

Committee	Dated:
Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee	15 February 2022
Subject: Queen's Green Canopy	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2, 3, 4, 10, 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	Y
If so, how much?	£40,000
What is the source of Funding?	Local risk
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	Pending
Report of: Juliemma McLoughlin, Executive Director Environment	For Decision
Report author: Beth West, Environment Department	

Summary

As part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, the Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) team have approached the City of London Corporation (CoLC) to become involved in QGC activities and Ashted Common, Burnham Beeches and Epping Forest have been nominated as part of the 70-strong ancient woodlands initiative, with successful woodland nominations being announced by the QGC Board in February 2022. This report recommends how the CoLC could be involved in QGC activities across the Square Mile and the Open Spaces and potentially other green asset holders such as the Housing Estates and Freemans School, engaging the Lord Mayor, school groups and wider communities.

It is proposed that the CoLC take an active role in the QGC activities over the course of the next 14 months and align activities in numerous locations around supporting the QGC campaign.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Agree the planning of an extensive tree-planting campaign to support the QGC with activities across the City Corporation estate, drawing together many previously planned activities into the QGC campaign and adding new activities where appropriate and cost effective
- Agree the following, already identified, initiatives:
 - Mayoral tree planting in Whittington Gardens at a ceremony to be held in March at a date and time to be agreed

- The planting of a Memorial Tree at Giffords Wood in memory of former Lord Mayor Sir Roger Gifford.
- Dedicate the Ancient Black Mulberry tree at Keats House as one of the 70 dedicated ancient trees
- Dedicate the three ancient woodlands (Ashted Common, Burnham Beeches and Epping Forest) that have been nominated, if selected
- Agree that officers engage with the QGC team to establish the City of London as a Champion City in the campaign
- Approve the budget for a level D project support officer for 14 months to manage the QGC activities

Main Report

Background

1. Several City Corporation City Gardens and Open Spaces have previously been utilized to provide planting opportunities to celebrate previous Royal Jubilees. At Epping Forest a number of initiatives from a 79-strong Black Poplar Avenue was planted on Woodford Green in 1886 (and replaced in 1966) to mark Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee of 1887 to the planting of a Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Grove in 1953.
2. The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) is a tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which celebrates the 70 years of the Queen's reign. QGC invites people from across the United Kingdom to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee".
3. Everyone from individuals to Scout and Girlguiding groups, villages, cities, counties, schools and corporates will be encouraged to play their part to enhance our environment by planting trees during the official planting season to the end of March 2022. Tree planting will commence again in October 2022, through to the end of the Jubilee year.
4. With a focus on planting sustainably, the QGC will encourage planting of trees to create a legacy in honour of The Queen's leadership of the Nation, which will benefit future generations.
5. As well as inviting the planting of new trees, the QGC will dedicate a network of 70 Ancient Woodlands across the United Kingdom and identify 70 Ancient Trees to celebrate Her Majesty's 70 years of service.¹

¹ <https://queensgreencanopy.org>

Current Position

6. The QGC team have requested that the Lord Mayor plant a tree in the Square Mile before the end of March 2022. They have separately asked if the Ancient Black Mulberry tree in Keats House can be dedicated as one of the 70 ancient trees. The QGC tree are keen for the CoLC to be actively involved in the campaign.
7. Ashted Common, Burnham Beeches and Epping Forest have been nominated as part of the 70-strong Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) initiative, with successful woodland nominations being announced by the QGC Board later this month.

Proposed Short-term Plans

8. Over the next 2 months, there are several planned initiatives that could be aligned to the QGC programme. We propose that whenever possible with timing and budget, these activities should be included as part of the CoLC's overall contribution to the QGC.
9. These activities are:
 - Replacing a tree in Whittington Gardens on Upper Thames Street
 - Planting three new trees in Giffords Wood in Epping Forest, dedicated to the late Lord Mayor, Sir Roger Gifford. This planting was scheduled for April/May, but we propose to bring this forward to March 2022. Lady Clare is happy to accommodate this change
10. These activities have previously identified budgets and therefore no additional funding is required for these activities. Should other activities be identified in the short term that could be included in the QGC programme without additional budget request, we will include them in the QGC programme and notify the committee of our intent.

Proposed Additional Plans

11. There are several initiatives currently under consideration that could be included within the CoLC's QGC approach. We would propose to identify all relevant activities and seek to include them in our overarching QGC narrative and campaign. Some proposed additional plans include:
 - Tree planting activities within the City Gardens and where possible, churchyards within the Square Mile. We would propose to delay all tree planting activities other than at Whittington Gardens (see above) until the October 2022-March 2023 period so that we can assess and prioritise any

- requests to plant trees within the Square Mile, and then allocate planting activities as 'awarded'. It is estimated that this will include approximately 10 trees based on current space availability. Additional budget may be required to purchase appropriate trees and for any ceremony, although we would request that those wishing to plant trees cover the costs of any ceremony.
- Tree planting activities within the Open Spaces outside the Square Mile. Looking at the longer 10-year plan, we would assess any near-term tree planting plans and determine if these can be undertaken during the October 2022-March 2023 period. This could include.
 - Two Jubilee copse plantings in LBWF and EFDC in the form of a hectare copse on Wanstead flats and an orchard of 70 apple trees on Coopersale Common
 - Individual tree planting including gapping up Whipps Cross, Planting a Tree at Chingford Golf course and then offering a tree planting in each local authority ward
 - Identify within our conservation plans, particularly with regard to ancient trees, where any activities can be adapted to be included in the QGC plans.
 - A new 50-tree plantation at Epping Forest planted by Commonwealth Commissioners during the Commonwealth Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in London. Work with our apprenticeship programmes, as well as those of our local authority partners, to identify where we can celebrate or add to existing skills programmes on green skills.
 - Engage with the education teams to determine where school children can be more involved in these activities; for example, it is already planned for primary school children to go to Epping Forest as part of the Giffords Woods tree planting programme.
12. The cost of these types of activities will be developed alongside the programme of work. Wherever possible, we will use previously identified budget to deliver these activities. If no specific funding can be identified or reallocated, Members will be asked to approve the programme of work and any additional costs in delivering it. It is anticipated that we will seek approval for the programme at the May committee meeting.
13. In order to ensure the appropriate prominence of these activities within the QGC, we propose that a specific QGC project support officer is retained for 14 months to facilitate the deliver of these works and coordinate with the QGC and communications team.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic Implications

These initiatives will allow the CoLC to be able to demonstrate our relevance in national campaigns, reinforcing our iconic role in the national consciousness.

Reputational Implications

The Town Clerk's Communications Team will develop a communications plan to provide positive, easily understandable messaging to key audiences for this campaign. This will include the media, elected Members, staff, residents, workers, the general public and other key stakeholders.

Financial Implications

To be fully successful in delivering a holistic campaign, it is proposed that a project support officer work in this programme full time for a period of 14 months. Therefore, Members are asked to approve funding for the salary and costs for this individual.

Additional budget may be required if activities that would have been delivered in future years are brought forward and/or for any ceremonies. Any request for additional funding will be made in line with the appropriate governance, and sought prior to committing to the activity as discussed above.

Additional communications resource may also be required, but this would be identified in the subsequent paper if necessary.

Legal Implications

Any legal implications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Comptroller & City Solicitor.

Risk Implications

Risk will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and any additional risks identified will be reported to the relevant committees by exception.

Equality Implications

There should be no equality implications for these activities; however, we can make efforts to ensure that women and under-represented groups are engaged in the apprenticeship and education programmes.

Climate Implications

These activities will enhance and shine a spotlight on the CoLC's Climate Action Strategy in a positive way.

Conclusion

As part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, the Queen's Green Canopy team have approached the City of London Corporation to become involved in QGC activities. It is proposed that the CoLC take an active role in the QGC activities over the course of the next 14 months and align activities in numerous locations around supporting the QGC campaign, through the creation and promotion of QGC activities across the Square Mile and the Open Spaces, engaging the Lord Mayor, school groups and wider communities.

Contact

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