

**Report to** Mousehold Heath Conservators  
17 March 2017  
**Report of** Head of citywide services  
**Subject** Mousehold Heath 2018 – 22 management plan review

---

**Item**

**7**

## **Purpose**

To agree the timescales and key stages for the Mousehold Heath management plan review 2018 - 2023 and to consider the option of revising the format to support a Green Flag Award application to be made in January 2018.

## **Recommendation**

- 1) To ask the parks and open spaces manager to submit a Green Flag award application by January 2018
- 2) To agree a revised management plan format to support a Green Flag application; and
- 3) To agree the proposed timescale and key decision making points in appendix 1

## **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.

## **Contact officer**

Simon Meek - Parks and open spaces manager

01603 212403

## **Background documents**

None

# **Report**

## **Management plan review**

1. In June 2008 Mousehold Conservators endorsed the Mousehold Heath management plan covering the period 2008 to 2018.
2. The 2008 – 2018 management is due for review during the 2017-18 Civic year, and a new plan endorsed by the Conservators to be in place from 1 April 2018.
3. The purpose of the management plan is to; enable the Conservators to manage the site effectively; to ensure continuity of management; to identify the management required to meet their objectives; to provide a framework for decision making; to identify budget requirements; support external funding applications and to develop work programmes. This is done taking into consideration the environmental, cultural and historical information, which collectively identify the importance of Mousehold Heath as an open space within the city.
4. The management plan review is a process and will require a number of steps to be taken. To ensure that the plan is developed and approved by the 31 March 2018 the process would be broken down into four key stages, with defined outcomes and work packages for each stage. The completion date for each key stage would coincide with one of the four Conservators meetings in the Civic year 2017-18.
5. The endorsement of the document at each key stage will provide a solid foundation upon which the next stage of development work can be based. This will minimise the risk of any reworking, which may occur if a completed draft document is produced for consideration. It will also enable the Conservators to play a full part in the development of the plan through their involvement at each stage, via the Management sub-group and the conservators.
6. The proposed stages are detailed in Appendix 1.

## **Green Flag Award**

7. The Green Flag Award is the national benchmark for parks and green spaces in the UK. It was launched in 1996 to recognise quality parks and green spaces in the country.
8. Applications are submitted by the end of January each year. A draft management plan could be submitted at that point with the endorsed version to follow.
9. Green Flag Award applications are judged against eight key criteria. If management practice changes are in progress but not yet fully implemented, transitional phases will be acknowledged and viewed positively. Applications are submitted by the end of January each year. A draft management plan could be submitted at that point with the endorsed version to follow.

10. The judges consider that different types of parks and open spaces have different kinds of offer and need to be managed and developed taking into account varying opportunities and constraints.
11. The criteria used to assess a site are:
- A welcoming place
  - Healthy, safe and secure
  - Clean and well maintained
  - Sustainability
  - Conservation and heritage
  - Community involvement
  - Marketing
  - Management
12. Assessment of the application involves a desktop assessment of the management plan and a judges' visit to the site. The scores from the two assessments are then amalgamated to produce an overall score.
13. There is a benchmark score below which a Green Flag Award will not be awarded. Each year the benchmark score needs to be achieved or Green Flag status will be withdrawn.
14. The outcome of the application is usually known in June/July time when there is a national press release and applicants are notified. If a site is successful there is a condition that the site must fly the Green Flag.
15. Details about sites which have won the award and the application process can be found on the Green Flag Award website. [www.greenflagaward.org.uk](http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk)
16. The cost of an application in 2016/17 was £365 excluding VAT
17. The way in which the site is managed by the Conservators is in line with Green Flag's eight criteria that reflect a well managed site.
18. The timing of the management plan review provides an opportunity to revise the management format to support an application, should the Conservators wish to submit an application.
19. A successful application would be independent national recognition of Mousehold Heath as a quality open space. It would also be recognition of the work the Mousehold Conservators and all those involved with the site do to protect, conserve and enhance the site for the people of Norwich and visitors to the city.

## **Appendix 1: Mousehold Heath management plan review**

The simplified steps for producing a management plan are:

1. Where are we now?
  - a. Intro
  - b. Context
  - c. Site description
2. Where do we want to get to?
  - a. Vision
  - b. Aims and objectives
3. How will we get there
  - a. Action plan
  - b. Finance and resources
4. How will we know when we get there?
  - a. Monitor and review

The proposed stages for the development of the Mousehold Heath management plan 2018 – 2023 are:

### **STAGE 1**

**Outcomes:** Review and update of factual information contained in the 2013 – 18 management plan and Vision and objectives defined and approved by Conservators.

Work to be undertaken by the Mousehold wardens and Parks and open spaces manager, covering:

1. General information
2. Environmental information
3. Cultural and historic information
4. Management constraints
5. Management procedures (Habitat, historic, amenity)
6. Maps and plans
7. Species lists and survey data

Work carried out by the Management sub-group and brought to the Conservators meeting for discussion and approval.

1. Vision defined
2. Objectives defined

### **APPROVAL: June 2017 Mousehold Heath Conservators meeting**

### **STAGE 2**

**Outcomes:** Development of management prescriptions and projects based on Vision and objectives approved at the end of stage 1. 1<sup>st</sup> draft management plan produced and consultation process identified, both approved by Conservators.

Work to be undertaken by the Management sub-group and brought to the Conservators meeting for discussion and approval.

1. Identify management prescriptions to achieve objectives
2. Identify projects and project specifications for each management prescription
3. Agree consultation process for stage 3

Work to be undertaken by the Mousehold wardens and Parks and open spaces manager.

1. Produce draft maps for project locations as required.
2. Source photographs to illustrate the management plan.
3. Pull together information from stages 1 and 2 to produce first draft of the management plan with communications team (simple word document not desktop published).

**APPROVAL: September 2017 Mousehold heath Conservators meeting.**

### **STAGE 3**

**Outcomes:** Stakeholders consulted. Final draft management plan produced. 2018-19 annual work programme produced. Final draft management plan and annual work programme approved by Conservators.

Work to be undertaken by the Management sub-group and brought to the Conservators meeting for discussion and approval.

1. Stakeholder consultation
2. Review stakeholder consultation.
3. Revise 1<sup>st</sup> draft management plan to produce Final draft management plan.
4. Annual work programme for 2018-19 produced and based on Final draft management plan.
5. Management plan distribution methods and number of hard copies required identified.

Work to be undertaken by the Mousehold wardens and Parks and open spaces manager.

1. Feedback to each stakeholder on the outcome of the matter(s) they raised.

**APPROVAL: January 2017 Mousehold Heath Conservators meeting**

### **STAGE 4**

Mousehold Heath management plan finished copy produced. Management plan adopted.

Work to be undertaken by the Mousehold wardens and Parks and open spaces manager.

1. Final minor amends made following January 2018 Conservators.

2. Finished document produced by communications team
3. Mousehold Heath management plan 2018 – 2023 submitted to March conservators for approval and adoption.

**APPROVAL: March 2018 Mousehold Heath Conservators meeting**

**STAGE 5**

**Outcome:** Mousehold Heath management plan distributed

Work to be undertaken by the Mousehold wardens and Parks and open spaces manager.

1. Hard copies distributed.
2. PDF produced and Norwich City Council website updated.
3. Distributed by other mechanisms identified at Stage 3.