

Gardens Advisory Group Report to the RCC November 2025

The Gardens Advisory Group carried out their quarterly inspections of the four sections of the Barbican Gardens in Sept 2025 and reviewed the results of those inspections at their meeting on October 15. Many thanks to GAG members for their active participation in the inspections and for the reports and contributions on the areas inspected. The City Gardens Manager, Jake Tibbetts, was unavailable to join our inspections. Members of the GAG expressed their appreciation of Jake's strong record of participation and their recognition of the many demands on his time.

The inspections confirmed the expectations expressed in our last report. The rains that arrived in late August and September restored the lawns and the weeds. Encouragingly trees and shrubs that had been shedding leaves in response to the long dry spell were putting out new leaves and new growth. This increase in foliage and the opportunity it provides for photosynthesis will be invaluable in helping plants to recover and sustain themselves through the winter. It also meant that blossom continued to appear across the gardens e.g. the Japanese anemones and Michaelmas daisies in the Beech Street and Gardens and the highly scented box leaf honeysuckle beside Ben Jonson.

The trees planted in Speed Gardens and those near John Trundle seem to have survived and flourished despite the dry spell. GAG will follow up with the City Gardens team on the issue of replanting the Speed Gardens trees to provide better coverage across the garden.

The GAG were very positive and appreciative of the hard work, skill and expertise of the City Gardens staff who work on the Barbican gardens. The GAG wants to highlight for the RCC the excellent contribution to life in the Barbican that is provided by these dedicated employees.

There are still some areas that need attention e.g. the planted bed beside the Barbican on Aldersgate, the area adjacent to the waterfall on the lake. In addition there is a need to remove dead wood and dead plants from areas including Fore Street, Breton House and the Thomas More hanging garden.

Disappointingly, the temporary pumps that provide the waterfall at the eastern end of the lake are still in place. The Barbican Centre's efforts to repair or replace the permanent pumps have not yet succeeded although it is understood that work is on-going. The planned temporary drainage of a small part of the lake has been carried out but the issue remains unresolved.

Finally, we would like to welcome Curtis Bannister-Pond to his new post as Head of Resident Services which includes responsibility for the Gardens. We will be inviting Curtis to join the next round of garden inspections and are looking forward to developing a constructive and supportive relationship with him.