

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Open Spaces, City Gardens & West Ham Park Committee	8 October 2012
Streets & Walkways Sub-Committee	15 October 2012
Subject: Queen Elizabeth II Fields	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Information
Ward (if appropriate): Castle Baynard	

Summary

This report provides an update to an earlier report agreed by your Committee on 6 February 2012. In response to the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge, the current flagship project of Fields in Trust, the City Corporation has dedicated two gardens, Tower Hill and the new green space on the former coach park of St Paul's Cathedral, as Queen Elizabeth II Fields. The latter has been named The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Garden in recognition of Her Majesty's Jubilee year celebrations. Tower Hill Garden has attracted grant funding of £10,000 from the London Legacy Fund toward site improvements.

In order to formally celebrate the naming of The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Garden, it is proposed that officers continue to seek ways of funding an unveiling ceremony, either by identifying a specific budget or by linking with another formal event in the immediate area.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- the new garden on the site of St Paul's Cathedral coach park is recognised as The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Garden;
- it is noted that The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Garden and Tower Hill Garden have been dedicated as Queen Elizabeth II Fields;
- you agree that officers should continue to pursue opportunities for recognising The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Garden through an unveiling ceremony (or similar) and potential sources of funding identified in conjunction with the Chamberlain.

Main Report

Background

1. At a meeting of your Committee on 6 February 2012, it was agreed that the new garden at St Paul's Cathedral coach park and the existing, but newly refurbished, garden space at Tower Hill should be dedicated as part of the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge, a scheme that seeks to safeguard recreational spaces across the country as a legacy to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Challenge is the current flagship project of Fields in Trust (FiT), one of the charities benefiting from the Lord Mayor's Appeal.

2. Following your agreement at the 6 February meeting, the Deeds of Dedication for both sites were completed and the appropriate forms were returned to the Land Registry, ensuring that these two gardens will be protected in perpetuity.
3. Following consultation with Buckingham Palace, the Cabinet Office and Mansion House, it was agreed that the most fitting name for the new garden south of St Paul's Cathedral was The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Garden.
4. There is a statutory process for the naming and numbering of City streets and spaces, a process which is administered by the Planning team. The necessary consultation was undertaken with the emergency services and a public notice was placed on site for 4 weeks. No objections were received.
5. Enquiries were made to see whether it was possible for the new garden to be officially opened by Her Majesty the Queen, as part of Her Jubilee Year celebrations. Unfortunately Buckingham Palace advised that, due to existing diary commitments, this was not possible.

Current Position

6. Two metal plaques are being provided by FiT in recognition of their Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge. An image of what these will look like is attached at Appendix 1. The cost of installing these will be met from your City Gardens local risk budget.
7. A grant was applied for under the London Legacy Fund (available as part of the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge) for improvements to Tower Hill Garden. Notification was received in September confirming that our bid had been successful, and that FiT will provide a grant award of £10,000 to the City Corporation for the thickening of the boundary hedge, lawn reinforcement and natural play equipment at Tower Hill Garden. These improvements will be implemented by the City Gardens Team working with local community volunteers. The grant will be spent in conjunction with Local Area Agreement funding of £5,900 for bulb planting at the same site. All work will be completed by the end of March 2013.
8. An approach has been made through the City Arts Initiative and The Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee, to place the Hooke Bell - a temporary art installation - immediately adjacent to The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Garden for 6 months. The background to this project is covered in a separate report on your agenda. The art installation is part of a much larger project that has attracted high-profile fund-raising.

Proposals

9. Officers have been investigating alternative ways of recognising the establishment and naming of the new Queen's Diamond Jubilee Garden. The traditional way to recognise this would be through an opening or unveiling ceremony, once the new plaques have been installed. However, unless separate funding can be identified, the only way to achieve this would be by linking the opening ceremony with another event.
10. Should the proposal for the Hooke Bell installation be successful, there may be an opportunity to attract a senior member of the Royal family to the site. It may then be possible to link the opening ceremony of the garden with the launch of this project, subject to negotiation.

11. Should this not be possible, an alternative would be to ask the Lord Mayor to unveil the plaque at this year's Christmas tree lighting ceremony (scheduled for 3 December).

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. Protecting the City Corporation's recreational spaces for the benefit of residents, visitors and workers, maximising the benefits of the Olympics and supporting a national campaign to safeguard open spaces is in keeping with the Corporate Plan and Open Spaces Business Plan. Increasing the amount of publicly-accessible open space is a key objective of the City of London Open Space Strategy.

Financial Implications

13. If the option of recognising the garden with an official opening ceremony is thought to be beneficial, then any necessary financial provision will need to be identified and sought in consultation with the Chamberlain.
14. The cost of erecting plaques at The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Garden and Tower Hill Garden will be approximately £75 and £50 respectively (the difference reflects the additional work needed to accommodate a plaque at the former). These costs would be met from City Gardens local risk budgets.

Legal Implications

15. The Deeds of Dedication were completed on 8 August 2012 and are in the process of being registered with the Land Registry. They restrict the use of the sites to the purposes specified. They also restrict the disposal of a site, other than as part of an exchange of land that is acceptable to FiT.

Conclusion

16. In response to a national campaign by Fields in Trust, the City Corporation has dedicated two public spaces as Queen Elizabeth II Fields in celebration of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee and the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, ensuring that these two gardens will be protected in perpetuity.
17. One of these sites, formerly the coach park for St Paul's Cathedral, has been named The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Garden. Whilst it would be desirable to recognise this with a formal unveiling ceremony, a way of delivering this has yet to be identified.

Background Papers:

Open Spaces, City Gardens & West Ham Park Committee report: Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge dated 6 February 2012

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge commemorative plaque (image)

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