

Committee(s): Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee	Date(s): 14/11/2022
Subject: Update Report for Keats House Charity, April – September 2022	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 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: Juliemma McLoughlin, Executive Director, Environment Department	For information
Report author: Rob Shakespeare, Principal Curator (Keats House), Environment Department	

Summary

Since 2019, Members have received the Trustees Annual Report on activities at Keats House as the basis for updating your Committee on achievements and progress at the House.

Presented at Appendix 1 for information and discussion is the draft mid-year report on activities at Keats House between April and September 2022.

An update on Keats House Divisional Plan projects for 2022/23 is presented at Appendix 2 and the draft Keats House Activities Plan 2022/23 is included for the information of Members at Appendix 3.

Members are asked to note the achievements at Keats House in rebuilding its services and programmes and the extent to which it delivers the objectives of the charity and contributes to Corporate, Departmental and wider outcomes.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Members note Keats House's achievements in the first half of 2022/23, as outlined below and described in more detail at Appendix 1 and how the Divisional Plan 2022-25 and Activities Plan 2022/23 (Appendices 2 & 3) support the priorities, aims and objectives outlined within the Corporate Plan 2018/23 and other key Corporate strategies, the Environment Department's primary and supporting aims and objectives, and the objectives of the Keats

House Charity.

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 update included at Appendix 1 forms the basis of the draft report for 2022/23, including activities from April to September 2022. This mid-year update has been presented to Members of Keats House Consultative Committee, for discussion at their meeting on 28 October 2022.
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 other key strategies, along with the Environment Department's aims and objectives determine the strategic outcomes and objectives for Keats House. The Divisional Plan outlines how these are delivered at Keats House through priority projects over a three-year period, while the annual Activities Plan celebrates the previous year's achievements and identifies priorities for the current year. The Keats House Divisional Plan, updated for end of September 2022, is presented at Appendix 2 and the Keats House Activities Plan 2022/23 is presented at Appendix 3.
4. In addition to rebuilding its core services (opening to the public, delivering learning sessions, live events and special projects), Keats House is prioritising longer-term projects to enhance physical access to its premises and virtual access to its collections as identified in its Divisional Plan for 2022-25. While we have received planning and listed building consent for access improvements to the grounds and the new visitor entrance, these have yet to be delivered. Proposals for the new boundary wall are ready to be submitted to London Borough of Camden for planning consent. The new Collections Management System has been procured, and its implementation, development and launch are ongoing priorities for the current year. We are working to progress these major projects in 2022/23 and 2023/24.
5. Despite some of the continued difficulties faced in the aftermath of the pandemic, Keats House is rebuilding its core services, growing its income and contributing to a range of Corporate and sector outcomes. It continues to work with internal and external partners to deliver creative and engaging programmes which contribute to individual and community cultural engagement and learning, wellbeing and community cohesion.
6. Over the next three years, Keats House has the opportunity to demonstrate how it can realise the potential of the City Corporation's Target Operating Model and

any recommendations arising from the Charities and Governance Reviews to fully recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, rebuild and grow its services and audiences and again achieve full Museum Accreditation. This award would validate the work it does to care for and make accessible Keats House and its collections, for the benefit of London and the nation.

Current Position

7. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Keats House was open to the public Wednesday to Sunday, 11am – 5pm and Keats Community Library (KCL) opened for a total of 42 hours per week, Tuesdays to Sundays.
8. In April 2022, Keats House was open to the public on Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays, 11am – 1pm and 2 – 4pm. From May 2022, Wednesdays were added to the public opening days and the afternoon session was extended until 5pm. School visits, live events and private hires all continued to grow between April and September 2022, supporting the rebuilding of our audiences and income streams in the first full year of recovery following the pandemic.
9. From 1 November, our public opening times will revert to Thursday, Friday and Sunday, 11am – 1pm and 2 – 4pm from November until February 2023. This small reduction will have little impact on our overall visitors during this period while enabling officers to develop and deliver priority projects, including the physical access improvements, development of the online collections catalogue and policy development which will all drive future visits. During this period school sessions, group visits, evening events and private hires will continue to be supported on days we are closed to the public.
10. During the first half of 2022/23, Keats House launched its 'Keats Inspired' exhibition and associated live events programme, accompanied and promoted by a newly designed visitor guide, special displays featuring rarely seen items from our collections and a social media campaign. We also worked with and partner organisations and colleagues to support two major conferences, an ongoing doctoral research student placement, four local community events for Hampstead Summer Festival, loans of artwork and image licencing, and the display of the 'Green City' outdoor exhibition on Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest.
11. The overarching theme of our public programming in 2022/23 is #KeatsInspired, comprising the exhibition, events programme and special projects, all promoted and supported by our social media and online outputs.
12. Keats House are currently planning their programme for next year, including a partnership project funded by Cardiff University which will result in our major exhibition for 2023: 'Young Romantics in the City'. We have also registered our interest and will be putting together a partnership funding bid for Art Fund's 'The Great Escape' project, which will culminate for Earth Day 2023. We are also preparing the content for the launch of our online collections database, planned for spring 2023, and continuing to review and revise our policies and processes to ensure we are ready for our Museum Accreditation submission, now expected

in 2024.

13. The number of private hires has increased, with ten hires between April and September (up from two in the same period last year) which has realised 34% of the annual income target for hire of facilities.
14. The licence for Keats Community Library (KCL) to operate from Ten Keats Grove expired on 19 April 2020. The City Surveyor and Principal Curator have held discussions with KCL Trustees to inform options for the future, which will be taken to Members following any recommendations from the City Corporation's Charities Review. An inflationary increase to the current licence arrangements is recommended for 2022/23 and will be presented to Members for their decision.
15. We continue to work with the City Surveyors to schedule works to maintain, preserve and enhance the Grade 1 listed house and garden and the Grade II listed Ten Keats Grove (library building). Reactive works and cyclical projects to improve the safety, security and appearance of both buildings are ongoing and scheduled to take place in 2022/23, pending approval of any required consents.
16. The Principal Curator and City Surveyors also continue to work with Paul Vick Architects and London Borough of Camden's Planning Department to improve physical access and enhance the appearance of the entire site, which is situated within the Hampstead Conservation Area. The already approved designs for the new pathways, with access lighting are being costed to inform an application to LB Camden's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) programme. The related proposal to replace the current dilapidated, wooden boundary fence on Keats Grove with a dual-height brick wall with metal fencing over as previously seen by this Committee, are now ready to be submitted to London Borough of Camden for the required approvals to proceed.
17. As well as providing public access and engagement at Keats House, officers are currently working to deliver the priority projects outlined in the Keats House Divisional and Activities Plans (see Appendix 2 and 3).

Proposals

18. Members indicate their continued support for the activities and priorities of Keats House in delivering the Charitable Objectives, as well as contributing to Corporate, Departmental and wider strategic and community outcomes.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

19. 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.
20. The activities of Keats House are designed to contribute to the aims and outcomes of the City Corporation's Education, Creative Learning and Skills Strategies.

21. The projects and works outlined in this report also support the Environment Department to Shape Sustainable Future Environments through its Primary and Supporting Aims and Objectives and contribute to the outcomes identified in the new Natural Environment Division's emerging strategic framework.

Conclusion

22. Keats House is open to the public and is again providing its core offer of self-led and guided visits, with formal learning sessions and opportunities for life-long learning and engagement with arts and culture.

23. The 'Keats Inspired' exhibition and events programme for 2022/23 has been launched and is driving a growing events programme which in turn is helping rebuild our audiences.

24. A number of delayed projects designed to increase physical and virtual access to Keats House and its collections, are being prioritised for delivery in 2022/23 and 2023/24. These will contribute to the legacy outcomes of the Keats200 bicentenary programme, supporting the post-pandemic recovery and achievement of Museum Accreditation, lead towards the 100th anniversary of the opening of the house to the public in 2025 and, in the longer-term, a sustainable future for the Keats House Charity.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – [Draft] Annual Report for Keats House Charity 2022/23, including activities from April – September
- Appendix 2 – Keats House Divisional Plan 2022-25, October 2022 update
- Appendix 3 – Keats House Activities Plan 2022/23

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