

MUSEUM OF THE HOME

Have your say on the future of the
Sir Robert Geffrye statue at the
Museum of the Home,
Kingsland Road, Hackney

Consultation report

Report date
July 2020

Background

The almshouse buildings in which the Museum of the Home is housed came from Sir Robert Geffrye. There is a statue of Geffrye on the Museum building.

He was an English merchant, involved with the slave trade. He was also Lord Mayor of London and Master of the Worshipful Company of Ironmongers.

The Museum held an open consultation to inform the Board of Trustees in its decision about what to do with the statue.

Alongside this consultation Hackney Council will run a wider review into the role of statues and the naming of buildings, streets, parks and other public spaces in Hackney.

Consultation approach

An online survey was used to conduct the consultation.

It was open from 10am on Thursday 18 June to midnight on Thursday 2 July 2020.

This was shared in the following ways by the Museum

- Museum's website home page
- Social channels – Facebook (9.7k), Twitter (23.5k), Instagram (14.6k)
- Enews subscribers (7k)
- By email to Friends, volunteers and donors
- By email to community partners, partner schools and creative partners

And was also shared by Hackney Council in the following ways

- Hackney Council's consultation web page
- Hackney News email
- Hackney Today (paper)
- Social media and website for LBH, Mayor of Hackney and Love Hackney
- Tenants & Residents Associations
- Hackney Young Futures Commission
- Windrush community partners

There was also a door drop on Thursday 25 June 2020, to about 800 households within 200m radius of the Museum.

Response rate

A total of 2,187 responses were received to this consultation. Completion rate was 96%.

Executive summary

Q1 How does the statue you make you feel?

The majority of respondents responded **Negative (78%)** rather than **Neutral (14%)** or **Positive (8%)**.

Q2 Please explain how you feel about the statue

Top three themes:

- Celebrates him, gives prominence / sends out wrong message (459 mentions)
- No place for it / not acceptable / remove it / negative (347 mentions)
- Made money from others' suffering / commemorates slave trade (260 mentions)

Q3 What messages do you think the statue sends to the local community?

Top three themes:

- That someone involved in slavery should be glorified / honoured (378 mentions)
- Slavery, white supremacy, colonialism are acceptable (343 mentions)
- Negative / insulting / wrong / disrespectful / unwelcoming message (273 mentions)

Q4 How does the statue make you feel about the Museum?

Top three themes:

- Disappointed / uncomfortable (446 mentions)
- Don't want to visit / support (215 mentions)
- Doesn't change view (184 mentions)

Q5 What do you think the Museum should do with the statue?

The majority of respondents wanted to **Take it down (71%)**, rather than **Leave it (29%)** – 4% did not respond

Further comment

Top three themes:

- Give information about Robert Geffrye (good and bad) and his role in funding the building (477 mentions)
- Give context, acknowledge broader history, don't try to hide (372 mentions)
- Put in the museum / garden (269 mentions)

Q6 How do you think Sir Robert Geffrye's history and his connection with the slave trade should be explored at the Museum and in Hackney?

Top three themes:

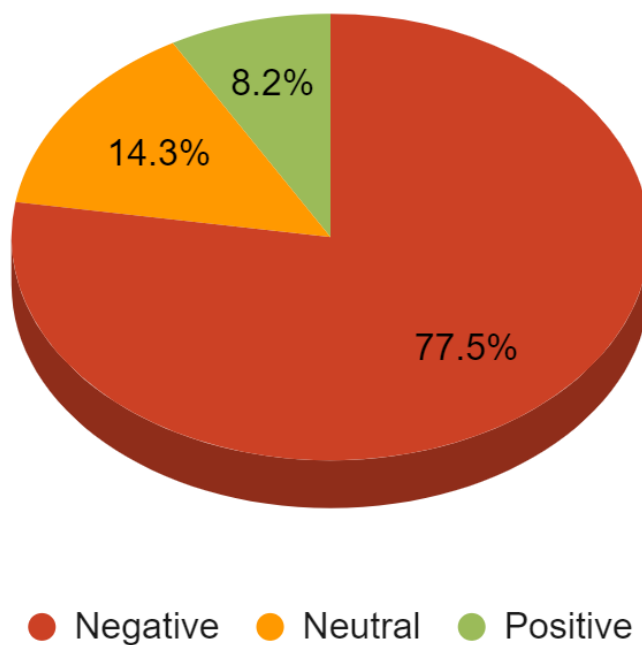
- Information / space about Robert Geffrye in the Museum (516 mentions)
- Fully, in depth, critically, with transparency / accountability / honesty (294 mentions)
- Information about slavery, commemorating those who lost their lives, how they would have lived, impact on homes (226 mentions)

Summary of responses

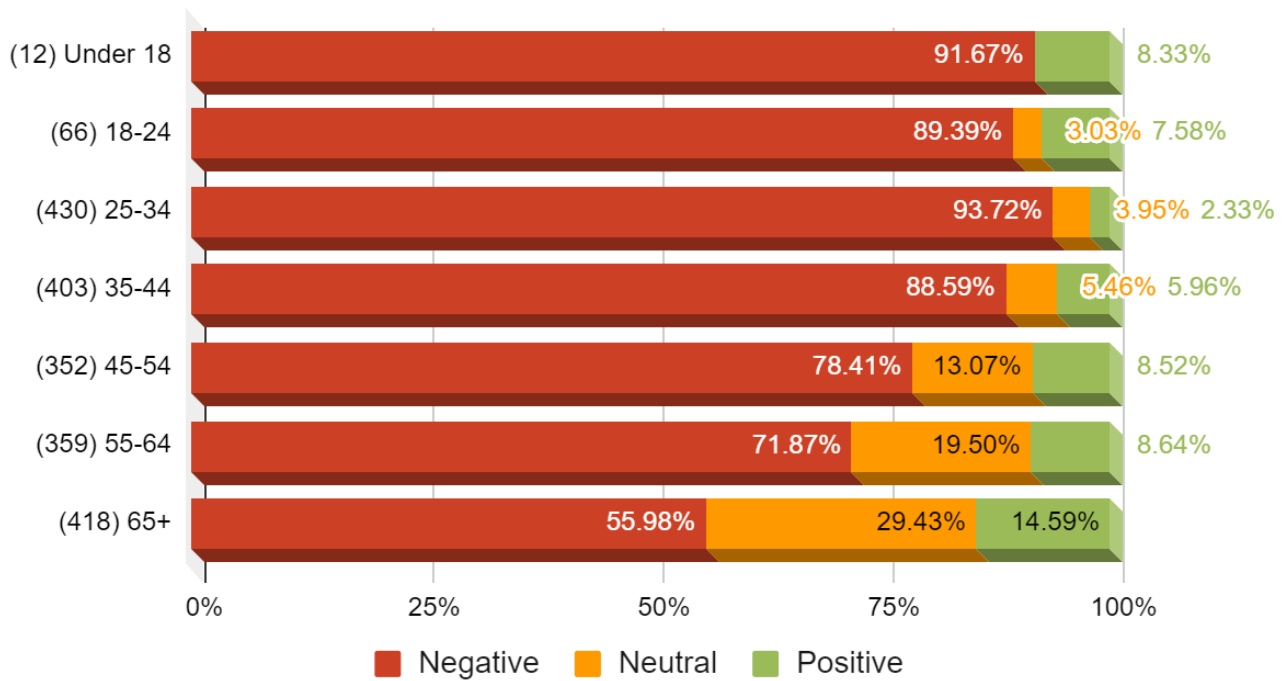
Q1 How does the statue you make you feel?

The majority of respondents responded **Negative** (77.5%) rather than **Neutral** (14.3%) or **Positive** (8.2%).

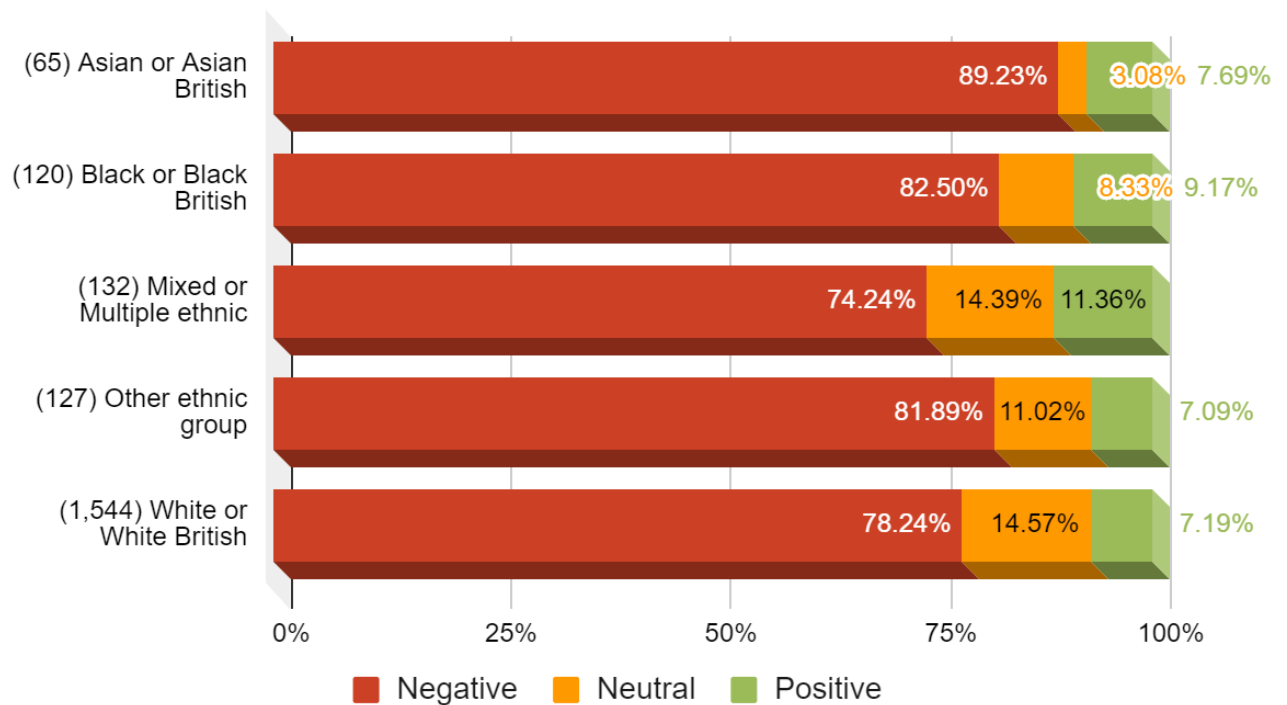
Q1: How does the statue you make you feel? (base 2,187)



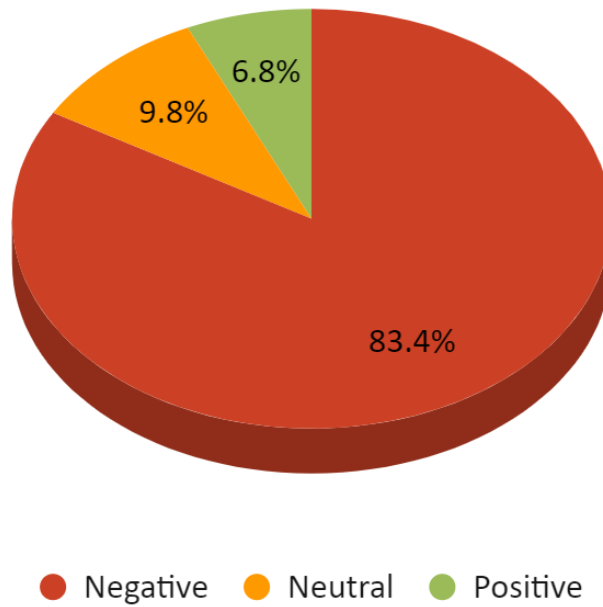
Q1 How does the statue you make you feel? by Age group (base 2,040)



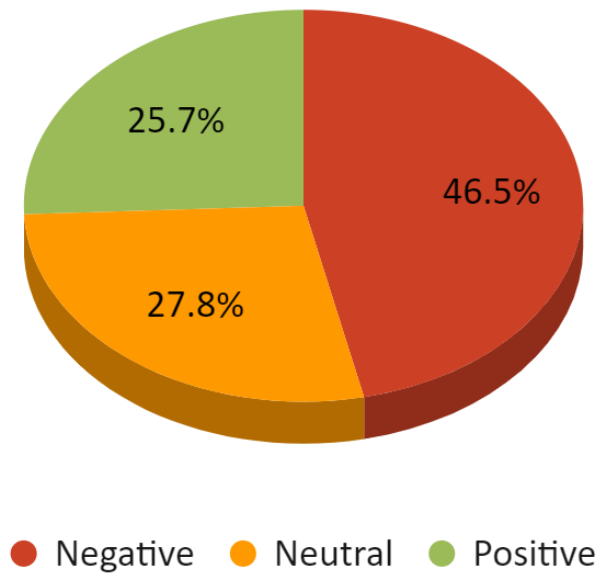
Q1 How does the statue you make you feel? by Ethnicity (base 1,988)



Q1 How does the statue make you feel? by "I live nearby" (base 869)



Q1 How does the statue make you feel? by "I support the Museum, as a volunteer, Friend or donor" (base 144)



Q2 Please explain how you feel about the statue

Theme	Mentions
Celebrates him, gives prominence / sends out wrong message	459
No place for it/not acceptable/remove it/negative	347
Made money from others' suffering/ commemorates slave trade	260
Display in museum / grounds or move elsewhere but with explanation	255
Accepting / think statue should stay / need to preserve & understand our history	233
Angry, annoyed, disgusted, offended, shocked, horrified	190
Legacy / philanthropy / generosity, valid to have statue of founder	134
Embarassed / ashamed / guilty / uncomfortable/ troubled	115
Not sure / neutral	109
We should use as learning opportunity to understand our past / the slave trade	93
Sign of oppression / racism / white supremacy / biased history / injustice	90
Depressed / upset / bad / gives pain / sad / hurt	82
Represents a time in our history we should not be celebrating	50
No place for it in a borough as diverse as Hackney	44
He was a man of his time / can't judge by today's standards	42
Statue is a well-made artefact / historic object / integral to the museum	41
Didn't know about Geffrye's involvement in slave trade	25

Q3 What messages do you think the statue sends to the local community?

Theme	Mentions
That someone involved in slavery should be glorified / honoured	378
Slavery, white supremacy, colonialism are acceptable	343
Negative / insulting / wrong / disrespectful / unwelcoming	273
Lack of care / shame about how your ancestors suffered	242
Museum is implicitly approving / unquestioning / biased	226
Black people don't matter, are not equal	202
Perpetuates racism, oppression, discrimination, exclusion and inequality	190
It doesn't matter where your money comes from, philanthropy can buy respectability	172
Are people aware or bothered? Do people know about it?	144
It is part of history / tradition	128
Needs explaining / contextualising, use the moment for education	108
A sign / reflection of his generosity to community and his achievements / wealth	110
Inappropriate for Hackney given diversity of the community	102
Past is good and bad, things were different, don't judge by modern values	83
Museum is systemically racist, unwilling to change, hides behind a survey, BLM support is performative	77
Statue more worthwhile than feelings of diverse community	77
White history more important than black history	63
It doesn't send a message	57
This man built this building	44
Museum for white people / not for you	40
Museum supports slave trade, inequality	34
Constant / unwanted reminder	32
Don't airbrush / erase / destroy history	31
Can't speak for local community	30
At odds with BLM	25

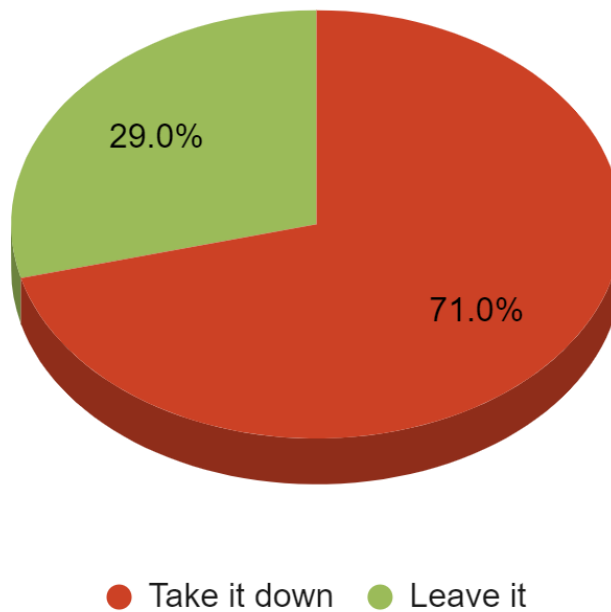
Q4 How does the statue make you feel about the Museum?

Theme	Mentions
Disappointed / uncomfortable	446
Don't want to visit / support	215
Doesn't change view	184
Fine	159
At odds with / stain on the Museum	131
Museum is white supremacist / racist	117
Needs reinterpretation	111
Museum must adapt for modern times	108
Pleased with Museum's handling of situation	76
Other / no comment / answer unclear	72
Don't erase history	66
Neutral / indifferent	55
Depends on what is done with the statue	51
Ambivalent / conflicted	45
Reflects history of its time	43
Happy and proud	25

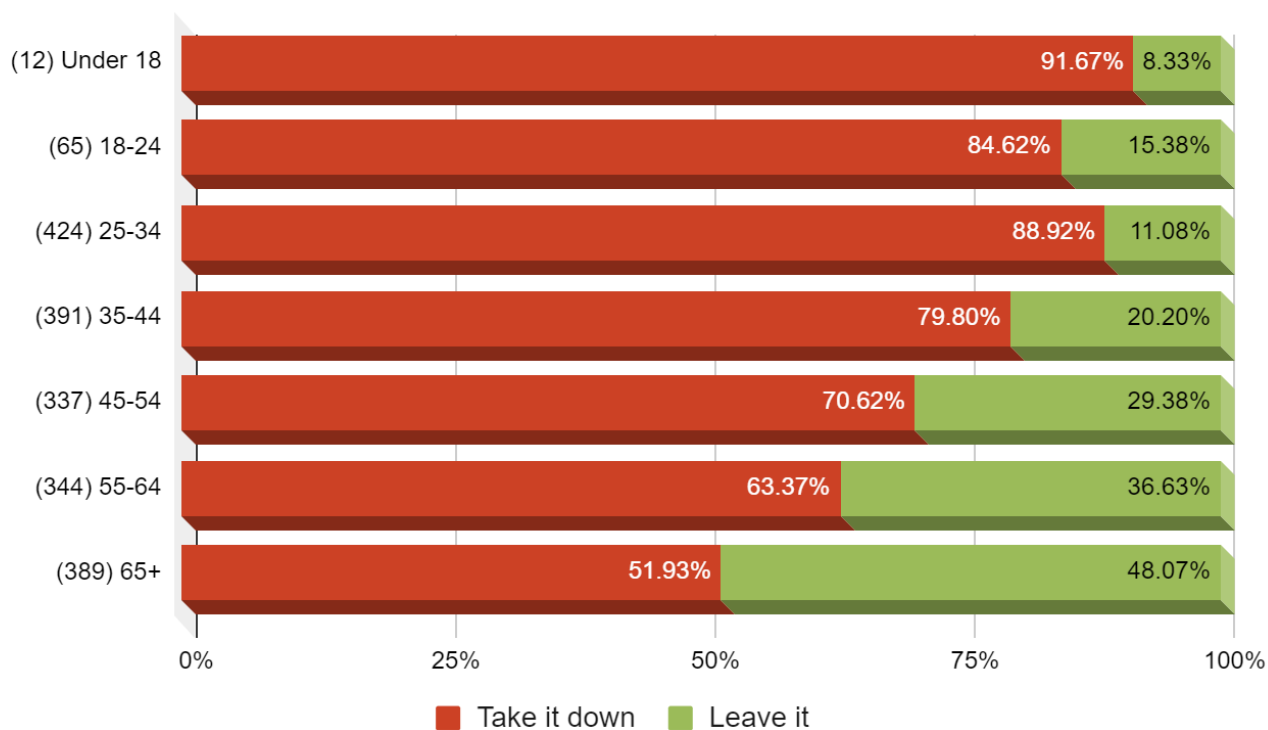
Q5 What do you think the Museum should do with the statue?

The majority of respondents wanted the Museum to **Take it down (71%)**, rather than **Leave it (29%)** – 4% did not respond

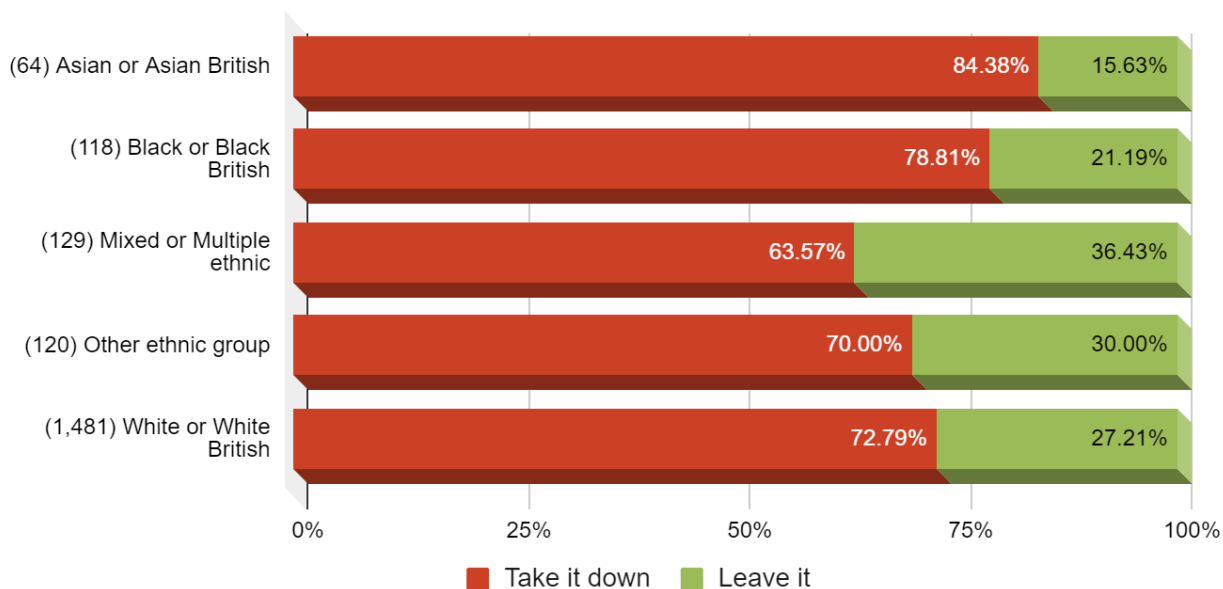
Q5 What do you think the Museum should do with the statue? (base 2,094)



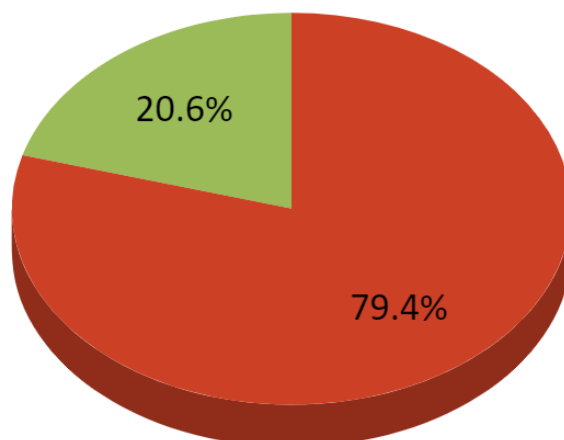
Q5 What do you think the Museum should do with the statue? by Age group (base 1,962)



Q5 What do you think the Museum should do with the statue? by Ethnicity (base 1,912)

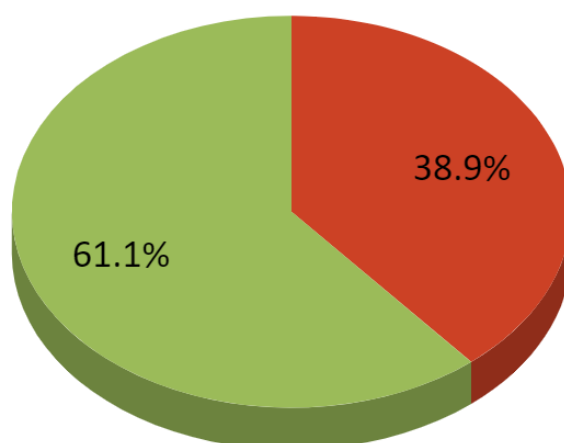


Q5 What do you think the Museum should do with the statue? by "I live nearby" (base 845)



● Take it down ● Leave it

What do you think the Museum should do with the statue? by "I support the Museum, as a volunteer, Friend or donor" (base 126)



● Take it down ● Leave it

Q5 Add further comment (1,261 comments)

Theme	Mentions
Give information about RG, both good and bad and his role in funding the building	477
Give context, acknowledge broader history, don't try to hide	372
Put in the Museum / garden	269
New artwork in its place or in addition / response	116
Dangers of erasing history, learn from the past, don't judge by current standards	100
Put in a museum e.g. Hackney, Liverpool, MoL, slavery, colonialism	99
Discuss inside the Museum	94
Somewhere less conspicuous / prominent	88
Use it for education / debate	67
Where will it end?	60
Other	58
Wider reflection of BAME culture / diversity	58
Melt it down / repurpose / destroy	42
Take it down (repeated)	39
Focus on actions around anti-racism / decolonisation and supporting the Black community	33
Taking it down is positive	25

Q6 How do you think Sir Robert Geffrye's history and his connection with the slave trade should be explored at the Museum and in Hackney?

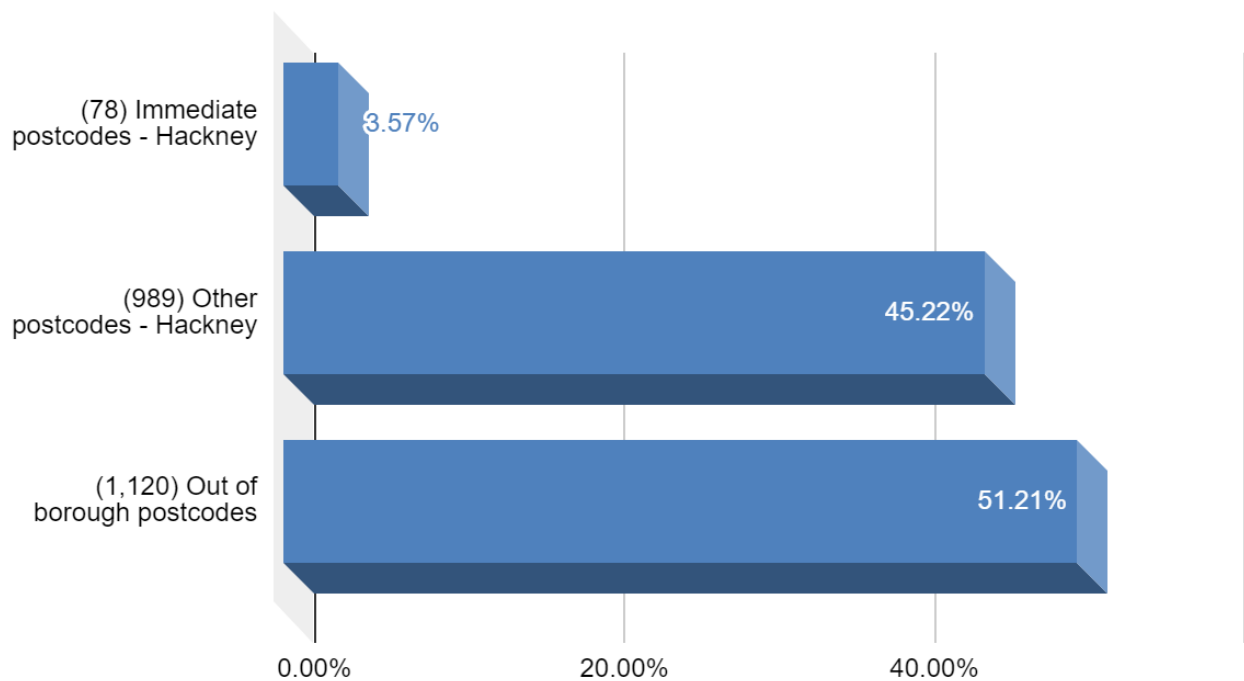
Information / space about Sir Robert Geffrye in the Museum	516
Fully, in depth, critically, with transparency / accountability / honesty	294
Information about slavery, commemorating those who lost their lives, how they would have lived, impact on homes	226
Workshops and events / educational resource	134
Permanent exhibition in the Museum to explain RG history, context and slavery (incl current debate and encourage ongoing debate)	129
Work with black historians / artists / community to research / interpret	117
Acknowledgement and tell the story / context / no celebration	106
Explore RG's involvement with the slave trade	101
Work with partners in Hackney / local community	95
All history should be explained / learn from the past	78
Put statue inside museum	76
Balanced interpretation inside the Museum / simple statement of fact	70
Panel / plaque by the statue to explain where the money came from	61
Context of slavery / racism still existing today	58
Display / teach black history including BLM / work with local schools	58
See above	58
Story of slavery better examined elsewhere e.g. Hackney Museum / M of L Docklands	53
Highlight philanthropy	51
No connection to the Museum - explain in relation to almshouses	50
Film / books / literature / audio	41
Yes	38
Explore impact of slavery throughout the museum /collections	31
Debate / discuss	31

A bit about you

Q7 What is your postcode? (base 2,187)

- The majority of respondents were from outside Hackney (51.21%).
- 78 respondents were from the immediate postcodes
- 989 respondents were from other Hackney postcodes

Breakdown of postcode areas by total respondents (base 2,187)

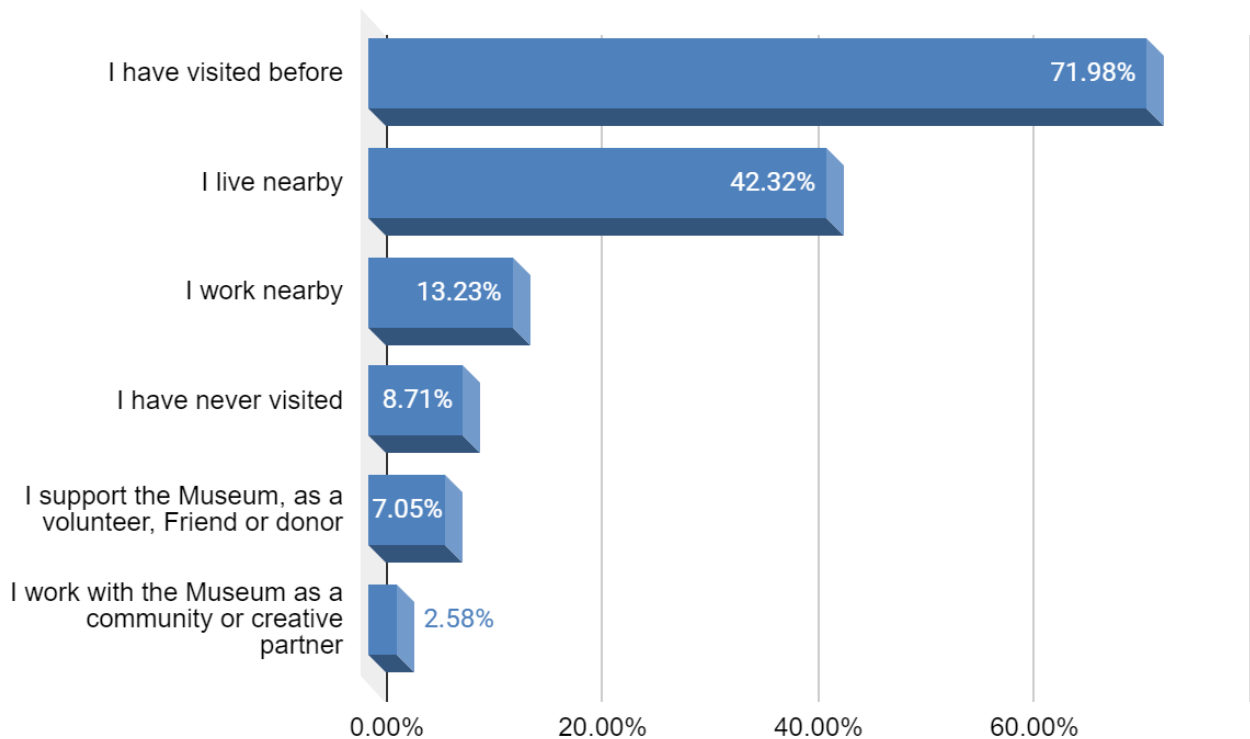


Q8 What is your relationship with the Museum? (base 2,056)

The majority of respondents stated they have visited before (71.98%).

55.55% live or work nearby.

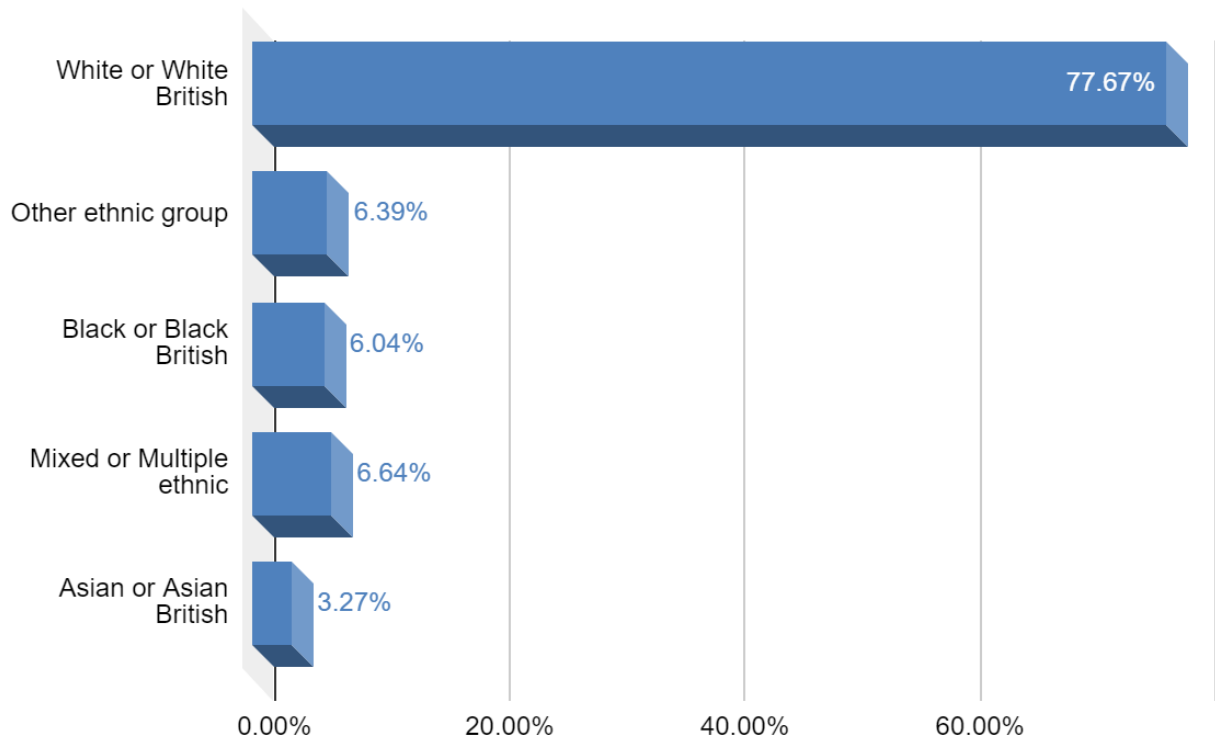
7.05% support the Museum (as a volunteer, Friend or donor) and 2.58% work with the Museum (as a community or creative partner).



Q9 What is your ethnic group? (base 1,988)

The majority of respondents were White or White British (77.67%).

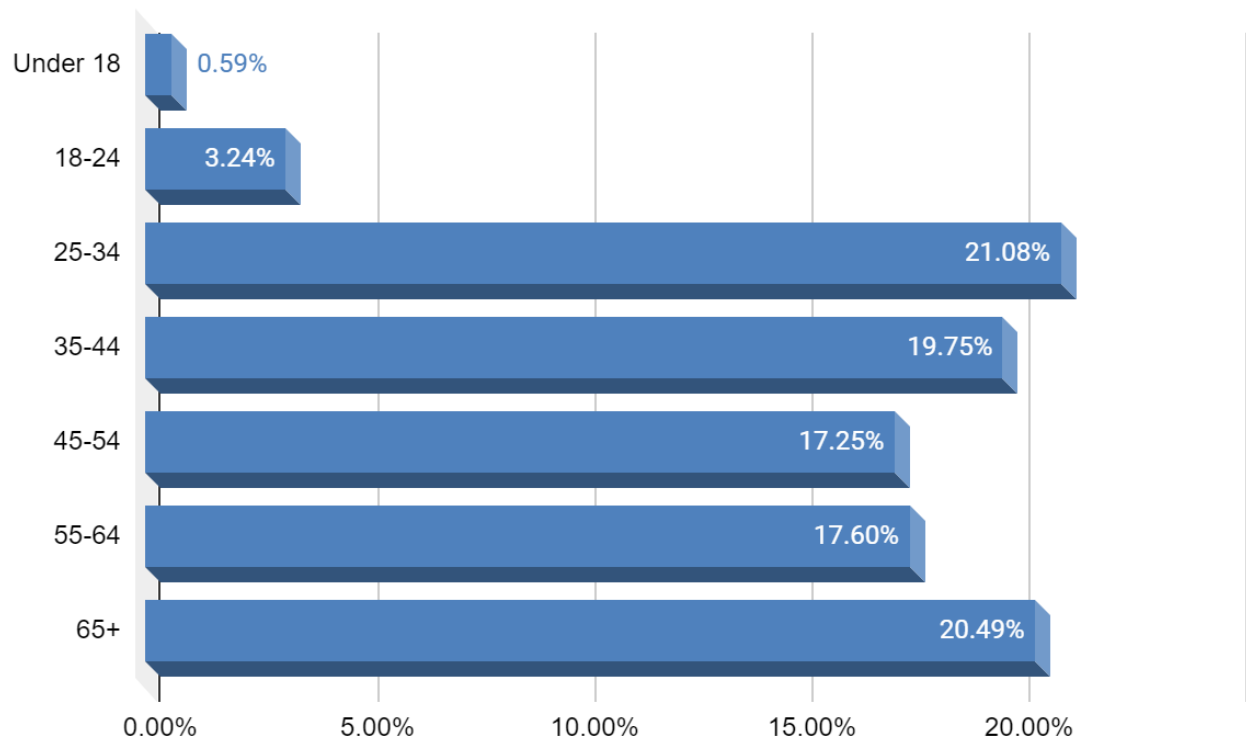
This was followed by Mixed or Multiple ethnic (6.64%), Other ethnic group (6.39%), Black or Black British (6.04%), Asian or Asian British (3.27%).



Q10 What age group are you in? (base 2,040)

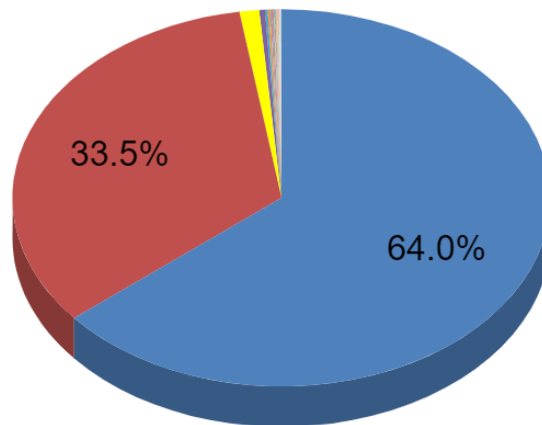
The highest percentage of respondents were in the 25-34 age group (21.08%).

This was followed by 65+ (20.49%), 35-44 (19.75%), 55-64 (17.60%), 45-54 (17.25%), 18-24 (3.24%), Under 18 (0.59%).



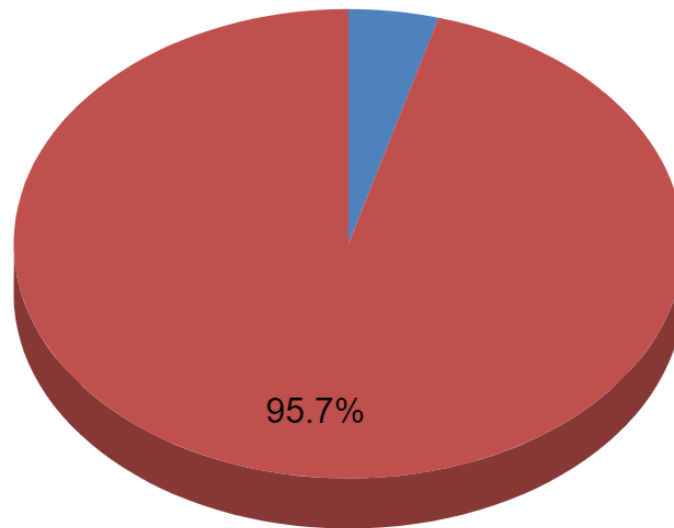
Q11 What is your gender identity? (base 2,037)

The majority of respondents identified as female (64%), with male (33.5%).
51 respondents preferred to use their own term.



Q12 Is your gender identity different to the sex you were assumed to be at birth? (base 1,934)

The majority of respondents state their gender identity was the same as they were assumed to be at birth (95.7%), 4.3% said it was different.



● Yes it's different ● No it's the same

Q13 Communications

- 70% wanted to be emailed about the decision
- 40% wanted information further consultation around representing Black and other under-represented communities in the Museum of the Home