

**Report to** Mousehold Heath Conservators  
23 July 2021  
**Report of** Parks and open spaces manager  
**Subject** Mousehold Heath Management Update 1 April 2021 to  
9 July 2021

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## **Purpose**

To provide a quarterly update on activities on the heath relating to the delivery of the Mousehold Heath management plan objectives.

## **Recommendation**

To note the content of the report.

## **Mousehold Heath management plan objectives**

The report helps to meet the Mousehold Heath management plan objective(s):

A: To ensure Mousehold Heath is a welcoming place for people to visit.

## **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority great neighbourhoods, housing and environment.

## **Financial implications**

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

**Ward/s:** Catton Grove and Crome

## **Contact officer**

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## Report

### **Objective A: To ensure Mousehold Heath is a welcoming place for people to visit.**

#### AI30/02 TREE SAFETY INSPECTION

1. Following the six monthly tree safety inspection at the end of March 2021, along all main paths, 14 dead, dying, dangerous trees and branches were made safe, between April and June, by the Mousehold wardens. Three, additional specialised tree works were ordered through the council's arboricultural team, and carried out by Norwich City Services Ltd (NCSL).
2. A meeting with the council's arboricultural officer and the Mousehold wardens took place in April, to assess and discuss the impact of high footfall on sensitive areas of the heath, and tree safety work required in the Beech Drive area.
3. In addition to the tree survey, eight more windblown/dead trees or branches, identified by the wardens on patrol, or members of the community, adjacent to main pathways, were completed.

#### AT40/01 CONTRACT MONITORING/IMPROVEMENT NORWICHNORSE ENVIRONMENTAL (NNE)

4. Gilman Road, Mousehold Avenue and Valley Drive footpath-cycle routes have not been regularly swept, this has been reported to our new company NCSL and the Area Management Officer for the eastern area.
5. The areas will be closely monitored by the Wardens and the Area Management Officer to ensure there is an improvement in the future.

### **Objective B: To protect Mousehold Heath and ensure that it is a safe and secure place to visit.**

#### ML00/01 MOUSEHOLD PAVILION

6. An initial meeting with NorwichNorse Property Services (NPSN) was contacted regarding programmed maintenance works to the pavilion.

#### ML60/01 NORFOLK CONSTABULARY

7. The Mousehold wardens liaised with police officers regarding anti-social behaviour and also a search for a lost, vulnerable adult.

## MP00/01 SITE PRESENCE

8. Increased patrols were undertaken due to the increase in visitor numbers.
9. A number of complaints have been received regarding cyclists jumping over the hard surface of the public cycle route/footpath at Valley Drive. Wardens have increased their presence and patrolled this area at peak times on weekends and evenings, advising cyclists of the risk to the public and that they should not be cycling on the heath. A temporary solution will be put in place to deter the activity and it is suggested that a site visit forms part of the itimerant to discuss a more permanent solution.
10. Two campers has been informed of the Bylaws and asked to leave the site.

## **Objective C: To ensure that Mousehold Heath is clean and well maintained.**

### ME01/01 GATES FENCING AND BARRIERS

11. A repair was undertaken to secure the hasp and staple to the wooden access gate to Beech Drive

### ME01/02 BOLLARDS

12. Six bollards were renewed along the disable pathway adjacent to Britannia Road to upgrade old decaying ones. A number of vandalised bollards were reinstalled by the wardens.

### ME04/01 LITTER PICKING

13. Due to the increase in visitor numbers during lockdown, additional litter picks have been carried out by Mousehold volunteers and wardens.

### ME04/02 LITTER BINS

14. Graffiti was removed from three litter bins located at Gilman Road, Gurney Road and the Wingfield open space, as part of the grounds maintenance contract provided by NCSL.

### ME04/03 FLY TIPPING

15. A number of fly tipping items were removed from Hill Farm Track, Pitch and Putt car parks and other parts of the heath, including garden waste and building materials. Items found are removed and disposed of by NCSL's EPA crew.
16. Seven cubic metres of fly-tipping and litter were removed from an area adjacent to the back gardens of Lavengro Road and surrounding area, making it safer for Forest School activities which take place in the area.

### ME12/01 REMOVE GRAFFITI

17. Four separate incidents of graffiti were removed from bollards and cycle route signs along Gilman Road and the notice board at the Pitch and Putt car park.

18. Graffiti has been removed from 5 benches, a way-marker post and 2 emergency vehicle access signs by the Mousehold wardens.

#### ME41/01 MAIN PATHS

19. Nine paths have been cut to allow easy access across Gilman Road Open Space and the Desert Wildflower meadow by a Mousehold warden. To make the area accessible, whilst increasing biodiversity in uncut areas, which receive a conservation cut later in the summer.
20. Scrub partially blocking a path on St James Hill has been cut back to allow easier access the Mottram Memorial.
21. Wooden dam boards and posts were used to support an eroding footpath by a Mousehold warden with help from a City College DofE group.

#### ME44/02 CAR PARK SURFACING

22. The pavilion public car park, Gurney Road was re-graded and potholes filled with spoil left over from the Turners Oak tree improvement works.

**Objective E: To improve habitats and the natural environment for wildlife to enhance the biodiversity of Mousehold Heath.**

#### MH31/01 SCRUB AND TREE REMOVAL

23. Birch saplings have been pulled up in open, low growing heathland areas, using tree poppers, by wardens and volunteers.

#### MH39/01 BRACKEN REMOVAL

24. Invasive bracken has been pulled by hand and using tree poppers in the heather area.

#### RA12/01 COMMON BIRD CENSUS

25. Weekly bird surveys have been undertaken by the Mousehold wardens with support from volunteers.

#### RA42/01 BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SURVEY

26. Two, weekly, Butterfly Conservation, Butterfly Monitoring Scheme transect surveys have carried out by the Mousehold wardens and volunteers.

#### RA82/01 ST JAMES' HILL BUMBLEBEE SURVEY

27. Monthly Bumblebee Conservation Trust, BeeWalk transect surveys have undertaken by a Mousehold warden.

#### RA92/01 NATIONAL BAT MONITORING PROGRAMME

28. NBMP Bat Transect Surveys are planned for July.

**Objective G: To provide opportunities for local communities to be involved in all aspect of our work.**

#### AT50/01 VOLUNTEERS GENERAL

29. Following the lockdown and in line with government and Norwich City Council policy, volunteer activity resumed on the heath on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021. 418 community volunteer hours have been completed up to 08/07/21 by the following groups;

- Mousehold Heath Defenders
- Mousehold Heath Mousketeers
- City College DofE Group
- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
- GoodGym Norwich
- Many individual volunteers from the community

**Objective H: To promote Mousehold Heath to increase awareness, knowledge, understanding and a sense of pride.**

#### MI60/01 EVENTS

30. A number of ROOTS environmental education and play activity sessions, for young people, organised through Norwich City Council Events Team, have taken place on the heath.
31. The Enchanted Woods Forest School environmental activity group has run weekly sessions, increasing knowledge, interest and enjoyment of nature for young people.
32. Two, Heritage Open Day (HOD) walks (Geodiversity and History) have been organised for the 17 and 19 September, to be jointly led by a local geologist, historians and Mousehold wardens.

#### WASTES AND STRAYS PROJECT: URBAN COMMONS FUTURES

33. Following the Wastes and Strays conference, in Brighton, in 2019 which was attended by two members of the Mousehold Heath Conservators and a Mousehold the conservators agreed to be part of the Wastes and Strays project and support project activities.
34. The Urban Commons Futures is the third phase of the wider Wastes and Strays project, celebrating the rich social, cultural and ecological value of the urban common.

35. In collaboration with the four cities, the plan is to explore and record on the ground, experiences of urban commons and to co-create visions for their possible futures. The stories, traditions and unique habitats will culminate in the production of a series of exhibitions, performances and artworks.
36. Following a site visit to the heath by Wastes and Strays project officers Siobhan O'Neill and Alessandro Zambelli, in May 2021, the project officers are looking to involve community groups in a creative dialogue and activities, around how they use the heath and alternative futures for urban commons in general.
37. The activities will be resourced by the Urban Commons Futures project with the wardens overseeing the delivery of activities on the heath.
38. The resource requirement and the potential impact on their work has been discussed with the wardens and they have confirmed that they have the capacity to support and advise the project whilst also ensuring that activities are appropriate and will not damage the heath. Further information about the project can be found here:

[Wastes and Strays | Wastes and Strays | Newcastle University \(ncl.ac.uk\)](#)