

**Report to** Mousehold Heath Conservators  
17 June 2016  
**Report of** Interim executive head of neighbourhoods  
**Subject** Mousehold Heath update

**Item**

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### **Purpose**

To provide an update on issues and recent activities at Mousehold Heath

### **Recommendation**

That Conservators comment on current activities that have been undertaken on Mousehold Heath during the last period

### **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority city of character and culture

### **Financial implications**

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

### **Contact officers**

Simon Meek - Parks and Open Spaces Manager	01603 212403
Will Stewart - Mousehold warden	01603 213310
Nigel Hales - Mousehold warden	01603 213310

### **Background documents**

None

# **Report**

## **St. Williams Chapel site**

1. A new clear perspex protective covering has now been installed along with a black metal frame to the interpretation panel; unfortunately the black coating of the frame has flaked away in parts exposing the metal underneath.
2. A solution is being discussed with the firm including a proposal of the paint being removed leaving a metal finish rather than a painted one, this would provide a more natural look in keeping with the design of the panel itself.

## **Britannia Road**

3. Approval has been given for National Grid to install marker posts along Britannia Road, to indicate the position of the gas main that lies adjacent to and underneath the public car park. Members will be informed before any works are carried out and the works closely monitored by the wardens.

## **Tree and natural area management**

4. A number of dead, dying, dangerous and windblown trees and branches near footpaths have been made safe by the Mousehold wardens, assisted by work placement students, including branches blocking main pathways. Many of these were identified by the 6 monthly tree inspections undertaken along all the main paths and tracks which are carried out.
5. A significant amount of heathland and grassland management has been undertaken involving volunteers and contractors, to restore and improve the condition of existing habitats in line with the Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreement with Natural England.

## **Asset management**

6. Minor repairs undertaken include:
  - Repairs to the disabled toilet facilities adjacent to the pavilion
  - A new pedestrian gate and supporting posts, adjacent to Gurney Road, have been installed at the Fountain Ground Sports Pitch
  - Public car parking signs have been installed at the Pitch and Putt public car park and the public car park in front of the pavilion
  - A number of bollards have been reinstalled by the Mousehold wardens assisted by work placement students after being hit by cars and vandalised.

## **Access**

7. The following access works improvement and maintenance works have been undertaken in the last period:
  - Paths on St. James Hill and across the site have been maintained by Mousehold Heath Defenders, the Conservation Volunteers (TCV), Green Gym, work placement students and other volunteers
  - Overhanging branches have been cut back along emergency vehicle access routes and paths
  - The dead hedge has been created to create a new dead wood habitat, protect young heathland plants and restrict access down a steep slope after the installation of the new cycle way.
8. These conservation and improve works have involved hundreds of hours of volunteer work by the Mousehold Heath Defenders, TCV, Norwich Community Green Gym, a City College Foundation skills and Duke of Edinburgh award scheme groups and an Easton College work placement student, all supervised by the Mousehold wardens. Work to improve the site will continue in the summer 2016.

## **Surveys and Monitoring**

9. A number of bee, plant, butterfly and bird surveys have been undertaken by Mousehold wardens and volunteers.
10. A solitary bee and wasp survey is currently being undertaken by the county recorder following a survey that was undertaken by him 10 years ago, which recorded 83 species, including 11 rare, notable and scarce species. Data from the survey will be presented in the Autumn.

## **Volunteers**

11. There have been a total of 220 volunteer hours undertaken on site in the last quarter.

These have been completed by:

- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
- Norwich Community Green Gym
- Mousehold Heath Defenders
- The Assist Trust
- An Easton College work placement student.

- A new Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award placement.
- Volunteers from the community.
- Harford House volunteer team.

12. These works have significantly contributed to the implementation of objectives set out in the Management Plan, along with increasing community involvement in the many projects being undertaken on the site.

## **Events**

13. A range of events to increase understanding, involvement and enjoyment of the site, have been organised or hosted on the heath in the last period, these being:

- Moth survey evening
- Dawn survey walk to celebrate International Dawn Chorus Day
- A number of guided surveys and walks led by the Mousehold Heath wardens.