

## Report for Information

**Report to** Mousehold Heath Conservators  
11 March 2011

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**Report of** Report of the Head of Local Neighbourhood Services

**Subject** Mousehold heath update report

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### **Purpose**

To provide an update on issues and recent activities on Mousehold Heath

### **Recommendations**

That the Conservators comment on recent activities note the report's contents.

### **Financial Consequences**

There are no direct budgetary implications that arise from this report other than can be met from agreed budget provision.

### **Strategic Priority and Outcome/Service Priorities**

The report helps to meet the strategic priority Safe & Healthy Neighbourhoods, and the service plan priority to ensure that Norwich has a clean & safe environment.

### **Contact Officers**

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### **Background Documents**

Mousehold Heath management plan, 2008-2013 and annual work programmes 2010/11 and 2011/12.

# Report

## Management works undertaken

1. Since the last meeting, there have been 29 volunteer tasks at Mousehold, involving 133 volunteers and 649 volunteer hours. The majority of tasks involved the Mousehold Heath Defenders working on the restoration of the Cavalry Track. Other volunteers came from the Assist Trust, BTCV, the Green Gym and Heartsease School who undertook a range of vegetation management tasks.
2. The GNDP (Greater Norwich Development Partnership) funded heathland project was successfully undertaken thanks to the efforts of the two Mousehold Heath wardens who overcame various problems and delays caused by the extreme winter weather. The project has involved soil stripping and seeding a new demonstration heathland area on part of the Heartsease School playing field on Heartsease Lane, with associated heathland restoration on the adjoining area of Mousehold Heath. On another part of the playing field, a small wildflower meadow area is being created. The project's outcome will be monitored over subsequent years, and the area will be used by the school for educational purposes.
3. Excellent progress has also been made on the Cavalry Track restoration by the Mousehold Heath Defenders, who are undertaking further research on the track's history.
4. In late February, a contractor with a large 'cut and collect' tractor-powered machine cut selected areas of heathland and scrub vegetation at Mousehold. This technique and type of equipment has been used successfully to maintain and regenerate heathland areas elsewhere, and the results at Mousehold will be monitored.
5. Winter weather conditions brought down a number of trees and large boughs, mainly from birches, most of which were made safe or cleared by the Mousehold Wardens.

## Other issues

6. The Vinegar Pond is currently holding little water and although the winter has been the driest since 2005/6, this is a cause of concern, especially as the frogs are now returning to breed. A number of short term options are possible including keeping the pond topped up with water during the breeding season and re-locating frogspawn if this is necessary. However, longer term options for resolving this issue will need to be considered by the Conservators.
7. The new Fountain Ground changing rooms building has now been ordered, with delivery and installation scheduled for early summer; this should allow time for any snagging, and a commissioning period before the start of the football season.
8. An exploratory meeting to discuss maintenance issues concerning the

Pavilion building, and possible co-operation between Blue Sky Leisure (the company running Zak's restaurants) and the Mousehold Conservators was held on 22 February. The meeting was attended by Chris Carr, a divisional manager at Blue Sky Leisure, Cllr David Bradford and Chris Southgate representing the Mousehold Heath Conservators and Paul Holley. The meeting was positive, and it will be followed up by further contact between Blue Sky Leisure and the Conservators.