

Committee:	Date:
Keats House Consultative Committee	07112017
Subject: Keats House Update Report	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Discussion
Report Author: Vicky Carroll, Principal Curator	

Summary

This report summarises achievements and developments at Keats House since the last Consultative Committee meeting in May 2017.

The past six months have been positive, seeing increases in visitor numbers and engagement with the events programme. Schools figures are lower than last year but bookings for the Autumn are strong.

Progress has been made with all major projects, including the appointment of a Poet in Residence, planning for Keats200, the exhibitions programme, the Camden Community Infrastructure Levey (CIL) funded access project and the Premises Licence application.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the contents of this report
- Share any suggestions for future events, including speakers
- Share any suggestions for future exhibition topics

Main Report

Progress Report

Integration with the Open Spaces Department

1. Keats House has now been fully integrated into the Open Spaces Department. Benefits are already being felt in the areas of property management and security (through collaboration with the Heath Constabulary). Further collaboration is planned on education.

Visitor figures

2. Visitor numbers and public engagement continue to increase year on year (See Appendix 1).

3. The total number of visitors to Keats House including estimated garden users for the period April to September 2017 was 19,961 compared with 19,501 the previous year, an increase of 2.4%.
4. Visitors to the house (excluding the garden estimate) were 12,842 compared with 11,813 the previous year, a significant increase of 8.7%.
5. The number of general admissions to the museum has recovered following a slight drop last year.

Events

6. The events programme is flourishing with 3,061 attending events during the first half of the year. 1,090 of those attended for Open House, which was even busier than last year.
7. Highlights have included: a well-attended Late Night Keats activity on Herbal Healing; a lecture by Dr Toni Griffiths and Dr Margot Waddell on Poetry and Psychoanalysis in collaboration with the Keats Foundation and a book launch by former Poet in Residence John Hegley. The volunteer-led Afternoon Poems series is attracting large audiences since being moved to the Nightingale Room and made completely free (rather than free with admission). Family days also continue to attract good numbers of participants.
8. Suggestions for future events, including speakers, are welcomed from the Consultative Committee.

Poet in Residence

9. Hannah Lowe has been appointed Poet in Residence for one year from September 2017.
10. Hannah's first poetry collection *Chick* (Bloodaxe, 2013) won the Michael Murphy Memorial Award for Best First Collection and was short-listed for the Forward, Aldeburgh and Seamus Heaney Best First Collection Prizes. In September 2014, she was named as one of 20 Next Generation poets. She has also published three chapbooks: *The Hitcher* (Rialto 2012); *R x* (sine wave peak 2013); and *Ormonde* (Hercules Editions 2014). Her family memoir *Long Time, No See* was published by Periscope in July 2015 and featured as Radio 4's Book of the Week. Her second collection *Chan* is published by Bloodaxe. (2016).
11. Hannah will be help to curate the public events programme – including an event commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Windrush in summer 2018. She will also create new work on the theme of 'Neighbours' inspired by Keats's relationships with his neighbours at Wentworth Place.
12. A Keats Festival is planned for September 2018. This is likely to be focused over one or two days rather than being spread over a whole week as in previous years.

Exhibitions

13. A new temporary exhibition 'Keats and Milton: Paradise Lost' will open on 6 December 2017. The exhibition focuses on Keats's annotated copy of *Paradise Lost* and explores how Milton influenced Keats's own writing. The exhibition will take place in the temporary exhibition space on the first floor, and Keats' annotated copy of *Paradise Lost* will be displayed in his parlour. Continued investment in the exhibition space – for example to fit blinds and purchase a showcase – will facilitate the display of 3D collections in the space in future.
14. An external PR consultant has been appointed to generate press coverage for the exhibition. Long-lead features are already lined up for *Elle Interiors* and *Red* magazine and the show has been mentioned in several industry publications. There will be a press preview of the exhibition for shorter-lead publications, TV news, bloggers etc. closer to the launch date.
15. The Principal Curator and Interpretation Officer are in discussion with Emily Bernhard-Jackson regarding a proposal for an exhibition in 2019 about the influence of the Romantics on 'New Romantic' musicians in the 1980s, with an emphasis on fashion. This is subject to an AHRC funding bid which, if successful, would facilitate the production of a high-quality exhibition and events programme, with the aim of reaching new audiences interested in fashion, music and popular culture.
16. Ideas for future exhibition topics are welcomed from the Consultative Committee.

Keats200

17. The Principal Curator and Interpretation Officer have met with potential partners to begin planning the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of Keats's death in 2021. The Keats-Shelley House in Rome and Kings College London have shown significant interest in working together. Further meetings will be scheduled for the coming months.

Learning

18. After a bumper year in 2016-17, education figures are lower than last year, with 793 school and higher education visitors compared with 1,355 the previous year. It is possible that attendance levels were boosted last year due to Michael Rosen being the poet in residence (in the early part of 2016-17).
19. The Education Officer has noted that teachers are increasingly struggling to get permission to take children out of schools for visits. Schools engagement is nevertheless impressive given that the programme is administrated and delivered by one part-time Education Officer. Bookings for the Autumn are promising.
20. The Education Officer is in conversation with the Open Spaces Learning Team about opportunities for cross promotion of the schools offer.

Grants

21. Keats House has been awarded a grant of £2,800 by the Keats Foundation to deliver a programme of free public workshops and open mic performances led by the Keats House Poets. The programme will commence in January 2018.

Accreditation

22. Keats House has been awarded Full Accreditation by Arts Council England after submitting its accreditation return in autumn last year. The following comment was received from the assessor: "My written assessment and verbal feedback to the Panel relayed how strong the museum's Accreditation return was and how responsive and helpful everyone has been at the museum. The major redisplay and strong visual merchandising were noted as positive developments during the assessment and at the Panel meeting."

CIL-funded access improvements

23. Paul Vick Architects have been appointed as the designers for this project, primarily funded by the Camden CIL fund. An initial meeting has been held and initial proposals are due to be presented to the project team on 31 October.

Garden

24. Heath Hands volunteers have continued to maintain the gardens at Keats House to a very high standard and make a significant contribution to the success of the museum and library.

Staff changes

25. The Principal Curator will be leaving Keats House in November 2017 to take up the role of Director of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry. Recruitment is underway for her replacement.
26. A Customer Service Apprentice has been appointed. This is a new fixed-term role centrally funded by the City of London for 14 months. The Apprentice will be assisting with visitor services, operations, administration and marketing.
27. A new Information Officer has been appointed. They will be primarily acting as duty manager at weekends and assisting with events.
28. Seven new casual staff have been recruited to assist with private hire and covering when, for example, staff are on leave.

Ten Keats Grove

29. Keats Community Library's licence to occupy Ten Keats Grove has been renewed for a further three years.
30. The Nightingale Room has been refurbished, creating a much improved space for public events and private hire.

Building maintenance

31. Work is scheduled to re-route the flue outlet for the Keats House boiler to avoid issues with excessive condensation. The relevant permissions have been obtained from the London Borough of Camden.
32. A major mains leak in the grounds has been located and repaired.

Premises Licence

33. The Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee have approved Keats House's proposal to apply for a Premises Licence from the London Borough of Camden, recommending that informal discussions with stakeholders take place prior to submission.

34. An informal information and discussion drop in session for local residents is scheduled for Tuesday 31 October 2017 and further discussions are planned with key local stakeholders.
35. The Principal Curator has approached the London Borough of Camden to set up a pre-application meeting.
36. It is intended for the licence application to be submitted in November or December 2017.

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Appendix 1: Visitor statistics

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Total including garden estimate													
2012-13	1787	2530	1985	2003	2330	2073	2187	1265	913	1121	1116	1338	20648
2013-14	1947	2690	2883	2841	2563	2149	2498	1998	1179	1361	1631	2645	26385
2014-15	2435	2687	2915	2549	2428	2513	2387	1540	1323	1956	1596	2101	26430
2015-16	3116	3758	3611	3590	2996	3002	2653	1594	1557	1788	2058	2615	32338
2016-17	2496	3643	3312	4001	2468	3581	2547	2557	1887	2109	2270	1995	32866
2017-18	2657	3332	3550	4101	2457	3864							19961
Total excluding garden estimate													
2012-13	1506	1756	1595	1546	1556	1448	1754	969	767	948	931	1050	15826
2013-14	1448	2109	2126	1855	1751	1511	2010	1496	889	1184	1234	1819	19432
2014-15	1817	1944	2197	1929	1913	1702	1634	1068	756	1328	1093	1322	18703
2015-16	1618	2335	2494	2115	1696	1683	1778	1209	1254	1296	1488	1716	20682
2016-17	1638	1914	2140	2496	1313	2312	1772	1854	1266	1444	1651	1973	21773
2017-18	1563	2266	2403	2305	1403	2902	0	0	0	0	0	0	12842
General Visitors													
2012-13	1480	1493	1514	1358	1485	1359	1510	801	731	798	797	977	14303
2013-14	1190	1378	1384	1201	1690	970	932	643	589	557	611	1019	12164
2014-15	1209	1141	1050	1271	1447	1012	852	491	360	557	571	736	10697
2015-16	987	1173	865	1191	1368	917	933	478	336	574	724	863	10409
2016-17	904	1020	842	1182	1039	842	920	624	602	643	635	842	10095
2017-18	893	1131	1079	1260	1159	1059							6581
Primary School Visits													
2015-16	0	84	83	90	0	36	93	129	0	0	26	0	541
2016-17	28	0	233	122	0	86	30	123	32	59	36	0	749
2017-18	0	28	156	0	0	22							206
Secondary School Visits													
2012-13		138	25	64	16	37	140	36	36	49	108	73	722
2013-14	21	48	169	249	35	96	162	126	53	144	223	151	1477
2014-15	52	88	152	206	47	31	101	142	104	142	120	71	1256
2015-16	156	101	327	175	0	36	94	77	135	17	68	0	1186
2016-17	93	104	141	189	0	112	138	117	52	158	143	202	1449
2017-18	17	60	101	130	0	54							362
Further/Higher Education Groups													
2012-13	0	27	18	67	0	10	43	65	0	82	0	0	312
2013-14	0	12	76	0	6	68	93	116	0	18	16	0	405
2014-15	5	57	50	51	23	0	16	0	0	0	0	45	247
2015-16	0	17	0	81	0	60	0	16	32	0	61	24	291
2016-17	30	34	75	73	0	35	38	5	0	47	0	0	337
2017-18	0	99	29	97	0	0							225
Tourist and Other Groups													
2012-13	26	98	38	57	55	42	61	67	0	19	26	0	489
2013-14	27	5	84	0	0	15	23	22	0	20	23	55	274
2014-15	39	44	0	12	0	97	0	0	0	0	0	0	192
2015-16	36	73	0	69	16	25	29	0	21	47	0	33	349
2016-17	6	17	66	73	13	55	19	15	5	0	0	32	301
2017-18	4	58	22	59	30	52							225

Keats House Events													
2012-13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2013-14	210	506	177	175	8	158	570	204	110	324	286	394	3122
2014-15	420	498	790	353	162	286	373	185	176	293	183	206	3925
2015-16	364	561	912	199	312	429	309	249	472	313	310	318	4748
2016-17	367	254	393	336	131	982	327	278	375	149	349	431	4372
2017-18	209	465	566	262	194	1365							3061
Private Hire Events													
2012-13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2013-14	0	160	236	230	12	204	230	385	137	121	75	200	1990
2014-15	92	116	155	36	234	276	292	250	116	336	219	264	2386
2015-16	75	390	390	310	0	216	210	260	290	392	280	280	3093
2016-17	210	475	390	550	130	280	382	692	200	388	455	640	4792
2017-18	440	425	450	497	20	350							2182
Garden													
2012-13	281	774	390	457	774	625	433	266	146	173	185	288	4792
2013-14	499	546	809	982	798	623	466	487	248	157	374	797	6786
2014-15	500	711	702	600	483	777	733	452	561	616	487	761	7383
2015-16	1423	1360	973	1565	1255	1305	1163	376	273	402	551	886	11532
2016-17	838	1670	1143	1441	1312	1255	752	687	597	576	598	522	11391
2017-18	1070	1048	1140	1772	1038	889							6957
Offsite Events													
2012-13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2013-14	0	35	4	4	14	15	22	15	42	20	23	29	223
2014-15	32	32	16	20	32	34	20	20	6	32	16	18	278
2015-16	20	33	30	18	17	14	15	9	24	90	19	13	302
2016-17	20	59	29	64	23	14	23	16	24	89	18	22	401
2017-18	24	18	7	24	16	73							162