

Committee	Dated:
Open Spaces & City Gardens	18.04.2016
Subject: Superintendent's update April 2016	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Parks & Gardens	For Information
Report author: Louisa Allen	

Summary

This report provides an update to Members of the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee on management and operational activities across the City Gardens section since February 2016.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Budget

1. Although final year-end figures have yet to be confirmed, it is anticipated that the City Gardens spend is within 2015/16 budget allocation.

Personnel

2. Two gardeners have recently resigned, one member of the team is retiring and the other is moving abroad. This gives an opportunity to recruit one fixed term apprenticeship position in partnership with Capel Manor College and the recruitment of an assistant gardener who can undertake work at weekends and evenings to further reduce overtime costs.

Operational Activities

3. The City Gardens team have completed, as part of an ongoing planter replacement scheme, the installation of sixteen concrete planters on the Willoughby Podium, Barbican Estate.

4. Since 1st February, Parkguard Ltd, an independent community safety service, has been delivering a patrol service in Bunhill Fields Burial Ground. Patrol officers have dealt with a number of issues, including dog owners not keeping their dogs on leads and nuisance bicyclists riding through the main thoroughfare. They have provided advice and guidance to offenders, reminding them of the site byelaws and in one incident called the police due to criminal activity. The pilot continues until August when findings from the service will be appraised and recommendations for future management planned.
5. Thirty three new street trees have been planted at the following locations; Plough Place, Southampton buildings, off Chancery Lane, Outwich adjacent to Salesforce Tower (formerly Heron Tower) and Aldgate as part of the Aldgate Public Realm Improvement Project.
6. The City Gardens team have completed the landscaping improvements at Plough Place, Fetter Lane as part of a capital improvement project. This includes *Taxus* hedging and a street tree as explained in point 5.

Community, Volunteering, Outreach and Events

7. A City in Bloom launch event attended by representatives from the City's community groups, residents and businesses took place on 29th February. The groups are assisting the City Gardens team to plan and implement this year's Britain, London and City in Bloom campaigns.
8. Clean for The Queen is a campaign launched by Country Life magazine in partnership with Keep Britain Tidy to clear up Britain in time for The Queen's 90th birthday. The City Gardens team in partnership with the Built Environment department used the opportunity to create a display of cigarette stubs which had been collected across the City during the previous two weeks. The display was set up in Festival Gardens over the weekend of 5th and 6th March.
9. The City's communications team tweeted messages regarding the annual total cost of waste management across the Open Spaces, £1.24 million, as well as encouraging people to make use of the 900 cigarette bins across the City and to promote recycling.
10. Over the last year the Friends of City Gardens have been supporting Sir John Cass Primary School and Prior Weston as Food Growing Schools, a London-wide initiative, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Mayor of London, to encourage children to grow and eat healthy food.
11. Friends of City Gardens run weekly sessions for Year 2 at Sir John Cass as part of their curriculum-based theme of Explorers. Children have learnt where vegetables were first domesticated and how they reached this country. In practical gardening sessions on the school rooftop garden pupils have planted potatoes, peas and beans. In the kitchen, a volunteer runs food tasting

sessions where the children learn how to cook using vegetables and herbs from their garden.

12. At Prior Weston, the Friends support the weekly Gardening Club; they provide materials and plants for gardening sessions in the community garden in Fortune Park, organise visits to the Fann Street wildlife garden and cooking and tasting sessions. The Friends are also helping the school to create a roof top vegetable garden for the children and mobilised nearly 40 volunteers from the local community for a weekend clean-up session.
13. Working with The City Centre, artist Rebecca Louise Law has created 'The City Garden', a site-specific installation of natural materials inspired by gardens within the City. This will be the first public art installation at The City Centre and is sponsored by The London Wall Place Partnership, a joint venture between Brookfield and Oxford Properties. This micro-theatre of London's natural world will feature fresh flowers entwined with copper wire that are suspended above head height where they can be closely observed as they dry and preserve. The exhibition opens on 23rd April and runs until September 2016.
14. The City Centre has commissioned two films of City gardens that accompany the exhibition and a map of the gardens that inspired Rebecca's installation. The map will also be available in an app that leads visitors through the City's open spaces detailing the history, horticulture and design of some iconic gardens.

Louisa Allen
City Gardens Manager

T: 020 7374 4140

E: Louisa.allen@cityoflondon.gov.uk