

Committee	Dated:
Open Spaces & City Gardens	05/12/2016
Subject: Superintendent's update December 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 October 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. A new Support Services Officer will start on 21st November.

Operational Activities

3. Over the last two months the City Gardens team have been undertaking significant landscaping work associated with the Aldgate gyratory project. The team have planted a further five trees bringing the total to 37 trees planted since October. The planting in the eastern section of the scheme has now been completed; the area has been planted with a mix of shrubs, herbaceous plants and bulbs. The team have begun the landscaping on the western side of the church which will be completed in the New Year.

4. The team have undertaken some improvement landscaping works to Tower Hill garden. These have included the installation of metal railings to the south side of the garden and general planting improvements.
5. The Project Development Officer is currently organising faculty and planning consent for the improvements to Postman's Park. Works include installation of new watering points, the removal of two trees, lower tier re-planting of the existing borders and planting of two new trees. The project will be completed by March 2017.
6. In partnership with the Cheapside Business Improvement District (BID) two large planters in Trump Street have been replanted and paid for by the BID.
7. The annual spring bedding has been planted across City Gardens. This season's bedding was supplied by an external supplier for the first time since the West Ham Park Nursery closed. The quality of the plants has been excellent and the delivery schedule has gone very smoothly. The 2017 summer annual bedding schemes are currently being tendered and a contract will be place in January 2017.
8. Three additional Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) were put forward to the London Wildlife Sites Board on 9th November and have been approved. The sites are: St Dunstan in the East Churchyard Garden, Postman's Park and Portsoken Street Garden. The approval of these additional SINC sites is one of the many objectives of both the City of London Biodiversity Action Plan (2016-2020) and the City of London Open Spaces Strategy (2015-2020). This progress will allow the City of London to approve formally their inclusion in the review of the City of London Local Plan.

Community, Volunteering, Outreach and Events

9. *Britain in Bloom Campaign*
On 14th October, officers attended the Britain in Bloom finalist award celebrations. The City won an overall Silver Gilt for the Town category.
10. Corporate volunteers from Kingston Smith and Accenture UK LTD have undertaken several volunteers days during November to develop a new planting scheme in Bunhill Fields Burial Ground. Both groups have contributed to the cost of 40 tonnes of topsoil. Professor Nigel Dunnnett has provided a shady planting plan at no cost to the City that will be planted up by a further volunteer session in the spring.
11. Spring flowering bulbs have been planted by the City Gardens team, the Friends of City Gardens and corporate volunteers in the following gardens: St Paul's Cathedral, St Dunstan in the East, Barbican Estate, Thomas More Garden and St Olave, Hart Street. These are in addition to the 10,000 bulbs paid for by the Cheapside Business Improvement District planted alongside the spring bedding for the Cheapside area.
12. *The Christmas tree lighting event*

The Christmas tree lighting ceremony will take place on 6th December at 4pm, the Lord Mayor will be in attendance and the St Paul's Cathedral School Bread Street choir will be singing at the event. Following the event, refreshments will be served at the St Paul's Cathedral School.

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