Fountains in the City of London

Department of Planning
Fountains in the City of London

The Corporation has a long tradition of providing, maintaining and encouraging publicly accessible fountains, statues and memorials. Today, more than ever, the importance of "Public Art" is recognised in terms of its contribution to the enhancement of the City's townscape and as a valuable source of enjoyment for all those who live or work in, or visit the City. The part played by City companies in funding or donating fountains and water features, or by providing them in private developments, is recognised as being important to the enhancement of the City of London.

As a local authority, the Corporation is conscious of its role and responsibility in encouraging the provision of fountains by developers and owners, and welcomes proposals for fountains which are appropriate to their location and, thereby, enhance the public realm.

Public Art

This leaflet is the second in a series of publications on statues, fountains, sculptural decoration and other forms of public art in the City of London, and is based on a recent audit of fountains in the City. This survey not only included fountains, but also pools, cascades, water jets and water sculptures. Only those fountains which are outside and are plainly visible from the public domain are included.

The many fountains in the City of London demonstrate a variety of styles, scale and wealth of invention and materials which...
are evidence of the creativity and diversity of the artists and designers represented. This abundance of quality and imagination is not only of great value in itself, but also complements the City's buildings and public spaces, making an important contribution to the appearance and visual character of the City.

Fountains are an important sensory diversion in the urban scene of the City. Whether a municipal drinking fountain or a monumental water feature, they provide a rich diversity of sculptural form, movement and sound. The movement provided by the water of a fountain is probably its most fascinating element. Still water seems lifeless, but when given motion, either by spurting, spraying, spouting, undulating or tumbling, it becomes full of life and vitality. Of itself colourless, water can direct and refract light rays, and when it is in the form of a
fine mist, it can disperse all the colours of the spectrum. The sound of a fountain is also one of its most essential and most overlooked attractions. Whether the water is crashing, whooshing, gurgling or gently lapping, sound is an integral part of a fountain’s aesthetic appeal. This can improve significantly the quality of a space, not only by adding the sound of water, but also by blocking out the less attractive sounds of the City.

The Corporation is keen to encourage the provision of water features in new developments, particularly where they can be enjoyed by the general public. This leaflet aims to draw attention to these by illustrating those which are publicly accessible.

Corporation Policies

The Unitary Development Plan states that "The Corporation is aware of the "Percent for Art" initiative promoted by the Arts Council and welcomes its aim to achieve a greater contribution to the arts.

The Corporation will also encourage the provision of new works of art as part of development schemes, taking into account the contribution made by any such works to the appearance of the scheme and the amenities of the area. The Corporation will encourage the introduction of works of art at an early stage to ensure that they are integrated into the overall concept of the design."
Cutlers Gardens

St. Bartholomews Hospital

Gresham Street

Whittington Garden

St. Swithin's Lane
Water Features, Drinking Fountains & Pumps in the City of London

**WATER FEATURES**

1. Barbican Centre, lakeside terrace
2. Barbican Centre, waterfall from half pipe
3. Barbican Centre, fountains in the lake
4. Barbican, Beech Gardens
5. Barbican, Ben Jonson Place (dolphins)
6. Barbican, Ben Jonson Place North
7. Festival Gardens
8. Salters Hall Garden
9. Salters Hall Garden
10. Salters Hall Garden
11. George Yard, off Gracechurch Street
12. Cheapside
13. Golden Lane Estate
14. Bread Street
15. Cutlers Gardens
16. Cutlers Gardens
17. Cutlers Gardens
18. Cutlers Gardens
19. St. Bartholomew's Hospital
20. Gresham Street, public garden
21. Whittington Garden, Upper Thames Street
22. 11-12 St. Swithin's Lane
23. Inner Temple Garden
24. Middle Temple, Fountain Court
25. Three Nun Court, off Aldermanbury
26. St. Botolph Without, Bishopsgate
27. Staple Inn, Holborn
28. Serjeants Inn, Old Mitre Court
29. Broadgate, Finsbury Avenue
30. Broadgate, Finsbury Square
31. Broadgate, Exchange Place
32. Aldermanbury Square
33. Dorset Rise (George and the Dragon)
34. Gresham Street, St. Lawrence Jewry
35. Drapers Gardens
36. St. Dunstan in the East
37. Adams Court, off Old Broad Street
38. Postman's Park
39. Britannic Tower Plaza

**DRINKING FOUNTAINS AND PUMPS**

(Note: Many of these will be ornamental rather than operational, due to current water company regulations)

40. West Smithfield Gardens
41. Finsbury Circus, (Merry England)
42. Royal Exchange
43. Postman's Park
44. Aldgate Pump, Leadenhall & Fenchurch St.
45. Aldermanbury
46. Blackfriars Bridge, outside of Bridge House
47. Royal Exchange, Cornhill
48. Coulin Lane
49. Finsbury Circus, near bandstand
50. New Bridge Street
51. One Tree Park
52. Royal Exchange Buildings
53. St. Botolph Without, Bishopsgate
54. St. Botolph Aldgate
55. St. Paul's Alley
56. St. Dunstan in the West
57. St. Pauls Churchyard
58. St. Sepulchres Church
59. West Smithfield Gardens, near entrance
60. Billingsgate, Lower Thames Street
Water Features, Drinking Fountains & Pumps in the City of London

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19. St. Bartholomew's Hospital
20. Gresham Street, public garden
21. Whittington Garden, Upper Thames Street
22. 11-12 St. Smithfield
23. Inner Temple Garden
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28. Sergeant's Inn, Old Mitre Court
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Unitary Development Plan Policies

REC 10 To encourage the retention of existing art, cultural and entertainment facilities and normally to require their replacement on redevelopment.

REC 11 To promote art and cultural and entertainment facilities and to encourage further provision by other organisations.

ENV 13 To encourage the provision of works of art which enhance the City townscape.

The text supporting policy ENV 13 in the Unitary Development Plan states that "The Corporation considers that art can contribute significantly to the quality of the environment. It will therefore encourage the incorporation of art and art works into the urban scene, in appropriate locations. To this end it is important that the integration of art and art works into developments and the local environment is considered at an early stage in their design."
Fountains and their Settings

The variety of fountains and water features in the City is a testament to the work of private companies, the Corporation and individuals, who, throughout the years, have provided these works for the enhancement of the City and the enjoyment of others.

In the provision of water pumps and water features, the Corporation continues to recognise a responsibility which dates back to the earliest provision of water works by the first Roman authority. For these earliest citizens, clean water and bathing were not only central to their well-being, but also to the spiritual and cultural life of the community. Fountains and water features still play their part in the City's social and cultural activity, and continue to be important focal points and gathering places in cities throughout the modern world.

This continuous provision has produced a variety of water related features which are evidence of the successive improvement of the urban environment and the aesthetic considerations of the time in which they were designed and constructed.

The City's open spaces, gardens and churchyards have traditionally provided locations for fountains. In the latter half of this century, the Corporation has increased and improved the amount of open space for public enjoyment and both existing and new spaces have been used as settings for new fountains and water features. Examples of these include the variety of fountains to be found in the public spaces of the Barbican, where even the water cooling system is in the form of a lake and fountains, the glass fountain in Three Nuns...
Court off Aldermanbury and the jets in the Festival Garden near St. Paul’s Cathedral.

There are also examples where fountains have been used to great effect in the setting of new buildings and refurbishments, such as the cascade at Drapers Gardens and the water walls in George Yard, Lombard Street.

The City, in recent years, has also seen the redevelopment of larger sites such as Broadgate and Cutlers Gardens. The scale of the development has allowed the creation of a complex of buildings set within new public spaces. The careful design of these spaces has been complemented by the introduction of fountains and water features. At Broadgate, the fountains are an integral part of the architecture as public amenities, which include landscaping, seating, sculptures, shops, restaurants and an ice rink.

In the future, the Corporation of London will continue to encourage, through the implementation of the UDP, the provision of well-designed fountains and water features in appropriate locations. Such provision will be sought not only in new developments but also in refurbishments and existing buildings and spaces, with the aim of enhancing the appearance of the City, for the benefit of City businesses, residents, workers and visitors.
Drinking Fountains - a selection

40. West Smithfield Gardens
41. Finsbury Circus
42. Royal Exchange
43. Postman's Park
44. Aldgate Pump
45. Aldermanbury

The Corporation of London is the local authority for the financial and commercial heart of Britain, the City of London. It is committed to maintaining and enhancing the status of the Business City as one of the world’s three leading financial centres through the policies it pursues and the high standard of service it provides. Its responsibilities extend far beyond the City Boundaries and it provides a host of additional facilities for the benefit of the nation. These range from the Central Criminal Court, The Old Bailey, to the famous Barbican Arts Centre and open spaces such as Epping Forest and Hampstead Heath. Among local authorities the Corporation is unique: not only is it the oldest in the country, combining its ancient traditions and ceremonial functions with the role of a modern and efficient authority, but it operates on a non-party political basis through its Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Members of the Court of Common Council. The Corporation of London: a unique authority for a unique City.

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