

**Report to** Mousehold Heath conservators  
21 June 2013  
**Report of** Head of local neighbourhood services  
**Subject** Mousehold heath update report

**Item**

**9**

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### **Purpose**

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

### **Recommendation**

That Conservators comment on current activities that have been undertaken on Mousehold Heath

### **Corporate and service priorities**

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

### **Financial implications**

Any financial implications arising from this report will have or will be met from approved budgetary provision

### **Contact officers**

Lenny Stamp Communities and neighbourhood manager	01603 213218
Will Stewart Mousehold warden	01603 213110
Nigel Hales Mousehold warden	01603 213310

### **Background documents**

None

### **Report**

All general day-to-day work is on schedule with no issues to report to this meeting.

## **1. Safety**

A number of trees near footpaths, which potentially posed a safety issue, have been made safe by the Mousehold Wardens.

## **2. Ecological Surveys**

A number of surveys have been carried out on the site including:

- A bee and plant survey by a member of the Mousehold Heath Defenders and a Mousehold Warden on St. James' Hill
- Weekly Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (BMS) transects by a Mousehold Warden supported by volunteers. The BMS is the oldest and largest ecological survey in the country, starting in 1976 and providing the government with data on climate change and the health of Britain's ecosystems
- Two Common Bird Census surveys, involving a transect route on either side of Gurney Road, walked eight times this Spring by a Mousehold Warden with the help of volunteers.

## **3. Path Maintenance**

Mousehold Wardens and volunteers have cut back vegetation growing over paths, to allow full access to the network of footpaths across the site.

## **4. Anti-social behaviour**

There have been a number of fires on the heath which appear to have been started deliberately. The Mousehold Wardens and volunteers have been cutting and clearing the burnt vegetation. Patrols have been increased in these areas to reduce this destructive activity.

## **5. Conservation Management:**

- Maintenance work has been carried out on the Earth Heritage Trail Interest Points.
- Rank vegetation has been cleared around the new pond and the area planted with wild flower seeds.
- Aquatic plants have been introduced to the new pond, with frogs, tadpoles, water snails, and water beetles colonising the new habitat.

## **6. Volunteer activity**

There has been a total of 589 volunteer hours worked on the site in the last quarter. These have been completed by:

- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV),
- Norwich Community Green Gym,
- City College Duke Of Edinburgh Award Scheme group,
- Assist Trust,
- Easton College work placement student
- Easton College Step By Step Group.
- A number of volunteers from the community.

These works have significantly contributed to the implementation of objectives set out in the Management Plan, along with increasing local resident involvement in the projects.

## **7. Events**

A Community Wildlife Walks have taken place, organised and led by the Mousehold Wardens and a local naturalist. This event was part funded by Norfolk County Council Adult Education (18).

A guided walks programme 2013 has been organised by the Mousehold Wardens, with an unprecedented eleven wildlife and management walks planned this year, along with two Norwich HEART Heritage Walks in September.

A copy of the walks programme is attached to the report.

## **8. Rangers House**

The Mousehold Wardens have been liaising with the new owner of the Ranger's House to ensure that works to the building has minimal impact on the heath.

## **9. Asset management**

Officers have received an asset survey of the public toilets on Gurney Road which identifies the maintenance issues in these assets. NPS Norwich has been requested to cost these repairs and once these have been received, officers propose that a management sub group meeting is convened, in conjunction with officers from NPS, to consider the implications and how they might be resolved.