

Committee:	Date:
Open Spaces & City Gardens	17 July 2017
Subject: Superintendent's update	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Parks & Gardens	For Information
<p style="text-align: center;">Summary</p> <p>This report provides an update to Members of the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee on management and operational activities across the City Gardens section since May 2017.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the report 	

Main Report

Budgets

1. The budgets for both City Gardens and Bunhill Fields are in line with anticipated expenditure for this time of year. Carry Forwards totalling £90,000 have been requested from the departmental City Fund underspend 2016/17 to undertake planting and infrastructure improvements to West Smithfield, St. Dunstan's in the West, Cleary and Tower Hill Gardens. Although not available at the time of writing, Members will be advised of the outcome at the meeting.

Personnel

2. The new recruit for the role of City Gardens Manager is currently working out their notice with their employer and will start work with the City Corporation on 31 July 2017.

Operational Activities

3. Following an opening event for the new hotel at 10 Trinity Square, the Pepys Garden at Seething Lane will be handed back to the City for the team to complete the soft landscaping works. Although there remain some elements of hard landscaping to be completed by Reignwood's landscaping contractor, your City Gardens team are working hard to get planting completed in time for the main summer season.

4. Another late works season project began at the beginning of June, with the introduction of nearly 300 tonnes of soil into Mitre Square. This was to fill the two newly-created planting beds, which will then be filled with a mix of hardy shrubs and herbaceous perennials; the final stage of public realm improvements to this area.
5. These additional activities, which would normally have been completed at the end of April winter works season, have provided the team with an additional challenge at this time of year when they are busy preparing for London in Bloom and trying to keep on top of watering during the recent spells of hot weather.
6. Behind the scenes officers have been negotiating with Legal & General and London Underground (LUL) regarding the re-landscaping of Senator House Garden once the refurbishment of that building is complete. Works inside the building are expected to take approximately one year, after which the garden on Queen Victoria Street will be completely remodelled to better read as a publicly-accessible garden. To enable this to happen, licenses have been entered into with the developer and LUL, signed off by your Chairman and Deputy Chairman under delegated authority. An additional benefit under the license with the developer is that they have undertaken to carry out cleansing of the new garden at their own cost.
7. Tuesday 6 June saw strong winds and torrential rain across much of the country. As a result, the top was blown out of one of the Plane trees in front of Juxon House, adjacent to St Paul's Cathedral. This was reported as a near miss. The team has a robust inspection and maintenance regime in place for all City trees, and Members can be confident that everything possible is done to prevent such incidents, and that this was an unfortunate consequence of the unusual wind patterns created by the City's buildings.

Community, Volunteering, Outreach and Events

8. As part of the Low Emission Neighbourhood (LEN), Friends of City Gardens supported by the City of London Corporation have designed and installed a pop up garden on Moor Lane. The aim of the volunteer-led project is to raise awareness of low emission routes as well as using plants to mitigate particulate levels. The new green spaces are also intended to enhance biodiversity and improve the public realm.
9. Open Garden Squares Weekend took place on 17 and 18 June 2017. This is an annual event involving over 230 private, secluded and little-known gardens across London. Entries from within the Square Mile will include Barbican Station Pop-Up Garden, Barbican Wildlife Garden in Fann Street, and The Golden Baggers allotments in Golden Lane. Guided tours also visited many of the City's gardens and churchyards, with a poet in residence at Postman's Park.
10. For 2017 City in Bloom is supporting the City of London Corporation's LEN to improve local air quality and create a more liveable and greener

neighbourhood. For the 'clean and green for seventeen' challenge, Friends of City Gardens asked local communities, businesses and residents to design and install a planting scheme. The challenge received 12 entries that were constructed throughout May. Entries will be photographed to promote those involved in the challenge and encourage others to be involved with the LEN.

11. Green Flag and Green Heritage judging took place on the 10 May. London in Bloom judging took place on 13 July. The results of this summer's judging will be announced later in the autumn.

Appendices

- None

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