

**Committee Name:** Mousehold Heath Conservators

**Committee Date:** 17/09/2021

**Report Title:** Mousehold Heath management update 9 July to 31 August 2021

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Executive director of development and city services
<b>Report from:</b>	Parks and open spaces manager
<b>Wards:</b>	Crome/Catton Grove
<b>OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>	

### **Purpose**

To provide an update on the activities on the heath relating to the delivery of the Mousehold Heath management plan objectives between 9 July and 31 August 2021.

### **Recommendation:**

To note the content of the report.

### **Policy Framework**

The Mousehold Conservators Mousehold Heath management plan 2019-2028 has eight objectives, which 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.

This report meets all the objectives.

The Council has three corporate priorities, which are:

- People living well
- Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment
- Inclusive economy

This report meets the great neighbourhoods, housing and environment corporate priority

## **Report Details**

### **Objective A: To ensure Mousehold Heath is a welcoming place for people to visit.**

ML00/03      Concession Britannia Road

1. Sunset Café has notified NPSN that they wish to terminate their licence. They will cease trading on 16 September 2021.

AT40/01      CONTRACT MONITORING/IMPROVEMENT NCSL

2. Damaged litter bins are placed by Norwich City Services Limited (NCSL) on a like for like basis. On three occasions damaged bins have been replaced with black bins. The matter was raised with the contractor and due to supply issues with the green bins and only having black bins in stock, the bins were replaced with black ones. The wardens will monitor the situation, to ensure that green replacements are provided.

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

MC50/01      MOUSEHOLD PAVILION

3. Following approval at Mousehold Conservators Committee to commission year three of the pavilion maintenance the warden met with NPS Norwich (NPSN). A price for the work has been requested prior to works being procured and delivered this financial year.

AI60/03      FOOTBALL PITCH PROVISION

4. A sink hole appeared at the Fountain Ground adjacent to the football pitch near to Gurney Road. The hazard was made safe temporarily by the NCSL employee cutting the football pitch. A warden attended to supervise the area until NPSN were able to attend and make safe with heras fencing shortly after.
5. The hole was surveyed by a civil engineer from NPSN. It is likely that it occurred following a period of heavy rain in the days prior to the subsidence. Following assessment the hole was infilled with a concrete and soil sub-base and then turf re-instated. The area remained fenced off for two weeks to see how the area settled.

ML60/01      NORFOLK CONSTABULARY

6. Six wooden bollards were pulled up around the perimeter of Britannia Road car park, a no overnight parking sign removed from its fixing and a bench uprooted adjacent to the Mottram Memorial. The crimes were reported to the police using their crime reporting process. The police were unable to pursue any lines of enquiry, due to a lack of information/evidence. As a result the cases were closed. The local beat manager has been made aware and the wardens will report any further issues.

Works to re-install the bench and a replacement sign have been ordered.

7. The meeting room at the Fountain Ground changing room was broken into with the interior door damaged beyond repair. Nothing was stolen. This was reported to the police and a crime scene officer undertook an inspection of the room involving the removal of items and fingerprint recovery, this crime is still being investigated. The exterior doors had new locks fitted and the interior door has been replaced.
8. Following the discovery of a body on the heath at St Jame's Hill, the wardens assisted the police search team by brush cutting vegetation in the search area.

MP00/01 SITE PRESENCE

9. Increased patrols have been carried out due to the continuing high level of use of the heath by visitors.
10. Four campers and a camper van driver have been informed of the bylaws preventing camping and overnight stays. Two campers were Beech Drive, one adjacent to the Pitch and Putt course and one adjacent to the Rangers House. The camper van was parked on Gurney road.
11. Two BMX jumps were dismantled and BMX riders crossing the valley drive cycle path were engaged with and advised by the Mousehold wardens.

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

ME01/02 BOLLARDS

12. Five wooden bollards have been replaced around the perimeter of Britannia Road car park.
13. One wooden bollard has been installed by NPSN, after the old one was broken off at the entrance to Gilman Road from Mousehold Avenue entrance.

ME02/01 BENCH AND SEAT PROVISION

14. The wardens removed graffiti from five benches and then the benches were treated with wood preserver

ME04/01 LITTER PICKING

15. Litter from campers and areas where vegetation has been cleared was removed by NCSL and the wardens.

ME04/02 LITTER BINS

16. Graffiti was removed from two litter bins located at Hill Farm track and the Fountain Ground, behind the bandstand.

ME04/03 FLY TIPPING

17. NCSL EPA crew removed and disposed of fly tipped items from Hill Farm Track and the Pitch and Putt car parks, including garden waste and building materials.

ME12/01 REMOVE GRAFFITI

18. Graffiti was removed from nine benches, two emergency vehicle access signs, a blue waymark trail post, two bollards, an interpretation board, the bandstand and Zaks sign post, by the Mousehold wardens.

ME41/01      MAIN PATHS

19. Vegetation encroaching onto seventeen paths was cut back to improve access to the site by the Mousehold wardens. Scrub partially blocking a path on St James Hill was also cut back to improve access to the Mottram Memorial.

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

MH31/01      SCRUB AND TREE REMOVAL

20. Birch saplings were growing in open heathland areas, were pulled up using tree poppers, by the wardens and volunteers.

MH39/01      BRACKEN REMOVAL

21. Invasive bracken has been pulled, cut and removed from heathland and acid grassland habitats by hand and with brush-cutters.

RA42/01      BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SURVEY

22. Butterfly Conservation, Butterfly Monitoring Scheme transect surveys were carried out by the Mousehold wardens and volunteers along two transects on a weekly basis.

RA56/01      DRAGONFLY SPECIES LIST

23. Dragonfly species and abundance were recorded whilst carrying out the Butterfly Monitoring Survey

RA82/01      ST JAMES' HILL BUMBLEBEE SURVEY

24. Monthly Bumblebee Conservation Trust, BeeWalk transect surveys have been done by a Mousehold warden and a member of the Mousehold Defenders.

RA92/01      NATIONAL BAT MONITORING PROGRAMME

25. The second and final NBMP Bat Transect Survey of the year was completed on 31 July by a Mousehold warden and a volunteer.

RF22/02      MUSTARD GLADE SURVEY

26. Monthly wild flower surveys have been carried out by members of the Mousehold Heath Defenders recording the number of flower species.

RF22/03      ST JAMES' HILL SURVEY

27. A warden and a member of the Mousehold Heath Defenders carried out monthly flower surveys identifying a wide variety of flower species.

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

AT50/01 VOLUNTEERS GENERAL

28. A total of 336 community volunteer hours have been completed on the site between 9 July and 31 August by the following groups;
- Mousehold Heath Defenders
  - Mousehold Heath Mousketeers
  - The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
  - The Assist Trust
  - GoodGym Norwich
  - Many individual volunteers from the community

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

MI60/01 EVENTS

29. One ROOTS environmental education and play, activity session, took place, for young people, organised through Norwich City Council Events Team; and one Enchanted Wood Forest School environmental activity was held. These sessions increase the enjoyment, knowledge and interest of nature and the heath for young people.
30. A Community Wildlife Workshop took place on Monday 26 July, covering an introduction to moths, butterflies and other biodiversity inhabiting the site, led by a local expert and Mousehold Heath warden. five people attended the event, viewing 17 species of butterfly and other wildlife species.
31. Two, Heritage Open Day (HOD) walks (Geodiversity and History) have been organised for the 17 and 19 September, to be jointed led by a local geologist, and historian and the Mousehold wardens.

WASTES AND STRAYS PROJECT: URBAN COMMONS FUTURES

32. 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 involved with the work of the project.
33. 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.

34. In collaboration with the four cities, the aim is 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.
35. 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 are looking to involve community groups in a creative dialogue and activities, around how they use the heath.
36. On 16 and 17 August a project officer joined Mousehold volunteer work parties to interview participants
37. The project activities will be resourced by the Urban Commons Futures project with the wardens overseeing the delivery of activities on the heath.
38. The resource requirement and the potential impact on their work has been discussed with the wardens. The wardens have confirmed that they have the capacity to support through their day-to-day work, and also ensuring that the activities are appropriate and will not damage the heath. Further information about the project can be found here:

[Wastes and Strays | Wastes and Strays | Newcastle University \(ncl.ac.uk\)](#)

#### **Contact officers**

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#### **Background documents**

None