

Committee(s): Open Spaces & City Gardens Finance Committee – For decision	Dated: 5 December 2022
Subject: Bunhill Fields Community Arts Project	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3 & 4
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
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 – Director of Environment	For Decision
Report author: Jake Tibbetts, City Gardens Manager	

Summary

Members were presented with a report in February from which members agreed in principle for Bunhill Fields to be used to exhibit appropriate art installations and to endorse the City Gardens Manager to represent the City of London on the steering group. In that report it was agreed that the final design would be presented to Open Spaces Committee for approval for use in the site. The final design is now presented with installation proposed for February 2023.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to approve for the proposed art installation to be exhibited in Bunhill Fields.

Main Report

Background

1. Bunhill fields is owned and managed by the City of London, it is located in the southern part of the London Borough of Islington, within the Bunhill electoral ward. The site is a Grade I listed garden on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. There are numerous listed structures (8 list entries at Grade II* and 68 list entries at Grade II, including the boundary walls and railings). The site is also listed as a Site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation (SBINC).

2. Bunhill Heritage is a community heritage and development project with the goal of exploring the rich and radical history of the ward of Bunhill and encourage residents of all ages to participate in a range of activities, with the main outcome to be a work of public art displayed in Bunhill Fields. Islington Heritage Service have formally partnered with the St Luke's Community Centre, on the delivery of this project. Engagement activities have included walks, talks, family activities such as sensory story time and arts and crafts, as well as arts and crafts activities for older residents and adults of working age. The three main groups that have engaged with the project are:
 - Older members of the St Luke's Community Centre
 - Year 4 pupils of City of London Primary Academy Islington
 - Year 4 pupils of St Luke's C of E Primary School
3. Islington commissioned Georgie Fay, a participatory artist who specialises in printmaking. Printmaking was once a major industry in Bunhill, and one former printmaker was the famous De La Rue printers who were once based on Bunhill Row. Artist-led sessions at St Luke's and with local schools informed the creation of the final artwork.
4. The City Gardens Manager has been part of the steering group and has been involved with the development of the artwork.

Current Position

5. In February 2022 Committee agreed in principal to for Bunhill Fields to be used to exhibit appropriate art installations and to endorse the City Gardens Manager to represent the City of London on the steering group.
6. The structure will be suspended from three trees. A structural engineer has been commissioned by Islington to assess the safety of the installation and the City Gardens Manager is ensuring the fixings are non-invasive and do not damage the trees.
7. The structure will be in place for a period of 12 months.
8. The final design is to be a suspended circular structure on which layers of printed banners will be displayed. The images presented on them will include works from children, residents and the artist's own work that respond to the history of the site. The banners reference the area's medieval history and focuses on historic jobs held in the and symbols are being created that represent those jobs, such as jeweller, flower seller, jailor, flower seller, chocolate maker, whale bone collector, sawyer and portmanteau maker. See picture below.



9. A planning application for the installation is currently being considered by Islington, Islington's Conservation Planning Officer is in support of this installation.
10. Islington will take on liability for any structures or installations installed as part of this project and will be covered by their public liability. Risk assessments and method statements will be submitted to and approved by city of London before installation. Islington will be responsible for costs of any maintenance, installation, and removal.
11. Friends of City Gardens have been in communication with Islington council's Heritage Service and are in support of this project.
12. The City Gardens Manager considers that the art installation is appropriate for the site and is satisfied that it does not contravene with the Byelaws of Bunhill Fields.
13. The installation is due to take place in the second half of February, so if there are any significant changes that are made because of the planning process or discussions with Historic England can be presented to committee at the beging of February.

Options

14. Option 1. The request is refused, and Islington find other sites for their installations. There are no benefits to the city beyond this being the lowest risk approach.

15. Option 2. Committee agree for this art installation to be displayed in Bunhill Fields on the basis that there are no significant changes made.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

1. Strategic implications –Corporate Plan Outcomes:
2. People have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential.
3. Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need.

Financial implications – There are no financial implications for the City as this is funded by Islington Council

Resource implications - None

Legal implications - installation approval would also be subject to the relevant planning considerations and listed building consents.

Equalities implications – Islington Heritage Service are partnering with the St Luke's Centre. St Luke's work with communities considered to be at risk including elderly residents, families, vulnerable young people, women's groups, asylum seekers and people of all ages with disabilities. The project aims to further inclusion and integration and promote wellbeing across the community.

Climate implications - None

Security implications - None

Conclusion

16. The City should support this project as outlined in option 2 above

Appendices

- None

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