



# NORWICH City Council

**Committee Name: Mousehold Heath Conservators**

**Committee Date: 17/06/2022**

**Report Title: Quarter one management update**

**Portfolio:** Councillor Giles, Cabinet member for community wellbeing

**Report from:** Head of environment services

**Wards:** Catton Grove and Crome

## **OPEN PUBLIC ITEM**

### **Purpose**

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

### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Conservators note the contents of the report

### **Policy Framework**

The Council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.
- Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.
- Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.
- The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.
- Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.

This report meets the sustainable and healthy city corporate priority

This report addresses Deliver a Capital Investment Programme in our parks that will improve visitor experience, maintain our heritage assets and improve community cohesion. strategic action in the Corporate Plan

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.

## **Report Details**

1. The report details the work, activities and issues arising on, and relating to the delivery of the Mousehold Heath management plan objectives.
2. The objectives are:
  - 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 for local communities to be involved in all aspect of our work.
  - H) To promote Mousehold Heath to increase awareness, knowledge, understanding and a sense of pride.

**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 2022, along all main paths, 24 dead, dying, dangerous trees and branches were identified. If resulting works were required, these works will be undertaken and trees made safe between April and the end of June, by the Mousehold wardens.
2. Three potentially dangerous dying trees - adjacent to the Ring Road and Hill Farm Track - were reported by the Mousehold wardens to the council's Arboricultural Officers. An order was raised and work carried by members of the Norwich City Services Ltd (NCSL) tree team.
3. In addition to the tree survey, three more windblown/dead trees or branches, identified by the wardens on patrol, or members of the community, adjacent to main pathways, were completed.

### **ML00/03 CONCESSION**

4. The concession holder at Britannia Road has forwarded a number of concerns regarding his trading position restricting his ability to provide a service to the public. Following a decision at the March Conservators meeting, a meeting took place between Norwich City Council civil engineers and Mousehold wardens, with car park remedial works expecting to take place shortly.

5. A new concession located on the Pitch and Putt public car park, Gurney Road started trading on April 16<sup>th</sup> selling hot and cold drinks with an annual rental charge of £1,800.00 per annum.

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

#### AR01/05 SEAT AND BENCH SPONSORSHIP SCHEME

6. The dedication of Ian Kents memorial bench, located adjacent to the Wingfield Open Space, was undertaken on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May, with his family and friends. Ian was a dedicated member of the Mousehold Heath Defenders for many years, attending many work parties, events, surveys and guided walks and was regularly seen on the heath walking his dog Frodo.

#### ML60/01 NORFOLK CONSTABULARY

7. The Mousehold wardens liaised with police officers regarding anti-social behaviour.
8. The public notice/Information board was stolen in early May located on the Pitch and Putt public car park, Gurney Road. This was reported to the police by the Mousehold wardens, a replacement board is being looked into.

#### MP00/01 SITE PRESENCE

9. Increased patrols were undertaken due to the exceptionally dry conditions. A group of teenagers were asked to put out a campfire on a dry part of the heathland by a Mousehold warden.
10. A motor cyclist riding on St James Hill has been informed that he was breaking the Bylaws and asked to leave the natural area.
11. Two campers have been informed of the Bylaws and asked to leave the site.

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

**ME04/01 LITTER PICKING**

12. Mousehold wardens have worked with a NCSL litter picker to clear areas of litter left by campers.
13. Assist Trust volunteers have carried out a number of litter picks in the Gilman Road area.

**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.
15. A number of litter bins have been burnt out across the site. The wardens have been liaising with a Parks and Open Spaces Officer to install replacement metal bins.

**ME04/03 FLY TIPPING**

16. 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.

**ME06/01 FINGER POSTS AND WAYMAKERS**

17. Two, vandalised Earth Heritage Trail way-marker discs have been replaced by the Mousehold wardens.

**ME12/01 REMOVE GRAFFITI**

18. 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.

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

**MH31/01 SCRUB AND TREE REMOVAL**

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

**RA12/01 COMMON BIRD CENSUS**

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

**RA42/01 BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SURVEY**

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

**RA44/01 MOTH TRAPPING SURVEY**

22. A community moth survey evening took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, with 17 species of moth identified and released. Of these, there were six new species bringing the site list up to 270 species.

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

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

**RA92/01 NATIONAL BAT MONITORING PROGRAMME**

24. NBMP Bat Transect Field Surveys are planned for July

**RF22/01 MUSTARD POND GLADE FLOWER SURVEY**

25. Member of the Mousehold Heath Defenders have carried out monthly flowering plant surveys, recording 32 species in May.

**RF22/02 ST JAMES' HILL SURVEY**

26. A member of the Mousehold Heath Defenders and a Mousehold warden have undertaken a monthly plant survey on St James Hill. A new species for the site called Miner's Lettuce was recorded in April, increasing the St James Hill cumulative survey list to 133 species.

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

AT50/01 VOLUNTEERS GENERAL

27. 173 community volunteer hours have been completed between 01.04.22 – 01.06.22, by the following groups;

- Mousehold Heath Defenders
- Mousehold Heath Mousketeers
- Assist Trust
- Many individual volunteers from the community

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

RC30/01 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

28. Local historians, involved with the research and restoration of the WW2 RAF/USAF Air Base at Newman Road, Rackheath, have been researching war activity on the heath with a Mousehold warden.

MI60/01 EVENTS

29. One ROOTS environmental education and play activity session, for young people, organised through Norwich City Council Events Team, has taken place on the heath.

30. Four Enchanted Woods Forest School environmental activity groups have taken place increasing knowledge, interest and enjoyment of nature for young people.

31. One Tribe gathering event has taken place providing environmental play and education activities organised through the Events Team.

32. On Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, the first community moth survey evening took place, with 17 species of moth identified and released. Of these, there were six new species bringing the site list up to 270 species. Three people attended the late evening survey.

33. A Community Wildlife Workshop, focusing on moths and other insects, was led by a local expert and a Mousehold warden, taking place on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May. Six people attended.

34. On Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May, in connection with International Dawn Chorus Day, a dawn chorus Common Bird Census Breeding Bird survey was undertaken, starting at 4.15am and finishing at 6.15am. The transect survey was led by a Mousehold warden and was followed by breakfast on the heath. Seven people attended the 'celebration of nature's daily miracle', on their doorstep.
35. A Forest bathing event run by the Nest Project discussing relaxation was organised through our Events Team and took place on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May.

#### MI60/02 GUIDED WALKS PROGRAMME

36. The Mousehold Guided Walks and Surveys Programme 2022 (see Appendix 1), has been put together by the wardens, inviting members of the community to learn more about, and enjoy, the sites biodiversity and natural features. The walks and wildlife surveys are advertised on local community neighbourhood boards and Norwich City Council website.

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

37. Following the Wastes and Strays conference, in Brighton, in 2019, which was attended by two members of the Mousehold Heath Conservators and a Mousehold warden, the conservators agreed to be part of the Wastes and Strays project and support project activities.
38. 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.
39. In collaboration with the four cities, the plan was 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.
40. 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 have involved community groups in a creative dialogue and activities, around how they use the heath and alternative futures for urban commons in general.
41. The activities have been resourced by the Urban Commons Futures project with the wardens overseeing the delivery of activities on the heath.
42. The resource requirement and the potential impact on their work was discussed with the wardens and they have found the capacity to support and advise the project whilst also ensuring that activities are appropriate and will not damage the heath.

43. The interdisciplinary Wastes and Strays research project is coming to an end on 30 June 2022. The pandemic intervened to prevent some planned visits to Norwich, but most of the interviews and work has been completed online.

44. The project is concluding with several public events to bring its work to as wide an audience as possible. **There will be an interactive exhibition at the Frere Road Community Centre, Norwich, on 7<sup>th</sup> June, between 12 – 8pm.** The exhibition will showcase the project's historical research on the urban commons and explore themes of locality and identity through testimony from contemporary users and user groups. There will be a poetry workshop; and participatory creative activities for both children and adults focussed to exploring the meaning and value of Mousehold Heath as a community 'green space'. There will also be short talks by the research team explaining the outcomes of the research.

45. Further information about the project can be found here:

[Wastes and Strays | Wastes and Strays | Newcastle University \(ncl.ac.uk\)](https://www.ncl.ac.uk/wastes-and-strays)

## Consultation

46. None

## Implications

### Financial and Resources

Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan and Budget.

47. There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources at this time

## Legal

None

## Statutory Considerations

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and Diversity	None
Health, Social and Economic Impact	None



<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:</b>
Crime and Disorder	The Mousehold Wardens will continue to work with Norfolk Constabulary to ensure that the Heath is a safe place to visit
Children and Adults Safeguarding	Safeguarding is a priority for the Mousehold Wardens, and they will continue to signpost vulnerable individuals to the services that they require
Environmental Impact	The Mousehold Wardens will continue to improve habitats and the natural environment for wildlife to enhance the biodiversity of Mousehold Heath.

### **Risk Management**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Controls Required</b>
Financial	Failure to adequately plan and monitor activities could result in insufficient resources being available to deliver the aims and objectives of the Management Plan	Ensure that sufficient management information is available to continue management and maintenance programme
Operational	Failure to adequately plan and monitor activities could result in insufficient resources being available to deliver the aims and objectives of the Management Plan	Ensure that sufficient management information is available to continue management and maintenance programme
Legal	The Council cannot comply with its legal duty to ensure that buildings are safe for users to access	Ensure that sufficient management information is available to continue management and maintenance programme

### **Other Options Considered**

- 48. Do nothing – not recommended as this will result in deterioration of building
- 49. Maintain budget at current level – not recommended as budget may be insufficient to carry out all works required

### **Reasons for the decision/recommendation**

- 50. Review of current budget will ensure that there are adequate resources to carry out required work

**Appendices: Appendix 1 Mousehold Heath guided walks programme 2022**  
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# Explore Mousehold Heath

with the Mousehold Heath Conservators' guided walks programme 2022

## Moth survey evenings

**Monday 2 May, 20.45 until late**

**Thursday 21 July, 9.45pm until late**

**Thursday 25 August, 8.30pm until late**

**Wednesday 14 September, 7.30pm until late**

Join a Norwich City Council Mousehold Heath warden in using a light trap to catch, record and release the beautiful and diverse species of moth living in our parks and gardens.

Please meet in the Pitch and Putt Car Park, at the top of Gurney Road, Mousehold Heath, Norwich.  
*Grid ref: TG247104.*

## Community wildlife workshops

**Introduction to moths:**

**Tuesday 3 May, 11am – 3pm**

**Introduction to butterflies:**

**Friday 12 August, 11am – 3pm**

**Introduction to winter birds:**

**Thursday 8 December, 11am – 3pm**

Join a local wildlife expert and a Mousehold Heath warden, to look at the wide variety of characteristic species and biodiversity which inhabit the site. The sessions will focus on a different species. After an hour in the classroom, the rest of the session will

be spent exploring the site. Light refreshments are provided during the lunch break.

Please meet at the car park below Zaks restaurant (NR1 4HW), halfway up Gurney Road.  
*Grid ref: TG243101.*

## Dawn Chorus survey walk

**Thursday 5 May: 4.15am – 6am.**

**Followed by breakfast.**

Join a Mousehold Heath warden in carrying out a B.T.O, Common Bird Census transect survey walk to mark International Dawn Chorus Week – a worldwide celebration of the nature's daily miracle.

Please meet in the car park below Zaks.

## Management and wildlife walk

**Tuesday 26 July, 2 – 4pm**

Join a Mousehold Heath warden, to look at the wide variety of often scarce and threatened species that inhabit the site and how management work is being undertaken to conserve this biodiversity and prevent fires.

Please meet in the car park below Zaks.

## Fungi Foray

**Tuesday 25 October, 1.30 - 4.15pm**

Accompany Neil Mahler (Suffolk's county fungi recorder) and a Mousehold Heath warden, for a walk around the site, to look at the stunning variety of fungi species living in the heart of Norwich.

Please meet in the car park below Zaks.



## ALL EVENTS ARE FREE

**Booking in advance is essential for the Community Wildlife Workshops and Fungi walk, by emailing [williamstewart@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:williamstewart@norwich.gov.uk)**

**Please bring sturdy footwear and outdoor clothing and a torch for events that take place after dark.**

**Events will be cancelled in the case of heavy rain/strong winds.**