

## Mousehold Heath Conservators

Date: **Friday, 23 July 2021**  
Time: **14:00**  
Venue: **Council chamber City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH**

### Committee members:

Councillor Brociek-Coulton  
Councillor Button  
Councillor Galvin  
Councillor Kendrick  
Councillor Lubbock  
Councillor Maxwell  
Councillor Price  
Councillor Sands (M)  
Councillor Sands (S)  
Clare Cohen, Mousehold Heath  
Defenders  
Matthew Davies, Norwich Fringe Project  
John Trevelyan, The Norwich Society

### For further information please contact:

**Committee officer:** Chris Reynolds  
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### Information for members of the public

Members of the public and the media have the right to attend meetings of full council, the cabinet and committees except where confidential information or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private.

For information about attending or speaking at meetings, please contact the committee officer above or refer to the council's website.

## Agenda

### Page nos

**1 Appointment of Chair**

To appoint a chair for the ensuing civic year.

**2 Appointment of vice chair**

To appoint a vice chair for the ensuing civic year.

**3 Management sub-group membership**

To appoint members to the management sub-group

**4 Apologies**

To receive apologies for absence

**5 Public questions/petitions**

To receive questions / petitions from the public.  
Please note that all questions and petitions must be received by the committee officer detailed on the front of the agenda five clear working days before the meeting.  
For guidance on submitting public questions or petitions please see the council's constitution.

**6 Declarations of interest**

(Please note that it is the responsibility of individual members to declare an interest prior to the item if they arrive late for the meeting)

**7 Minutes**

**7 - 12**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2021

**8 Provisional Outturn 2020-21**

**13 - 16**

**Purpose** - To provide a provisional revenue and capital outturn position for the Mousehold Heath Conservators budgets 2020/21.

<b>9</b>	<b>Mousehold Heath Management Update 1 April 2021 to 9 July 2021</b>	<b>17 - 22</b>
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**Purpose** - To provide a quarterly update on activities on the heath relating to the delivery of the Mousehold Heath management plan objectives.

<b>10</b>	<b>Mousehold Heath Conservators Annual Report 2020-21</b>	<b>23 - 40</b>
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**Purpose** - To report on the work carried out on Mousehold Heath on behalf of the Mousehold Conservators for the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021.

<b>11</b>	<b>Flag Pole Location</b>	<b>41 - 44</b>
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**Purpose** - To decide on the location for the installation of a flag pole to fly the Green Flag

<b>12</b>	<b>Mousehold Pavilion Maintenance</b>	<b>45 - 48</b>
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**Purpose** - To seek approval for delivery of year three of the pavilion maintenance programme.

<b>13</b>	<b>Installation of a Letterbox at the Rangers House Access Track</b>	<b>49 - 52</b>
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**Purpose** - To seek approval for the installation of a letterbox next to the access track to the Ranger's House.

<b>14</b>	<b>Temporary Trading Sign Permission</b>	<b>53 - 56</b>
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**Purpose** - To consider a request from the Sunset Café a concession located on the heath to display a temporary sign advertising the café.

<b>15</b>	<b>Mousehold Heath Itinerant</b>	
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Oral report to discuss potential Mousehold Heath Conservators

itinerant to the Heath

## **16 Exclusion of the public**

Consideration of exclusion of the public.

### **EXEMPT ITEMS:**

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and the public.)

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, members are asked to decide whether, in all circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**Page nos**

## **17 Concession Application Gurney Road**

- This report is not for publication because it would disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as in para 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

Date of publication: **Thursday, 15 July 2021**





**Mousehold Heath Conservators****14:00 to 16:10****15 January 2021**

Present: Councillors Maxwell (chair), Price (vice chair), Brociek-Coulton, Button, Kendrick, Neale (substitute for Councillor Osborn), Sands (M), Sands (S), Clare Cohen (Mousehold Heath Defenders), Matthew Davies (Norwich Fringe Project) and John Trevelyan (Norwich Society)

Apologies: Councillors Lubbock and Osborn

**1. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**2. Public questions/petitions**

There were no public questions.

**3. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2020.

(The chair agreed to revise the order of the agenda so that the presentation on the environmental services update was taken earlier in the meeting to release the officers and the finance reports were taken in a logical order.)

**4. Environmental Services Update**

(Hannah Leys, managing director, Norwich City Services Ltd, and Helen Lambert, project manager (NNE), attended the meeting for this item.)

The managing director (NCSL) and project manager (NEE) gave a power point presentation on the city council's transfer of services to Norwich City Services Ltd (NCSL). (A copy of the presentation is available on the council's website with the agenda and papers for this meeting.) The transfer of environmental services to NCSL was on track for 1 April 2021. They said that they would welcome an invitation back to a meeting of the Conservators next year to report on progress.

In reply to questions from the vice chair, the managing director explained that NCSL would engage with the Conservators by working closely with the parks and open spaces manager and there would be quarterly stakeholder liaison meetings, which he would attend. A review of service specifications would commence from day one to accurately capture what was being delivered. The timing of the stakeholder liaison meetings could be scheduled to allow for the parks and open spaces manager to feed any issues raised at meetings of the Conservators into it. The parks and open spaces manager commented that he considered that there would be a seamless transition to NCSL. He also pointed out that the wardens maintained an issue log of any issues arising from contracts so he did not anticipate any problems in reporting these to NCSL.

In reply to a further question on the company's environmental credentials, the managing director said that the council and NCSL were committed to the council's environmental strategy and carbon reduction targets. The Conservators were advised that the depot would have a solar panels on its roof, that there would be two electric vehicles from the start of the contract with proposals to expand the fleet as opportunities arose, and that teams were trialling the use of electric power tools to roll these out across the service if found effective. The company would also have its own targets for environment improvements. NCSL would be happy to undertake a site visit to the heath with members and officers at the earliest opportunity.

Councillor Brociek-Coulton welcomed Hannah Leys to her new role, as she had worked with her previously on Norwich in Bloom and had been impressed by the level of service that had been received.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (1) thank Hannah Leys, managing director NCLS, and Helen Lambert, project manager (NEE) for attending the meeting and for their presentation;
- (2) extend an invitation to NCLS to attend the January 2022 meeting of the Conservators
- (3) hold a site visit accompanied by NCSL and officers to identify environmental improvements.

The finance business partner presented the report. He explained that the variance was incorrect, because of an issue with the repairs budget which should not have been added to the Conservators' account. The outturn figure of £222,492 was correct as was the level of reserves. He also explained that there was some confusion in the reports with the numbering of the pension instalments and confirmed that the 7<sup>th</sup> instalment had been paid in 2019-20, the 8<sup>th</sup> instalment in 2020-21, the 9<sup>th</sup> instalment was due in 2021-22 and the final instalment was due in 2022-23. The balance carried forward from 2019-20 was £18,270. The Conservators still held the capital receipt for the sale of the Rangers' House and would need council approval for any capital expenditure.

The vice chair commented on the report and said the management of the budgets and service delivery, and creation of an underspend, was a credit to the officers.



The capital programme was part of the Conservators' 10 year work programme and works on the football ground and pavilion would be brought forward next year. There was a prudent level of reserves and the pension liability debt would be paid in instalments.

The vice chair then referred to the minutes of the previous meeting (17 January 2020) where he had expressed concern that the prudent management of the Conservators' reserves could be undermined by a recharge from Norwich City Council and that the Conservators had requested a risk assessment to be undertaken so that they could have all the information available to them when making decisions on the precept and prudent level of reserves. The finance business partner said that the prudent level of reserves was 5 per cent of the overall budget. There was no scope to reduce expenditure but that after the pensions liability debt had been paid off a further £3,000 would be added to the reserves each year. Officers confirmed that some work had been done on this. The vice chair commented that the Conservators should be aware of the true, quantifiable risk when setting its precept and considering the prudent management. The parks and open spaces manager acknowledged this concern and, in the interests of due diligence, suggested that in future years the Conservators considered the risk assessment at its September meeting which would then inform the setting of the precept in January.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) note the revenue and capital outturn positions for 2019-20;
- (2) that officers undertake a risk assessment of recharges from the city council and that the information is considered at the Conservators' September meeting before the setting of the precept and prudent level of reserves at the January meeting.

**6.**

The finance business partner presented the report. As explained in relation to the previous report, the budget appeared to be higher than the precept because of the inclusion of the repairs budget making the underspend greater than the actual amount. He also confirmed that the pension instalment for this financial year was the 8<sup>th</sup> not 9<sup>th</sup> as referred to in the report.

The parks and opens spaces manager confirmed that the underspend, achieved through the management of the budgets, was just under £6,000.

**RESOLVED** to note the current budget monitoring position and capital position.

The financial business partner presented the report. He explained that the opening reserves for 2021-2022 was £15,525 rather than £17,060 (*Budget & Precept 2021-22*, paragraph 3). The underspend of £1,598 should be corrected to £63. The chair commented that last year an additional £6,000 had been requested the previous year for the pavilion works and was reassured that the precept this year could be reduced by £4,636.

During discussion, the Conservators considered whether the level of balances should be increased or decreased, in light of the council's risk environment and steps to mitigate the risks. Councillor Kendrick, in his capacity as cabinet member for resources, said that risk levels had to be calculated and advised members to be guided by the officers' recommendations, as set out in the report.

John Trevelyan pointed out that the actual figures at year end might be better than projected and commented that the letting of the pop-up café concession would generate an income that was not accounted for in the proposed budgets for 2021-22.

The vice chair commented that it had been proposed to increase the level of reserves to 10 per cent of the annual budget over time, not the 5 per cent recommended by the officers, and called on Councillor Kendrick to engage the support of cabinet colleagues to progress the risk assessment (of potential recharges from the city council) so that the Conservators were in an informed position when it set a prudent level of reserves next year.

**RESOLVED** having considered the report to:

- (1) approve the budget proposals set out in paragraph 10 of the report and approve the budgets set out in Appendix A
- (2) place a precept on Norwich City Council for to fund expenditure would be **£235,471** (20/21 £240,107) (this will be a decrease of £4,636 from the 2020/21 precept).

The parks and open spaces manager presented the report. He referred to the 10 year work programme and because of the pandemic it had been necessary to move three work streams. The review of the tree safety strategy was in progress but would not be completed by April and would be included in the work programme for 2021-2022. The review of sports provision had not been started this year and therefore would also slip to the 2021-2022 work programme. As a consequence the review of the wardens' office accommodation would slip to 2022-2023. Decisions on these reviews would be delivered in the following year.

Members were also advised that the Green Flag award was awarded on an annual basis and that it would be necessary to apply for accreditation each year.

The parks and opens spaces manager referred to the report and outlined the costings for the works to the pavilion that were proposed to take place in 2021-2022.

In reply to a question about the provision of car and cycle parking for visitors to the heath and whether it could accommodate large numbers of visitors, the parks and opens spaces manager said that the wardens had reported an increase in visitors to the heath, which in the summer had been up by 70 per cent. Mousehold Heath had a large number of access points which dissipated visitors, unlike Eaton Park for instance, and had its own car park. The pandemic had provided a greater understanding of how people used outdoor space and what was important to people for their recreation. The vice chair suggested that there should be a press release

on the heath and that he would speak to the communications team about this. He also suggested that the Beryl Bikes should be available on the heath.

During discussion, the Conservators agreed the proposed changes to the work programme. The use of the reserves to deliver the pavilion works was considered prudent. The vice chair suggested that the Conservators considered establishing a subcommittee to oversee the project and monitor expenditure.

**RESOLVED** to approve:

- (1) the annual work programme for 2021-2022;
- (2) £3,150 expenditure from reserves to deliver the pavilion works required in 2021-22.

The parks and open spaces manager presented the report for the period 1 April 2020 to 15 January 2021. He paid particular tribute to the two wardens who had continued to deliver against the Mousehold Heath management plan objectives in despite the impact of Covid-19, which had included increased visitor numbers to the heath and the introduction of home working for council officers.

The Conservators noted that during this period, the parks and open spaces manager, in consultation with the chair and vice chair, had taken urgent decisions in relation to the concession on Britannia Road to the Sunset Café and the tree works to Turner's Oak which had an impact on the carpark.

The chair referred to the award of the Green Flag and thanked the Mousehold Heath Defenders and the officers for their contribution towards the receipt of this award.

**RESOLVED** to note the report.

The chair introduced the report and thanked the officers for the production of the report.

John Trevelyan commented that he had visited the heath recently and said that there was plenty of space to exercise away from other people. He had also seen the evidence of the work that the wardens had been doing to maintain the heath.

**RESOLVED** to note the report.

CHAIR



<b>Report to</b>	Mousehold Heath Conservators	<b>Item</b>
	23 July 2021	
<b>Report of</b>	Chief finance officer (Section 151 Officer)	
<b>Subject</b>	Provisional Outturn 2020/21	

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### **Purpose**

To provide a provisional revenue and capital outturn position for the Mousehold Heath Conservators budgets 2020/21.

### **Recommendation**

To note the revenue and capital outturn positions.

### **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority value for money services

### **Financial implications**

The report states the provisional outturn position for Mousehold Heath Conservators, and the financial implications are discussed within the report.

**Ward/s:** Crome

**Cabinet member:** Councillor Kendrick - Resources

### **Contact officers**

Vicki Reynolds (Service accountant)

01603 987667

### **Background documents**

None

## Report

1. Conservators approved a budget and precept for the financial year 2020/21 of £240,107 at their meeting of 17 January 2020.
2. The Conservators have requested that budget reports be brought to their meetings on a regular basis. Appendix A details the provisional revenue outturn for Mousehold Heath as at the end of 2020/21, and comparison against the annual budget. Explanations for variances are given in the paragraph below.
3. The letter preceding the explanation below cross references with the corresponding letter shown in Appendix A.
  - A. Salaries are lower than budget due to a review of late shift payments.
  - B. Some items have been miscoded but together these amounts fall within the budget.
  - C. There has been reduced activity due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - D. The overspend on grounds and tree maintenance is due to an in year revision of the Bill of Quantities.
  - E. This variance is for bench sponsorship.
  - F. This variance is due to additional concession income.
  - G. Depreciation is charged but does not impact on balances, as it is reversed out of the revenue accounts.
4. Overall the budget report shows an underspend of £9,871 against the budget. However, in the calculation of the surplus or deficit attributable to Conservator's balances, the adjustments referred to above need to be applied to the actual expenditure incurred of £230,236, leaving an underspend against the precept of £13,645.
5. The revenue surplus attributable to Conservators' balances can be summarised as:

Item	2020/21 £
Net Revenue 2020/21	226,462
Less: Precept 2020/21	(240,107)
<b>Surplus 2020/21</b>	<b>13,645</b>

## Balances

6. At their meeting of 21 June 2013, the Conservators' opted to take up the council's offer to spread a £28,077 pension deficit charge, incurred as a result of a contractor's failure, over ten years. The Conservators' balance will

therefore be reduced by the amount of £2,808 (being the eighth of ten instalments) as well as the addition of the revenue surplus.

7. The impact of the revenue surplus and pension costs on the level of balances is therefore:

Item	2020/21 £
Balance brought forward from 2019/20	(18,270)
Revenue Surplus 2020/21	(13,645)
Pension costs – 8 <sup>th</sup> of 10 instalments	2,808
<b>Provisional balance c/f to 2021/22</b>	<b>(29,107)</b>

8. This level of balances is above the level of balances anticipated by Conservators when setting the precept for 2020/21 at their meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> January 2020.
9. Conservators may wish to review the work programme should they wish to reduce spend in the year and contribute to reserves.

### Capital

10. The position on capital is as follows, with no spend incurred in 2020/21:

Item	£
Rangers House balance b/f	- £100,766
Balance of receipts c/f	- £100,766

### Summary

11. The Conservators' financial position at the end of the 2020/21 financial year is consistent with the financial planning, budgets, and precept for 2020/21.
12. To maintain this position for the current and future financial years, Conservators will need to continue to monitor income and expenditure and ensure that the level of future precepts takes account of the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves, and the impact of the remaining instalments of the pension deficit costs.

## Appendix A

		Current budget	Actual	Variance	
<b>421020</b>	<b>Mousehold Heath Conservators</b>	<b>240,107</b>	<b>230,236</b>	<b>(9,871)</b>	
2000	Salaries	73,210	71,716	(1,494)	A
2011	Employers Pension C'tributions	9,632	9,446	(186)	A
2015	Annual Added Years Payments	4,229	4,108	(121)	
2018	Pension Deficit Recovery	14,526	14,526	0	
2090	Employee/Public Liab Insurance	55	0	(55)	
2285	Water Charges Metered	78	0	(78)	
2102	Responsve Rprs CW srvcs exR100	0	4,919	4,919	B
2103	General Repairs & Mtce	15,000	3,412	(11,588)	B
2170	Programmed Maint(ES/Prop Grp)	0	1,336	1,336	B
2171	Day to Day Reps (ES/Prop Grp)	0	3,133	3,133	B
2207	Contract Cleaning	7,710	7,833	123	
2216	Electricity	1,493	1,409	(84)	
2231	Grounds General Mtce & Upkeep	2,204	(205)	(2,409)	C
2239	Rechge from GMO main contract	78,724	80,846	2,122	D
2240	Treeworks	4,467	6,079	1,612	D
2255	Fire Insurance Buildings/Conts	30	32	2	
2400	Car and Cycle Allowances	800	553	(247)	C
2600	Clothing and Uniforms General	500	132	(368)	C
2658	Equipment - Purchase	450	280	(170)	C
2659	Equip-Repairs/Mtce	650	438	(212)	C
2663	Other Equipment and Tools	550	563	13	
2682	Refreshments	745	0	(745)	C
2684	Staff Conference & Course Fees	500	0	(500)	C
2710	Specialist Supplies	445	0	(445)	C
2832	Projects	4,046	1,671	(2,375)	C
2849	Other Contractual Services	7,110	2,993	(4,117)	C
4000	I.T. Services recharge	5,874	5,483	(391)	
4002	Personnel Services Support	4,370	4,097	(273)	
4003	Financial Services Support	8,103	8,127	24	
4006	Management Support	7,484	6,689	(795)	
4007	Communications support	2,530	2,445	(85)	
4011	Property Services Support	0	662	662	
4015	Recharge from AHOs	5,000	3,727	(1,273)	
1061	Football	(1,404)	(188)	1,216	C
1135	Sponsorship - External Orgs	0	(289)	(289)	E
1146	Other Rents	(15,000)	(15,000)	0	
1148	Catering Concessn Pitch & Putt	(1,800)	(2,309)	(509)	F
1412	Government Grants - Specific	(2,204)	(2,204)	0	
3601	Depreciation	0	3,774	3,774	G



**Report to** Mousehold Heath Conservators  
23 July 2021  
**Report of** Parks and open spaces manager  
**Subject** Mousehold Heath Management Update 1 April 2021 to  
9 July 2021

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## **Purpose**

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

## **Recommendation**

To note the content of the report.

## **Mousehold Heath management plan objectives**

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.

## **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority great neighbourhoods, housing and environment.

## **Financial implications**

Any financial implications arising from this report will have or will be met from approved budgetary provision.

**Ward/s:** Catton Grove and Crome

## **Contact officer**

Simon Meek, parks and open spaces manager	01603 989479
Will Stewart, Mousehold Heath warden	01603 989587
Nigel Hales, Mousehold Heath warden	01603 989392

## Report

### **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 2021, along all main paths, 14 dead, dying, dangerous trees and branches were made safe, between April and June, by the Mousehold wardens. Three, additional specialised tree works were ordered through the council's arboricultural team, and carried out by Norwich City Services Ltd (NCSL).
2. A meeting with the council's arboricultural officer and the Mousehold wardens took place in April, to assess and discuss the impact of high footfall on sensitive areas of the heath, and tree safety work required in the Beech Drive area.
3. In addition to the tree survey, eight more windblown/dead trees or branches, identified by the wardens on patrol, or members of the community, adjacent to main pathways, were completed.

#### AT40/01 CONTRACT MONITORING/IMPROVEMENT NORWICHNORSE ENVIRONMENTAL (NNE)

4. Gilman Road, Mousehold Avenue and Valley Drive footpath-cycle routes have not been regularly swept, this has been reported to our new company NCSL and the Area Management Officer for the eastern area.
5. The areas will be closely monitored by the Wardens and the Area Management Officer to ensure there is an improvement in the future.

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

#### ML00/01 MOUSEHOLD PAVILION

6. An initial meeting with NorwichNorse Property Services (NPSN) was contacted regarding programmed maintenance works to the pavilion.

#### ML60/01 NORFOLK CONSTABULARY

7. The Mousehold wardens liaised with police officers regarding anti-social behaviour and also a search for a lost, vulnerable adult.

## MP00/01 SITE PRESENCE

8. Increased patrols were undertaken due to the increase in visitor numbers.
9. A number of complaints have been received regarding cyclists jumping over the hard surface of the public cycle route/footpath at Valley Drive. Wardens have increased their presence and patrolled this area at peak times on weekends and evenings, advising cyclists of the risk to the public and that they should not be cycling on the heath. A temporary solution will be put in place to deter the activity and it is suggested that a site visit forms part of the itimerant to discuss a more permanent solution.
10. Two campers has been informed of the Bylaws and asked to leave the site.

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

### ME01/01 GATES FENCING AND BARRIERS

11. A repair was undertaken to secure the hasp and staple to the wooden access gate to Beech Drive

### ME01/02 BOLLARDS

12. Six bollards were renewed along the disable pathway adjacent to Britannia Road to upgrade old decaying ones. A number of vandalised bollards were reinstalled by the wardens.

### ME04/01 LITTER PICKING

13. Due to the increase in visitor numbers during lockdown, additional litter picks have been carried out by Mousehold volunteers and wardens.

### 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.

### ME04/03 FLY TIPPING

15. 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.
16. Seven cubic metres of fly-tipping and litter were removed from an area adjacent to the back gardens of Lavengro Road and surrounding area, making it safer for Forest School activities which take place in the area.

### ME12/01 REMOVE GRAFFITI

17. 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.

18. Graffiti has been removed from 5 benches, a way-marker post and 2 emergency vehicle access signs by the Mousehold wardens.

#### ME41/01 MAIN PATHS

19. Nine paths have been cut to allow easy access across Gilman Road Open Space and the Desert Wildflower meadow by a Mousehold warden. To make the area accessible, whilst increasing biodiversity in uncut areas, which receive a conservation cut later in the summer.
20. Scrub partially blocking a path on St James Hill has been cut back to allow easier access the Mottram Memorial.
21. Wooden dam boards and posts were used to support an eroding footpath by a Mousehold warden with help from a City College DofE group.

#### ME44/02 CAR PARK SURFACING

22. The pavilion public car park, Gurney Road was re-graded and potholes filled with spoil left over from the Turners Oak tree improvement works.

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

#### MH31/01 SCRUB AND TREE REMOVAL

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

#### MH39/01 BRACKEN REMOVAL

24. Invasive bracken has been pulled by hand and using tree poppers in the heather area.

#### RA12/01 COMMON BIRD CENSUS

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

#### RA42/01 BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SURVEY

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

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

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

#### RA92/01 NATIONAL BAT MONITORING PROGRAMME

28. NBMP Bat Transect Surveys are planned for July.

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

#### AT50/01 VOLUNTEERS GENERAL

29. Following the lockdown and in line with government and Norwich City Council policy, volunteer activity resumed on the heath on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021. 418 community volunteer hours have been completed up to 08/07/21 by the following groups;

- Mousehold Heath Defenders
- Mousehold Heath Mousketeers
- City College DofE Group
- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
- 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

30. A number of ROOTS environmental education and play activity sessions, for young people, organised through Norwich City Council Events Team, have taken place on the heath.
31. The Enchanted Woods Forest School environmental activity group has run weekly sessions, increasing knowledge, interest and enjoyment of nature for young people.
32. Two, Heritage Open Day (HOD) walks (Geodiversity and History) have been organised for the 17 and 19 September, to be jointly led by a local geologist, historians and Mousehold wardens.

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

33. Following the Wastes and Strays conference, in Brighton, in 2019 which was attended by two members of the Mousehold Heath Conservators and a Mousehold the conservators agreed to be part of the Wastes and Strays project and support project activities.
34. 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.

35. In collaboration with the four cities, the plan 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.
36. 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 and alternative futures for urban commons in general.
37. The 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 and they have confirmed that they have the capacity to support and advise the project whilst also ensuring that 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 \(ncl.ac.uk\)](#)

**Report to** Mousehold Heath Conservators  
23 July 2021  
**Report of** Parks and open spaces manager  
**Subject** Mousehold Heath Conservators Annual Report 2020-21

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## **Purpose**

To report on the work carried out on Mousehold Heath on behalf of the Mousehold Conservators for the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021.

## **Recommendation**

To:

- (1) note the content of the report.
- (2) produce a simplified summary PDF version of the report highlights, in colour, to be published on the Mousehold Heath web page.
- (3) include information about the heath to raise awareness of its value as an open space and the opportunities it has to offer for residents and visitors.
- (4) delegate authority to the Parks and open spaces manager to produce the finished version of the summary report with the communications team.

## **Mousehold Heath management plan objectives**

The report helps to meet all objectives in the Mousehold Heath management plan.

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

## **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority great neighbourhoods, housing and environment.

## **Financial implications**

Any financial implications arising from this report will have or will be met from approved budgetary provision.

**Ward/s:** Catton Grove and Crome

**Contact officer**

Simon Meek, parks and open spaces manager	01603 989479
Will Stewart, Mousehold Heath warden	01603 989587
Nigel Hales, Mousehold Heath warden	01603 989392



## **Introduction**

1. Mousehold Heath is a unique area made up of 88 hectares (184 acre) of woodland, heathland and recreational open space within Norwich. Mousehold has played an important part in the history of Norwich and it is a designated Local Nature Reserve. It is important both for its wildlife and as a place where people can improve their health by exercising and unwind from the pace of city life.
2. In Tudor times, Mousehold Heath stretched as far north as South Walsham and was 22 miles round. The surviving remnant of the heath was given to Norwich City Council (then known as the local corporation) by the Dean and Chapter, to look after on behalf of the citizens of Norwich.
3. This was officially recorded in 1884 by Parliament in an agreement called the Mousehold Heath Confirmation Act and a body called the Mousehold Heath Conservators was formed to govern the heath. The Mousehold Conservators is comprised of city councilors, representatives of professional bodies and members of the public and meets four times a year, to oversee the management and protection of Mousehold Heath.
4. The Conservators also prepare an annual report which provides an overview of the work of the Conservators, any changes to the heath or new biological records and an opportunity to look forward and reflect on changes, opportunities and issues that the heath faces. The report also highlights the level of voluntary activity as well as the numbers of events, walks and surveys undertaken.
5. The report also highlights how the community are involved with Mousehold Heath; through active involvement in its management and attending events and guided walks and talks, to find out more about their local open space.

## **The work of the Mousehold Conservators**

6. The management of Mousehold Heath is guided by the Management Plan 2019 - 28. This seeks to balance the important ecological value of Mousehold with an equally important recreational site within an urban area.
7. The challenge is to balance these important and at times conflicting objectives.
8. The Conservators agree an annual work programme and budget in January each year for the following financial year and monitor the implementation of this plan at its meetings.
9. The management plan and further details of the work of the Mousehold Conservators can be found on the Norwich City Council website.

[https://www.norwich.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5043/mousehold\\_heath\\_management\\_plan.pdf](https://www.norwich.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5043/mousehold_heath_management_plan.pdf)

## **Mousehold Heath during Covid-19 and lockdowns**

10. In accordance with government Covid-19 regulations, volunteer, school and college student activities were suspended during both lockdowns (see volunteering and Covid-19 section later in report).
11. During the first lockdown, with people told to exercise locally, the wardens observed an increase in visitors (estimated at 5 times the usual number). People who may have driven to the coast or countryside were using the heath, and appreciating more than ever, the positive impact of having safe and accessible green space on their doorstep.
12. During this time, the wardens received positive feedback about how important and wonderful it was to have such a large, semi-natural area so close to their homes.
13. The wardens continued to undertake ecological surveys (it was much easier to record bird song without car and plane sound) and tree safety works. Their work switched to issues arising from the increase in visitors due to the promotion of the site through social media, local press and TV, promoting the Heath as a top five place to visit in Norwich as a natural area for physical exercise and mental health well-being, within the lock down periods.
14. Patrols were increased to deal with anti-social behaviour, such as campfires, BBQ's, with an increase in cycling and BMX jump construction, fly-tipping, etc.
15. Extra litter picks were undertaken to remove the increase in litter. With recycling centres closed, the wardens reported over twenty cases of fly-tipping for removal by NCSL.
16. Without volunteer activity, the wardens spent extra time maintaining site infrastructure, such as painting benches, repairing nature trail/earth heritage trail posts and cleaning interpretation boards.
17. For many people, the new normal is more locally focused and the heath has continued to see an increased number of visitors through the year, even when lockdowns haven't been in place. This year, more than ever, the site has provided the community with space to escape, space to unwind and space to reflect on the events of 2020-21 and enjoy the natural world in a safe environment.

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

### **AF00/01 PREPARE ANNUAL BUDGET**

18. The Mousehold Heath revenue budget for 2020/21 was £240,107, with £100,766 capital held in reserves.

### **AI00/01 GREEN FLAG AWARD APPLICATION**

19. The Mousehold Heath Conservators applied submitted a Green Flag application application in February 2020 and judging took place in July 2020. The green flag judge who was shown various parts of the heath by the Chair of the Mousehold Heath Conservators, Cllr Marion Maxwell and the Chair of the Mousehold Defenders, Clare Cohen, accompanied by the Mousehold Heath Wardens. The application was successful and Mousehold Heath achieved Green Flag status for the first time.
20. Sites have to apply annually and be judged annually to ensure that they are stilling meeting the criteria to receive the award. An application was submitted in February 2021 and the site will be judged again later this year.

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

**AI30/02 TREE SAFETY INSPECTION**

21. Both six monthly (September 2020 and March 2021) tree safety surveys were completed by the wardens, identifying 76 dead, dying, dangerous trees and branches mostly due to several high winds and adverse weather conditions, requiring work to manage tree safety risk. Works were completed by the Mousehold wardens within three months, with three specialised specialised pieces of work being delivered by NorwichNorse Environmental (NNE).
22. An early Autumn storm on 25.09.20 created significant damage, with the Mousehold wardens undertaking twelve windblown tree safety jobs following the strong winds.
23. An additional 32 dead, dying, dangerous and windblown trees and branches spotted during patrols and reported by members of the community, these were been made safe and cleared by the Mousehold wardens.
24. Due to the concern regarding the declining health of the Turners Oak tree located in the middle of the pavilion public car park, Gurney Road, a site meeting was held by the Mousehold wardens and Norwich City Council's arboricultural officer to discuss measures to improve the future health of the tree.
25. It was thought that the declining condition of the tree was due to suffocation of the root system caused by compaction of the surrounding soil by vehicles using the car park. The compaction reduces the amount of air being taken up by the roots.
26. Improvement works were ordered a specialised contractor was procured to undertake the works to improve soil conditions and secure the future health of the tree.
27. The recommended works carried out included, the extension of the existing root protection area (RPA) at the base of the tree to reduce soil compaction by vehicles and air spading (using compressed air to loosen compacted soil around

the roots) within the root protection area to improve air circulation to the root system and to improve soil conditions within the RPA.

28. The works started on Monday 22nd February over a five day period and completed on Friday 26th February.
29. Since the works, the tree's condition has started to improve.

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

30. A sponsored bench was installed within the open grassed area, locally known as the Round Hill, accessed by following the pathway to the side of the pavilion from the car park on Gurney Road.
31. The new bench replaced an old decaying bench. A trustee of a charity developing a football museum at Norwich City Football Club was interested in displaying the old bench in the museum as a piece of historical memorabilia. It had been a location of several meetings held by the club in its formative years. Approval was granted by the conservators via email.

#### MH08 DEAD AND DECAYING WOOD

32. Dead/diseased/dying trees were retained, to encourage a diverse structure to woodland and to ensure that there is a supply of dead and decaying wood for those specialist species which require it. Trees identified as posing an unacceptable level of safety risk were removed. Where appropriate dead wood removed is left on site as a habitat.

#### MI60/03 FOOTBALL PITCH PROVISION

33. A full-sized football pitch is available for hire at the Fountain Ground, Gurney Road, including changing rooms, showers and toilets.
34. 16 senior matches and 1 junior match were held at the Fountain Ground in the 2019/20 season, income from the facility was £1020.04. The income was impacted by
35. The cost per booking for the 19/20 season was £65.81 (standard charge) or £54.84 (VAT exempt) the junior rate was £32.90.

#### MI60/04 FOOTBALL BOOKINGS MANAGEMENT

36. This facility can be booked via Norwich City Services Ltd on 01603 987922 or email [ncslsportsbookings@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:ncslsportsbookings@norwich.gov.uk)

#### MP00/01 SITE PRESENCE

37. Covid 19 lockdowns and being promoted through the media and online as a top ten place to visit in the city, resulted in the heath seeing an increase in visitor

use for outdoor exercise. Due to the increased use patrols were undertaken more frequently.

#### MP00/02 PATROLL SITE BOUNDARIES AND HOTSPOTS

38. Due to adverse weather conditions two sink holes were discovered on Monday 4 January 2021 both appeared at the same time, one at St. James Hill and the other in the woodland adjacent to the pavilion car park on Gurney Road.
39. These were dealt with under an emergency order and fenced off with Heras fencing to ensure public health and safety.
40. Both areas were left for several weeks to settle, a visual safety inspection was carried out to determine the cause followed by a probe inspection by NPSN and a senior civil engineer. The cause was put down to wet and cold conditions over a prolonged period of time making the underlying soil conditions unstable, the survey did not identify any other cause. They were filled in and monitored once a month over a five-month period to make sure they were stable, both locations were then re-opened to the public.

#### RH35/01 ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES CRIME

41. The wardens worked with the council's homeless/rough sleeper coordinator for support to be provided to rough sleepers (camping or sleeping in vehicles) on the heath. This included site visits, resulting in temporary accommodation being found until a more permanent arrangement could be made.
42. A number of BMX jumps were dismantled and holes filled in by the wardens, adjacent to Valley Drive and central parts of the heath. The wardens also used the principle of engage, inform, and advise when speaking to people having BBQ's and campfires on open spaces and conservation areas across the site also metal detectorists have been asked to move on from St. James Hill, the pitch and putt side of the heath and the Winfield open space.
43. Car parking was also in demand with vehicle encroachment being an issue, drivers were asked to move on to protect the heath and keep emergency access gates clear.

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

#### ME01/01 GATES, FENCING AND BARRIERS

44. Following an insurance claim concerning the damage to a roof rack caused to a vehicle by the height barrier cross bar at the pitch and putt car park, the height of the barriers at Gilman Road and the Pitch and Putt car parks has now been painted on each cross bar, to mitigate against any future claims.

45. As a result of normal wear and tear one new chain link fencing supporting post was installed and six sections of fencing re secured to supporting posts at the Fountain Ground sports pitch, Gurney Road.

#### ME01/02 BOLLARDS

46. Four new wooden bollards were installed around the perimeter of Britannia Road car park, replacing missing and damaged ones to ensure the security of the site.
47. Four new bollards were installed in an area of woodland along the edge of the driveway leading from Britannia Road to the flats managed by Wensum Property, to deter illegal parking on the Heath by residents.
48. Six bollards were renewed along the disable pathway adjacent to Britannia Road to upgrade old decaying ones.

#### ME04/01 LITTER PICKING

49. NCSL litter picked the whole site five days a week Monday to Friday with just the car parks being litter picked on a weekend.
50. An area used for camping at the top of St. James Hill was cleared and rubbish removed by the wardens. Assistance was provided by the NCSL litter picker, as part of his daily work.

#### ME04/02 LITTER BINS

51. Graffiti was removed from five litter bins across the site, this fell within the terms of the maintenance contract provided by NCSL.

#### ME04/03 FLY TIPPING

52. An above average number of fly tipped items, 25 individual reports, were removed from Hill Farm Track, Pitch and Putt and Britannia road car parks and other parts of the heath, including garden waste and building materials. Items found are being removed and disposed of by NCSL.

#### ME06/01 FINGER POSTS AND WAYMARKERS

53. The Nature Trail and Earth Heritage trail posts and discs have been maintained and any rotten or vandalised ones replaced.

#### ME12/01 REMOVE GRAFFITI

54. Five separate incidents of graffiti were removed from bollards and cycle route signs along Gilman Road, the notice board, Welcome to Mousehold Heath sign, historical interpretation panel (adjacent to the Ice Cream concession) on Gurney Road. The graffiti was reported using the council's online reporting system and removed the next day, the police were also informed.

55. Graffiti on former Cllr David Bradford's bench and two interpretation boards was removed by the wardens.

#### ME12/04 CHANGING ROOMS

56. The meeting room window at the Fountain Ground changing rooms was vandalised and required the installation of a new security grill.

#### ME41/01 MAIN PATHS

57. Eighteen paths have been maintained by brush cutting and raking off vegetation, including those on Gilman Road Open Space, the Wildflower Meadow; Mustard Pond Glade, in front of the pavilion; St William's Chapel; and St James Hill by the wardens with the help of volunteers.

#### ME41/03 CYCLEWAYS

58. All main cycleways have been flailed by NNE and swept to help control encroaching vegetation providing safe and open access.

#### ME44/02 CAR PARK SURFACING

59. Due to erosion caused by high vehicle usage, car park maintenance works were required at the lay by on Gurney Road, these works included the levelling of the curb from car park to highway and pot holes being filled.

#### ML00/03 CONCESSION BRITANNIA ROAD

60. A site meeting was held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December attended by the chair, vice chair and Mousehold Heath wardens to meet and introduce themselves to the successful applicant of Sunset Café, the new concession holder for Britannia Road.
61. The position was offered on a twelve-month basis with a contract drawn up on behalf of the conservators by NorwichNorse Property Services covering a twelve-month period from December 2020.

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

#### **Heathland and Grassland management**

62. Lowland heathland is a scarce and threatened habitat and only a sixth of the heathland that was present in England in 1800 now remains.
63. However, Britain still has 20 per cent of the world's total area of heathland and this makes it important to conserve the existing heathland areas and look for opportunities to extend them.

64. The Government UK Biodiversity Action Plan for Lowland Heathland includes targets for establishing more lowland heathland to provide space for wildlife and open access to members of the community.
65. Similar declines have been seen in acid grassland habitat. Both of these habitats can be found at Mousehold and provide a home to a high number of notable, declining and threatened species.
66. Heather is an important nectar source for many insects, such as bees, butterflies and hoverflies. A survey of solitary bee and wasps found a number of scarce and threatened species on heather and bare ground, inhabiting the heath.
67. One of the management objectives is to address the reduction of open heathland and acid grassland across the site, which has occurred over the last 40 years. Of the total area of 88 hectares, only 10 hectares of Mousehold is covered by heathland.
68. Butterflies, such as small copper and green hairstreak, and a number of moth species, such as true lover's knott, heath rustic and beautiful yellow underwing, are associated with heathland habitats, and were recorded on the heath this year.

#### HL40/06 NATURAL ENGLAND HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP (HLS) AGREEMENT

69. A grant of £30,600 was awarded to be paid in equal annual payments until the year 2022/23. HLS funding has enabled the conservators to access specialist contractors to achieve their objective objective of improving the quantity and quality of heathland habitat.
70. The funding has been used to restore heathland and acid grassland, by removing scrub, mowing with a tractor-mounted Ryttec mower, grinding stump, and stripping humus. This has resulted in existing heathland areas being enlarged and linked up.
71. Habitat improvements carried out during 2020-21 involved the removal of encroaching trees, scrub and leggy gorse from existing heathland areas. These works are were undertaken by volunteers and contractors under the supervision of the wardens, in compliance with the HLS agreement. The works also included humus stripping and the use of a cut and collect mower, to control nutrient enrichment of soil, in line with management plan objectives
72. In short sward open areas, tree poppers were used to pull up birch saplings, which rapidly out-compete heather and grassland species.
73. Future management will increasingly move from heathland restoration to maintenance as areas in the agreement are restored.

#### MH12/01 MAINTAIN ACID GRASSLAND



- 74. The Anthill and Wildflower Meadows had an annual conservation cut which was completed by volunteers and the wardens.
- 75. All arisings were removed from site, minimising nutrient enrichment of the soil. These management techniques provide and maintain acidic soil conditions required by specialist grasses and wildflowers found on the heath.
- 76. The conservation of ant hills is ensured through sympathetic management techniques, such as using a cord trimmer and carefully raking around the habitats.

#### **MH39/01: BRACKEN REMOVAL**

- 77. Large areas of bracken were cut, pulled, raked and removed from heathland, grassland and woodland glade habitats by volunteers and the wardens. This summer task is crucial to conserving nectar rich heather species and complying with the Mousehold Heath's, Natural England, HLS Agreement.

#### **MH39//03 COMMON GORSE REMOVAL**

- 78. Invasive common gorse has been cut and removed from heathland areas to conserve heather, western gorse and other dwarf shrub species.

#### **Woodland management**

- 79. Mousehold today is largely covered in secondary woodland and scrub, consisting mainly of oak and birch, with some rowan and sycamore. These are species which readily invade open areas.

#### **MH00/01 COPPICING**

- 80. Woodland areas were managed through a number of techniques to diversify and enhance habitat and increase biodiversity, through ride creation, coppicing, and pollarding.
- 81. Work to maintain access to a section of woodland adjacent to Gilman Road by clearing dead and overgrown vegetation has continued. This work has been carried out to increase community access to a formally impenetrable area, with the aim of improving biodiversity and creating a more diverse environment for fauna and flora to become established.

#### **MH03/01 NATURAL REGENERATION**

- 82. Natural woodland regeneration is encouraged, rather than the planting of new trees, which ensures the trees within the woodland are of local provenance, minimising the spread of pests and disease.

#### **MH04/01 GLADE MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE**

83. Grassland habitat in the Wildlife/Mustard Pond glade has been maintained by cutting and raking encroaching vegetation, such as invasive bracken and bramble.

#### MH31/01 SCRUB AND TREE REMOVAL

84. Invasive scrub and birch trees have been cut and removed within the heathland habitat area.

#### **Aquatic habitats**

##### MH60/01 Vinegar Pond and MH60/02 Mustard Pond

85. The Vinegar and Mustard Ponds are the only source of water on the heath. These habitats were monitored and floating debris, such as branches and litter removed. Reed sweet-grass and yellow flag iris are invasive plants which had been unofficially introduced to the Vinegar Pond. These plants were removed by the wardens.
86. Since the installation of a bentonite clay linings in December 2011 (Vinegar Pond) and November 2012 (Mustard Pond), water levels have remained high, even during prolonged periods of dry weather, providing an ideal environment for spawning common frogs and other still water biodiversity.
87. These conditions have also resulted in common newts inhabiting the ponds, along with a wide variety of damselfly and dragonfly species.
88. The ponds are also served as an important place for birds and mammals to bathe and drink.

#### **Birds.**

##### RA12/01 COMMON BIRD CENSUS

89. A Common Bird Census (CBC) survey was carried out by the wardens in the Spring. 34 species of bird were recorded (singing and/or calling) as having breeding territories based on the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), CBC methodology.

#### **Reptiles and Amphibians.**

##### RA26/01 REPTILES SPECIES LIST

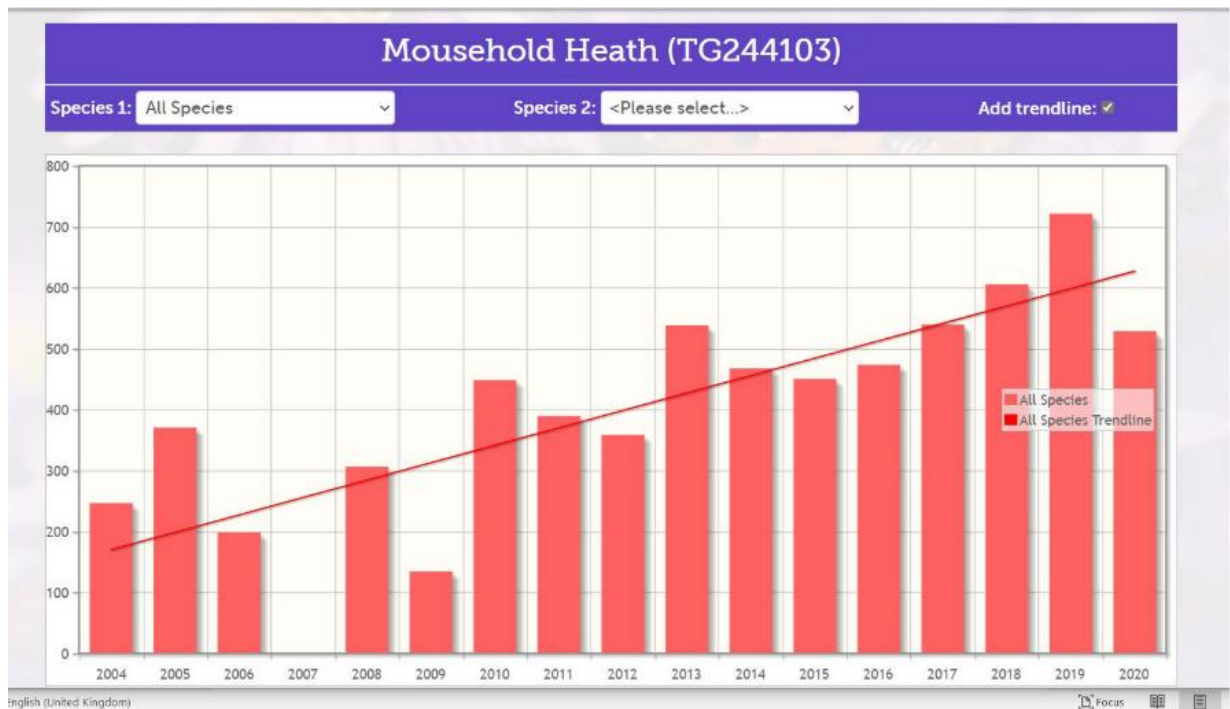
90. Common lizards were recorded in good numbers throughout spring and summer months, with many seen basking in recently restored open heathland and grassland habitats.
91. Frogs had a very productive year with many adults being seen in March and frog spawn and tadpoles in the Vinegar and Mustard Pond.

92. There were ad hoc sightings of both slow worm and grass snake at various locations across the site.

## **Butterflies.**

### **RA42/01 BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SURVEY**

93. The BMS is the largest and longest running biological survey in the country (established in 1976). Data is collected from over 1,200 sites in the UK, with 31 sites surveyed in Norfolk.
94. Butterflies are uniquely placed among British terrestrial insects and other invertebrate groups to act as indicators of the state of the environment. The results of the surveys are used by the national government to assess the impacts of climate change and the progress of governmental policy initiatives such as the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) schemes.
95. Not only are butterflies biologically suitable as indicator species, having rapid lifestyles and, in many cases, high sensitivity to environmental conditions, but the recording and monitoring volunteer and datasets built up by Butterfly Conservation and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, enable accurate assessment of their trends.
96. Two, weekly BMS transect surveys have been undertaken by the wardens. On the Mousehold Heath West survey, monthly counts recorded 627 individual butterflies. This is compared to 1047 estimated in 2019.
97. Several local and characteristic species were recorded, such as Green Hairstreak, Brown Argus, Small Copper and Purple Hairstreak.
98. On the Mousehold Heath East transect, an estimated 615 were recorded compared to 722 in 2019.
99. This drop in numbers in 2020 could be explained by an exceptionally good year for many butterfly species in Norfolk, in 2019, following the record warm summer of 2018. This is supported at county level by the Norfolk County BMS Butterfly recorder who stated, "Looking at the Norfolk transects that had fairly complete data, they all showed a decrease compared to 2019".
100. When taking into consideration that butterfly numbers have been declining nationally over recent years, it is encouraging that the butterfly population trend line on both Mousehold BMS transects (see trend line graphs below) - when taking into account annual weather fluctuations and national population changes - are increasing.
101. An upward trend could suggest that the restoration and conservation of early-successional habitat, such as heathland, woodland glades and grassland, through bracken control and scrub clearing, is having a positive impact.



## **Bumblebees.**

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

102. Monthly, BeeWalk Bumblebee Conservation Trust surveys have been undertaken by the wardens with the help of a member of the Mousehold Heath Defenders. A total of 51, Buff-tailed, Red tailed, White tailed, Common Carder, Tree and Early bumblebee species, along with Honeybees, were recorded along the transect route on St. James Hill.

## **Bats.**

### **RA92/01 NATIONAL BAT MONITORING PROGRAMME SURVEY**

103. Two, National Bat Monitoring Project (NBMP), Bat Conservation Trust Field Surveys were completed in July by the wardens assisted by volunteers, using a bat detector. A total of 66 Common pipistrelle passes (49 in 2019), 39 Soprano pipistrelle (26 in 2019), 2 Noctule passes (1 in 2019) were recorded during the transect survey, starting 20 minutes after sunset. This annual national survey was started in 2018 on the heath. Bat population trend line analysis will help assess bat numbers on the site in future years.

## **Plants.**

### **RF22/02 MUSTARD POND SURVEY**

104. A monthly flowering plant survey has been undertaken by members of the Mousehold Heath Defenders, recording many beautiful and nectar-rich species. 82 flowering plant species have been recorded in this area.

### **RF22/03 ST JAMES' HILL SURVEY**

105. A warden and a member of the Mousehold Heath Defenders carried out a monthly flower survey, identifying a number of new flowering plant species and bringing the total number up to 125 species in the last 10 years.

## **Objective F: To safeguard the historic landscape, archaeological features and buildings of Mousehold Heath.**

### **MC03/01 ST WILLIAMS CHAPEL – VEGETATION REMOVAL**

106. Invasive bracken and bramble has been cut and removed from chapel paths, banks and viewpoints by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) and the Mousehold wardens so that views of the chapel could be viewed from the interpretation board.

### **MC81/03 CAVALRY TRACK**

107. Under the supervision of a warden, volunteers have cleared vegetation, leaves and other dead vegetation to keep the track open.

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

Volunteering and Covid-19.

108. Despite volunteer activity having to be suspended during the lockdowns, there has been a large amount of interest in, and volunteer activity out on site. The Mousehold wardens worked with parks and open spaces officers to produce Covid-19 risk assessments and safe working procedure sheets, to create a safe working environment for when volunteer activities could resume.
109. The wardens have had a higher than usual interest in volunteering by members of the community, some of whom discovered and used the site for the first-time during lockdown; and from people who had been furloughed and had more time to volunteer.
110. Due to this demand and a maximum of 6 volunteers per task, an additional nineteen Mousketeer work parties were organised and lead by the wardens. This extra community support made up for lost time in the lockdowns and has resulted in tasks carried out by volunteers being delivered despite a challenging situation.
111. The volunteer tasks have provided physical and mental health benefits to the volunteers during a challenging and difficult year for many people. The wardens are planning to continue the increased number of volunteer sessions over the coming months, whilst there is the demand.

AT50/01 VOLUNTEERS GENERAL

112. This year's volunteer tasks, groups and numbers have been negatively affected by Covid-19 restrictions. There were two long periods when volunteer work parties were not permitted to take place. A total of 923 volunteer work hours (5156 hours in 2019/20) were contributed to work on the site, in the last year, by the following groups:
- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
  - The Assist Trust
  - Mousehold Heath Defenders
  - Mousehold Heath Mousketeers
  - Natwest, RBS and Aviva Corporate Groups
  - GoodGym Norwich

- Norwich High School For Girls
- City College DofE group
- George White School students
- Individual volunteers from the community.

113. Since July 2008, there has been 46,896 volunteer hours safely undertaken on the site. Volunteering has provided an opportunity for the community to become involved with the management of the heath, to increase their understanding of the projects being undertaken, the importance of the heath and to engender a sense of ownership and pride in the space.

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

**MI60/01 EVENTS**

114. A range of events to increase understanding, involvement and enjoyment of the site have been organised or hosted on the heath.
115. An Armistice Day service was held by the Mousehold Heath Defenders on Monday 11 November 2020. A wreath was laid at the Airmen's Memorial, Gurney Road, to remember those who gave their lives, especially in recognition of the 5 airmen who were killed there during World War 2.

Plt.Off. Colin Barton RNZAF  
 Flt.Sgt. James Lemon RCAF  
 Flt.Sgt. Robert Kater RCAF  
 Sgt. Donald Carpenter RAFVR  
 Sgt. Ernest Nightingale DFM RAFVR

**RH31/01 FOREST SCHOOLS**

116. Five environmental education activities were authorised to take place throughout December after a long break due to Covid19 restrictions. These were booked through Norwich City Council events team, and run by ROOTS, to encourage children and adults to reconnect with the natural world through play and outdoor experiences. The activities included, birthday parties (including woodland adventure), stay and play sessions, adult fitness and wellbeing and children's clubs, spoon carving and yoga.
117. Enchanted Forest school is a new Forest School environmental education and play group booked to undertake one event in November and four in December booked through Norwich City Council events team.





**Report to** Mousehold Heath Conservators  
23 July 2021  
**Report of** Parks and open spaces manager  
**Subject** Flag Pole Location

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### **Purpose**

To decide on the location for the installation of a flag pole to fly the Green Flag.

### **Recommendation**

To:

- (1) approve a location, and;
- (2) subject to planning permission being received, the purchase and installation of a flag pole at the location.

### **Mousehold Heath management plan objectives**

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.

### **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority great neighbourhoods, housing and environment.

### **Financial implications**

Any financial implications arising from this report will have or will be met from approved budgetary provision.

**Ward/s:** Catton Grove and Crome

### **Contact officer**

Simon Meek, parks and open spaces manager	01603 989479
Will Stewart, Mousehold Heath warden	01603 989587
Nigel Hales, Mousehold Heath warden	01603 989392

## Report

1. The flying of a Green Flag following a successful application is a requirement of the award.
2. The installation of a flag pole will require planning permission as it is not flying the national flag. Following the approval of a location a planning application will be submitted on behalf of the conservators.
3. There have been supply issues as a result of the pandemic, but initial enquiries have identified a cost in the region of £2000 including installation.
4. The two most heavily used locations are the Fountain Ground and the Britannia car park. (Appendix A, Map 1).
5. The location at the Fountain Ground would make the flag visible and raise awareness of the achievement to more visitors and also passing traffic using Gurney Road

## Appendix A





**Report to** Mousehold Heath Conservators  
23 July 2021  
**Report of** Parks and open spaces manager  
**Subject** Mousehold Pavilion Maintenance Programme

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### **Purpose**

To seek approval for delivery of year three of the pavilion maintenance programme.

### **Recommendation**

To authorise the procurement and delivery of works identified for 21/22 to the value of £20,400 from the revenue budget.

### **Mousehold Heath management plan objectives**

The report helps to meet the Mousehold Heath management plan objective:

F: To safeguard the historic landscape, archaeological features and buildings of Mousehold Heath.

### **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment

### **Financial implications**

Any financial implications arising from this report will have or will be met from approved budgetary provision.

**Ward/s:** Catton Grove and Crome

### **Contact officers**

Simon Meek - parks and open spaces manager

01603 212403

## **Background**

1. The pavilion has suffered from a lack of proactive investment over previous years. Expenditure has related to reactive repairs which can result in inconvenience for the tenant, budget implications that impact on delivery of the approved work programme and higher costs due to call outs.
2. In October 2018 NPS Norwich carried out a condition survey of the pavilion on behalf of the Mousehold Conservators
3. The condition survey was undertaken to gain an understanding of existing elemental conditions on site and the financial liabilities of the property over a 30 year period.
4. A cost plan was generated covering the period for external and internal elements. This is done by applying a cost (determined by the surveyor on site) to the end of the estimated remaining life of the relevant element. Any elements which have an estimated remaining life of greater than 30 years will not appear in the cost plan.
5. The survey is purely a visual inspection and no investigations or enquiries are made regarding the presence or trace of any potentially environmental damaging materials that may be found in the building, nor have any investigations been made in relation to soil stability, mining or geological conditions.
6. The costings used in the condition survey are based on a professionally informed estimate by the surveyor however, at the time of procuring the works the actual costs may vary.
7. The conservators increased their precept by £6,000 for 2019/20 to accrue funding to pay for the works based on the costings for the works identified as being required over the next 5 years.
8. The conservators have been managing their annual budget with the aim of building up this reserve to approximately 5% (£12,000) of their annual budget. The risk will be assessed again and reported to the conservators in September 2021.

## **Mousehold Pavilion Maintenance Programme**

11. The works and costs to be scheduled over the next 6 years were reported to the Mousehold Conservators on 20 September 2019.
12. The cost estimates each year were based on:
  - (a) The prices are surveyor estimates at the time of the survey. Prices could come in above or below the estimate. Health competition in the market can result in lower prices and a lack of competition in the market and changes in legislation can result in an increase.
  - (b) No figure for inflation has been included in the estimates.

13. The works identified for delivery in 2019/20 were completed on budget. No works were scheduled for 2020/21.
14. Details of the works identified as the landlord's responsibility and recommended for delivery in 2021/22 are contained in Appendix A.
15. As the costs in the condition survey are estimated costs rather than firm quotations there is a risk that actual costs for work could be higher than those detailed in appendix A. It would be prudent to allow 20% contingency as a result of this and also a potential uplift due to the impact of covid on the supply and cost of materials.
16. The works recommended for delivery in 2019-20 have an estimated cost of £15,000. It would be prudent to allow a contingency of 20% (£3,000). This would provide a budget of £18,000 to cover the landlords works.
17. A sum of £6,000 has been budgeted for towards the works in this year's budget with the balance being drawn from reserves.
18. The balance held in reserves at the start of financial year 21/22 is £25,333 and so the balance of the reserve remaining will be £13,333 (0.55% of the budget)
19. It would be prudent to review the budget situation in September 2021 following completion of the works, alongside a review of financial risk, prior to setting the precept in January 2022.

## Appendix A

### Programme of works

Item	Detail	Condition survey estimate	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
			Revenue (Budget)	Revenue (Actual)	Revenue (Budget)	Revenue (Actual)	Revenue (Budget)	Revenue (Actual)
<b>External Chimney</b>	Vertical crack running up length of chimney to rear elevation. No additional movement apparent since survey of 2016. Investigate and carry out crack stitch repairs. This was previously priced in 2014. Check missing pot is capped appropriately.	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000				
<b>External roof 2</b>	Rear section of main pitched roof has multiple areas of broken, damaged and slipped tiles. Roof is pin tiles on purlins with no felt or membrane. Recommended removal of tiles, installation of breathable membrane or felt and reinstatement of salvaged tiles, replacing any like for like, as required. Insulate as necessary while ensuring adequate ventilation is maintained.	£12,000					£12,000	
<b>External Roof Space</b>	No insulation to roof. Install additional insulation while maintaining adequate ventilation.	£1,500					£1,500	
<b>External Rainwater Goods</b>	Downpipe section west elevation taped together just below roof line. Repair section.	£150	£150	£150				
<b>External Window</b>	Leaded window East elevation 1st floor sections cracked /broken. Repair affected sections. Leaseholder	£2,000	£0					
<b>External Door</b>	Front timber door at low level. Sign of timber rot which may require minor repair only. Leaseholder	£250	£0					
<b>External Pigeon Guano</b>	Pigeons roosting on bays and under eaves area causing potential environmental hazard, particularly in an area which could be used for eating. Consider external netting and / or pigeon guarding where appropriate. Leaseholder	£2,000					£0	
<b>External Rear Shed</b>	Timber constructed rear shed with felt roof. Multiple areas of rot and sections of timber missing. Structure is beyond repair and should be removed. Cost is for removal and make good only.	£1,500					£1,500	
<b>External Roof 4</b>								
<b>Fences and walls</b>								
<b>Gates</b>								
<b>External redecorations</b>								
<b>Total</b>			<b>£4,150</b>	<b>£4,150</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£15,000</b>	



**Report to** Mousehold Heath Conservators  
23 July 2021  
**Report of** Parks and open spaces manager  
**Subject** Installation of a Letterbox at the Rangers House Access Track

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### **Purpose**

To seek approval for the installation of a letterbox next to the access track to the Ranger's House.

### **Recommendation**

To approve the installation of a letterbox to allow the Rangers House drive bollard to be raised to reduce fly-tipping and other anti-social behaviour in the area.

### **Mousehold Heath management plan objectives**

The report helps to meet the Mousehold Heath management plan objectives:

- 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

### **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority great neighbourhoods, housing and environment.

### **Financial implications**

Any financial implications arising from this report will have or will be met from approved budgetary provision.

**Wards:** Catton Grove and Crome

### **Contact officer**

Simon Meek, Parks and open spaces manager	01603 989479
Will Stewart, Mousehold Heath warden	01603 989587
Nigel Hales, Mousehold Heath warden	01603 989392

## Report

1. Historically the area surrounding the Ranger's House has been subject to fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour, partly due to its easy vehicle access, and it having no natural surveillance from Gurney Road.
2. In the past a security bollard was installed at the end of the the drive leading up to the house to prevent fly tipping and reduce anti-social activity in the area. This action has prevented unauthorised vehicle access deterring fly tipping and reducing anti-social behaviour, when the bollard is raised.
3. The Royal Mail will not deliver mail or parcels to the house and so the bollard must be left down during the day.
4. In recent months there has been an increase in vehicles on the drive and vehicles have left at speed when approached by the owner.
5. Installing a letterbox and leaving the bollard up during the day, would remove the need for the bollard to be down every day and prevent unauthorised vehicular access to the heath.
6. It would minimise the risk of fly tipping and anti-social behaviour and so reduce vehicle usage of the drive reducing maintenance costs in the future.
7. Appendix A shows the proposed location of the letter box (Map1) at the side of the access track to the Ranger's House set back from the highway just behind the security bollard.
8. The cost of the letter box is £445 and it would be installed by a Mousehold warden and a volunteer so that there is no additional charges. The project would be funded from within the general repairs and maintenance budget. Appendix A (Image 1) shows the proposed letter box.

## Appendix A

Map 1: Proposed letterbox location

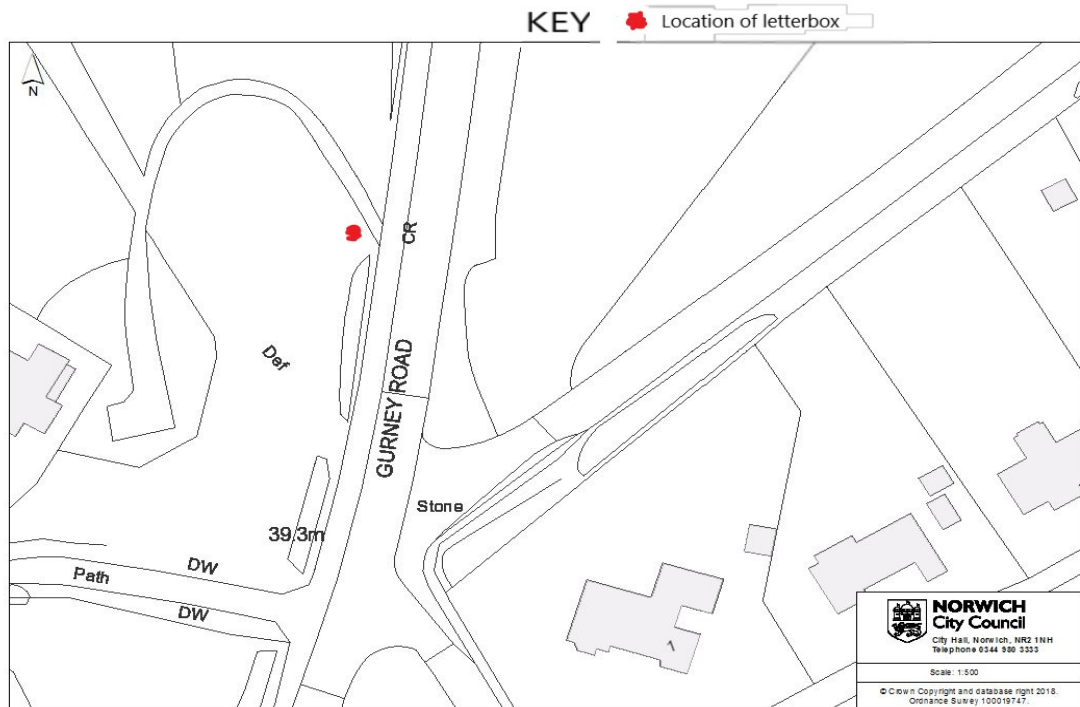


Image 1: Proposed design





**Report to** Mousehold Heath Conservators  
23 July 2021  
**Report of** Parks and open spaces manager  
**Subject** Temporary Trading Sign Permission

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### **Purpose**

To consider a request from the Sunset Café a concession located on the heath to display a temporary sign advertising the café.

### **Recommendation**

To approve the request to display the sign subject to a planning application being submitted if it is required.

### **Mousehold Heath management plan objectives**

The report helps to meet the Mousehold Heath management plan objective B.

### **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority great neighbourhoods, housing and environment.

### **Financial implications**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.  
approved budgetary provision.

**Wardss:** Catton Grove and Crome

### **Contact officer**

Nigel Hales, Mousehold Heath warden

01603 989392

### **Background documents**

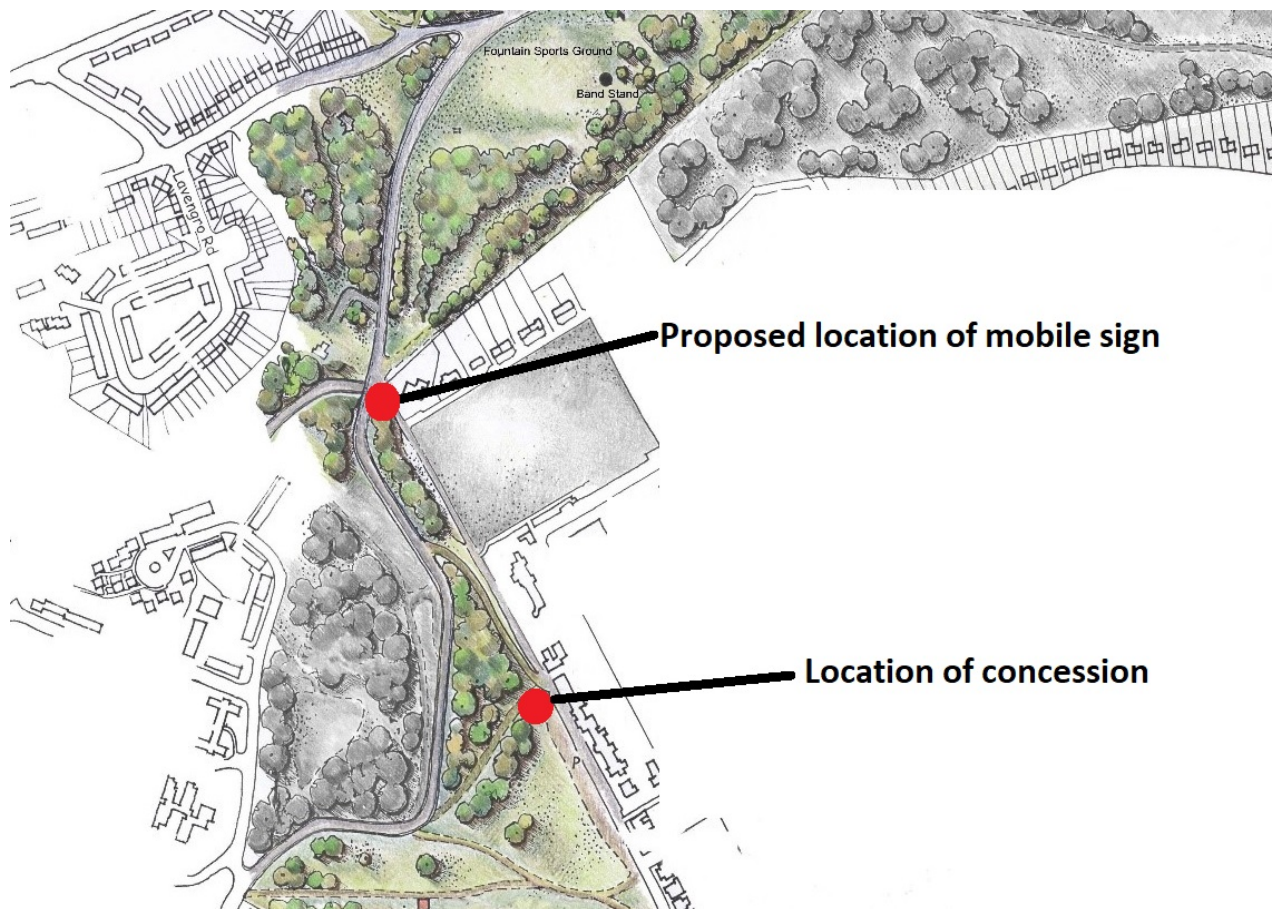
None

## Report

1. The Sunset Café has a licence to trade from a mobile unit located at the public car park, Britannia Road.
2. A request has been received from the licence holder to display a sign on the heath at the junction of Britannia Road with Gurney Road.
3. The sign is 1m x 1m and will only be displayed when the café is trading. It will be removed from the heath at all other times.
4. The Mousehold wardens will approve the method of fixing and exact location to ensure that it does not pose a risk to car drivers or visitors to the heath.
5. The sign may require planning permission and advice has been sought from the planning service.
6. If a planning application is required it will be submitted and paid for by the licence holder.
7. Appendix A contains the location of the proposed sign (Map 1) and the design of the proposed sign (Image 1).

## Appendix A

**MAP 1:** Proposed location





**Image 1:** Proposed sign

