

Committee:	Date:
Open Spaces & City Gardens	14 October 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 July 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, 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. Following interviews, two assistant gardeners are being appointed to fill vacant posts on one-year contracts. We will be re-advertising a third post which remains vacant following an unsuccessful recruitment campaign.
3. The current City Gardens Apprentices are coming to the end of their contracts. One was successful and will be filling one of the above positions and one will be progressing to a level three apprenticeship. We will be recruiting two new apprentices who will start in January.

Procurement

4. City Gardens are due to carry out a number of procurement exercises this financial year, these will help ensure that we continue to provide a value for money service:

- Supply of Herbaceous plants – this contract is currently being advertised
- Soils and substrates – the final documents are currently with procurement and due to go out to tender shortly
- Tree purchase tender – early stages of procurement process anticipated start date is April/May 2020
- Tree Management Database – We have gone out to tender for a new tree management database. The existing database will soon stop being supported by its suppliers; it was prudent to go to market to assess other options.

Operational Activities

5. **Christmas Trees:** Sourcing large Christmas trees has proven to be very difficult this year due to a shortage of trees in excess of 30ft. This is due to a number of factors including changing climate and pest and disease. Our term contractor has been unable to provide us with the required trees this year. After considerable research an alternative supplier was found. The cost of purchase and supply has increased from £11,675 in 2018 to £17,135 this year. It is envisaged that this situation will only worsen and we may not be able to acquire large size trees in future years. City Gardens will assess options such as smaller sized and artificial trees and present a paper to this committee later in the year.

Pests and Diseases

6. **Box Disease/ Caterpillar:** City Gardens visited RHS Wisley to view the hedge trials they are conducting with an aim to increasing the diversity of species that we plant. The team learnt how to identify Box caterpillar and to adjust pruning times to reduce the pest's impact.

Project Updates

7. **Guildhall Piazza:** City gardens are working with DBE to remove the defunct 'bog-garden' and to replace it with substrate/ soil and low maintenance, high impact planting.
8. **St Dunstan's 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 enhance 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. This is due for completion over the coming winter.
9. **St Mary Aldermary:** This Churchyard paving requires extensive repairs. The boundary wall has failed due to poor design. The Historic Building Surveyor is currently considering options for the replacement of the wall. City Gardens have met with the Church and agreed to sharing the cost for repairing the paving. These works are being programmed in and will commence once faculty consent has been given.

10. **Senator House:** This garden is now complete following the building refurbishment.
11. **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. Completion is anticipated over the winter.
12. **St Alphage's Garden:** All of the hard and soft landscaping works have now been completed. Some final works to the wall and the installation of benches will be completed shortly.
13. **Stonecutter Street – Goldman Sachs development:** This project is now complete except for the replacement of one tree that was removed at Goldman Sachs request. This will be carried out in November 2019.
14. **Greening Cheapside:** Highway improvements around St Paul's tube station will commence shortly. The improvements remove the existing low-level beds (currently seasonal bedding) and replace these with a new design to a raised level of 450mm to allow for additional seating. There will be two street trees included and the planting will change to herbaceous and shrub planting.
15. **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 2020 and will be planted with large multi stemmed trees and shrubs.

Planning

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

Community, Volunteering and Events

17. Culture Mile installations in Smithfield Rotunda were removed at the beginning of October.
18. Following the success of Friends of City Gardens "*Top Ten Trees in the City of London*", a second similar installation is being planned for the winter with a focus on bark.
19. City Gardens were very successful at this year's London in Bloom awards ceremony:
 - City Gardens – *Gold and best in category*
 - Aldgate Square – *Gold*

It's your neighbourhood awards:

- Fann Street Wildlife Garden – Was rated as *outstanding*

- “Nic’s Secret Garden” (All Hallows by the Tower) – Was rated as *thriving*

The City of London was awarded a special award of *Gardening in a Changing Climate*. The judges were particularly impressed with the trialling of new species and new planting mediums.

Appendices

Appendix 1 -Planning Application Open Spaces Consultations to 30 September 2019

Jake Tibbetts

City Gardens Manager

T: 020 7374 4127

E: jake.tibbetts@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Planning Application Open Spaces Consultations to 30 September 2019

Application number	Location	Description
PT_BXD/19/00383/FULLR3	Undershaft London EC3A 6AT	To vary a condition of planning permission 18/00378/FULLR3 dated 21.06.2018 to extend the temporary time period for the installation of the sculpture 'Crocodylus Philodendrus' by Nancy Rubins to 01.06.2020.
PT_AC/19/00473/MDC	10 Lower Thames Street London EC3R 6EN	Submission of the landscaping scheme for the Riverside Walkway pursuant to Condition 10 of planning permission 18/01105/FULL dated 19.02.2019.
PT_SJW/19/00569/MDC	St Botolph Without Aldgate Churchyard, Aldgate High Street London EC3N 1AB	Submission of details of a planning permission approved on 15.2.2018 (17/01054/FULL) including measures taken to protect trees in the Churchyard.
PT_CL/19/00657/MDC	Former Bernard Morgan House 43 Golden Lane London	Landscaping and planting plan, including on site external courtyard pursuant to condition 22 of planning permission dated 30th August 2017 (planning reference 16/00590/FULL).
PT_CL/19/00680/MDC	Former Bernard Morgan House 43 Golden Lane London EC1Y 0RS	Details of the green roof pursuant to condition 23 of planning permission dated 30th August 2017 (16/00590/FULL).
PT_CL/19/00682/MDC	Former Bernard Morgan House	Details of biodiversity enhancements for birds

	43 Golden Lane London EC1Y 0RS	pursuant to condition 18 (m) of planning permission dated 30th August 2017 (16/00590/FULL).
PT_BXD/19/00619/FULL	Inner Temple Garden Inner Temple London EC4Y 7HL	Construction of two soakaways, associated pipework and gullies within the Inner Temple Garden.
PT_CL/19/00699/FULL	Aldgate House 33 Aldgate High Street London EC3N 1AH	Change of use of part of the ground floor and mezzanine (395 sqm) from office (Class B1(a)) to restaurant (Class A3) and associated works including ground floor extension (165 sqm) and extension of existing internal mezzanine (289 sqm). – street trees to be protected.
PT_CL/19/00767/TCA	St Bartholomews Churchyard Cloth Fair London EC1A 9DS	Works of pruning to one Mulberry and one Elder.
PT_SJW/19/00777/MDC	Crosby Square Steps London EC2 (22 Bishopsgate)	Details of materials and appearance of walls, ground level surfaces, landscaping, bollards, handrails and balustrades and the resiting of the 1890s lighting column pursuant to Condition 2, and details of the stairs and wind mitigation trees pursuant to Condition 3 of planning permission 18/00910/FULL dated 14.02.2019.

PT_SJW/19/00856/MDC	22 Bishopsgate London EC2N	Details of a landscaping scheme pursuant to Condition 17 of planning permission 16/00849/FULEIA dated 11.09.2017.
---------------------	-------------------------------	---