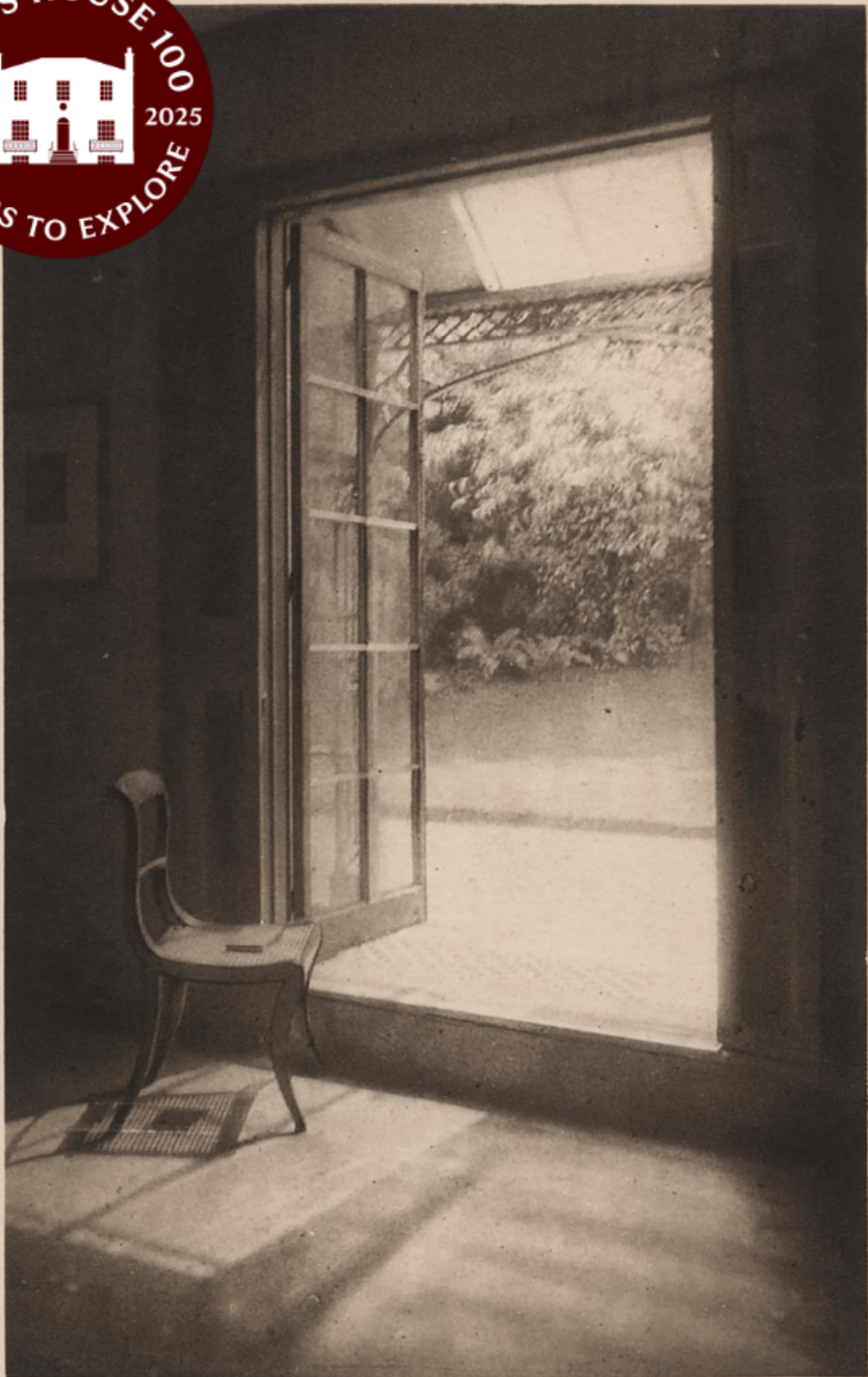


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THE KEATS PARLOUR (WENTWORTH PLACE)



Keats House is provided by the City of London Corporation as part of its contribution to the cultural life of London and the nation

# Keats House Activities Plan 2025/26

The origins of Keats House Charity date back to the 1920s, when a public appeal raised the money to acquire the house and collections for the public. The house first opened to the public on 9 May 1925 and celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025. The modern charity was registered in March 1996 (no. 1053381) and, since 1997, is supported by the City of London Corporation as part of its contribution to the cultural life of London and the nation.

The object of the Keats House Charity is:

**'To preserve, 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.'**

## About Keats House today

Keats House is a Grade I listed Regency villa, which was built between 1814 and 1816. Romantic poet John Keats lived here between December 1818 and September 1820, writing some of his most-loved work, including Ode to a Nightingale, during the spring and summer of 1819.

Today, Keats House is open to the public as an Accredited Museum (no. 097) and visitor attraction, delivering a programme of exhibitions and events, formal and informal learning opportunities for all ages and abilities, as well as supporting volunteer, work, creative, and research placements.

The garden is closely linked to the history of the site and remains an important part of the visitor and community offer.

Also within the grounds of the property at 10 Keats Grove stands a Grade II listed building known as Ten Keats Grove. This was first built as the Keats House Museum and Heath Library, which opened in 1931. Today, it functions as a volunteer run library operated by Keats Community Library (registered charity number 1146702) and is noted as an Asset of Community Value by the London Borough of Camden. The Nightingale Room within Ten Keats Grove acts as an events and private hire space managed by Keats House, including its use by KCL as a Children's Library and for their own fundraising events.

In 2024/25, Keats House continued its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic and social changes impacting on the cultural and tourism sectors. While most measures showed positive improvement, Keats House is yet to return to pre-pandemic visitor numbers and income.

Important priorities within 2025/26 include the opening of our Keats House 100 exhibition and centenary programme, the launch of our collections catalogue online, and planning to support our anticipated Museum Accreditation application.

Through these over-arching priorities and its day-to-day operation and activities, Keats House continues to demonstrate how it can **conserve the past while being relevant to the lives of people today**, and work in partnership to make a positive impact on the cultural life of Londoners and our wider engaged audiences.

## Our achievements in 2024/25

Between April 2024 and March 2025, Keats House:

- **Delivered the 'Hidden Histories of Keats House' exhibition and events programme**, revealing new stories of the people who lived at the house in the 1800s.
- **Devised three new object displays** in partnership with The London Archives and The Shelley Conference, featuring rarely seen items from our collections.
- **Delivered 42 different events**, including poetry readings, talks, book launches, family and literary workshops, **attended by over 1,000 people**.
- **Hosted the Keats Foundation annual conference** in May **and The Shelley Conference 2024** in June, leading to new insights and research into our collections.
- Devised and **delivered Summer School at Keats House, engaging 36 young people aged 16 -19 from five different schools** in four days of creative writing.
- **Supported the learning of 1,112 students and 169 teachers / assistants**, through 60 taught sessions delivered at Keats House.
- **Collaborated with key partners** including Poetry Versus Colonialism, the Education Strategy Unit, Speakers Trust, National Literacy Trust, Heath Hands and three cultural partner venues to deliver 'Culturally Speaking', 'Young City Poets' and 'Green Changemakers' projects.
- **Supported events for Hampstead Summer Festival**, helping them to raise funds for two local charities: Keats Community Library and Hampstead School of Art.
- **Took part in Open House Festival and Heritage Open Days**, engaging new audiences with Keats House.
- **Supported 640 hours of volunteering by 12 individuals**, who delivered tours and poetry readings for our visitors, as well as helping with front of house, collections care and events.
- **Opened Keats House** to the public **receiving 7,664 visits in person**.
- Prepared our collections records ready to import into our new Collections Management System – ContentIndex+.
- **Maintained our online engagement**, including social media and web presence.
- **Worked with City Surveyor's to improve the safety and security of our premises**.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our activities and outcomes during the year. Your creativity, time and commitment has helped Keats House Charity to deliver a creative and engaging programme for its visitors from London and around the world.

## Our governance and strategic context

Keats House operates as a registered charity (no. 1053381) with the City of London Corporation as its sole Trustee. It is managed within the City Corporation's Environment Department and reports to the Cultural, Heritage & Libraries Committee. The Keats House Consultative Committee, which acts as an advisory body, meets twice a year and includes representatives from the City Corporation and local community / sector stakeholder groups.

Our activities are developed within the framework of the City Corporation's Corporate Plan and the Environment Department's business plan. Keats House is managed within the Natural Environment Division and helps deliver its vision, mission and four key strategies. We also support wider City Corporation strategies, including for Climate Action, Education, and the emerging Culture Strategy.

Beyond the City Corporation, our activities and advocacy contribute to a wide range of heritage initiatives, led by organisations such as Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Keats House directly contributes to five of the six outcomes in The City of London Corporation's new Corporate Plan 2024-29:

**Diverse Engaged Communities, Dynamic Economic Growth, Vibrant Thriving Destination, Flourishing Public Spaces, Providing Excellent Services and Leading Sustainable Environment.**

Keats House aims to support the Environment Department's vision 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 main objectives of Keats House Charity in 2025/26 are to:**

- **Implement the projects and activities identified in this Activities Plan for delivery in 2025/26**
- **Develop a longer-term Business Plan for Keats House, to ensure the future sustainability of Keats House charity and its operating model**
- **Deliver maintenance and access improvement projects at Keats House.**

The resources we have to deliver our objectives in 2025/26 include:

**Staff based at Keats House reporting to the Head of Heritage & Museums:**

Keats House Supervisor – 1fte (vacant 0.6fte to be recruited to in '25/26)

Interpretation Officer (Programming) – 0.5fte

Interpretation Officer (Learning) – 0.43fte

Visitor Services Officer – 1fte (vacant 0.6fte to be recruited to in '25/26).

We also provide, and benefit from, volunteer opportunities in five main roles: front of house; tour guides; poetry ambassadors; collections care; and event support. Approximately 15 individuals give their time and experience to support our work throughout the year.

**Financial:**

In 2025/26, the City Corporation will deficit fund Keats House through City's Estate as follows:

Category:	Annual budget:	Description:
Staff costs:	£253k	Officer salary and on-costs, inc. training.
Revenue costs:	£78k*	To pay for the running costs of the premises and our programmes.
Income target:	-£118k	Generated through admissions, shop sales, private hire, events & learning programmes, and licences.
Net budget:	£213k*	* In 2025/26 spend will exceed this amount to fund Keats House 100 projects and other priorities from the Charity's Reserves.
Other costs covered:	£230k (+)	Support services / maintenance works (+ indicates that additional funds will be allocated to address the identified schedule of building maintenance works).

**Between April 2025 and March 2026, we plan to support Corporate Plan outcomes by:**

### **Diverse Engaged Communities**

- Actively engaging with young people through Cultural & Creative Learning funded partnership projects.
- Growing our offer for families with young children and older people.
- Improving access for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and adults with disabilities.
- Continuing to support, develop and diversify our workforce by providing a range of paid and volunteer opportunities, including for young people aged 16 – 18.
- Making our collections more accessible and relevant by launching our new collections management database, including an online, searchable catalogue.
- Collaborating with our strategic partners (The London Archives, Keats Foundation, Heath Hands, Poetry Versus Colonialism and Keats Community Library) and establish new partnerships, to enrich and diversify our offer.

### **Vibrant Thriving Destination**

- Delivering the 'Keats House 100' exhibition and redisplay of items from 1925.
- Devising and delivering a year-round events programme, including talks, live interpretation, creative workshops, and special events.
- Researching and developing a new exhibition and events programme for 2026/27.
- Supporting local community stakeholders to deliver cultural events.
- Improving our marketing, particularly within the local and London context.

### **Flourishing Public Spaces**

- Supporting City Surveyor's to improve the appearance, safety and security of our premises at 10 Keats Grove.

### **Providing Excellent Services**

- Working with our governing body and all stakeholders to develop a sustainable and deliverable Management Plan for the period 2024 – 29.
- Reviewing and developing our visitor experience, collections and policies to support applications for Museum Accreditation and Visit England's Quality Assured Visitor Attraction Scheme.
- Rebuilding our income streams, including admissions, retail sales, private hires, creative project grants and charitable donations.
- Continuing to support formal learning in primary, secondary and higher education institutions, by providing taught sessions at Keats House, special learning projects and Summer School.

### **Leading Sustainable Environment**

- Undertaking specific actions to reduce our climate impact and improve the sustainability and biodiversity of our site and services.
- Working with Heath Hands volunteers and the Learning Team to maintain and enhance the garden at 10 Keats Grove.

**To find out more and follow our progress visit:**

[www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/keats](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/keats)



keatshouse



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