

## Report for Information

**Report to** Mousehold Heath Conservators  
17 September 2010

**ITEM**

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

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**Subject** Mousehold Heath: Natural Area Officer's report

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### **Purpose**

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

### **Recommendations**

That the Conservators note the report's contents.

### **Financial Consequences**

This report is for information only, and any costs have been, or will be, met from existing budgets.

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

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

### **Contact Officers**

Paul Holley

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### **Background Documents**

Mousehold Heath Management Plan, 2008-2013.

# Report

## **Recent issues & management work**

### **The Pavilion (Zak's Restaurant)**

Bob Clark, of Norwich City Council's Asset & City Management section, attended the Conservators' Working Group meeting on 2 August 2010 to discuss issues concerning the building, notably concerns over its state of repair and the forthcoming renewal of the lease by Zak's. The Conservators offered to meet up with Zak's management to discuss these and other issues and as a result of a favourable response a meeting between representatives of the Conservators and Zak's is to be arranged for early October. The need to inspect the Pavilion roof for signs of damage and to clear obstructed gutters was identified as a priority, and a joint inspection by Zak's and Norwich City Council's building surveyors is planned for September.

### **Management work and surveys**

A high level of conservation work, mainly bracken control, has been maintained over the summer and was mostly carried out by BTCV Green Gym volunteers supervised by William Stewart. The 2010/11 autumn/winter work programme was agreed by the Conservators at the itinerant meeting held on 1 September 2010, and will again involve the Mousehold Heath Defenders and BTCV undertaking most of the management work. A 'cut and collect' mowing machine is scheduled to carry out gorse cutting in autumn 2010, and the results of this will be monitored with a view to managing the gorse areas on a rotation; this will create a more varied wildlife habitat, and reduce the fire risk by removing patches of old, highly flammable gorse.

In addition to the annual butterfly transect and bird census, plant survey work was undertaken by the Mousehold Heath Defenders, and two moth trapping events have yielded several new records for Mousehold (NB, all the moths are released after being identified).

### **Miscellaneous repairs etc**

Repairs have been carried out to bollards and fencing as required, and a further emergency repair to the Britannia Road car park entrance.

The picnic bench funded by the Mousehold Heath Defenders should shortly be installed in the Anthills area near to the Pavilion car park.

### **Tree works**

The Council's tree section has attended to several trees left in a hazardous state or causing obstructions after high winds in August, including a large, multi-stemmed oak near the Fountain Ground changing rooms. Outstanding work on a large beech on Beech Drive is scheduled for September, and further work on potentially hazardous trees will be carried out over the autumn/winter period. Where there is likely to be a wildlife benefit, large trees in a hazardous state, including dead specimens are reduced or made safe rather than being removed

entirely.

### **Off-road cycling**

The Mousehold Heath wardens continue to enforce the bye-laws and limit off-road cycling activity to the temporarily designated 'hills and hollows' area. Contact has been maintained with the Cyclists' Touring Club (CTC), whom it is hoped will be providing details of their recent research and management guidance.

### **Events**

The events programmes organised by the Mousehold Heath Defenders and the Mousehold Heath Wardens have continued to run successfully, and in addition there were three band concerts over the summer. A further guided walk, organised by Norwich HEART (Heritage, Economic & Regeneration Trust) and the Mousehold Wardens for Sunday 12 September 2010 will be part of the National Heritage Open Days scheme. Attendance figures for all conservation tasks and events at Mousehold throughout the year are collated, and will be available for the December 2010 Conservators' meeting.