building and provide a safe and pleasant place for clients accessing the services. Whilst the council is keen to see a suitably sized building that can accommodate these facilities provided on site, it should be noted that it is highly unlikely that the council will be able to fund any additional services within these buildings.

4.25 The wider building could include affordable workspace to support local enterprises and employment opportunities, particularly for young people. There is also the potential to provide a service offer to the wider community with the provision of a range of well-being, therapeutic and family support services.

SISTERS UNCUT

What are your aspirations for the Women's Building?

Sisters Uncut want the so-called 'Women's Building'* to provide services to all women and non-binary people affected by state violence, especially supporting survivors of colour, LGBTQ and disabled survivors. It should be a free, relaxing space for members of the local community.

We hope the new site can act as a remedy for the pain so many women suffered at the hands of state violence.

*'Women's Building' is the language used by Islington Council and Peabody consequently. We want a building and services available to all non binary, gender non-conforming people and women and that the name is changed accordingly.

What do you think would be appropriate services for the Women's Building to host?

The 'Women's Building' must:

- Only house provisions that do not cooperate with the Home Office or MOJ in any capacity or deny access on the basis of immigration status.
- Provide support (counselling, advice, healing, trauma-focused initiatives, physical wellbeing, emotional wellbeing, art therapy, etc) by prison abolitionist organisations that recognise the harms perpetrated by the criminal justice system.
- Provide specialist services for marginalised groups, including survivors of colour and queer, trans, migrant and disabled survivors
- Display the artwork of survivors of state and domestic violence and provide a library, craft space, kitchen, garden and comfortable, accessible seating.
- Provide free childcare.

How have you responded to the brief as set out in the Supplementary Planning Document produced by Islington Council?

This "women's building" would be a safe space to support women and non-binary people who have experienced the harm of the criminal justice system and other women and non-binary people in the borough, as set about in the main outline of what a women's building should be in the SPD.

Our demand is that the building provides transformative, radical services and support for women and non-binary people (4.18 and 4.2 of SPD). However, these must not be operated by or in-conjunction with the criminal justice system.

We completely reject the idea of MOPAC using any of the women's building as a women's centre or to run any services from (as suggested as a possibility 4.19). This is meant to be a radical space of healing that understands the damage the CJS has had on people's lives, rather than a place that furthers that damage. Our demand is that the building is filled with services run by groups not associated with the criminal justice system, including many important local community groups. We envision the building as a place for local community groups to operate from, use and provide support from (4.21 of SPD) The building will be a safe space - meaning it must be completely separate to the criminal justice system and MOPAC. Having such a space would allow homeless people, people experiencing violence and other marginalised people to come to for free support and advice (4.22-3). Allowing MOPAC or other criminal justice operations to run from the building, would only make this space unsafe for marginalised women.

The women's building will be a community space with a library, child care, accessible seating etc. This kind of community space is the social infrastructure the area needs (4.26).

How do you see the services run from the building being funding?

Our demand is that the money made from the sale of the prison be used to fund services in the planned so-called 'Women's Building'. Using money from the sale of the site would be a symbol of recognition and reparation for local survivors of domestic and sexual violence and the women of Holloway Prison.

We also demand that Peabody sever its financial and organizational relationship with MOPAC, and commit to constructing social housing and a women's building guided by the above and serving the needs of the community and survivors of state, domestic and sexual violence.

Any further supportive information.

The idea of having a "women's building" on the site is one that came from local and community groups. It is completely necessary to listen to our collective demands on what this should look like. We do not want MOPAC, or any other CJS involvement in this site. We do not want a women's centre run by MOPAC on the site, or even running services from the building. There is an opportunity to build a truly incredible building which could help transform the lives of people in the area.

Please place any feedback in the box below

Holloway Neighbourhood Group comprises a busy community centre in Holloway and also the Stress Project, which offers low-cost therapies and counselling to the local community. We facilitate, with local resident Ruth Clarke, a Network of women's groups, who advise and support often very marginalised community members in Finsbury Park.

What are your aspirations for the Women's Building ?

We welcome the prospect of a women's facility in the heart of our community which, respecting the history of the site, will provide services for women affected by the criminal justice system as well as affordable women-only services for local women. Whilst there is community space for hire in the area, there is very little specialist woman-only provision or space that is affordable for local groups.

What do you think would be appropriate services for the Women's Building to host?

Among the ideas that we have discussed with members of the Women's Network are:

- Therapeutic services for local women and children;
- Low cost office space for community and campaign groups, and possibly social enterprises;
- Activity space (a medium sized hall, available at a concessionary rate to tenants);
- Educational/ training facilities;
- A shared kitchen, shower and café;
- A nursery/crèche, and perhaps a link to respite/supported housing.

Group members thought the facility should be multi-purpose (to avoid stigma), free from enforcement agencies, and sensitive to the cultures of the users. Organisations would need to have well thought through safeguarding policies.

How do you see the services run from the building being funding?

We assume that Peabody will build the facility and let it for a pepper-corn rent to a management committee, responsible for sub-letting and the day-to-day running of the service. It will be necessary to employ management, maintenance and security staff.

We are concerned that the facility should be financially sustainable, and we understand that a senior officer in the Planning Department is working on possible sources of income. These could include: rents and hire fees, grants from Trusts, Lottery Fund, academic and philanthropic charities, and celebrities.

Could organisations like Public Health, Adult Social Care, the Mental Health Trust or Solace Women's Aid be persuaded to relocate already-funded services to the site? Following the demise of the Women's Therapy Centre, there might be new (Cripplegate) funding for local voluntary sector therapeutic services.

Any further supportive information

This is a unique opportunity for women in north London and further afield. A decade of austerity has hit provision hard, especially for the most marginalised members of society.

We very much hope that secure sources of funding will be found to ensure that the facility provides a wide range of widely accessible and sustainable services.

Please place any feedback in the box below

ISLINGTON MUSEUM – THE ECHOES OF HOLLOWAY PROJECT

Holloway Prison has been an important landmark in Islington for over 100 years. Until summer 2016 it was the largest women's prison in Britain. Many well-known prisoners have passed through its doors, and the prison has become notorious in the public imagination, but there are diverse voices which remain unknown and unrecorded.

The Echoes of Holloway Prison project aimed to save the stories of this highly significant place before they were lost forever following the closure.

The project was led by Islington Museum from February 2018 to June 2019, in collaboration with Holloway Prison Stories and Middlesex University, and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

What are your aspirations for the Women's Building?

The Echoes of Holloway Prison Project has worked closely with many of those linked to Holloway Prison over its history, capturing stories which reflect the prison both as a place of pain but also of safety. From our work we feel the Women's Building should include:

- Recognition of the history of the site providing a tangible legacy for the thousands of women imprisoned there
- A place for the local community, which can provide support for all women, offering ways for women to avoid contact with the criminal justice system
- A trusted place of stability, hope and meaningful engagement and support.

What do you think would be appropriate services for the Women's Building to host?

From objects, voices and discussions within our project we feel the following should be included in the Women's Building:

- A space to hear the voices of the many women held at the prison over time
- A display space and/or community exhibition area to articulate the legacy of the building and give space for women to tell contemporary stories
- In-community support for education, housing, jobs, benefits and other services for women
- Mental health, drug/alcohol services and other therapeutic services including both formal and informal
- Space and support for women to develop their own support networks and community groups
- Support for those affected by domestic violence and for children whose mothers are in prison

Please add any further supportive information.

Echoes of Holloway Prison has been a heritage project exploring the story of the prison through the many disparate voices of those who were held there, worked there, volunteered there, were prison officers or civilian staff, and others with an interest in the prison such as health care staff and activists. The project has sought to develop a broad-based understanding of the prison and to capture and reflect a complex diversity of voices and experience.

To build a 'Women's Building' on the site not acknowledging its complex past would risk it being tokenistic and doing a great disservice to all the women who have been held at the prison and all those who could benefit in future. We feel the building should serve the widest possible range of women and it is crucial that their voices are central to this consultation, in particular those who have lived-experience of being imprisoned at Holloway. These consultations need to be fully engaged with the whole spectrum of relevant parties and all development must be community-led.

Please place any feedback in the box below

WOMEN'S BUILDING WORKSHOP DECEMBER 2019

PENDERYN AND TRECASTLE TRA

What are your aspirations for the Women's Building?

We want a Women's Building that is a holistic hub for women from many different walks of life (trans-inclusive and support migrant, LGBTQ+, BME women, and other marginalised groups). A stand-alone building that is innovative in its design architecturally and environmentally sustainable. The building should offer a space for vital services that support women as well as being a social and cultural space. With few museums and public galleries in Islington and we like the building to have a dedicated museum and gallery. The Women's Building will be on the site of Holloway Prison, which was a site of pain and trauma. The women imprisoned there, political prisoners, such as the suffragettes and all the anonymous women must be remembered. The Women Building needs to be a significant landmark for London and the UK.

What do you think would be appropriate services for the Women's Building to host?

Women only housing connected to the Women's Building or elsewhere on the site.

- Short stay hostel for women and their children
- Domestic and sexual violence support
- Drug and alcohol services
- Support for children and young people affected by a family member's imprisonment
- Range of different therapies (counselling, psychotherapy, art, dance and drama)
- Translation and language services for foreign nationals
- Crèche
- Parenting support
- Workshop space and studio hire (activities that are inclusive and intergenerational)
- Cafe
- A museum and gallery
- Garden with trees

How have you responded to the brief as set out in the Supplementary Planning Document produced by Islington Council?

The SPG specifies a Women's Building but does not expand on the ambitions for this building. What we take from the document is that the redevelopment of the Holloway site will be socially transformative space providing much-needed housing, green space and a Women's Building. The history of the site is of pain and trauma, as well as sadly a refuge for many women who were homeless and victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse and poverty. We, therefore, think that the Women's Building is one of the most important aspects of this redevelopment and the emancipation of all women, by providing support services and a safe space for women with affordable workspace.

As housing is a central part of the SPD documents we would like to see dedicated women's only housing alongside family and co-housing units.

How do you see the services run from the building being funded?

We see the building as offering support services outside of the criminal justice system and as transformative and social justice project. Therefore, there should be multiple streams of funding from different sectors and foundations as well as income generated through the running of the building and spaces that are rented to different organisations connected to the support services. We would like to see some significant research made of different models of innovative public buildings nationally and abroad and how they are funded and build communities. For example, Mayday Rooms <https://maydayrooms.org/about/>

Any further supportive information.

We would like a Women's Building consultation that engages with the wider public through debate rather than a Fayre style format. We would like a series of events where speakers are invited and we can all learn from each other about the issues affecting women today with examples of projects and buildings that address the issues outside of the criminal justice system. We would like a Women's Building that is significant as any major public building and museum in its status and architectural merits and that will stand as both a site of absence and remembrance as well as looking to the future around women's rights, equality and care.

Please place any feedback in the box below

WOMEN'S BUILDING WORKSHOP DECEMBER 2019

RECLAIM HOLLOWAY

What are your aspirations for the Women's Building?

Reclaim Holloway envisions an accessible, welcoming and visually striking women's building, one that will provide a positive and lasting legacy for the tens of thousands of women held in the prison over the past century-and-a-half.

Since the great majority of women in prison are tangled up in the criminal justice system due to poverty, injustice, abuse, addiction, and mental health issues, an important focus will be build community and support away from this punitive system.

In our vision, the building will also deliver a range of services for the local community, and provide workspace that supports social change, creativity and networking.

What do you think would be appropriate services for the Women's Building to host?

Based on community feedback and consultation with support providers, it could include:

- Education, housing and employment advice services
- Parenting support
- A crèche
- Support for women and children affected by domestic violence
- Mental health services including diverse psychotherapies (art/music/drama therapies)
- Drug and alcohol services
- Support for children and young people affected by a family member's imprisonment
- Short stay hostel for women and their children
- Cultural and athletic amenities, including a swimming pool, gym, art studios, and open spaces for meetings and workshops
- A museum commemorating the history of Holloway Prison.

How have you responded to the brief as set out in the Supplementary Planning Document produced by Islington Council?

We see the Women's Building as providing both the safe spaces and support services for women and affordable workspace for local grass-roots organisations as outlined in the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). It will also address the need for various non-residential spaces such as facilities for the whole community.

Our vision recognises the importance of Holloway as a place where women's needs were met in a way they weren't being outside of the prison, and aims to fulfil this need within a community setting. We will be collaborating with a variety of organisations that worked both inside and outside the prison and have a wealth of knowledge when it comes to services for women. We believe that the governance structure for the Women's Building is a key issue, and support the idea of an independent arms-length model.

As noted above, our vision also addresses the need for non-residential spaces on the former prison site such as art studios, a swimming pool, a gym, a crèche and parenting support.

How do you see the services run from the building being funding?

We believe there should be multiple sources for funding to ensure the vibrancy and sustainability of the building. We would encourage creative collaborations and enterprising, innovative models. Our initial discussions of the business plan suggest that some income will need to come from rental of a portion of the building to social and commercial enterprises that are in line with the vision outlined above.

Additionally, it may be advantageous to for the building to include a development function in order to tap personal and commercial donations, and support from foundations. Where support services are provided, we believe that government and trust fund should work with voluntary organisations and other statutory organisations to enable that through realistic and unrestrictive grant-based funds.

Potential rentable spaces and their uses should be integrated with the rest of the building so it functions as a cohesive whole. Segregating parts of the building into income-generating spaces that are not directly tied to the vision described above will dilute the presence and transformative potential of the building.

We have been discussing ways to finance the creation of a business plan, feasibility study, and architectural brief. As a campaigning coalition, we do not envisage undertaking these activities ourselves, but will work with others to ensure that this will be an open process and in line with the vision outlined above.

Any further supportive information.

We are particularly interested at this stage in understanding how Peabody intends to work with those who have developed the concept of the Women's Building, from the prison's closure till now. How will that concept be accommodated with the practical parameters of the project (the SPD, building footprints, height, construction materials, public space requirements, public access within the site etc.), and in the consultation and brief-building process? What timelines are planned?

We are committed to and have experience in co-production techniques, bringing together service users and commissioners, and would like to know how Peabody will integrate such good practice into the wider consultation process for the whole site.

Please place any feedback in the box below

WOMEN'S BUILDING WORKSHOP DECEMBER 2019

WOMEN IN PRISON

What are your aspirations for the Women's Building?

Our aspirations are for a space which hosts multiple organisations that all provide support services and activities for women and girls or who are campaigning and pushing forward debates around women's rights and equality. The Women's Building would include both private space for organisations and have public facing areas which could include a lecture hall, café, exhibition space.

What do you think would be appropriate services for the Women's Building to host?

The Women's Building would include specialist support service(s) for women who have been affected by the criminal justice system predominantly via a specialist Women's Centre that provide holistic support in one place. Further to this any organisation furthering the cause for women's rights or providing support for women and girls should be welcome from housing support, mental health through to the arts or sports.

How have you responded to the brief as set out in the Supplementary Planning Document produced by Islington Council?

We have responded to the brief by considering the needs of both women affected by the criminal justice system and support for women as part of the broader building. Further to this, as set out in the SPD we are calling for affordable workspaces to be made available and employment opportunities through the inclusion of social enterprises such as the café.

How do you see the services run from the building being funding?

The building could be run as a cooperative with a management committee made up of tenant representatives. Revenue would be brought in through tenants' rents and fees from hiring the space or hosting events. Additional revenue could be raised through grant funding and donations. The site should include examples of social enterprise such as with a café or exhibition space which could generate some additional income.

Please place any feedback in the box below

WOMEN'S BUILDING WORKSHOP DECEMBER 2019

NIKKI GIBBS- LOCAL ARTIST AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE CAMPAIGNER

What are your aspirations for the Women's Building?

I see a welcoming iconic building that is seen as a model for women's and community services world wide. It has to be a multi functioning space that serves the needs of women who have had contact with the criminal justice system, those in danger of becoming involved with the criminal justice system, community and London as a whole. A place where services are brought together so that the complex needs of women, children and family can be resolved in a cohesive space. Somewhere that you want to go to and enjoy the communal spaces whether you require the services or not!

What do you think would be appropriate services for the Women's Building to host?

- Art and craft spaces
- Therapy
- Housing
- Emergency housing for women leaving prison with no home (current hostels are not always appropriate)
- Educative classes
- Legal advice
- Cafe
- Art gallery
- Creche
- Library
- Hot desks
- Auditorium for conference, theatre, film and music. This would be somewhere that the whole community would benefit from as well as organisations such as Geese Theatre and Clean Break.
- Dance room (multi functioning)

How have you responded to the brief as set out in the Supplementary Planning Document produced by Islington Council?

We promote the use of the word building instead of Centre. An iconic building, whether it contains private flats on top or not needs to be the aspiration.

How do you see the services run from the building being funding?

A mix of funding including:

- Grant's from Governments and private funds.
- Commercial ventures, hire of space and venues, events, cafe, restaurant, roof Garden.
- Creative philanthropic funding I.e. short and long term funding of different rooms or activities
- Rent from charity and commercial stake holders

Any further supportive information.

A once in a lifetime to blaze a path of forward thinking ideas in construction, relations with working with people with criminal records, eco building ideas and social reform. This is not the time to worry about cost (not encouraging excessive spending) but a time to be bold and create a new vision. An ex HMP Holloway staff commented that nothing good had come from the closure of Holloway. This is true for the staff and women since the closure, however we have a chance to ensure that something good does come from this story. Something is good for all women, a place where progressive ideas are put into practice and is supported by everyone!

Please place any feedback in the box below

WOMEN'S BUILDING WORKSHOP DECEMBER 2019

MOPAC

“Our ground-breaking loan to Peabody means the majority of new homes on this site will be genuinely affordable. We’ve developed planning policies with the council that support this, and that also set out how the development should include public green space and a new centre for women”

– Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London

The Deputy Mayor introduced the ambitious **Blueprint for Women** – a new plan which aims to tackle the root causes of offending, prevent reoffending and ensure women have the support they need after leaving prison.

The **Blueprint for Women** will provide a more co-ordinated approach, bringing together the police, prisons, local authorities and rehabilitation organisations to better meet the needs of women and girls.

“The Blueprint for Women means we can ensure that women in London are able to access support across a range of areas and services”

– Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

A high proportion of women who enter the criminal justice system are first-time offenders and are given short-term custodial sentences

- Over 16,000 females were arrested in London. Nearly two-thirds of those females are given a sentence of 3 months or less were for theft-related offences.
- Over 17,000 females in London were proceeded against, resulting in over 4,000 charges and 787 sentences.
- At any point in time, 571 women from London are in custody, and 2,883 are under probation supervision.
- Reoffending rate for female offenders in London 19.9% Compared to 28.7% for all offenders.
- Proportion of total offenders cautioned/sentenced that are female:
 - indictable offences 10.9% (female custody rate 30.1%)
 - summary offences 14.2%
- A third (32%) of female offenders are 1st time offenders
- Nationally over half of all female offenders given a custodial sentence were detained for a period of three months or less; compared to just over a third of male offenders.
- A higher proportion of women received cautions following arrest compared to men. Similarly, there was a slightly higher proportion of women receiving fixed penalties
- Female offenders cost the Government approximately £1.7bn per year, and investing in a Whole Systems Approach, including Women's Centres, can lead to sizable cost savings for the public

Women have needs which require a different response to reduce offending

- More than half of women in prison report having experienced emotional, physical or sexual abuse as a child and more than half have experienced domestic violence.
- Women are more likely than men to say they have a problem with alcohol on arrival to prison, 24% compared to 18%
- Incarcerated women are nearly twice as likely as incarcerated men to suffer from depression (65% compared to 37%), and more than three times as likely as women in the general population (19%).
- 46% of women prisoner's report having attempted suicide at some point in their lives. Twice the rate of male prisoners (21%) and more than seven times higher than the general population.
- Women in prison are far more likely than men to be primary carers of children. A Ministry of Justice survey found that 58% of women compared with 43% of men in prison had dependent children living with them before custody
- Over three quarters of women sentenced to custody receive sentences of fewer than 12 months. Nearly 60% of adult women released from custody reoffend within a year, with 70.7% of women reoffending following a short custodial sentence
- Although the proportion of women in the criminal justice system (CJS) is small – approximately 5% of the prison population and 15% of offenders in the community– the positive impact of addressing their needs is significant
- A higher proportion of women received cautions following arrest compared to men. Similarly, there was a slightly higher proportion of women receiving fixed penalties
- Adverse experiences during childhood such as parental incarceration increases the likelihood of future involvement in crime, both as an offender and as a victim. These experiences can have a lasting impact on health, addiction and crime into adulthood.

Consultation event

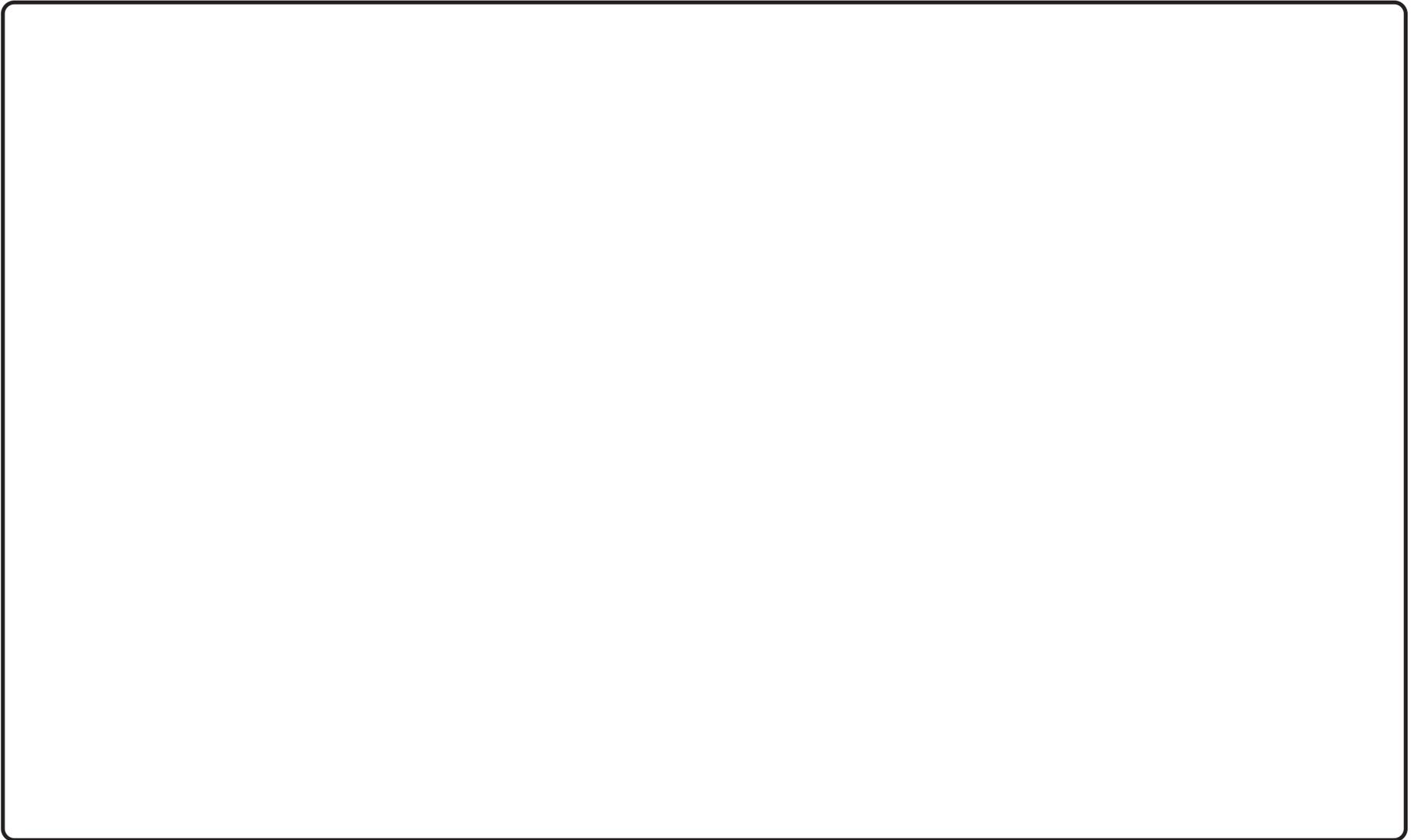
We spoke to organisations who support women in contact with the criminal justice system. They had this to say ...

- It should prioritise serving women in contact with or at risk of contact with the criminal justice system, the Building should also be a hub for services for women, including providing space that could be used by women's groups.
- We need a safe space for women where they are treated as individuals and their needs can be addressed holistically.
- It needs some access to outdoor space... a connection to nature
- It needs to be light, inspirational, trauma-informed and somewhere women feel proud of and happy to be.
- There should be co-location of services to address needs
- We need a place that offers a range of services and space for women in contact with the CJS
- It must be safe and easy to access via bus routes
- It must honour the “legacy” of Holloway

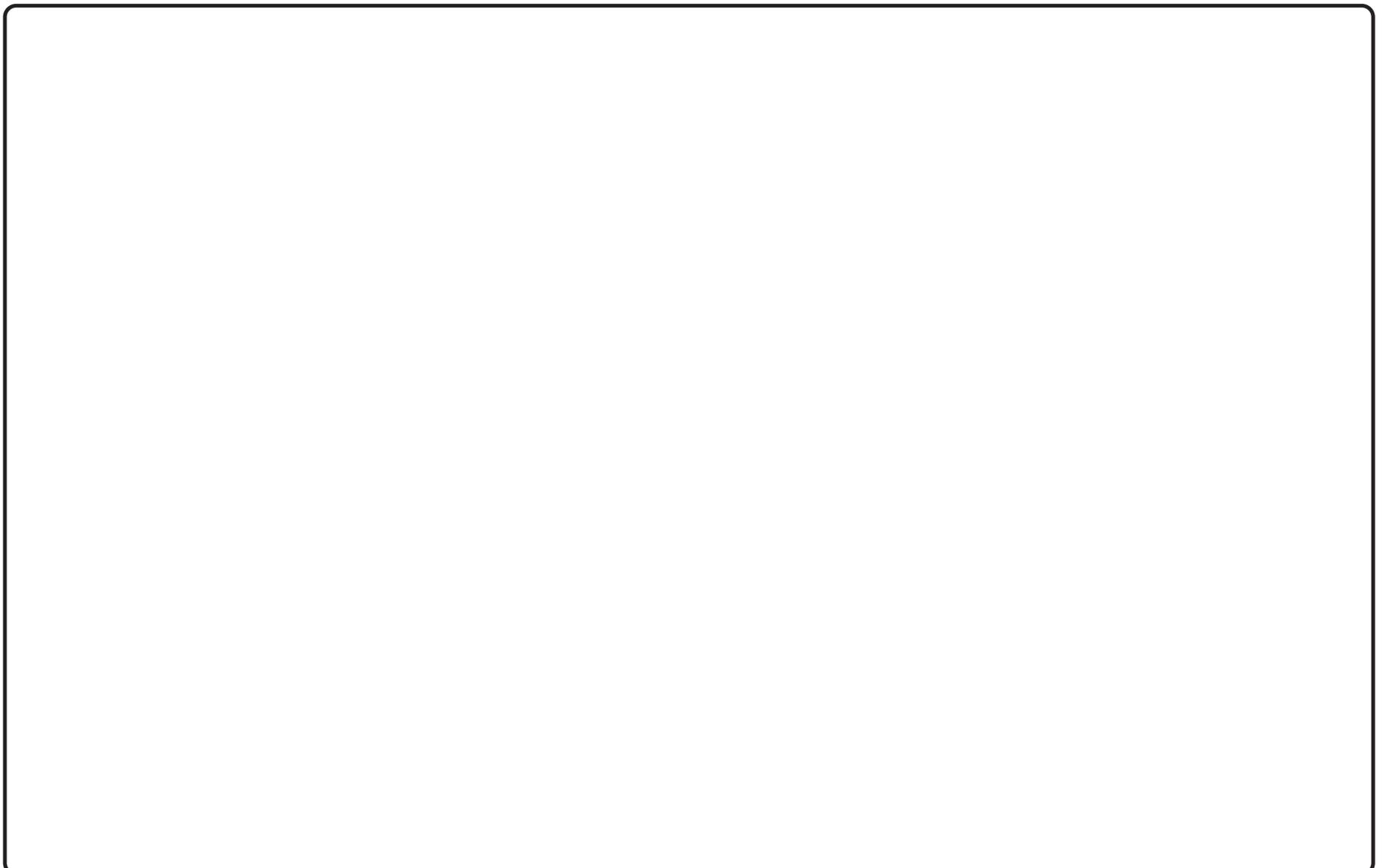
Please place any feedback in the box below

WOMEN'S BUILDING WORKSHOP DECEMBER 2019

What are your aspirations for the Women's Building?

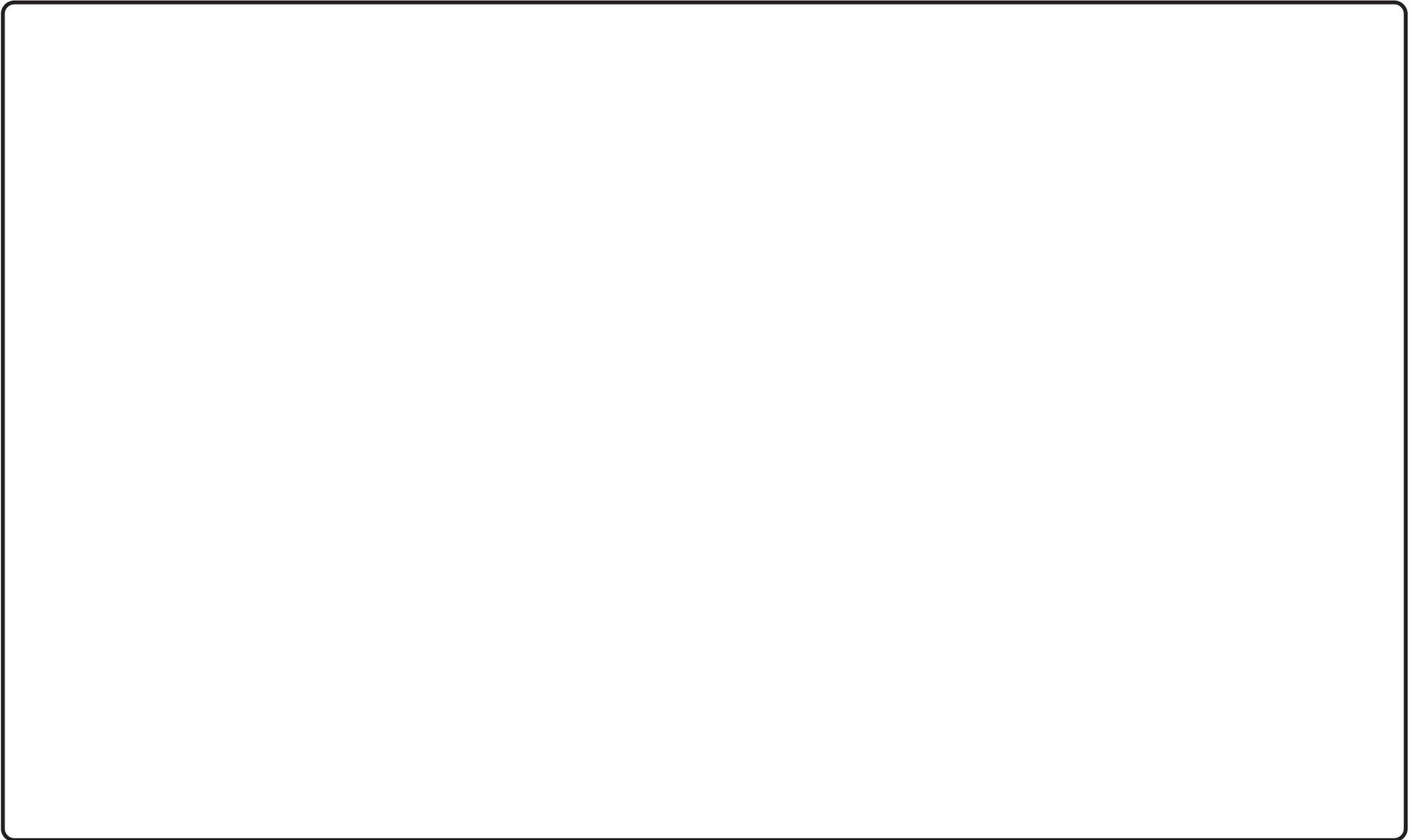


What do you think would be appropriate services for the Women's Building to host?

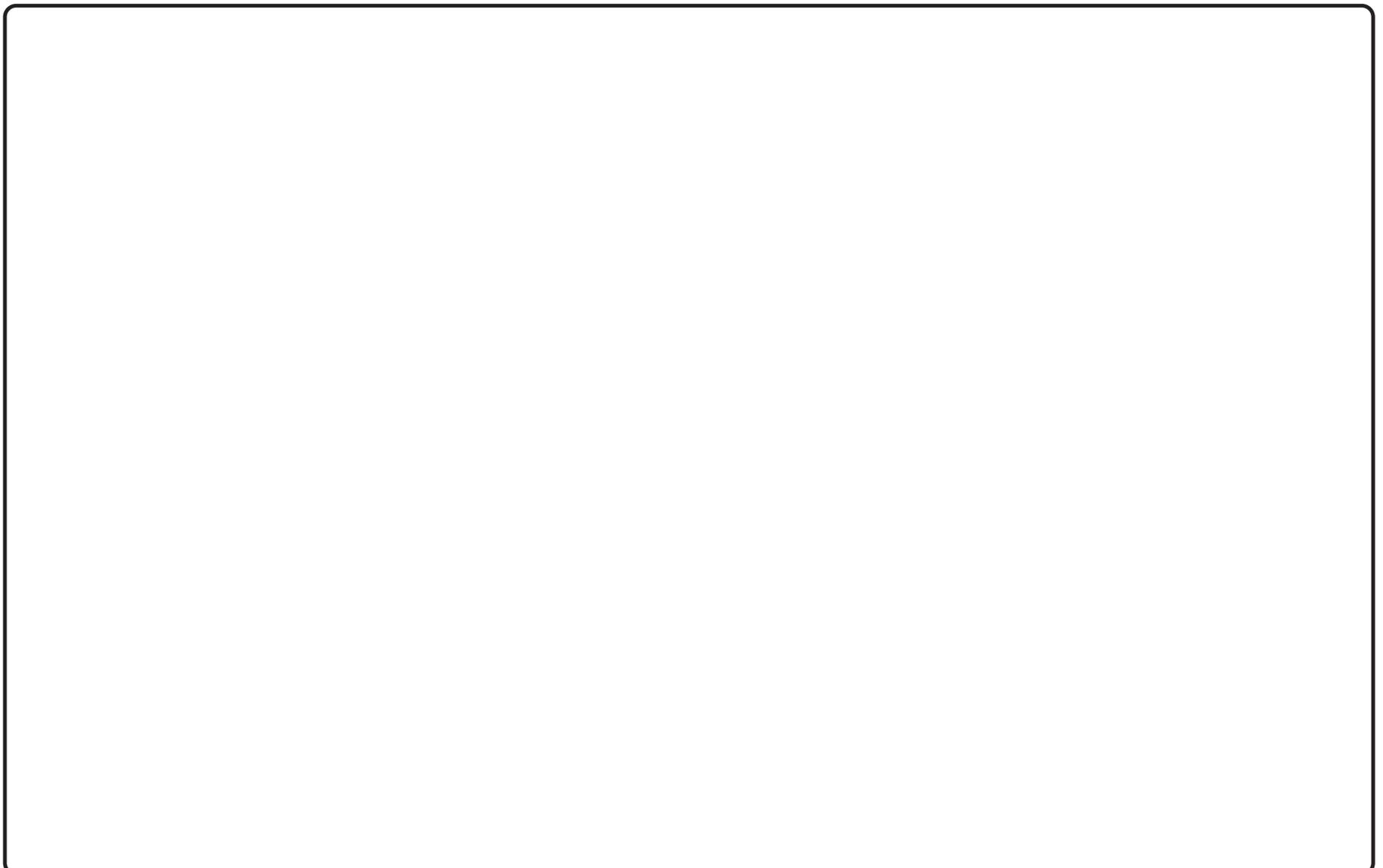


WOMEN'S BUILDING WORKSHOP DECEMBER 2019

How do you see the services run from the building being funding?

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Any additional comments

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