

Nursery Business Plan Improvement and Project Plan – Year 3 (2012/13)

The following improvement plan shows a series of actions under each of the five Nursery Business Plan aims and objectives for the period of March 2012 to April 2013. The actions were developed through consultation with staff and clients. Each action has expected outcomes and measures of success, a target date for completion and a progress report. The actions listed are by exception only, i.e. they are actions that have either not appeared in the preceding 2 years' improvement plans or had been deferred.

Nursery Objective 1 – Quality		Establish SMART processes that measure and ensure customers receive and the Park users benefit from, the highest quality, value for money services and effective use of land and infrastructure.		
Nursery Actions		Expected outcome / measure of success	Target Date	Progress
1.4	Lead on establishing a local authority Nursery networking group to share best practice and to benchmark against	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aid future reviews • Sharing of best practices and experiences • Evidence of value for money 	Apr 2011 <i>Deferred</i>	<p>This action had been deferred whilst the team focused on providing tenders for the <i>Compete for the Olympics</i> bid and The Royal Parks tender.</p> <p>Staff have visited and shared information with 2 other local authority nurseries in the UK and West Ham Park nursery business is reported at meetings of the London Parks Benchmarking Group. Now that the nursery has started supplying plants to an organisation outside the City of London, it may be helpful to benchmark prices and customer service against private growers in the industry. This has been set as an objective for staff in their Performance Development Reviews.</p>

Nursery Objective 2 – Trading		Review and adjust trading terms and apply an innovative approach that maximises returns and opportunities from our Nursery capital assets and contributes to the objectives of the Park.		
Nursery Actions		Expected outcome / measure of success	Target Date	Progress
2.1d	Market and sell plants through dedicated on-line website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase existing Nursery income by 7% • Promotion of the Nursery and the Park 	Jan 2012 <i>Deferred</i>	<p>Deferred due to the strategic review of corporate website which was completed at the end of last year.</p> <p>The nursery has its own web page and has been registered as a preferred supplier as part of the strategic procurement review (PP2P). The viability of on-line plant provision will be investigated this year.</p>
2.1e	Market the supply of floral displays and decorations to Livery companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase existing floral income by 7% • Promotion of the Nursery and Park 	July 2011	<p>A marketing letter was sent out to all Livery Companies explaining the Nursery and its services.</p> <p>Update: although uptake did not happen in the first year following the mail shot, this year has seen a number of Company functions catered for by the nursery. These include the Worshipful Companies of Gardeners (throughout the Jubilee, Olympics and Lord Mayor's Show), and Plumbers at the Mansion House in late March 2013.</p>
2.7	Provide wider range of plants for City of London Open Spaces i.e. new planting schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of Nursery areas • Increased income • Responds to client needs and provides alternative range of plants • Provision of competitively priced plants • New internal clients Burnham/Commons growing wildflower plugs 	Annually January and July	As well as a whole range of new species being grown for the new City Gardens Manage in the Square Mile, the nursery is also germinating and growing Wild Service Trees for NLOS and has developed a niche side line in 'instant' wild flower meadows (grown in seed trays for ease of transportation).

Nursery Objective 3 - Environment		Ensure that processes and measures to reduce our impact on the environment are embedded in the Nursery's work.		
Nursery Actions		Expected outcome / measure of success	Target Date	Progress
3.3	Explore alternatives to non-sustainable resources i.e. water, gas, electric, fuel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out further research and identify innovative approaches to reduce impact on non-sustainable resources Feasibility of a sustainable or supplementary water supply that reduces the demand on public supply Apply for a Green Flag innovation award for sustainability with the installation of the new boilers Apply for Sustainable Business Awards (Locally and Nationally) 	Apr 2012	As well as the installation of a borehole in 2011, the nursery has also replaced old petrol buggies with the electric equivalent; the delivery van is equipped with LPG; and the boiler replacement project evaluated the potential use of woodchip boilers before deciding on the most fuel efficient and economically viable modern gas boilers.

Nursery Objective 4 - Promotion		Develop initiatives that maximise opportunities for community use and expand our client base to achieve sustained sources of income.		
Nursery Actions		Expected outcome / measure of success	Target Date	Progress
4.4	Create a flagship bed within the City that promotes the work and standards of the Nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities with City Gardens to create a bed within the City Recognition and potential new clients 	Apr 2012 <i>Deferred</i>	This project was deferred pending changes in management within the City team. Proposed date: 2013
4.7	Advertise the activities of the Nursery at the Guildhall, open spaces and other external sites through promotional videos, presentations, pictures, leaflets, notice boards etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase profile of nursery Brand development of the Nursery Maintain and increase clients 	Nov 2012	Active promotion of the nursery is taking place through newsletters, noticeboards, a product brochure and meetings with existing and potential clients, including the Remembrancer and Town Clerk's departments.

Nursery Objective 5 - People		Involve Members, staff, clients and the community in achieving the outcomes and requirements that this business plan sets out.		
Nursery Actions		Expected outcome / measure of success	Target Date	Progress
5.4	Establish schedule of regular dates when a 'Display House' is freely accessible to the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff costs, security and risk assessments undertaken Schedule of regular dates established and advertised Community engagement and connection with Park users 	Jun 2011	<p>Objective not achieved. Insufficient staff resources due to the absence of an apprentice and keeper summer 2011.</p> <p>Update: Although this is a good way to engage with the local community, it is unlikely to capture any potential customers. The resources required to set up a house worthy of display, managing safe entry and exit to the site and providing security and safety for visitors means that the cost of staging the event on an ongoing basis would outweigh any benefit.</p>
5.6	Regularly review staff structure and numbers against service delivery requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure staff numbers are correct for production levels and efficiency 	Review Annually in September	The staff structure is reviewed in line with production requirements. Park staff assist with winter management and delivery of bedding. We are currently recruiting for a temporary summer post to assist during this busy summer period.
5.11	Explore training opportunities in association with horticulture colleges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of nursery experience/plant husbandry hands on training Increase development of horticultural skills throughout the horticultural sector 	Jul 2012	This year the nursery will become home to a number of work placement students from <i>Roots and Shoots</i> – a training provider based in South London. Through a partnership with The Royal Parks and funding secured through City Bridge Trust, we will ultimately be able to take three full-time apprentices through to NVQ Level 2 starting in September 2013.