Report to Mousehold Heath Conservators

19 January 2018

Report of Head of citywide services

Mousehold Heath 2018-2028 management plan review
progress update and development of part 2 of the draft

Purpose

To update the Mousehold Conservators on progress with the management plan and provide a draft of the first four objectives of part two of plan.

Recommendation

To:

1) note the progress to date

plan.

- 2) review the management prescriptions and projects contributing to the delivery of them for the first four objectives of part 2 of the plan.
- 3) provide any amendments to the parks and open spaces manager by 26 January for the draft to be amended.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority a safe, clean and low carbon city

Financial implications

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

Ward/s: Multiple Wards

Contact officers

Simon Meek – parks and open spaces manager	01603 212403
Adrian Akester – head of Citywide services	01603 212331

Background documents

None

Report

Background

- 1. On 17 November 2017 the Mousehold Conservators approved a revised timescale for the production of the draft management plan.
- 2. At the 17 November meeting a draft of part one of the document was circulated and following the meeting amendments were received which have been incorporated into part one of the plan.
- 3. A partially completed draft of part two of the plan was presented for the format to be approved.
- 4. It was agreed a draft of the first four objectives of part two of the plan would be brought to the 19 January 2018 meeting for consideration and comments.

Progress to date

- 5. Progress with the production of the document has not been as quick as anticipated, due to more work to produce the project specifications being required than expected.
- 6. A draft of the first four objectives for part two of the plan has been completed (Appendix 1) for the Mousehold Conservators to review to provide comment and any amendments.
- 7. The draft provided is a word document and does not reflect the finished document, which will be designed by the communications team and will contain photographs and plans.
- 8. Due to the length of the document it is proposed that the conservators have time to review the document after the meeting and provide any amends or additions to the parks and open spaces manager for incorporation by 26 January 2018, to enable the document to be updated and discussed at the management subgroup meeting on 12 February 2018.
- 9. Progress with the management prescriptions for the first four objectives for part two of the plan has been made with initial drafts being completed by the Mousehold wardens, however, there is a need for further editing and refinement of these, which there has been insufficient time to complete prior to this meeting.

Next steps

- 10. Incorporate any amends received from the conservators on the first four objectives and complete the project specifications
- 11. The aim is to complete this work and bring those to the management sub-group on 12 February 2018.



Integrated impact assessment



The IIA should assess the impact of the recommendation being made by the report

Detailed guidance to help with the completion of the assessment can be found <u>here</u>. Delete this row after completion

Report author to complete	
Committee:	Mousehold Conservators
Committee date:	19 January 2018
Director / Head of service	Adrian Akester
Report subject:	Mousehold Heath 2018-2028 management plan review progress update and development of part 2 of the draft plan.
Date assessed:	11 January 2018
Description:	

		Impact		
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)	\boxtimes			
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact				
ICT services				
Economic development				
Financial inclusion				
	•			
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	\boxtimes			
S17 crime and disorder act 1998	\boxtimes			
Human Rights Act 1998	\boxtimes			
Health and well being				The management plan will maintain the heath for active recreation and also provide volunteer opportunities.
	•		•	

		Impact		
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)				
Eliminating discrimination & harassment				
Advancing equality of opportunity				
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation				
Natural and built environment				
Waste minimisation & resource use				
Pollution				
Sustainable procurement				
Energy and climate change				
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments

	Impact			
Risk management				Improved risk management through new/revised projects relating to tree safety, vehicle access, site audits etc
Recommendations from impact ass	essment			
Positive	Positive			
Negative				
Neutral				
Issues				

1.A VISION FOR MOUSEHOLD HEATH

'The Mousehold Conservators are committed to safeguarding the long term future of Mousehold Heath as a high quality and accessible natural area for residents and visitors to the city to enjoy.

To manage the heath in a way that protects and enhances the valuable historic and natural features of the site, and provides opportunities for all to be involved in looking after and learning about the site.'

The vision will be achieved through the following objectives, management prescriptions and projects.

Project detail is contained in the Mousehold Heath project register (Appendix TBC)

2.MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

There are eight management objectives.

- A) To ensure Mousehold Heath is a welcoming place for people to visit.
- B) To protect Mousehold Heath and ensure that it is a safe and secure place to visit.
- C) To ensure that Mousehold Heath is clean and well maintained.
- D) To manage Mousehold Heath in a way that has a positive impact on the environment.
- E) To improve habitats and the natural environment for wildlife, to enhance the biodiversity of Mousehold Heath.
- F) To safeguard the historic landscape, archaeological features and buildings of Mousehold Heath.
- G) To provide opportunities local communities to be involved in in all aspect of our work.
- H) To promote Mousehold Heath to increase awareness, knowledge, understanding and sense of pride of Mousehold Heath

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

Mousehold heath will be managed in a way that attracts visitors to the site and draws them into once they are there.

Management

The Mousehold Conservators are responsible for the management of the site and are legally empowered through the Norwich City Act 1984 to maintain and preserve the heath, and to ensure that the city has free access to the site.

The Heath is used for a wide range of activities which are acceptable and legal and also on occasions it is misused and used for illegal activities. Trends will change over time and the Conservators will need to respond to changes in trends and activities over the life of this plan and seek to ensure that the site is not only maintained but continuously improved, in terms of provision and management.

Continuous improvement will be delivered through the Conservators and wardens learning from other appropriate examples of best practice, training and implementing the learning via the management plan, management techniques and changes to the way in which contractors operate.

A Green Flag submission, the adopted standard for a well-managed public space, will form the basis for an ongoing annual independent quality assessment and continuous improvement needs to be demonstrated to retain the award.

Personal safety

There is often a perception among visitors to open spaces, especially large ones containing woodland that they are unsafe to visit, due to a feeling of being isolated in secluded areas.

There is a balance to be struck with a natural area such as Mousehold Heath. Key access points will be developed in terms of being open and providing information to enable visors to orientate themselves, with clear sightlines and key paths, glades and areas of heathland and grassland maintained as open areas to ensure that there are areas of the site for those who may have personal safety concerns to visit. Increased use and presence will also reduce people's personal safety co0ncerns.

Access points

Although much of the heath is 'informal countryside' there is a need to ensure that key access points are maintained and key information provided about the heath and who it is managed by, to increase understanding of the site and increase visitors' enjoyment of it.

A1) The Mousehold Conservators will manage the site and discharge their duties in accordance with the Norwich City Council Act 1984

AF00 Financial planning and recording
AF00/01 PREPARE ANNUAL BUDGET

AF00/02 BUDGET MONITORING AND REPORTING

AP20 Prepare/revise site management plans

AP20/01 NEW MANAGEMENT PLAN AP20/02 MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

AP60 Prepare/plan annual work

AP60/01 ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME

AP60/02 ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME MONITORING

AP80 Convene meeting, Site Management Committee

AP80/01 MOUSEHOLD CONSERVATORS MEETING

AP80/02 MOUSEHOLD CONSERVATORS MANAGEMENT SUB GROUP

MEETING

AP80/03 MOUSEHOLD CONSERVATORS ITINERANT

AR01 Prepare report, project review, new project

AR01/05 BRITANNIA CAR PARK REVIEW

AR20 Prepare report, annual progress

AR20/01 MOUSEHOLD CONSERVATORS ANNUAL REPORT

AR30 Prepare correspondence, general

AR30/01 GENERAL ENQUIRIES

AR60 Prepare report, other

AR60/00	MOUSEHOLD CONSERVATORS PROJECT APPROVAL AND
	RECORDING

AR60/01 MOUSEHOLD CONSERVATORS QUARTERLY MANAGEMENT

UPDATE

AR60/02 MOUSEHOLD CONSERVATORS QUARTERLY BUDGET

MONITORING REPORT

AR60/03 MOUSEHOLD CONSERVATORS ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT

AR60/04 MOUSEHOLD CONSERVATORS PRECEPT REPORT

A2) To provide opportunities for the Mousehold Conservators to develop their understanding of the management of the site and of best practice in the management of public open space and especially heathland.

AP80 Convene meeting, Site Management Committee

AP80/03 MOUSEHOLD CONSERVATORS ITINERANT

AT00 Training and management

AT00/04 BEST PRACTICE VISITS

A3) To continuously improve the management of the site through the development of staff and contractors

AT00 Training and management

AT00/01 STAFF 1:1s

AT00/02 STAFF APPRAISAL
AT00/03 STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLANS
AT00/04 BEST PRACTICE VISITS

AT40 Liaise and supervise staff/contractors

AT40/01 CONTRACT MONITORING/IMPROVEMENT NORWICH NORSE

ENVIRONMENTAL

AT40/02 CONTRACT MONITORING/IMPROVEMENT NPS NORWICH AT40/03 CONTRACT MONITORING EXTERNAL CONTRACTORS

To ensure that key access sites are welcoming and encourage people to explore the site

AP21 Prepare/revise plan. Strategic planning

INTERPRETATION STRATEGY AP21/04

AP21/05 ACCESS HUBS

To submit applications for awards, where appropriate, for awards that recognise the positive management of Mousehold Heath

Al00 Inspections and audits

GREEN FLAG AWARD AI00/01

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

Protection

The Mousehold Wardens play an important role in protecting the heath by carrying out regular patrols and also when out on the site for other purposes such as carrying out practical tasks and survey work.

Patrols cover the whole site but known 'hotspots' relating to vandalism, misuse or fly tipping will be visited more regularly. The wardens will advise visitors regarding issues of misuse and drawing their attention to the byelaws. In the case of more serious misuse the matter will be passed to a more appropriately authority to deal with.

A community approach is taken to the safeguarding of the heath, with the wardens working with regular visitors to the site and the Mousehold Heath Defenders, acting as additional 'eyes and ears'.

Any incidents the wardens see or are notified of are investigated and action taken immediately, if possible, to resolve them; information is shared with the relevant authorities when it is appropriate to do so. The wardens will also work proactively with the police and fire service when necessary to reduce the risk of future incidents occurring. The recording and analysis of incidents could be improved through the introduction of an incident reporting system.

Licences and leases agreements

Licenses and lease agreements relating to property and business use are negotiated by Norwich Property Services (NPS) on behalf, but with the approval of the Mousehold Conservators; as well as one off access requests relating to adjacent properties.

Meetings are held with leaseholders whose activities will potentially have an impact on the hehath.

Occasionally requests are received from people wishing to do projects or research on the heath, permission to undertake these types of activity is given by the Conservators.

Facility provision

The heath currently has a senior size football pitch and changing facility, with booking and pitch management carried out by NorwichNorse Environmental and the changing room facility is maintained by NPS Norwich on behalf of the conservators.

The provision of this facility will need to be reviewed in the future taking in to account the level of use, other local provision and the cost of providing it in relation to the income received, taking into consideration other possible recreational uses.

Seating is provided at a number of locations across the heath to sit in a quiet area to reflect or observe a view of the city. The provision range from formal seats, where appropriate, through to more rustic benches in the less formal areas of the heath.

The Mousehold Conservators respond to request for benches or seats favourably subject to the location being appropriate and the resource available for purchase and installation. The development of a bench sponsorship scheme will be considered.

The heath has one public toilet block located at the Fountain Ground car park and in very close proximity to Zak's restaurant. The toilet block requires some investment to improve the quality of provision.

Vehicular access management

Where possible restrictions are not put in place which would impede people's access to the site, however, there are places where it is necessary to prevent unauthorised motor vehicle access to the site, to protect the site and also visitors. Restrictions installed can take the form of gates; barriers; drop down bollards and rows of low bollards.

Legal obligations

As well as the Norwich City Council Act 1984 the heath is managed with the aim of meeting all the legal requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, as well as other applicable regulations; and policies and procedures defined by Norwich City Council.

Tree safety

On such a largely wooded site with paths and roads running through the site, tree safety is a priority but, with a need to balance risk reduction with the conservation of notable trees and dead and dying trees.

Six monthly inspections are carried out by the Mousehold wardens. The tree safety policy would benefit from being reviewed so that it can be integrated with the Council's tree safety policy regarding inspectors qualifications, methodology, recording and ordering.

Any work required identified during the inspections is done by the wardens or, if it is of a more specialist nature, it is completed by NorwichNorse Environmental.

Site hazard identification and management

The wardens risk assess their activities and also those undertaken with volunteer groups, ensuring that safe systems of work are used and appropriate qualifications held for those activities that require them. PPE identified as being required by the risk assessments is worn by the wardens and if necessary provided to the volunteers.

The joint ventures, Norwich Norse Environmental and Norwich Property Services, who undertake work on the site have health and safety management systems in place that have been checked prior to the contracts being awarded and this is monitored on an annual basis via the contract managers. Any sub-contractors working on behalf of the joint ventures have also been checked for compliance prior, by the joint venture prior to work being awarded.

Although currently and annual site safety inspection is not carried out the wardens will deal with or make safe and request repairs for any hazards identified as part of

their patrol and management activities on site. An annual inspection, recording and rectification system will be introduced during the life of this plan.

B1) To protect the integrity of the heath and in accordance with the Norwich City Council act 1984

AS00 Site and species safeguard and law enforcement

AS00/00 LEGAL ENFORCEMENT ACTION

AS10 Protect site, visitor permit system

AS10/00 LICENCE AND PERMIT SCHEME

ML00 Liaise with stakeholders, owners/occupiers

ML00/01 ZAKS RESTAURANT

ML30 Liaise with stakeholders, neighbours

ML30/01 BRITANNIA CAFÉ
ML30/02 RANGERS HOUSE

ML40 Liaise stakeholders, local/national authorities

ML40/01 NORWICH AREA TRANSPORT STRATEGY

ML40/02 NORWICH CITY COUNCIL – AREA MANAGEMENT TEAM ML40/03 NORWICH CITY COUNCIL – COMMUNITY ENABLING

MP00 Patrol, general

MP00/01 SITE PRESENCE

MP00/02 SITE BOUNDARIES AND HOSTPOTS

RH35 Collect data, public use, trespass/theft/damage

RH35/01 ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES CRIME

RH36 Collect data, undesirable activities

RH36/01 UNDESIRABLE ACTIVITY

B2) To work with the emergency services to work on joint problem solving to deter and resolve misuse of the site.

ML60 Liaison with stakeholders, emergency services

ML60/01 NORFOLK CONSTABULARY

ML60/02 NORFOLK FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

B3) To increase visitor perception of feeling safe on the heath.

AP21 Prepare/revise plan. Strategic planning

AP21/04 INTERPRETATION STRATEGY

AP21/05 ACCESS HUBS

AT00 Training and management, general

AT00/05 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

MP00 Patrol, general

MP00/02 SITE PRESENCE

B4) To provide facilities for formal and informal recreation where appropriate

AR01 Prepare report, project review, new project

AR01/01 FORMAL AND INFORMAL SPORTS PROVISION REVIEW

B5) To provide a public toilet facility at the heath

AR01 Prepare report, project review, new project

AR01/02 PUBLIC TOILETS PROVISION REVIEW

B6) To manage vehicular access to prevent damage to the site and to reduce the risk to visitors.

AP21 Prepare/revise plan. Strategic planning

AP21/01 ACCESS MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

AP50 Prepare/revise plan, safety

AP50/01 VEHICLE ON SITE POLICY

B7) To provide seating.

AP21 Prepare/revise plan. Strategic planning

AP21/02 BENCHES AND SEAT PROVISION PLAN

AR01 Prepare report, project review, new project

AR01/06 SEAT SPONSORSHIP SCHEME

B8) To ensure that the heath is managed in accordance with relevant legal obligations.

Al30 Implement inspection, site safety

AI30/01 ANNUAL SITE SAFETY INSPECTION

Al30/02 TREE SAFETY INSPECTION

AI30/03 RISK ASSESSMENT

RH90 Collect data, other activities, by others

RH90/01 CHEMICAL USE RECORDS RH90/02 GOALPOST INSPECTIONS

C. To ensure Mousehold Heath is clean and well maintained.

Boundary protection maintenance

Infrastructure relating to the protection of the boundary relating to gates, barriers and bollards is will be inspected on ad-hoc basis by the wardens and damaged/missing infrastructure are maintained/replaced on a reactive basis.

A phased programme of bollard replacement will be developed as sections of bollards tend to become rotten and vulnerable at a similar time.

Litter bins and waste

There are 16 litter bins which can be used for litter and also the disposal of dog faeces.on Mousehold Heath at strategic locations. Litter bins are cleaned and maintained by the NorwichNorse to ensure that they are usable. Bins are emptied at a frequency to ensure that they do not become full or overflowing.

In 2017 a review of the provision of litter bins was undertaken but no bins were identified as being not required or needing to be moved to more suitable locations.

The bins currently installed on the site do not enable for recycling of the contents. The possibility of installing different bins which enable recycling will be considered during the life of this plan. Installation would depend on the style of the a recycling bin being deemed appropriate in what is a natural landscape and not a park, vehicular access being feasible to empty the bins and the budget required.

The site receives a daily litter pick by a person from NorwichNorse who is dedicated full time to the site. The litter pick covers the key areas and hotspots as it would not be possible to cover every part of the site. The litter picker also acts as 'eyes and ears' liaising with the wardens and reporting fly tipping issues.

Fly tipping is reported through to NorwichNorse and is removed within 24 hours. If there is evidence of who fly tipped the waste the matter is passed to the environmental protection team, to pursue the matter further.

Public toilets

The public toilets located near to Zaks restaurant are permanently open and cleaned by NorwichNorse on a daily basis. The condition of the toilets is poor which can make cleaning difficult. A refurbishment of the block, using capital held in reserve by the Conservators needs to be considered.

Any damage to the toilets is reported to NPS for repairs to be made.

Paths

The majority of paths on the heath are natural surfaces. Surfaced paths are maintained (Needs clarification from wardens).

The vegetation on path boundaries is maintained to prevent encroachment and paths becoming in accessible. This also improves people's perception of feeling safe.

Car parks

Car park surfaces are not tarmac but compacted stone and are regraded on an annual basis to remove potholes. Compacted stone is a preferred option as it discourages people from speeding in the car park and putting other visitors at risk.

The work is resource intensive, so a more cost effective solution will be explored during the life of this plan.

Mousehold warden office

The Mousehold Wardens are located at Heathgate Area Housing Office on the boundary of the heath. A recharge is made for the use of this facility and all repair and maintenance costs are included in this charge.

Periodically the council carries out a review of its assets and the future of the office cannot be guaranteed. Depending on the outcome of the review of sport provision on the heath the building which is currently a changing facility located at the Fountain Ground will have an option appraisal carried out regarding its suitability as a site office for the wardens.

Equipment maintenance

The wardens have chainsaws and brush cutters for carrying out practical maintenance on the heath as well as a stock of hand tools for volunteer tasks. Mechanised equipment is serviced and maintained by a specialist and hand tools are checked and maintained by the wardens.

Graffiti

Graffiti on hard surfaces is removed by NorwichNorse environmental protection crew. Where possible, offensive or racist graffiti is removed within 24 hours, all other graffiti will be removed within 14 working days of being reported.

Graffiti occasionally occurs on trees or other natural absorbent surfaces. On non-living surfaces the wardens will sand the surface to remove it. Graffiti on trees is left to weather with time as the use of graffiti cleaning products or sanding would be detrimental to the health of the tree.

Bandstand

The bandstand is repaired on a reactive basis following any damage. It would beneficial to get a condition assessment of the bandstand completed to enable a maintenance plan to enable a proactive maintenance plan to be developed.

The bandstand is cleaned by NorwichNorse twice a year in April and September.

C1) To maintain and where necessary install additional boundary protection

AP21 Prepare/revise plan. Strategic planning
AP21/01 ACCESS MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

ME01 Manage site infrastructure, boundary features
ME01/01 GATES AND BARRIERS

ME02/02 BOLLDARDS

ME02 Manage site infrastructure, other structures

ME02/01 BENCHES, SEATS & PICNIC TABLES

C2 To provide and maintain litter bins and remove rubbish and waste

ME04 Remove rubbish/maintain litter bins

ME04/01 LITTER PICKING ME04/02 LITTER BINS ME04/03 FLY TIPPING

C3 To provide and maintain public toilets

ME14 Site buildings, maintain/improve toilets

ME14/01 TOILET CLEANING

ME14/03 TOILET MAINTENANCE - REACTIVE

C4 To provide and maintain paths

ME41 Provide/maintain paths

ME41/01 MAIN PATHS

ME41/02 SECONDARY PATHS

ME41/03 CYCLEWAYS

C5 To provide and maintain car parks

ME44 Provide/maintain car parks

ME44/01 CAR PARK SURFACING

ME44/02 CYCLE STANDS

C6 To provide and maintain accommodation for the Mousehold Wardens

ME70 Provide/maintain staff facilities, general

ME70/01 WARDEN OFFICE ACCOMMODATION
ME70/02 WARDEN OFFICE OPTIONS APPRAISAL

C7 To maintain tools and equipment so that it is safe to use

MM20 Acquire and maintain tools and equipment

MM20/00 TOOLS & EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

C8 To keep the site clear of graffiti

ME12 Site buildings, maintain/improve

ME12/01 REMOVE GRAFFITI

C9 To provide and maintain the bandstand

ME12 Site buildings, maintain/improve

DRAFT 09/01/2018

ME12/02 BANDSTAND CLEANING ME12/03 BANDSTAND MAINTENANCE

D. To manage Mousehold Heath in a way that has a positive impact on the environment.

Activities relating to Mousehold Heath and the warden accommodation carried out taking to account Norwich City Council's environmental strategy. The council is committed to:

- Increase energy efficiency in council owned property.
- Reduce disposal of waste to landfill.
- Increase recycling.
- Reduced consumption of paper in council activities.
- Reduced consumption of fuel in council buildings and vehicles.

This is being achieved through a number of initiatives:

- Recycling facilities in all offices for paper.
- Recycling facilities for cans and bottles in all offices.
- Default settings on printers for black and white, double sided, draft quality.
- Only essential operational car users provided with city centre parking to encourage use of the park and ride or cycling to work.
- Mileage allowance paid for operational use of bicycles at work.
- Hot desking 10 people to 8 desks to reduce the number of pcs and energy consumption.
- Restricted to 1m of shelf space to reduce paper use as information needs to be stored electronically.
- Pool cars are Citroen C0 (electric) and C1models chosen for their environmental credentials.

Climate change

The influence of human activities on our climate is now widely recognised. With more frequent extreme weather events affecting biodiversity, hydrology and the built environment.

The council has contributed to the work that Norfolk County Council have done looking at extreme weather events in the county and the impact they will have on services.

Pesticides

Pesticides use is minimal and where possible other control methods are used. The contractor is responsible for ensuring that any chemicals used are approved for use by the Conservators, that they are stored correctly, staff are have the relevant qualifications to use them and all usage is logged.

Peat use

There is no bedding planting used on the heath and no and peat use.

Procurement

Trees and shrubs sourced from UK nurseries as local as possible. Park benches are produced using timber from timber on the site or sustainable sources. Where appropriate products are made from recycled plastic. Surplus equipment that has not reached the end of its product life is reused on the heath.