

ITEM 7

Mousehold Heath Conservators management sub group meeting

Friday 5 September 2014 Britannia Cafe

Present

Cllr David Bradford

Cllr Barker

Margaret Bush

Will Stewart, Mousehold Warden

Lenny Stamp, Community & neighbourhood manager North

Guest:

Davina Tanner, CEO Britannia Enterprises Norwich Ltd

Apologies

Chris Southgate

From previous sub-group meeting:

Conservators asked that the wardens:

- approach the company and ask what mutual benefit might be achieved from visitors to the café using the car park and the company helping to maintain the facility
- put on hold the surface treatment for the time being but to ensure it is completed for the summer

In view of the above Davina Tanner was invited to this meeting

Britannia Café

The work of the enterprise was introduced and how low category prisoners contribute to the café and other work across the city. Davina informed the meeting that the café was doing better than expected and she realised that there was additional use of the car park opposite the café.

The usage of the car park was discussed and Davina said that she was aware of:

- the impact on the car park since opening
- users of the heath were also using the café
- the café encouraged visitors to the heath and
- provided a place for refreshments for visitors
- a further review in six months to assess the impact further

Davina informed the meeting that since the café opened there has been positive feedback about visits to Mousehold Heath placed on Trip Advisor; she also acknowledged that there was an impact on the car park, and the additional vehicles had a significant effect on the surface. Davina indicated that she may be able to offer a small contribution towards additional resurface work in the future.

Working Groups

Working groups for Mousehold was included in the discussion, and it was agreed that:

- Groups would be available from April 2015, after new accommodation block was in use
- Davina would liaise directly with Nigel Hales and Will Stewart about a work programme for clients
- There would be a review after six months of the work groups

Tree Works on St James Hill

Management of the trees on St James Hill was mentioned which seem to block the view across the city. Will Stewart informed the meeting that there was a current programme which will include:

- Coppicing of the bordering trees and bushes
- Trimming of branches; and
- Removal of one tree by bark ringing

The meeting was closed by David Bradford all where thanked for attending and reminded of the following Itinerant meeting to discuss further the wear and tear on Britannia Road car park.

Mousehold Heath Conservators itinerant meeting

Cllr Bradford, Cllr Little, Cllr Brociek-Coulton, Cllr Barker, Cllr Maxwell, Margaret Bush

Lenny Stamp, William Stewart, Bob Cronk, Paul Holley, Sarah Cracknell and Angela Western (NPS Norwich)

Britannia car park

Conservators considered the wear and tear of the car park surface and agreed to ask NPS for some alternative design options for a more robust car park surfacing that reduced costs but was in keeping with Mousehold Heath.

Mousehold Avenue

Surface water flooding

The use of the woodland hollow at the junction of Gurney Road and Mousehold lane as a soak away was agreed.

The Pavilion

NPS were asked to:

- request proposals from the leaseholder on the possible future maintenance of the toilet provision on the basis of previous suggestions
- ask that the leaseholder confirms if they wish to explore an increased outside eating area
- investigate if the current lease describes public usage of the external eating area;
- progress the lease and explore how it can be used to minimise size of lorries using the car park and access track

The wardens were also requested to remove one dead conifer tree on the edge of the car park, to open up sight line of the pavilion.

Heathland Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) Agreement

An area of recent HLS funded heathland restoration was visited. Heather seedlings could be seen in areas scrub cleared and humus stripped earlier in the year.

Conservators were pleased with the progress of the heathland restoration and HLS agreement.

Woodland Management

Beech Drive – a discussion concluded that encroaching vegetation onto the drive could be cut back, possibly by prison work parties.

The natural thinning of a large beech tree had created a natural glade which was now an important habitat for woodland butterfly species.

Woodland Management Update – an update was given stating that work was still being undertaken in accordance with Management Plan, including tree inspection

and safety surveys, ride and glade creation/conservation and the removal of non-native invasive species such as laurel and sycamore saplings.

Woodland Diseases - the only woodland disease presently affecting the heath is the Horse Chestnut leaf minor disease (first recorded 2002 in UK) which causes leaves on Horse Chestnut trees to colour and fall early. If the tree is in good health it should survive the disease.

Due to Mousehold Heath's acidic soils, Chalara Ash Dieback disease is not a major threat as only a few young ash trees grow on the site.

Further information and discussion on these subjects will be included in a Woodland Management Update at the next sub group meeting.