

Committee:	Date:
Open Spaces & City Gardens	15 th July 2019
Subject: City Gardens Update	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Information
<p>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 April 2019.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the report 	

Main Report

Finance

1. At this stage of the financial year City Gardens are predicting a balanced budget at the end of this financial year. Members will be aware of the increasing pressure on budgets, which is only likely to get worse in future years as a result of any further budget reductions, and an anticipated reduction in the availability of Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy, against the background of a significant rise in the number of people using our gardens.

Personnel

2. The initial recruitment campaign for a Support Services Officer was unsuccessful. Following a second campaign the position has been now been offered to a candidate who has accepted and will be starting on the 29th July.

Operational Activities

3. The OJEU tender process to procure a four-year tree work contract has been completed and awarded to KPS Ltd, who are our current interim contractors. This contract will start on the 1st of July and provide the City with a tried and tested contractor who provide a high value for money service.
4. City Gardens were fully ULEZ compliant when it was introduced on the 8th April, through securing a fleet of EURO 6 diesels. Our objective remains to move to an electric or hybrid fleet.

Pests and Diseases

5. **Box Disease:** Certain sites have been hit badly by box caterpillar this year, the Barbican Estate and Bunhill Fields were particularly badly hit. This pest in addition to Box blight and City Gardens visit to RHS Wisley has been planned for the 19th August. The aim is learn from the hedge trials they are conducting with an aim to broaden our planting palette to ensure our planting has increased resilience.

Project Updates

6. **Guildhall Piazza:** City gardens are working with DBE to remove the defunct 'bog-garden' and to replace it with sub straight/ soil and low maintenance, high impact planting.
7. **Guildhall Security project – Location 7:** City Gardens are working in conjunction with DBE with the installation of HVM barriers on the triangle area of paving and planting to the north of the Livery Hall/ Old Library. The barriers will require substantial foundations and priority here is to protect the root system of the Hornbeam tree (*Carpinus Betula*), which is the largest of this species in the city.
8. **St Dunstons in the West:** This is a City Gardens project that is funded by a grant from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The grant will be used to will revamp the garden with repairs to the paths, installation of a water standpipe, removal of defunct electrical uplighters and cabling, removal of 80-90% of the planting and replacement, new signage and turf replacement. Due for completion in the Autumn.
9. **2-6 Canon Street (phase 2) Old Change Court/St Nicholas Cole Abbey:** This project is a redesign of the current area incorporating new beds and trees. It is also proposed that the area to the front of the Church (St Nicolas Cole Abbey) on Queen Victoria Street will also be planted up. Completion anticipated winter 2019
10. **Senator House** The garden which was constructed by the developer's contractor under licence has required additional works owing to poor drainage design. These works have now been completed. City Gardens have signed this site off and planting will be completed by the end of June.
11. **St Alphage's Garden:** All of the hard landscaping works have now been completed and Planting is due to take place and the site reopened by the end of June.
12. **Stonecutter Street – Goldman Sachs development:** Substrate has now been infilled into all seven planters along Farringdon Street and Shoe Lane. Nearly all street the trees have been planted – the remainder being carried out in June/July and August/September. Planting will take place outside of the recommended planting window but due to the high-profile nature of this project, it is important that the team complete this work.

13. **60-70 St Mary Axe:** Design incorporates 3 raised planters with multi-stem trees and underplanting and is now complete. Delay of the installation of the irrigation system has caused significant maintenance challenges as watering is required daily here owing to high wind speeds. Irrigation system is due to be installed imminently, however some plant loss has occurred.
14. **St Mary Aldermary:** This Churchyard paving currently falls well below the acceptable standard, and has a food concession upon it. In addition; the boundary wall has failed and partially collapsed due to poor design and the increased use of the garden following the recently completed development opposite which include houses, eateries and bars at ground level. City Surveyors are responsible for the wall whilst City Gardens is responsible for the paving. City Gardens have met with the Church and agreed that the cost for lifting and relaying the paving will be shared between both parties. These works are being programmed in and will commence once faculty consent has been given.
15. **Artizan Street:** This project is now complete. There have since been a few issues with theft of planting, the culprit has now been caught and cautioned by the police. Bicycles have also been chained to the railings necessitating the installation of new signs.
16. **St Bartholomew's Close:** Six street trees have been planted with more to follow in 2020. Raised bronze planters are due for installation in early summer 2019 and will be planted with large multi stemmed trees and shrubs.

Planning

17. A list of planning applications that have been received since the last Committee meeting can be found in Appendix 1.

Community, Volunteering and Events

18. Culture Mile events in City Gardens are largely focused on Smithfield Rotunda. This includes a summer long installation called "The House of Wayward Plants", a greenhouse containing ferns and seating. A programme of activities within the garden is being delivered throughout the summer. A second installation of a virtual reality tree swing will also be featured in this garden as well as a second at Christchurch Greyfriars.
19. The City Gardens Walks run by the City of London Guides have commenced for the year.
20. Open Gardens Square weekend was held on the weekend of the 8th and 9th of June, which included a number of City sites. During this weekend the Friends of City Gardens launched "*Top Ten Trees in the City of London*". This project promoted trees in the square mile through nominating the best tree in ten categories, such as the most beautiful, the most historical and the Friendliest.

Locations of these trees are available via an online map which lists all of the trees, temporary signs at each site provide information.

Web address: <https://qrco.de/bb8UJb>

21. The City Gardens team also hosted a staff culture board day, where staff from other divisions took part in a scavenger hunt around some of our gardens, were given a tour of the conservatory at the Barbican and potted up plants for London Bridge.
22. Green Flag Award judging took place on the 6th June and judging for London in Bloom takes place on the 9th July.

Appendices

Appendix 1 -Planning Application Open Spaces Consultations to 4th June 2019

Jake Tibbetts

City Gardens Manager

T: 020 7374 4127

E: jake.tibbetts@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Planning Application Open Spaces Consultations to 4th June 2019

Application number	Location	Description
PT_RC/19/00233/FULLR3	Smithfield Rotunda Garden West Smithfield London EC1A 9DY	Temporary installation of a greenhouse pavilion for a period of 4 months. To be removed on or before 06 October 2019.
PT_MRB/19/00214/FULL	Exchange Square London EC2A 2BR	Remodelling of the public realm within Exchange Square to include the provision of new soft and hard landscaping; the creation of informal events/activity spaces; the removal and replanting of trees and other works.
PT_RC/19/00278/FULL	Cheapside London EC1A 7HL	Retention of existing structure and addition of an art installation on the Cheapside traffic island for a temporary period of 12 months.
PT_BXD/19/00362/FULLR3	Mitre Square London EC3A 5DH	Application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary condition 1 of planning permission 18/00395/FULLR3 dated 14.06.2018 to extend the temporary time period for the installation of the sculpture 'Climb' by Juliana Cerqueira Lette.
PT_BXD/19/00424/FULLR3	Fenchurch Place London EC3	Temporary Installation of a sculpture 'Arcadia' by Leo Fitzmaurice for a period of up to one year to be taken down on or before 1 June 2020.
PT_BXD/19/00383/FULLR3	Undershaft London EC3A 6AT	Application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary condition 1 of planning permission 18/00378/FULLR3 dated 21.06.2018 to extend the temporary time period for the installation of the sculpture 'Crocodylius Philodendrus' by Nancy Rubins to 01.06.2020.
PT_CL/19/00272/TCA	The Master's House Church	General prune and re-reduction to Betula Pendula (Silver Birch) and re-coppice to Laurus

	Court London EC4Y 7BB	Nobilis (Bay).