

Report to Mousehold Heath Conservators
19 October 2012
Report of Head of local neighbourhood services
Subject Management sub-group

Item

6

Purpose

To update the Conservators on the work undertaken by the management sub group since the last meeting.

Recommendation

That the Conservators receive the minutes of the sub-group meeting held on 24 September 2012 (attached to this report).

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority City of character and culture.

Financial implications

Any financial implications that arise from this report will be met from approved budgetary provision.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Gihawi – Play, parks and open spaces

Contact officers

Lenny Stamp

01603 213281

Background documents

None



MOUSEHOLD HEATH CONSERVATORS MANAGEMENT SUB-GROUP

2pm – 4.35pm

24 September 2012

Present: Councillors Bradford (chair), Brociek-Coulton and Little;
Chris Southgate and Margaret Bush

Also present: Nigel Hales (Mousehold Heath warden), Lenny Stamp (Community and neighbourhood manager – North) Will Stewart (Mousehold Heath warden), Tony Jones (Connect 2 Project manager).
Bob Cronk (Head of neighbourhood services)

Apologies: Councillor Jenny Lay

1. Connect 2 cycle scheme

Tony Jones, updated the group on the Gurney Road cycle way/footpath with focus on Valley Drive. Gurney Rd work commenced on 10 September and were due to be completed by 2 November.

Gurney Rd cycle / footway

Works to Gurney Rd commenced 10 September and are due to be completed by 2 November.

Valley Drive

- New specification for surface now approved, and contractor appointed
- The works will create a shared use cycle / pedestrian route across Mousehold Heath along Valley Drive, with works due to commence 1 October
- This is a 9 week programme, so we expect completion 30 November (though bad weather could delay this)
- From 1 October there will be some work to cut back scrub and remove a small number of trees prior to full construction commencing
- Site compound likely to be on lay-by on Gurney Rd
- Access to the Heath will be possible throughout
- Areas where plant is operating will be cordoned off, but people need to be aware and exercise caution
- Contractors will observe the council's tree protection requirements
Contractors have been made very much aware of the sensitive nature of the heath environment, and that they will be under scrutiny from users of the Heath

- Contractors will place signs indicating pedestrian / cyclist diversions, TJ will arrange signage with information on the Connect 2 programme
- Open Academy to be warned about construction taking place

Any issue that arise should be reported to Tony Jones.

The issue of a segregated pathway was discussed with the following results:

- Shared pathways are favoured in Norwich
- Signage to be discussed further by conservators (wooden posts with circular signs and notice asking users to use appropriately)
- Easier access to the heath by motor cyclist will need to be monitored
- Public notice in the evening news

2. Mousehold Management plan 2010-2013 and programme

Mousehold Heath management plan progress report was discussed and showed positive progress with completion of several projects including the Vinegar Pond St James Hill/Cavalry track.

Bob Cronk added that the management plan was established with a 10 year work programme and would be revised in order to take into account work completed to date; the changing operating environment and best practice.

A report will be presented to the next meeting with the progress report and it was anticipated that a revised plan would be presented to the January meeting together with a costed work programme for 2013-14.

RESOLVED Following discussion: that the progress plan should cross reference to the management plan e.g. objective and item and the progress plan spreadsheet will be updated for the October meeting and the final revised plan presented in January

Noted: that Gilman Road shrub and bush clearance and cut back work has been completed.

3. Mottrum Memorial

Nigel Hales reported on the progress of replacing the memorial and due to the original lettering size being too small it has been slightly enlarged to improve readability. There was a discussion about an additional plaque and what it should say and positioning of the plaque.

RESOLVED, following discussion: Wording to be: This is a replica containing no metal materials (2012)

The plaque to be located on the ground, positioned where visitors stand to read and look over the city.

4. Heart Heritage trail update

It was reported that all the trail posts are now in position. There have been over 30 people attending the first trail. Positive feedback and comments about the trail and the leaflet have been received, with almost all the 250 leaflets distributed.

Chris Southgate reminded the meeting that it was agreed that only 250 would be produced initially and there needed to be further discussion and agreement on further reprints.

Further copies were going to be litho printed and a copy to be distributed to each of the groups members.

Webpage contents were also being drafted and placed on the Norwich City Council website. Tim Wilson-Smith is working with the council's web officer to finalise the pages.

The Chair suggested that since the heritage trail had opened it would be forge a strong link with the Museum. Margaret Bush agreed to liaise with Tim Wilson –Smith on this and report back at next meeting.

Will Stewart informed the meeting that by opening additional sand areas it would encourage further insect habitation and create greater diversity of the heath

Chris Southgate presented a list of ideas from Tim Holt-Wilson, for taking forward the Mousehold earth heritage trail in the future to bring together links between geodiversity and industrial history.

It was also suggested that the next Mousehold five-year Management Plan should envisage such development.

A grant is available through the Heritage Lottery fund. The Heritage programme offers grants between £3000 and £100,000 for local, regional and heritage projects

RESOLVED, following discussion: to acknowledge the work carried out by Tim Wilson-Smith had completed on behalf of the Conservators.

Take forward additional projects ideas from Tim Wilson-Smith into the next 5 year plan.

Projects should include young people (the Norwich School has shown interest in volunteer geodiversity work on the Heath)

Applying for Heritage Lottery Funding by Defenders assisted by Tim Wilson-Smith

5. Fountain Ground changing rooms

The meeting was informed that the electricity was working and that snagging work has been completed. The wardens are waiting for a set of keys.

Councillor Brociek-Coulton informed the group that a youth football club was interested in finding a meeting place with the opportunity to play football. Could the changing rooms be considered and how would the club get access.

Nigel Hales informed the group that if a group wished to hire the changing rooms, they would have to make enquiries through council's customer contact team.

6. Press coverage

The recent press article relating to St Williams Chapel was discussed. A member of the public originally contacted the press. The press contacted Claire Cohen from the defenders. David Bradford (Chair) had briefed Margaret Bush prior to the statements going to press and there was concern from the Defenders about the monument.

The Norfolk Archaeology Trust had concerns about the article that it would further highlight the vulnerability of the site, where further damage may result.

RESOLVED, following discussion: agreed that Norfolk Archaeology Trust implement an interpretation board highlighting the historic area. The Defenders are happy to contribute. Thanks to be passed to the Norfolk Archaeology Trust for their responses and contribution.

7. High Level Stewardship

The meeting was informed that high level stewardship identifies high levels of diversity. Small grants are available to back up heathland plans, which are given as £2000 per annum over 10 years

Noted: that only 8 hectares of Mousehold are heathland out of the total 87 hectares this means that less than 8% is heathland.

RESOLVED, following discussion: to endorse grant application and Will Stewart to report back to next meeting

8. Successes

It was reported that there had been a wide range of activities on the heath. This included groups from, Beavers, The Conservation Volunteers (TCV), Green Gym, Schools, ecology studies and path opening and heart heritage event.

Over 1230 hrs of voluntary activity and work has taken place to date; there has been one concert on the bandstand so far this year; the changing rooms are now being used and heritage open days have taken place on the heath.

RESOLVED, following discussion: to support further Heritage open days, however through non financial resources and include activities for children

OTHER BUSINESS

Pavilion publicity

Councillor Julie Brociek-Coulton asked how council staff were informed about the availability of using the pavilion and if ways that the pavilion it could be used could be investigated. Requests should be through the parks and open spaces team.

The defenders were thanked for being available on the heath when the Britain and Anglia in Bloom carried out their inspection.

Norwich have done well and maybe selected for the "Entrepreneurs of the Year" which is a European competition for Towns and Villages to improve the quality of life for local urban and village communities. The competition fosters:

- the greening of towns and villages
- flowers, shrubs, green spaces, parks
- development which is environmentally and ecologically sensitive
- educational and communication initiatives which promote environmental awareness

Sewell Open Day

There was a good response for information about the heath with positive feedback.

However two suggestions were made for the Conservators consideration:

Producing a pocket map showing the red/yellow way mark post pathways

Information Boards at main access to the heath, with this information available to download from the internet (this is in management plan for review)

**RESOLVED, following discussion: to implement in next years 2013/14 work programme a map of Mousehold Heath
Investigate a revised map of the Mousehold Heath leaflet - copies to be provided to the group members to look at.**

Date for diaries

Sewell Park Event 22 June 2013

It was suggested that publicity for Mousehold is made available. Wardens may have a stall at the event

Meeting closed 16:35