



## **Keats House forward plan October 2016 – March 2020**

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Keats House is provided by the City of London Corporation as part of its contribution to the cultural life of London and the nation

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## Statement of purpose for Keats House

To preserve and develop Keats House as a museum and live memorial to John Keats and as a literary meeting place and centre for the education and benefit of the public.

## Strategic context within the City of London Corporation

Keats House sits within the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Department (CHL) of the City of London Corporation. This forward plan supports the CHL business plan 2016-19.

The mission for the CHL department is: To educate, entertain and inform, through discovery of our amazing range of resources.

The strategic aims of CHL are:

- To transform activities through best use of technology and community engagement, to improve customer service and increase efficiency and effectiveness; and
- To transform the perception and experience of the City as a destination.

The aims and objectives for Keats House support the broader aims of the CHL department, which in turn supports the wider aims of the City of London Corporation, especially in relation to its Corporate Plan and Cultural and Visitor Strategies. For reference, these include:

- **City of London Corporate Plan 2015/19:** the House supports key policy priority (KPP) 5 – increasing the outreach and impact of the City's cultural, heritage and leisure contribution to the life of London and the nation.
- **City of London Cultural Strategy 2012/17:** the House supports this strategy's three key development strands:
  - *Sustaining Excellence in the Arts* – developing our reputation for theatre, music, dance, festivals, literature and the visual arts;
  - *Displaying the Heritage* – increasingly helping people to discover our outstanding heritage assets, to bring history alive; and
  - *Breaking down Barriers* – focusing on the importance of opening up in all directions, welcoming visitors to the Square Mile and taking the City's cultural offer to all of London, engaging more effectively with our borough partners in particular.
- **City of London Visitor Strategy 2013/17:** the House supports the following key priorities (KPs) within this strategy:
  - KP1.2: to enhance the appeal of the City Corporation's own attractions through the introduction of new visitor experiences that incite audiences to re-visit.

## Current situation

- Keats House is a museum and literary centre located in Hampstead. It is an independent charity which is managed and financially supported by the City of London Corporation.
- The House and grounds are the former home of the Romantic poet John Keats. Also within the grounds is 10a Keats Grove, a library building, which is managed by Keats House and is currently occupied under licence by the Keats Community Library.
- In 2015/2016, 32,641 visited the House and garden, an increase of 23% on 2014/2015.
- The majority of visitors are women, with men making up only 13% of respondents to the annual visitor survey. Around half of all Keats House visitors are under 34 years old.
- 5% visitors describe themselves as local, while 40% come from the rest of London, 15% from the rest of the UK, and 40% are international.
- Keats House employs 3 full time members of staff and three part time members of staff. It has a team of 45 volunteers who support a range of activities from collections care to tour guiding and events. They contribute an average of 6,318 hours a year in volunteer time.
- A SWOT analysis of the current situation, completed in consultation with the Keats House team, is given in Appendix 1.

## Review of 2014-16

Keats House has good progress in achieving its strategic objectives in the period 2014-16.

February 2015 saw the completion of its major redisplay, which was funded by a grant of £85,500 from Arts Council England (ACE). The project saw the development and installation of new interpretation including text, audio, a film, a new access-friendly touch screen and interactive exhibits for families. The project also enabled significantly more of its world-class collection to go on public display by refurbishing and acquiring new showcases. Permanent displays are supplemented by a new temporary exhibition space on the first floor.

Part of the ACE-funded project saw the development of new Keats House merchandise. This change, along with the redisplay of the shop and training in visual merchandising, saw shop profit grow to £16,700 in 2015/16 compared with £8,220 the previous year.

Keats House has been working closely with colleagues and neighbours to increase income streams. Its Patrons and Supporters group was launched in 2014, and has raised a total of £14,000 to date. Income from venue hire has also increased to £12,280 in 2015/16 compared with £11,000 the previous year.

The events programme continues to attract a large and diverse audience. During 2015/16, over 5,184 people attended 103 events compared to 3,925 at 89 events the previous year. Highlights of last year's programme included: a series of events and workshops by the Keats House Poets, supported by the Keats Foundation; a Tagore recital for the Bangla Music festival; a high-profile event with Professor Germaine Greer celebrating Shakespeare's sonnets and a programme of events for adults and families by Poet in Residence, Michael Rosen.

School figures have continued to increase. In 2015/16, 2,009 school students and teachers visited compared with 1,256 the previous year, an increase of almost 60%. The increase is in part thanks to a grant from the Clore Foundation of £1,640, which enabled the part-time Education Officer to deliver, in partnership with Keats Community Library a 'Modern Myths' project in which school students worked with professional writers to create their own myths and stories.

Keats House was awarded an HLF Young Roots grant for £41,300 to deliver a major youth project in partnership with Jacksons Lane during 2016-17. The project consists of three activities led by young people: a Keats Slam performance which took place this summer, a film-making activity in October half term, and an immersive theatre performance.

A number of other small grants during this period have supported staff and volunteer training and collections care activities.

Awards received between 2014 to 2016 include:

- Sandford award for outstanding contribution to heritage education within the historic environment
- Time Out *Love London* Award, 2015
- Highly Commended in the *Hidden Gem* category of the Hudson's Heritage Awards 2016

As part of the City Corporation's (CoL) Service Based Review (2014/18), alternative models for running Keats House were explored. After considering a wide range of options, the CHL committee decided to continue to support Keats House at the same level for foreseeable future on the understanding that the House seeks to continue to increase its earned income.

## **Development of the Forward Plan**

The plan was written by the Principal Curator and Senior Curator in partnership with Keats House staff. The plan has been informed by the strategic concerns of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries department, and has been amended and approved by the Head of Cultural and Visitor Development and the Director of Culture, Heritage and Libraries.

In shaping our current and future services and objectives Keats House undertakes a range of consultations. Further details are provided in Appendix 2.

## **Our vision**

To be an internationally-renowned museum and literary centre which enriches people's lives and inspires an enjoyment of poetry, both past and present.

## **Our aims and objectives**

### **Our strategic aims**

- To position Keats House as a compelling and must-see visitor attraction, and broaden our audiences through our public programme;
- To ensure the long-term sustainability of Keats House and its collections for the benefit of future generations; and
- To achieve recognition for the City Corporation as a steward of culture for London and the nation.

### **Our objectives**

1. To increase footfall by providing and promoting a distinctive and memorable museum experience;
2. To broaden our audience by working creatively with partners to deliver a diverse programme of exhibitions and events;
3. To deliver an education programme which provides excellent learning opportunities for schools, families and adult learners;
4. To care for and improve access to our Grade I listed building and collection;
5. To increase earned and charitable income; and
6. To become more actively engaged with our local community.

## Action plan

Obj	Action	Who	Resources	Deadline	Priority 1 (highest) – 3 (lowest)	Success criteria
1	Create and implement a marketing plan promoting general visits	Principal Curator/CoL Cultural and Visitor Development team	Staff time	Mar 2017	1	Increased footfall and social media engagement
1	Procure new website	Principal Curator/contractor	Est £30,000 from House reserves or external funding	Dec 2017	1	Increased footfall, web hits and user feedback with clearer information and clarity of location for users
1	Develop group visits	Interpretation Officer	Staff time	Aug 2017	2	Increase in group numbers
1	Conduct visitor survey	Interpretation Officer	Staff time	Annually	1	High quality and in-depth; completed by end of the year and informing improvements to service
1	Review and refresh interpretation of permanent displays	Principal Curator/ Interpretation Officer	Staff time	2019-20	3	Implementation of new interpretation to be engaging and reflect best practice; engagement measured through visitor tracking
2	Establish special exhibition programme	Principal Curator and Senior Curator	Staff time	Jan 2017	1	New exhibition in 2017; schedule of exhibitions established April 2017; increased PR and footfall
2	Plan activities for Dec 2018 Keats Anniversary (when Keats moved to Wentworth Place, now Keats House)	Principal Curator/CoL Cultural and Visitor Development team	Staff time; Marketing Budget; CVD staff time	Start in 2017-18	2	Series of events implemented in Dec 2018; increased footfall and significant PR
2	Deliver the events programme, including at least one headline event per season	Principal Curator	Staff time; events budget	On-going	1	Series of at least 25 events produced each season; increased attendance; PR; positive evaluation



2	Plan activities for Feb 2021 (anniversary of Keats's death)	Principal Curator/ Head of Cultural and Visitor Development	May seek external funding to support programme	Start in 2018-19	1	High profile events programme and partnerships with City and literary attractions; increased PR; Increased footfall
2	Work with local attractions such as Freud and Burgh House to develop initiatives driving audiences	Principal Curator	Staff time	2017-2018	1	Increased footfall; increased admissions income
2	Develop Hampstead Heritage Trail in association with local attractions	Principal Curator	Staff time; marketing budget	2017-2018	2	Increased footfall
3	Research opportunities for educational partnerships and funding	Principal Curator/ Interpretation Officer	Staff time	2017-2018	2	New funding stream awarded; new partnerships created; increased number of educational visits
3	Develop and deliver schools programme	Interpretation Officer	Staff Time	On-going	1	Maintain or increase school numbers; good teacher feedback
3	Develop higher education offer	Interpretation Officer	Staff time	Oct 2017	2	Increase in numbers of HE visits
4	Obtain new collections database	Principal Curator/ Interpretation Officer	Cost tbc but to be met from House reserves or external funding; may need additional staff/ volunteer resource	Mar 2018	2	Documentation meets SPECTRUM industry standard; faster recovery of information; safer records
4	Review and update documentation procedures	Senior Curator/ Interpretation Officer	Staff time	2017-2018	1	Documentation records delivered to Accreditation Standards
4	Implement collections care plan	Senior Curator/ Interpretation Officer	Staff and volunteer time	On-going	1	Delivery of collection care to Accreditation standards

4	Complete condition reports for objects on open display	Interpretation Officer/ Conservation Volunteers	Staff and volunteer time; advice from Guildhall Art Gallery conservation team	Start in early 2017	2	All reports completed by the end of 2017; House adheres to collection care best practice
4	Refurbish toilets; investigate possibility for increasing number	Principal Curator/ CoL City Surveyor's Department	Staff time; budget to be sourced, possibly from Additional Works Programme	2017-2018	2	Fewer visitor complaints; Suitable for private hire events; meets accessibility standards
4	Replace induction loop at front desk	Principal Curator/ CoL Access Team	Staff time; budget to be identified	2017-2018	2	Improved experience for those with hearing impairment
5	Redecorate Nightingale Room and Library entrance	Principal Curator/ CoL City Surveyor's Department	Budget to be identified	2017-18	2	Increased uptake of and income from private hire; more high-end events
5	Develop private hire packages including reviewing pricing structure	Senior Curator/ Information Officer	Staff time	Dec 16	1	Increase income from private hire; simplified process which free up staff time
5	Obtain premises licence	Principal Curator	Licence fee to be met by House local risk budget; time for consultation	Jun 17	2	Licence obtained; minimal reputational issues; increase in private hire income
5	Develop legacy giving programme	Principal Curator/ CoL Comptroller's Department	Staff time	April 2017	2	Legacies secured
5	Develop patrons programme	Keats House team	Staff time; external consultant as in-house expertise minimal; external funding to be sought	2017-18	2	Increase income from patrons
5	Introduce gala fundraising events	Principal Curator	Staff time; external consultant to be paid for from increase in private hire revenues	2018-19	3	Income increased; new patrons secured

5	Explore possibilities for summer school in partnership with a university	Principal Curator/ Senior Curator	Staff time	2016-17	1	Income generated from partnership
5	Develop wedding/ engagement photography service	Principal Curator/ Interpretation Officer	Staff time	2017-18	1	Income from this service
5	Extend retail range and trial online retail through new website	Interpretation Officer	Staff time	2018-19	3	Increased income from retail
5	Assess feasibility of US friends programme	Principal Curator	Staff time; external consultant to be paid for from increase in private hire revenues	2018-19	3	Income increased; US patrons secured
6	Host a stall at the Hampstead Summer festival	Information Officer	Staff time	Summer 2017	1	Presence at festival delivering good PR; better local networks; increase in local visits
6	Work in partnership with Keats Community Library (KCL) on school visits	Interpretation Officer	Staff time	On-going	3	At least 3 schools sessions in partnership with KCL per year
6	Participate in the South End Green (SEG) festival, in partnership with SEG Association	Principal Curator/ Information Officer	Staff time; possible use of garden	Summer 2017	3	Presence at South End Green festival delivering positive reputational PR; better local networks; increase in visits by locals

## Resource plan

### People

Keats House sits within the City of London's Cultural and Visitor Development Team. An organisational chart is shown in Appendix 2.

Due to staff members at Keats House and the Guildhall Art Gallery being on maternity leave this year, a temporary staffing structure is in place.

The Keats House staff team currently comprises:

- Principal Curator (P/T – currently on secondment to Guildhall Art Gallery and working 0.5 days/week at Keats House)

- Senior Curator (F/T – temporary contract)
- Interpretation Officer (F/T)
- Interpretation Officer (P/T – specialising in education)
- Interpretation Officer (F/T – on maternity until November 2016)
- Information Officer (F/T – until November 2016)
- Information Officer and weekend duty managers x 2 (P/T)
- There is a pool of 4 casual assistants

Additional services are provided by other teams and departments of the City of London Corporation

- Conservation support by conservators at London Metropolitan Archives and Guildhall Art Gallery (both owned and managed by the City Corporation);
- Marketing support is provided by the City Corporation's Cultural and Visitor Development Team; and
- Property services, maintenance and security is provided by the City Surveyor; and
- Business support functions (human resources, finance, IT support, etc.) are provided centrally.

### Financial resources

Keats's House's primary source of funding is the City of London Corporation.

Additional income is generated through retail, venue hire, events and donations. A licence fee paid by the Keats Community Library contributes to the running costs of 10a Keats Grove (the Library building).

Grants are obtained for specific projects on an ad hoc basis.

The following budget projections exclude grants acquired for specific projects; figures are rounded to the nearest £1000.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
EXPENDITURE			
Staff costs (pay, superannuation, NI)	200000	202000	204000
Casual Staff costs	3000	3000	3000
Training	2000	2000	2000
EXPENDITURE - OTHER			
Premises related expenditure	25000	26000	27000
Transport	1000	1000	2000
Equipment and materials	8000	8000	9000
Books/acquisitions	1000	1000	1000
Printing, stationery	2000	3000	3000
Fees and services (exhibitions, events, residency, design)	26000	26000	26000
Communications and computing	2000	2000	3000
Expenses (hospitality)	2000	2000	2000
Advertising and promotion	12000	14000	15000
<i>Total expenditure</i>	<i>284,000</i>	<i>290,000</i>	<i>297,000</i>

EARNED INCOME			
Retail profit	15000	16000	17000
Fees for services (events)	8000	9000	10000
Facilities services (private hire)	12000	13000	14000
School visits	2000	2000	3000
Admissions	29000	30000	31000
Rent from 10 Keats Grove	24000	24000	24000
<i>Total income</i>	<i>90,000</i>	<i>94,000</i>	<i>99,000</i>
<b>TOTAL LOCAL RISK</b>	<b>194,000</b>	<b>196,000</b>	<b>198,000</b>

## Access audit and improvements

An access audit was completed in August 2016. This found that access was good in general, and identified some improvements required to meet the most recent guidelines. Priority and some medium-term improvements have been implemented. Outstanding improvements will be implemented in consultation with the City Corporation's City Surveyor's department and Historic England. A summary of outstanding actions is shown in Appendix 4.

## Environmental sustainability

Keats House is covered by the City of London Corporation's Climate Change Mitigation Strategy 2010 (currently under review).

At Keats House we will continue to minimise our environmental impact day to day by:

- Recycling general and office waste;
- Reusing exhibition materials where possible;
- Using recycled paper where appropriate;
- Turning off lights when not in use; and
- Encouraging visitors to use public transport.

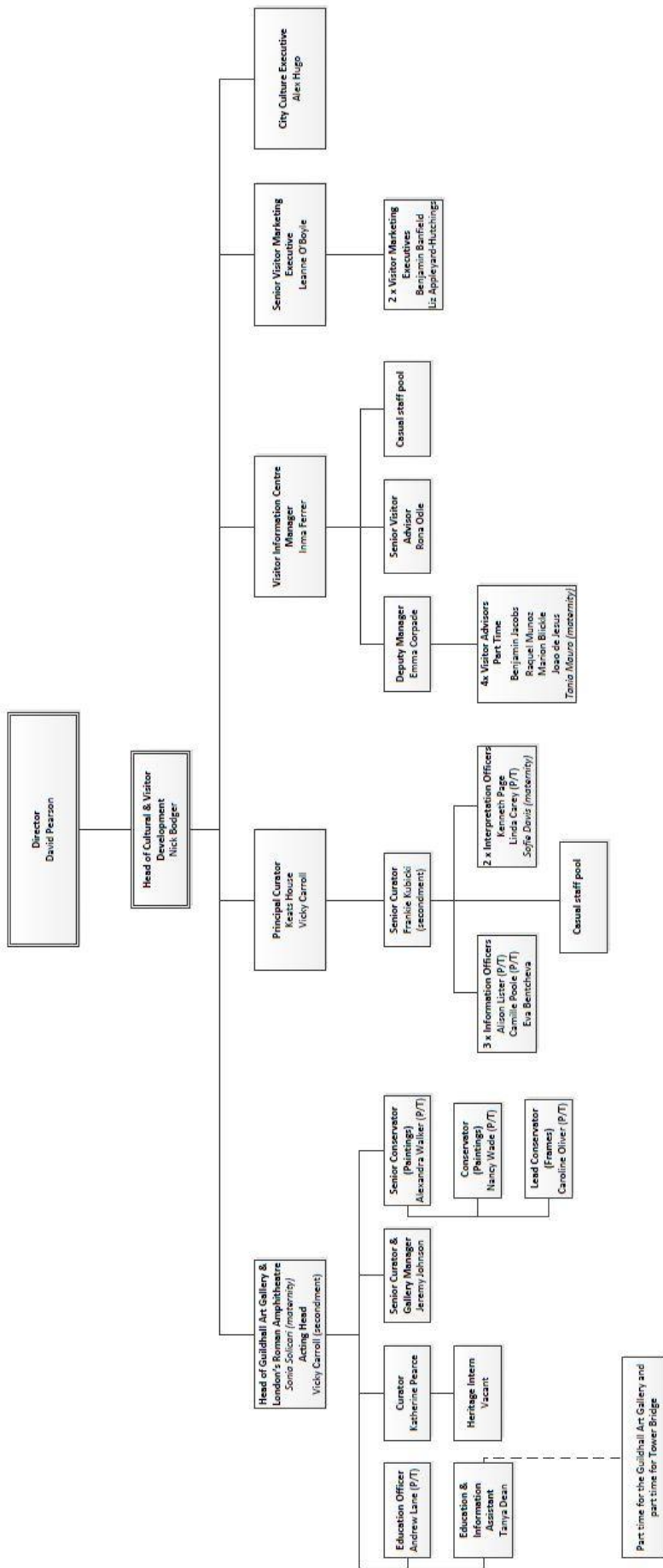
## Review date

This plan will be reviewed in autumn 2019, with a new plan to be submitted to the Culture Heritage and Libraries Committee for approval in early 2020, unless a review is required earlier.

## Annexe 1: SWOT analysis of current position

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Museum content and interpretation</li> <li>• Popular events programme</li> <li>• Loyal and committed volunteers</li> <li>• Experienced and knowledgeable staff</li> <li>• Strong brand</li> <li>• World class collection</li> <li>• Beautiful garden</li> <li>• Excellent and well-regarded education programme</li> <li>• Popularity of Keats and interest in the Fanny Brawne and John Keats love story</li> <li>• Recognised by a number of awards as voted by users</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor and limited toilet facilities</li> <li>• Location (outside centre of London)</li> <li>• Poor connectivity in terms of transport</li> <li>• Lack of catering facilities</li> <li>• No alcohol or entertainment licence</li> <li>• Limitations of corporate (City of London) website and confusion regarding location</li> <li>• Lack of parking</li> <li>• Lack of external signage to house</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private hire offer</li> <li>• Social media</li> <li>• Standalone website</li> <li>• Opportunity to capitalise on new and existing partners (e.g. National Trust / Art Fund)</li> <li>• Supporters group</li> <li>• Fundraising and partnership opportunities for education, exhibitions and programming</li> <li>• Proximity to Hampstead Heath, with an opportunity to work more closely</li> <li>• Keats Festival</li> <li>• Poet in Residence programme</li> <li>• Potential to develop consultative/advisory panel to include advisors with income generation and marketing experience</li> <li>• Location within local cluster of heritage houses and assets with potential for partnerships and joint ticketing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance and upkeep of building is costly and time-consuming</li> <li>• Challenging visitors at remote City Corporation site</li> <li>• Concerns amongst some neighbours about late events and weddings</li> <li>• Local concerns about City Corporation activities, e.g. Hampstead Heath ponds and the reputational impact this brings</li> <li>• Potential reductions to core budget through further expenditure reviews at the City Corporation</li> </ul>

# Annex 2: Organisational structure chart



### **Annex 3: consultation and analysis of views**

In shaping our current and future services and objectives Keats House undertakes a range of consultations, these include:

- Visitor Surveys – undertaken annually with a report of the findings presented to senior management and staff;
- Visitor Book – a Visitor Book is available for comments all year round and is located in the Chester Room;
- Visitor feedback – many visitors are more comfortable sharing their thoughts with staff and visitors directly rather than record them on a survey – these are fed back to the Senior and Principal Curator on an ad-hoc basis;
- Workforce feedback – workforce feedback is actively encouraged through regular one-to-ones and in the more formal structure of our regular monthly staff meetings; and
- Volunteer feedback – feedback is actively encouraged through regular discussion and debriefings after volunteer shifts.



## Annex 4: Summary of improvements from access audit

Summary of improvements		Priority A (highest) – C (lowest)
1	Portable ramp should have a 100mm upstand on both sides.	A
2	Replace the emergency cord in the accessible WC.	A
3	Make adjustments to the shutter in Mrs Brown's Kitchen to reduce potential hazard.	A
4	Make adjustments to the cupboard door in Charles Brown's Bedroom to reduce potential hazard.	A
5	Extend the angled slabs at the public entrance to reduce the gradient.	A
6	Introduce a hearing enhancement system in the Welcome Area and The Chester Room.	B
7	Introduce a chamfered detail at the raised threshold between the conservatory and Chester Room.	B
8	Make adjustments to the accessible WC; lower the alarm reset button, install two clothes hooks at correct height and introduce outward opening door and chamfered detail at raised threshold.	C
9	Make adjustments to the unisex WC; remove the drop down rail and provide a step for children.	C
10	Introduce a bench along the sloped path for an informal means of support.	C
11	Update the website; distances are measured in metres rather minutes and upload the subtitled version of the film.	C

The City of London Corporation's City Surveyors department has been notified of recommendations to be implemented during maintenance and refurbishment works.