

Appendix 1 – [Draft] Annual Report for Keats House Charity 2022/23, updated for the period April – September 2022

Origins and Objectives of the Charity

In 1921, a body called the Keats Memorial House Committee appealed to the public for funds to purchase the property and archive from the then private owners to save it from being destroyed or dissipated, and in order to preserve John Keats's former home in which most of the poet's finest work was written. The public appeal was successful, and the property was acquired and vested in the, then, Corporation of Hampstead "as a permanent trust to be restored and equipped with relics of the poet and to be maintained in perpetuity as a Keats Museum and a live memorial to his genius, a shrine of pilgrimage for his worldwide admirers and a literary meeting place and centre". Camden Borough Council became the successors of the former Corporation of Hampstead on 1 April 1965, pursuant to the London Government Act 1963.

Keats House was registered as a charity in March 1996. The City of London Corporation acquired ownership of the land and buildings and responsibility for the administration and management of Keats House with effect from 1 January 1997.

The objective of the Charity is:

'to preserve and maintain and restore for the education and benefit of the public the land with the buildings known as Keats House as a museum and live memorial to John Keats and as a literary meeting place and centre.'

The Charity shall first defray out of the income of the Charity the cost of maintaining the property (including the repair and insurance of any buildings thereon) and all other charges and outgoings payable in respect thereof and all the proper costs, charges and expenses of and incidental to the administration and management of the Charity.

The Trustee has due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when setting objectives and planning activities.

Explanation of Aims and objectives for the year including the changes or differences it seeks to make through its activities

The activities of the Keats House Charity are guided by its Charitable Object as stated above and developed within the framework of the City Corporation's Corporate Plan 2018-23 and the Environment Department's Business Plan 2022/23. Our activities also support the City Corporation's Education, Cultural & Creative Learning and Skills Strategies and the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018 - 2028, as well as the wider aims of heritage sector organisations such as Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and The National Archives.

The City of London Corporation's Corporate Plan 2018-23 states that:

Our vision

The City of London Corporation is the governing body of the Square Mile dedicated to a vibrant and thriving City, supporting a diverse and sustainable London with a globally-successful UK.

We aim to...

- Contribute to a flourishing society
- Support a thriving economy
- Shape outstanding environments

Keats House aims to support the Environment Department to Shape Sustainable Future Environments through its Primary and Supporting Aims and Objectives, particularly:

- Provide excellent frontline services
- Deliver key strategies (climate action and volunteering)
- Support sustainable growth, vibrancy, heritage and culture
- Provide thriving, biodiverse, relevant spaces
- Financial, Information and Talent Management, Innovation, Engagement & Collaboration and inclusivity.

The contribution which Keats House makes towards these is detailed below.

Achievements and Performance

Achievement against the key priorities for 2022/23 (updated to include activities from April – September 2022):

1. Implement projects and activities identified in the Keats House Divisional Plan and Activities Plan identified for delivery in 2022/23

In April 2022, Keats House was open to the public on Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays, 11am – 1pm and 2 – 4pm. From w/b 2 May this was increased to Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays, 11am – 1pm and 2 – 5pm.

Our new 'Keats Inspired' exhibition opened to the public on 11 May. The exhibition, which is on display until 2023, looks at the individuals and movements which influenced Keats to become a poet and how he and the other Romantic poets have inspired art and culture through to the present day. From July, the exhibition was enhanced by new displays in Keats's and Charles Brown's parlours, celebrating the lives and afterlives of Percy and Mary Shelley. A number of rarely seen items from our collections, including the previously unseen manuscript of 'The Heir of Mondolfo' by Mary Shelley, were put on display with support from our colleagues at London Metropolitan

Archives (LMA), with whom we work closely to care for and research our collections and make them accessible, both physically and intellectually and in person and online.

A #KeatsInspired live events programme to support the themes of the exhibition was delivered between April and September, with 15 different events and two major conferences attended by a total of 618 people. Highlights of the spring / summer programme included: a flower-pressing workshop by former artist in residence Elaine Duigenan for London Craft Week; the return after a two-year hiatus of the Keats Foundation Conference; a performance of Keats's and Shelley's work by actor Julian Sands; a special two-day conference on the bicentenary of Shelley's death, organised in partnership with the British Association of Romantic Studies; a two-day 'Poetry and Nature' creative writing workshop delivered by City Lit; and book launches in partnership with Arachne Press, who are celebrating ten years of independent publishing in 2022. The beginning of our autumn events programme continued on the same themes, with the return of our free creative workshops for families, Keats House again opening for free on Sunday 11 September as part of London Open House Festival, when 237 people attended, and the return of former Keats House poet in residence John Hegley, to perform poems from his new book 'A Scarcity of Biscuit', in partnership with Speaking Volumes. We have a strong #KeatsInspired programme for autumn / winter 2022/23 and have already begun planning our major exhibition and events programme for spring / summer 2023, with funding and research support from Cardiff University.

As well as our own programme, Keats House officers supported the work of partner and stakeholder organisations, through a number of projects and initiatives, including: four events in Keats House garden for Hampstead Summer Festival 2022; the loan of four artworks for display in Guildhall Art Gallery's 'Inspired' exhibition; and working with colleagues at LMA to display their 'Green City' outdoor exhibition at Hampstead Heath in August and Epping Forest in September.

Social media continues to be an important method of engaging audiences with our collections and promoting events. By September 2022, Keats House had 6,896 followers on Twitter (+2% on March 2022), 4,137 on Facebook (+3%), and 3,077 on Instagram (+10%). Our #KeatsInspired social media campaign and project to publish online the Fanny Brawn to Fanny Keats letters on the 200th anniversary of them being written regularly attracts positive social media activity and engagement in the form of likes, shares and re-posts.

Delivering poetry and creative writing sessions for schools is a core part of our work, supporting teachers and students in formal education as well as contributing to a number of strategic outcomes. Between April and September 2022, our part-time learning officer delivered 12 taught sessions, to primary and secondary school groups and one university group, with a total of 74 primary, 183 secondary and 11 HE students, plus a further 39 accompanying adults, taking part. An online professional development session was delivered to a further 10 teachers.

In June, we worked with our Techne lead partner organisation Roehampton University, to deliver a 'Keats and the Classics' session aimed at students with Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND): Keats and the Classics. The session, run over a full day with a small group from New River College, was very successful, and we hope to arrange similar events in the future. In July, the eleventh Keats House Creative Writing summer school took place in person at Keats House, with workshops by Daljit Nagra and novelist Louise Carey. 29 students from 7 London secondary schools took part, leading to a total of 98 instances of engagement over the four days. The week produced some very strong writing, some of which will be presented in an online anthology to be sent to the participating schools and students at the start of next term.

We also continue to collaborate with 'Poetry Versus Colonialism' to explore and reveal the, often hidden, histories of objects in the house, as stimulus for students' creative writing and to present a more rounded interpretation of objects in our collections and the stories they can tell.

A dedicated core team of volunteers continue their enthusiastic support for Keats House through two main programmes: volunteer tours for visitors to Keats House, which take place on most afternoons we are open to the public; and support for our live events programme, principally through 'Afternoon Poems', free themed poetry readings on the second Sunday of most months. In addition, one under-graduate volunteer gave most of her summer vacation to volunteering front of house, welcoming visitors to the house and volunteers assisted with the delivery of several events, including Open House Festival. In total, 12 individuals have provided over 430 volunteer hours supporting activities at Keats House between April and September 2022. As always, we would like to acknowledge and thank all our volunteers for their continued support for the Charity and its activities, especially in light of the impact of the pandemic on their own lives.

Keats House continue to work with Roehampton University to support a doctoral research student to work with the collections held at Keats House and London Metropolitan Archives. This programme, which commenced in October 2020, is funded through the Techne Doctoral Training Programme through to 2024, resulting in new insights and interpretations of our collections. At this stage in their research, regular access to our collections at LMA is a necessary requirement and the active support of our colleagues at LMA has been instrumental in facilitating this.

Between 1 April and 30 September 2022, Keats House opened to the public on 95 days, with a total of 3,283 recorded visits to the house during that period. For comparison, 7,708 people visited Keats House between April and September 2019 and 1,139 in the same period in 2021, when the house was only open on 44 days between May and September. The number of people visiting Keats House is therefore 43% of pre-pandemic levels but almost three-times the numbers visiting in the spring and summer of 2021, when restrictions were still partly in place.

Income from admissions, shop sales and private hires has risen along with the increase in numbers visiting the house and booking in-person events. It has not yet been possible to achieve the levels of income previously derived from admissions, shop sales, events hires or events prior to the pandemic, although it is anticipated that a full recovery will be achieved by 2024/25. In addition, Keats Community Library (KCL) have yet to be invoiced for their use of Ten Keats Grove in the period April – September 2022, pending approval of the fee payable for 2022/23.

As a condition of the premises licence for 10 Keats Grove, Keats House Consultative Committee receive a twice-yearly report of licensable events held at the House, to ensure that the operating schedule and conditions are being upheld. To report that no activities have taken place to date in 2022/23 under Keats House's premises licence. As referred to above, four events were delivered from the premises for Hampstead Summer Festival which involved the sale of alcohol and other licensable activities under TENs obtained by the organisers. Complimentary drinks were also served at a small number of private events, including the two conferences referred to above, although these did not involve the sale of alcohol they are reported here for completeness. The Premises Licence for 10 Keats Grove was renewed for the period to 11 September 2023 at a cost of £180.00.

2. Deliver maintenance and access improvement projects at Keats House

In 2018/19 plans were progressed to put in place a sustainable cyclical works programme to preserve and maintain Keats House (Grade I listed) and Ten Keats Grove (Grade II listed). These arose from the overall condition survey of Keats House and Ten Keats Grove conducted in 2017/18. As a result a number of projects have been completed and prioritised to ensure Keats House and Ten Keats Grove can continue to be accessed and enjoyed by future generations.

The London Borough of Camden's Planning Department determined in favour of the proposals as submitted to improve physical access to the premises through new pathways, subtle, ground-level lighting to pathways for safety reasons. The intention is for these works to be funded by the London Borough of Camden's Community Infrastructure Levy grants programme and are currently being costed by the City Surveyor's Department to inform an application for funding from that source.

Planning and listed building consent were also granted for the proposed new visitor entrance, the funding for which has been identified from the Charitable Reserves as a Keats200 legacy project. Proposals to replace the aged, wooden boundary fence to the front of the property have been finalised and are ready for submission to the London Borough of Camden to obtain the required planning and listed building consents.

The gardens, which form an integral and much-loved aspect of the heritage site, continue to be maintained by a dedicated team of 'Heath Hands'

volunteers working with officers from the Golders Hill Park team. The black mulberry tree was one of 70 ancient trees and 70 woodlands dedicated to The Queen's Green Canopy, with a plaque installed to mark this.

3. **Develop a three-year Management Plan for Keats House, to ensure the future sustainability of the Keats House Charity and its operating model**

While an Activities Plan for 2022/23 has been produced to outline our current work programmes (see Appendix 3), the development of a detailed three-year forward plan for Keats House, which is required as part of the City Corporation's documentation framework and for our Museum Accreditation return, has been severely delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of Phase 2 of the City Corporation's Target Operating Model in the Environment Department. The Divisional Plan, which is for a three-year rolling period, has been updated for 2022/23 (see Appendix 2) to inform the plans, priorities and activities for future periods. The Principal Curator proposes that the development of a three-year Management Plan for Keats House should follow the timeline of the Target Operating Model, before being submitted to Members for consultation and approval, before being presented as part of any future Museum Accreditation return, now expected in 2024.

As a result of the above activities, the Trustee has had due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when setting objectives and planning activities.

Plans for Future Periods

The overarching priorities which will guide all of our objectives and activities from April 2022 are:

- Implement projects and activities identified in the Keats House Divisional Plan and Activities Plan for delivery in 2022/23 onwards
- 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.

KPIs for 2022/23 [2021/22 outturn data for benchmarking.]

1. **To increase visitor numbers to Keats House.** April – September 2022 = 3,282 [2021/22 like-for-like comparison = 1,139; end of year outturn = 2,575.]
2. **Improve Visit England Annual Quality Attraction Assessment Scheme score at Keats House.** 2022/23 data not available due to pandemic. [2019/20 score: 82%]
3. **Achieve budgeted income and expenditure targets for Keats House Charity.** Despite reduced income levels continuing in 2022/23 with c.20% achieved to date, the net budget position will be met at year end.