

Committee:	Date:
Open Spaces & City Gardens	3 February 2020
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 Dec 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 financial year end.

Personnel

2. Under the current moratorium, there are two vacant positions that City Gardens are awaiting the Town Clerk's approval to recruit to.
3. City Gardens have welcomed two new level two Gardening Apprentices who are being supervised by our level three apprentice.

Procurement

4. City Gardens are carrying out a number of procurement exercises this financial year, these will help ensure that City Gardens continue to provide a value for money service:
 - Supply of Herbaceous plants – this contract has been awarded to the incumbent supplier.
 - Soils and substrates – this contract tender has been awarded.
 - Tree purchase tender – currently in the early stages of the procurement process, with the anticipated start date being April/May 2020.

- Tree Management Database – This contract has been awarded to a new software supplier. City Gardens are now preparing for the process of transfer of data from the old system to “Treeplotter”.

Operational Activities

5. **IT Transformations Project:** City Gardens have been working with a software developer to deliver a mobile application that will improve the service City Gardens provide. This app has been trialled by the Aldgate team and final improvements are being made with the intention of rolling this out to all City Gardens staff in the next two months.
6. **Christmas Trees:** The City Gardens Manager viewed several artificial trees over the festive period including ones at Kings Cross, Camden Market, Paddington Station, Wembley and Hammersmith. There is a wide variety of trees available and some were considered of a standard appropriate for the City. Consultation with the Department for the Built Environment (DBE) and City Surveyor’s is now taking place in regard to the Christmas trees displayed on their sites.
7. **Tree Strategy:** The City of London’s Tree Strategy is currently being updated by the City Planning team in consultation with the City Gardens section. Once a draft format has been agreed amongst the relevant officers, a meeting will be held with the Chairman and other internal stakeholders.
8. **Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) 2020:** A consultant has been commissioned to undertake a baseline survey on biodiversity data pertaining to the City held by Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL). This will help define the focus species and assist in setting targets and objectives for the new BAP.

Buxus replacement programme

9. Last year’s box hedge replacement programme is continuing with the following sites being identified:
 - West Smithfield – *Taxus baccata*
 - Christchurch Greyfriars – *Euonymus* Jean Hughes
 - Warwick Square Gardens - *Euonymus* Jean Hughes
 - Jubilee Gardens - *Euonymus* Jean Hughes, but the actual quantity of hedging will be reduced substantially
 - Fenn Court - *Euonymus* Jean Hughes

Project Updates

10. **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. This project will start when funding becomes available to DBE.

11. **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 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 will be completed by the end of March.
12. **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 granted.
13. In addition, the Church has requested a new litter bin. This has been rejected due to a church approved food concession located in this garden that generates waste. It was felt that a bin would simply increase costs to City Gardens which should be borne by the concession.
14. **Senator House/ Cleary Gardens:** The team is working towards installing a new entrance from Senator House into Cleary Gardens to join the two gardens and provide disabled access between the two. This is due for completion by the end of March.
15. **2-6 Cannon 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. This project has been delayed due to issues with underground structures; planting is now not anticipated until autumn 2020.
16. **St Bartholomew the Great:** City Gardens are working with the Church, the Diocese and Friends of City Gardens to bring about improvements within the Churchyard. This project needs to be delivered this financial year due to funding constraints and City Gardens are awaiting faculty consent to be granted. The works will include the installation of a handrail to the steps leading up to the garden, paving improvements, and the inclusion of evergreen planting improvements throughout the garden.
17. **Greening Cheapside:** This work has commenced. 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. This project is also due for completion by the end of March.
18. **St Bartholomew's Close:** Six street trees have been planted with more to follow in 2020. The bronze planters have been delivered and planted.
19. **Dukes Place:** City Gardens together with DBE are looking at redesigning the two planters at Dukes Place to incorporate an innovative sustainable urban

drainage scheme, capturing rainwater runoff from the paving. This is at an early stage of design.

Planning

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

Community, Volunteering and Events

21. The Friends of City Gardens have been successful in raising £5,000 from British Land which will go towards the St Bartholomew's the Great Project, the objective being increased biodiversity within the garden.
22. Friends of City Gardens have also secured funding that will contribute towards a composting shredder that City Gardens will purchase. This will be used to shred leaves at Bunhill Fields before they are placed in the leaf bins to speed up the composting process.

Appendices

Appendix 1 -Planning Application Open Spaces Consultations to 16th January

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Appendix 1

Planning Application Open Spaces Consultations to 16 January 2020

Application number	Location	Description
PT_GD/19/01343/FULEIA	Poultry Market And General Market And The Annexe Buildings West Smithfield London EC1A 9PS	New Museum of London building application.
PT_KS/19/01356/FULL	St Paul's Cathedral St Paul's Churchyard London EC4M 8AD	Re-landscaping works to re-align the existing pathway in the North Churchyard leading to the area immediately in front of the North Transept.
PT_CL/19/01307/FULEIA	50 Fenchurch Street London EC3M 3JY	Application for a 35 storey building including Clothworkers' Hall. Includes creation of ground level public access to level 10 roof garden and basement level 1 to Grade II Listed crypt; together with hard and soft landscaping works.
PT_RC/19/01252/MDC	25 Cannon Street London EC4M 5TA	Submission of measures to be taken during the period of demolition and construction for the protection of the trees to be retained and details of any pruning of the trees pursuant to condition 6 (p) of planning permission 18/00859/FULL dated 15.11.18.

PT_LH/18/01020/FULMAJ	1-12 Long Lane London EC1A 9HF	Demolition of existing buildings and structures and construction of a 10 storey office building with retail at ground and basement level, including landscaping and other associated works (RECONSULTATION FOLLOWING REVISED DOCUMENTS RECEIVED)
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