

Committee(s): Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee	Date(s): 14/06/2021
Subject: Keats House summary of achievements in 2020/21 and plans for future periods	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 & 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Information
Report author: Rob Shakespeare, Principal Curator (Keats House), Open Spaces Department	

Summary

At the meeting of the Keats House Consultative Committee held on 18 February 2019, members agreed to the proposal to use the Trustees Annual Report on activities at Keats House, as the basis for updating Members on achievements and progress at the House.

The draft report for 2020/21 was presented to Members of the Keats House Consultative Committee at their virtual meeting held on 10 May 2021. This will be brought to Members of the Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee as part of the Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements, which is prepared by The Chamberlain, in due course.

Presented at Appendix 1 and 2 for the information of Members are the Divisional Plan, showing priority projects at Keats House for the period 2021 – 2024, and the Activities Plan 2021/22, which summarises achievements in 2020/21 and plans for 2021/22.

Members are asked to note the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the services and programmes being delivered and the extent to which Keats House continues to deliver the objectives of the charity and contribute to Corporate and Departmental outcomes.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Members note achievements at Keats House as summarised in Appendix 2 and how the service continues to meet the priorities, aims and objectives outlined

within the Corporate Plan 2018/23, the City Corporation's Cultural Strategy, the Open Spaces Department Business Plan 2021/22 and the objectives of the Keats House Charity.

- Members note the future priorities for Keats House in 2021/22 and subsequent years, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2.

Main Report

Background

1. Keats House is a registered charity (number 1053381) with the City Corporation acting as sole trustee.
2. As a registered charity it is required to submit an annual report and financial statement, detailing its activities and to ensure compliance with the Charities Act 2011. The draft activities report covering the period April 2020 to March 2021, was presented to the virtual meeting of the Keats House Consultative Committee held on 10 May 2021. This will be incorporated in to the annual Trustees Report and Financial Statements, which is prepared by The Chamberlain for this Committee, in due course.
3. As a matter of best practice and as an Accredited Museum, Keats House is required to have a Forward Plan which demonstrates how it plans to meet its stated aims and objectives within the wider strategies and desired outcomes of its governance arrangements. The Corporate Plan and Departmental Business Plan determine the strategic outcomes and objectives, while the Divisional Plan outlines how these are delivered through priority projects over a three-year period. The Divisional Plan for Keats House for the 2021 – 2024 is presented at Appendix 1.
4. In recent years, the Keats House Activities Plan has been introduced as a public facing document to inform partners, stakeholders and audiences of the previous year's achievements and the plans for the current year. This is presented at Appendix 2 for information and use by Members.

Current Position

5. Due to restrictions imposed by the Government to control transmission of the COVID-19 virus, Keats House and Ten Keats Grove, including Keats Community Library, closed to the public with effect from Wednesday 18 March 2020. During this first lockdown, City Corporation Officers and the 'New Museum School' trainee worked from home and volunteer activity was suspended. Keats House casuals were paid a weekly average rate based on hours worked from January to March 2020, with this cost being reclaimed through the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.
6. Following the initial lifting of COVID-19 restrictions for the heritage sector, Keats House reopened to the public on a limited basis with COVID-19 Secure measures in place from Sunday 26 July 2020. Keats Community Library

reopened from the earlier date of Saturday 18 July, again on a limited basis. Both venues closed again in November 2020, prior to reopening in early December before closing for Christmas, followed by the National Lockdown from January to March 2021.

7. In November 2020, five Officers from the Keats House team were furloughed in proportion to how their roles were impacted by the closure of the House to the public and the suspension of programming due to the COVID-19 restrictions in force at various times. From May 2021, these Officers are being brought back in a phased manner to support their safe return to full duties while continuing to protect the Keats House Charity from the economic impacts of the pandemic.
8. Following the publication and implementation of the Government's COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021 (Roadmap), Keats Community Library reopened from w/c 12 April and Keats House reopened from w/c 17 May 2021. Both Keats Community Library and Keats House continue to open with restrictions on opening times and specific measures to ensure the site remains COVID-19 Secure for our workforces and visitors. These safety measures will remain in place as long as Government and sector guidance, as well as the safety requirements of our workforce and visitors, require them to.
9. In the absence of a live events programme, Keats House continues to work with colleagues in the Cultural and Visitor Development team, partner organisations and key stakeholders to deliver online engagement, particularly relating to the Keats200 bicentenary programme. February 2021 marked the bicentenary of Keats's death in Rome and the culmination of the bicentenary programme, although a number of events and initiatives planned for that time will now be delivered in autumn 2021.
10. The response to, and initial recovery from, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the activities of the Keats House Charity. In particular, income targets for admissions, shop sales, events and private hires were not met in 2020/21. Despite some reductions in 2020/21 operating costs, including furloughing of Keats House Officers, it was necessary for the City Corporation to provide additional funding for Keats House in 2020/21. This was to ensure that the Charitable Reserves were protected for spending against future priority projects. Examples of these include the procurement and implementation of a Collections Management System, to improve access to the Keats House collections, and enhancements to the visitor entrance.
11. The licence for Keats Community Library (KCL) to operate from Ten Keats Grove expired on 19 April 2020. The City Surveyor is making arrangements for a new licence agreement, with KCL paying a reduced fee based on actual usage as an interim measure. The designation of KCL as an Asset of Community Value, nominated by Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum, has been renewed by the London Borough of Camden for five years effective from 14 April 2021.
12. Over the next three years, Keats House will need to determine and demonstrate how it can respond to the challenges of: recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic; delivering the 12% savings required in 2021/22;

implementing the City Corporation's Target Operating Model; and any recommendations arising from the Charities and Governance Reviews.

13. Priority projects, which have been identified as part of Departmental and Divisional planning for the period 2021 to 2024 are shared with Members for their information at Appendix 1. Activities planned for 2021/22 to help deliver these and our longer-term aims are outlined in Appendix 2.
14. The Principal Curator and City Surveyor's Department are working to deliver the access improvement project funded through the London Borough of Camden's Community Infrastructure Levy, along with associated works to preserve and enhance the Grade 1 listed house and garden. Cyclical and reactive maintenance works to Ten Keats Grove (library building) are also ongoing, with projects to improve safety and security of the building scheduled to take place in 2021/22.
15. The Principal Curator continues to work with Paul Vick Architects and London Borough of Camden's Planning Department to develop a proposal to replace the current dilapidated, wooden boundary fence on Keats Grove with a dual-height brick wall with metal fencing over. The initial proposals were presented to Members of the Keats House Consultative Committee at their virtual meeting on 10 May 2021. Following their feedback and after seeking key stakeholder views, these will be further developed and costed, before being presented to Members of the relevant Committees for approval in due course. This is with a view to obtaining the planning and listed building consents, which are required for this Grade I listed site, within 2021/22, for possible delivery of the project in 2022/23.

Proposals

16. The Principal Curator recommends that the following revised priorities for April 2021 onwards are included in the Plans for Future Periods section of the annual Trustees Report and Financial Statement once submitted:

The overarching priorities which will guide all of our objectives and activities from April 2021 are:

- Implement Keats House Divisional Plan projects identified for delivery in 2021/22.
- Deliver maintenance and access improvement projects at Keats House
- Develop a three-year Management Plan for Keats House, to ensure the future sustainability of the Keats House Charity and its operating model.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

17. The projects and works outlined in this report contribute towards the achievement of the three aims set out in the City of London Corporate Plan 2018-23: Contribute to a flourishing society, Support a thriving economy and Shape outstanding environments.

18. The projects and works outlined in this report also contribute towards the three objectives and outcomes set out in the Open Spaces Business Plan 2020-21 (a) Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible, (b) Spaces enrich people's lives and (c) Business practices are responsible and sustainable.

Conclusion

19. While activities have continued online and the museum has again reopened to the public, with restrictions in place, from w/c 17 May 2021, the operation and programming of Keats House has been profoundly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, its operating model, medium-term plan, and desired outcomes need to be reviewed to ensure the future sustainability of the museum and its continued Accredited status guided by the structures and principles of the Target Operating Model.
20. The Keats200 bicentenary programme culminated in February 2021 on the 200th anniversary of Keats's death, with a range of commemorative events delivered online along with our partners. It is hoped that some of the larger scale, celebratory events, which could not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, can now safely take place in autumn 2021. This will coincide with an outdoor, touring display and associated programming as part of the City Corporation's Outdoor Art Programme theme for 2021: 'A Thing of Beauty'.
21. A number of projects, designed to increase physical and virtual access to and engagement with Keats House and the Keats House collections, will now be delivered in 2021/22 and subsequent years. These will contribute to the legacy outcomes of the Keats200 bicentenary programme, supporting continued audience engagement with the objectives and activities of the Keats House Charity.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Keats House Divisional Plan, 2021/22 update
- Appendix 2 – Keats House Activities Plan, 2021/22.

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