

Report to Mousehold Heath Conservators
30 January 2015
Report of Head of local neighbourhood services
Subject Mousehold Heath update

Item

7

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

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Background documents

None

Report

Management works

Asset management

1. A large hole that developed at the base of St. James Hill was made secure and reported to be a collapsed sewerage pipe, Anglian Water carried out the repair but due to heavy rain the hole appeared again. On inspection it was found tree roots were impeding the flow of the pipe and would need to be removed, the area has been made safe restricting public access and the works will be carried out in the near future.
2. Earth Heritage Trail interest points have been maintained by a Mousehold warden and volunteers.

Tree and natural area management

3. Dead, dying, dangerous and windblown trees and branches near footpaths have been made safe by the Mousehold wardens, including a large oak limb blocking a main pathway.
4. Heathland and grassland management has been undertaken by Mousehold wardens, volunteers and contractors, to restore and improve the condition of existing habitats in line with the site's Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreement.
5. Management changes to conservation cuts at Gilman Road Open Space and the Desert including changes to the sports cut to a vegetation cut at Gilman Road Open Space have been actioned.

Access works

6. Car park maintenance works have now been completed at Britannia Road and Hill Farm Track, also a hole filled in at the Ice Cream Van concession Gurney Road.
7. Emergency access routes have been opened up adjacent to Gilman Road and central parts of the heath and a rhino bollard has been installed at the driveway leading up to the Rangers House
8. A burnt out car was removed from Hill Farm Track and an abandon car was removed from the pitch and putt car park
9. Travellers have been moved on from the pitch and putt car park and Gurney Road and campers from Beech Drive.
10. Two posts have been installed across the pathway leading up from Hill Farm track car park onto Gilman Road Open Space to stop encroachment by vehicles.
11. Speed restriction tables have been erected at the junction of Britannia Road including extension to the 20 miles per hour speed limits along Gurney Road.

12. Drainage work along Gurney Road has been completed which will alleviate the problems of flooding from rain water running from Gurney Road into Mousehold Road
13. Ecological surveys including plant, bird, bat and moth have been completed by members of the community and Mousehold wardens across the site.

Other

14. Push The Pedalways works started at Gurney Road to improve accessibility for cyclists and improve flood relief for residents of Mousehold Avenue.
15. Improvements to the Connect two cycle routes have commenced with the opening of Garrison Ride alongside the former rangers house leading into Heathgate.

Volunteers

16. There have been a total of 1526 volunteer hours worked on the site in the last quarter. These have been completed by:
 - The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
 - Norwich Community Green Gym
 - The Mousehold Heath Defenders
 - The Assist Trust
 - Hartford House Engage Group
 - A work placement student
 - Volunteers from the community.
17. These works have significantly contributed to the implementation of objectives set out in the Management Plan, along with increasing community involvement in the many projects being undertaken on the site.

18. Events

19. A range of events have been organised or hosted on the heath in the last period, these being:
 - A number of Forest School environmental education activities.
 - The Mousehold Defenders have undertaken several weekend tasks these include improving public access by cutting back overhanging vegetation from pathways.
 - A walk for members of the Norwich Society was led by a Mousehold warden, to discuss historic features and site management.
 - Fungi foray with local expert Tony Leech
 - Armistice Day service arranged by the Mousehold Defenders held on 11-11-2014 at the war memorial Gurney Road.
 - Several Wild4wellies environmental activities have taken place.
 - Moth survey evenings.
 - Bat walk and survey
 - Norfolk Women's Trefoil Guild walk
 - Two community wildlife watch walks
 - A Christmas thank you meal, held in Britannia Road Café, to thank the many volunteers for their time, hard work and dedication throughout the year.

