

Report to	Mousehold Heath Conservators 18 January 2013	Item
Report of	Head of local neighbourhood services	7
Subject	Mousehold management plan 2013-2018 and work programme 2013-14	

Purpose

To seek approval for the changes required to refresh the Mousehold management Plan for the period 2013-18 and endorse the work programme for 2013-14

Recommendation

To approve the proposed changes to the Mousehold management plan

To approve and request officers implement the work programme for 2013-14. Any changes to costs will be reported to the Conservators for approval or if between formal meetings Conservators are asked to delegate this decision to the head of local neighbourhood services in conjunction with the Chair

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority city of character and culture and the service plan priority to refresh the Mousehold Management plan

Financial implications

The works that arise from the plan which will form the annual work programme will be met from approved budgets which will be set on an annual basis.

Ward/s: All wards

Contact officers

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Background documents

None

Report

1. In June 2008, The Mousehold Conservators endorsed the Mousehold Management Plan 2008-2013.
2. The purpose of the plan is to guide the work and actions of the Conservators using a range of environmental, cultural and historical information and data which collectively identify the importance of Mousehold as an open space within the City.
3. The plan sets out a number of management objectives and proposed actions through two broad management objectives which are to:
 - Ensure that the area is managed as effectively as possible to maintain and enhance its wildlife and historic value
 - Promote and enhance people's access to, and enjoyment of, the site
4. The plan also identified a set of management objectives which were:
 - (a) Maintain, enhance and increase areas of heather and lowland heath vegetation
 - (b) Join existing areas of heathland vegetation
 - (c) Control encroachment by trees on open heathland areas
 - (d) Control bracken on open heath areas
 - (e) Maintain and enhance acid grassland areas
 - (f) Maintain and enhance areas of woodland selected for retention
 - (g) Maintain footpaths for public access
 - (h) Safeguard and improve management of the St. William's Chapel site
 - (i) Provide interpretation on history and natural history of site
 - (j) Increase public understanding of issues relating to conservation of lowland heaths
 - (k) Encourage sympathetic use of the site by the public through informal recreation and education
 - (l) Discourage misuse and antisocial behaviour by users, especially the setting fire of vegetation
5. These were used to frame a set of management themes which have been used to prepare an annual work programme. These are:
 - (a) Habitat management;
 - (b) Management of the historic environment;
 - (c) Visitor management;

- (d) Visitor infrastructure.
6. The plan identified a 10 year work programme and a report to the Conservators in October 2012, suggested that the plan be reviewed at after the five year period, as best practice suggests, as circumstances and opportunities can change.
 7. This report summarised progress in the implementation of the plan against the main objectives, reasons for any change and recommendations for years six to ten (2013 - 14 to 2017-18).
 8. As the management plan influences the content of the annual work programme, the lay out of the work plan has also been included in this review.
 9. However, it is important to note that this review is a refresh and does not attempt to re-write the plan at this time. This will be undertaken at the end of year nine.
 10. The proposed changes are attached at appendix 1 to the report and they broadly cover:
 - (a) Updating wording where objectives have been achieved and monitoring is required;
 - (b) Details about requirements of environmental grant schemes;
 - (c) Continued developed of some themes e.g. cycling; interpretation.
 11. Following consideration and endorsement by the Conservators, the plan will be revised and uploaded onto the Council's website. Key partners will be notified of the changes and will be referred to the website as there are no plans to print copies of the revised plan.

Annual work programme

12. As in previous years, the Conservators are asked to comment on and endorse the annual work programme at the same meeting that the budget and precept is agreed.
13. The format of this plan has evolved since it was first introduced and the draft plan for 2013-14 continues this trend with a number of changes which set out to make the plan more informative and each action including budgetary implications.
14. The draft plan is set out in appendix 2 to the report.
15. It is intended that with the approval of the plan and the budget, the latter of which is set out in a separate report, the Mousehold Wardens can progress the implementation of the work programme with monitoring being undertaken through the management sub group.
16. Budget approval will be sought for any item where costs exceed the agreed budget allocation.
17. At the October meeting, Conservators discussed a number of areas where they were interested in seeing a greater focus these were as follows with how they might be progressed:

Point 1

Establish a reasonable target for the percentage of the heath to be recovered as heathland

Proposal – Investigate as part of the higher level stewardship scheme requirements

Point 2

Establish whether the current level of volunteers could be sustained and identifying mechanisms to increase it

Proposal – comment added into management plan revision and will form part of the work programme

Point 3

Consideration of the use of herbicides to clear shrub on the heath

Proposal – management plan has been amended to include managed use in certain areas

Point 4

Publicise the heath through the website (computers and portable devices) and leaflets and bring together the various data on ecology, geo-physical, biodiversity, history etc.

Proposal – covered by existing management plan wording; use the management plan to develop specific activity

Point 5

External funding - continue to explore opportunities for additional funding from external sources

Proposal – covered by section 6.1 of the management plan and will be explored as part of the annual programme of works

18. It is proposed that these points are considered in more detail through the management sub group.

Mousehold Heath Management Plan proposed amendments 2013-18

Item no.	Page	Section	Proposed change	Reason
1	1	Cover	Date change to 2013-18	Date should refer to 2nd five year period
2	13	4.3	Main management objectives - add an additional bullet point	The need to reflect increased volunteer involvement
			Continue to develop volunteer and resident involvement in the management of the heath	
3	14	4.4	Under, Proposed management: a summary , include statement below	Development of HLS agreement
			By 2017 cover of dwarf shrubs of ling (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>) and bell heather (<i>Erica cinerea</i>) are expected to cover between 30% and 90% in open heathland areas with a wide range of age classes of dwarf shrubs present by year 10. These areas should include between 10% and 20% cover of pioneer stage growth, 10% and 30% of mature stage growth, 10% and 30% cover of degenerate stage growth and more than 10% cover of dead dwarf shrub.	
4	14	4.5	Under Habitat management - lowland heath , include statement below	Development of HLS agreement
			To meet objectives set within the Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreement, indicators of success are dependant on the managed use of herbicides to control scrub encroachment on open heathland areas and the Cavalry Track.	
5	14	4.8	Under, Habitat Management - vinegar pond , Change heading to read as below.	Installation of new wildlife pond
6			Habitat management - Vinegar pond and wildlife pond	

	14	4.8	Under, Habitat management - Vinegar Pond , amend first and second bullet point's	A new liner has been installed and the introduction of sweet grass has been eradicated
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor the effectiveness of the new pond liner - Monitor the effectiveness of removal of sweet reed grass and take appropriate action if it recolonises 	
7	15	4.1	Visitor management - access, education and interpretation. Amend bullet point 1 and add a second bullet point	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote responsible access and use of the heath - Continue to develop volunteer involvement and consider how current involvement can be sustained 	
8	27	11.0 (iv)	Under (iv) Geological trail delete - Investigate potential for a Mousehold Heath Geological Trail in partnership with Norfolk geodiversity Partnership, and replace with statement below.	A new Earth Heritage Trail has now been installed.
			An earth heritage trail has been installed in partnership with Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership and Norfolk Geodiversity Partnership. An on request a leaflet is available for information and guidance around the trail along with a downloadable version from Norwich City Council web site www.norwich.gov.uk	
9	27	11.0 (vi)	Under (vi) Cycling amend statement	Cycle stands have now been installed at various locations across site.

			Maintain existing authorised cycle access to the site and promote access to the site by bicycle as an alternative to car use. Consider provision of small cycle stands for visitors at further locations	
10	27	11.0 (ix)	Amend and re-number (ix) Gurney Road statement	Traffic calming measures have been completed under the connect two project
			(xii) Traffic calming measures have been completed under the connect two project and the benefits they bring will be monitored.	
11	All	All	Updating of organisations names	Names of some organisations have changed

	1	Off site	Web Site and leaflets	Update leaflets and city council M'hold web pages		4.10	0	MW	MW	MW	MW										
	2	Whole site	Guided walks programme	Deliver annual programme of guided walks/activities	Various	4.10	900	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW
	1	Whole site	Litter	Litter pick, monitor contractor	Various	4.10	0	MW	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
	1	Whole site	Fly-tipping	Remove fly-tipping as it occurs	Various	4.10	0	MW	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Ensure that main pathway networks are maintained and repaired for public health and safety and emergency vehicle access including disable access routes, trails, courses, signs, furnishings, interpretation panels, on site car parks, toilet and sports facilities.																					
Visitor Infrastructure	2	All Paths	Paths	Cut back either side as necessary		4.11	0	MW	C/MW	C/MW	C/MW	C/MW	C/MW	C/MW	C/MW						
	2	All Paths	Paths	Level/fill as necessary		4.11	0	MW													
	1	St. James' Hill	Easy access track	Cut back encroaching scrub TCV GG work parties		4.11	0	MW								MW	MW				
	2	Cavalry Track	Path	Trim back as necessary	F13/G12-13	4.11	0	MW								MW					
	1	Fountain Ground	Bandstand/Changing Rms	Electrical safety testing	F9	4.11	0	MW			MW										
	2	Pavilion area	Visitor point	Examine feasibility/progress	G8	4.11	0	MW												MW	MW
	2	Pavilion area	Pavilion access track	Maintain to safe standard	G8	4.11	0	MW												MW	MW
	1	Britannia Rd car park	Car park	Essential maintenance as required	G12-13/H13	4.11	1,000	MW	C	C	C									MW	MW
	1	Pitch & Putt car park	Car park	Essential maintenance as required	J5	4.11	1,000	MW	C	C	C									MW	MW
	1	Pavilion/Gilman Rd car parks	Car parks	Maintain as necessary		4.11	1,000	MW	C	C	C	C	C	C							
	3	Whole site	Interpretation stations	Renew and update when necessary		4.11	0	MW			MW										
	3	Selected locations	Welcome to M'hold signs	Review potential new signs		4.11	0	MW			MW										
	2	Various	Benches	Replace/repair as necessary		4.11	0	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW
	2	Various	Signs	Replace/repair as necessary		4.11	0	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW
	2	Various	Bollards	Replace/renew as required	G12-13/H13	4.11	5,000	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW
	3	Car parks	Car park surfacing	Review durable surfaces		4.11	0	MW												MW	MW
	3	Areas with BMX activity	BMX biking	Monitor & review measures to resolve unauthorised BMX activities		4.11	0	MW			MW				MW						
	1	Whole site	Response works	Contingency budget		4.11	2,000	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW
Review management on a regular basis																					
Review & monitoring	1	Off site	Management Plan	Review & revise plan		5.1	0	MW				MW			MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	
		Off site	Conservators Meeting			5.1	0	CO	MHC			MHC			MHC	MHC					
		Off site	Cons Working Group Mtg			5.1	0	CO			MHC				MHC				MHC		MHC
	2	Whole site	Itinerant	Organise site visit to review work plan progress & priorities for next financial year		5.1	0	CO/MW													
	1	Off site	Annual Work Programme	Drafted and agreed by Conservators		5.1	0	MW											MW	MW	
	2	Heathland Areas	Heathland Regeneration	Monitor heathland regeneration	Selected Sqs	5.1	0	MW				MW	MW	MW							
In order to determine whether management is having an appropriate affect on the site's biodiversity, it is important that the site is monitored on an ongoing basis.																					
Surveying & recording	2	All	Common Bird Census	Carry out weekly during season		5.1	0	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW							
	2	All	Butterfly transect	Complete 26 week transect		5.1	0	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW							
	2	All	Fungi survey	Survey & record Fauna and Flora		5.1	0	MW/D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
	2	All	Miscellaneous species	Collate records		5.1	0	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW
	2	All	Dragonfly survey	Monitor weekly throughout season		5.1	0	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW						
	2	All	Annual report	Collate information & produce report		5.1	0	MW	MW	PH											
	1	Heathland areas	Heathland Management	Implement Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreement		4.5	0	MW	MW	MW	MW										
Supplies and Services																					
Equipment and Tools	1	All	Site management works	Purchasing	NA	All	400	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW
Equipment and Tools	1	All	Site management works	Repairs and maintenance	NA	All	400	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW
Protective clothing	1	All	Service	Health and Safety	NA	All	100	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW	MW

Available funds 25,915
Balance 25,915
0

KEY; MHC Mousehold Heath Conservators
D Mousehold Defenders
C Contractor
ARB Arboriculture section
CO Committee Officer
GG Green Gym
TCV The Conservation Volunteers
NGP Norfolk Geodiversity Partnership
A&CM Asset & City Management
MW Mousehold Wardens