

Committee	Dated:
Open Spaces & City Gardens	18/07/2016
Subject: Superintendent's update July 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 June 2016.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Budget

1. The City Gardens budget is in line with agreed budget profiles for this time of year.

Personnel

2. The recruitment of an assistant gardener who can undertake work at weekends and evenings to further reduce overtime costs has been delayed is due to start in July.

Operational Activities

3. The City Gardens team have completed the first stage of rejuvenation of both Carter Lane and the Queens Diamond Jubilee Gardens to ensure that the gardens are providing a good display throughout the summer months. Further improvements are scheduled for September when the team will tackle the more mature planting which is due for replacement.

4. The City Gardens team have also completed planting improvements to the frontage at St Andrews by the Wardrobe Church – Queen Victoria Street. The project was brought about through partnership working with the church.
5. The last of the summer annual bedding schemes were planted out by the team at the end of June and are providing a good display despite the wet weather experienced recently.
6. The team have been catching up with general maintenance tasks across the City Gardens as well as preparing the gardens for judging for both London in Bloom and Britain in Bloom, taking place 13th July and 3rd August respectively.

Community, Volunteering, Outreach and Events

7. Open Squares Weekend held on Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th June.

The City Gardens team supported the event with a truly impressive array of activities available across the City's green spaces, ranging from walks, talks, visits and activities.

8. Six hundred and forty people attended 32 organised walks which were fully booked and 80 people attended the Nigel Dunnett talk held in the City Centre. Fann Street wildlife garden, Sir John Cass primary school roof garden, Golden Lane baggers, the Barbican Station pop-up garden, Inner and Middle Temple, including for the first time the Master's garden, all reported high numbers of visitors. The City Centre received over 800 visitors to view the Rebecca Louise Laws exhibition and a recently commissioned film about City Gardens. Nomura International PLC and Eversheds roof gardens received 2,000 visitors each. The Open Squares organisers reported 18,500 visits across the whole of London, estimating the City received approximately 6,000 of these visits. Four poets from the Poetry School were in residence in some of the gardens and the Friends of Watts Memorial provided a talk in Postman's Park. The Friends of City Gardens raised an impressive £900 from selling teas and coffees and plant donations, an increase on last year's amount. The volume and range of events and activities attracted high profile media attention; two BBC news items, a feature on BBC Gardeners World and a self-walk article in the Sunday Telegraph online gardening section.
9. City in Bloom judging is under way organised by the Friends of City Gardens. The Friends are processing applications that have been submitted from businesses, schools, residents, estates and community groups. The 2016 City in Bloom campaign has been sponsored by J B Riney & Co. Ltd.
10. A celebratory event, including announcing the winners, is planned for 12th September and will be held in the City Centre and the Roman Amphitheatre in the Guildhall.
11. Festival Gardens will be the venue for an open air film screening of Purple Rain taking place on 18th August, organised by Nomad Cinema, a first for City Gardens. Tickets can be purchased via the City Information Centre and

through Nomad Cinema's website. City Gardens have received sponsorship worth £8,000 from both Brookfield Property Partners and Cheapside Business District which will cover all the associated costs for the event. Food and drink stalls and seating will be available for the evening event.

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