

<b>Committee(s):</b> Keats House Consultative Committee	<b>Date(s):</b> 18 September 2012
<b>Subject:</b> Keats House events, education and community programme (KHCC 2012-06)	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> The Director of Culture, Heritage and Libraries	<b>For Information</b>

**Summary**

This report summarises progress in delivering Objective 1 of the Keats House Business Plan 2012-13 and the associated Performance Indicators. Progress is recorded in bold.

(a) Objective 1 - To transform usage of Keats House by enhancing the education and community programmes in partnership with others

**The Keats Festival was expanded this year and included more events over a wider range of interests than previously. John Hegley has been a very engaged poet in residence and has contributed several enjoyable and intriguing sessions already.**

(b) Indicator 1 - The number of usages of Keats House, comprising personal and group visits, school visits, remote enquiries and online contacts. The target is 220,000 aggregate usages

**The overall figure for usages during April to August (101,999, with two areas to be added) includes for the first time web and social media data and is well ahead of target, although it should be noted that actual visits to the house have been significantly lower than for the same period in 2011. The Olympics has been an important factor and similar drops have been recorded in other museums in London.**

Indicator 2 - High overall visitor satisfaction. The target is 95% for the aggregate of Good and Very Good responses to the annual visitor survey. **The survey is carried out during August and September.**

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that this report is received.

## Main Report

### Current position

1. The third annual Keats Festival took place between Saturday 2 June and Sunday 10 June and was launched by the 2012 Poet in Residence John Hegley, who chose the overall theme 'Happy is England: fair attitude and fine excess'. Over 40 events were staged in a programme of poetry, music, theatre and workshops, many for the whole family. Highlights included a Bank Holiday performance of the Arthurian play *The Sword in the Stone* by the Cambridge Theatre Group, the appearance of a 13ft high mechanical dragon named George, performances by the poets Jackie Kay, Rommi Smith and John Hegley himself and a workshop for young poets led by the youth group SLAMBassadors who have emerged from the most prestigious and longest running youth poetry 'slam' in the UK, organised by the Poetry Society.
2. The Festival also saw the launch of the poetry anthology *Sweet Beats for Keats*. One of the most important legacy projects from each of the Festivals and the poet residencies has been the production of an anthology of works created during and inspired by them. *Sweet Beats* was edited and contains works by the 2011 poet in residence Benjamin Zephaniah and the Festival Director, Maureen Roberts.
3. John Hegley has continued his residency since the Festival with a series of events for adults and children, including monthly Sunday 'afternoon tea with John Keats' poetry reading and discussion sessions.
4. Keats House staff and volunteers took part in the Celebrate the City fair during the open weekend in June which marked the City's contribution to the arts and culture, performing 'pop up' poetry sessions outside various sites along Cheapside.
5. As part of the culmination of the Stories of the World Cultural Olympiad programme, young people from the Keats House Young Poets Forum performed at a day-long event in the Houses of Parliament in July. Stories of the World is led by the Arts Council and has celebrated over the past two years the international nature of the collections held in museums and galleries in the UK. Over 2,000 people across the country have worked with professionals in these cultural institutions to create new works (in the case of Keats House poetry inspired by workshops and other sessions there) and exhibitions. The Forum is also being supported to host a screening in the garden in September of the documentary *We Are Poets*. This film, directed by Daniel Lucchesi and Alex Ramseyer-Bache, follows six young poets from the Leeds Young Authors performance poetry group on their visit to the international poetry slam competition in Washington D.C. USA. Funding has been provided by the Mayor of London as part of a series of outdoor events called Showtime, which will be taking place in London during the summer.

## Current Position: performance indicators

6.

	April	May	June	July	August	Total
<b>Personal visits -</b> number of people	1,598	2,530	1,985	2,002	2,330	10,445
<b>Group visits -</b> number of people	26	156	46	92	55	375
<b>School visits -</b> number of people	0	96	17	68	0	181
<b>Remote enquiries</b>	223	293	366	425	406	1,713
<b>Website</b>	19,117	18,681	17,922	Data not yet available		55,720
<b>PatronMail</b>	9,488	10,695	9,850	Data not yet available		30,033
<b>Twitter</b>	0	19	39	46	51	155
<b>Facebook</b>	497	752	743	656	729	3,377
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,949</b>	<b>33,222</b>	<b>30,968</b>	<b>3,289</b>	<b>3,571</b>	<b>101,999</b>

7. For the first time web and social media statistics have been provided to give a more comprehensive picture of the range and number of ways in which people engage with Keats House. The service has only been linked to Facebook and Twitter recently and there are no comparable figures for last year. On actual visits to the house, numbers are 16% down on last year over the five months recorded which reflects particularly the effect of the Olympics and the extremely poor weather in June. Events targeted specifically at local residents, such as teddy bears picnics, have continued to be well attended. School visits are broadly the same as at the same stage in 2011 and reflect the fact that the majority of sessions are held during the autumn and spring terms.

## Future plans

8. Events planned for the autumn include a number around National Poetry Day in October where the national theme this years is 'Stars', Big Draw in the same month, the now annual wreath laying at the Keats memorial in Westminster Abbey and a performance in November by the poet Jenny Joseph of her work *Persephone*, to celebrate here eightieth birthday. She is most well known for her poem Warning which begins with the line "When I am an old woman I shall wear purple".
9. Planning for the 2013 Keats Festival is now in hand and it is hoped to announce the 2013 poet in residence shortly.
10. The 2012-13 schools prospectus for the City's Heritage Services (Keats House, London Metropolitan Archives and Guildhall Art Gallery) has recently been

published and includes for Keats sessions in the curriculum areas of history, citizenship, maths and science, art, English and creative writing.

## **Conclusion**

11. A great deal of creative work has been undertaken this year already, particularly around the Festival and while the overall number of visitors has been less than last year so far, this was expected during the Olympic period based on the experience of previous host cities.

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