

	<p style="text-align: center;">Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee Monday 10 November 2008</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Director of Environment and Culture</p>
For Information	Wards Affected: ALL
<p>Welsh Harp Management Plan</p>	

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report presents progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan and related issues. The Management Plan is jointly managed by the three main local land-holding organisations: Brent Council, British Waterways, and the London Borough of Barnet.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the Report.
- 2.2 Members are asked to approve the revised version of the Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan.

3.0 Detail

Welsh Harp Management Plan

- 3.1 The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan is due for annual review. Comments have been sought from officers of the three land-holding public authorities and it would appear that no significant changes are required, except for some minor updating that has been undertaken. The revised Management Plan will be available on the Brent Council website. Members are asked to approve the revised version. Background information is provided below.
- 3.2 The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan is administered by officers of the land owning and land managing organisations. Reviews are undertaken annually. The Management Plan was signed by English Nature (now Natural England) on 15 May 2003. Subsequent amendments have been reported to this Committee. Natural England have indicated that there is no need to seek their consent for minor changes to the Management Plan. The current version of the Management Plan is available on the internet at www.Brent.gov.uk/parks. A map of the zones is also provided on the internet; and is attached to this report.

Management works

- 3.3 The Capital Ring section through Brent and Barnet has been surveyed by Walk London and a number of issues have been reported to Borough officers for action or comment.
- 3.4 Brent Energy Solutions have now moved into the Chapel building of the Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre.

British Waterways

- 3.5 British Waterways will continue during 2008 the clearance of fly-tipping in the Site of Special Scientific Interest on the southern side of the Reservoir bordering the North Circular Road. A detailed progress report is not currently available but British Waterways have indicated that the first phase was undertaken during the winter of 2007/08 with the second and third phases to follow in 2008/09 and 2009/10 (Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan: Zone 4C).
- 3.6 Blue-green algae: In July 2008, British Waterways provided public information and warning of the presence of blue-green algae at the Brent Reservoir.

Environment Agency

- 3.7 Welsh Harp issues are led by the Brent and Crane Environment Management Team. They report that they are continuing work on pollution prevention upstream of the Welsh Harp. Much of their work in this respect is reactive; and they will follow-up and plan future work if there are reports of incidents or other issues at the Welsh Harp.

Heritage Lottery Award

- 3.8 Maintenance of the Heritage Lottery Fund award project continues.

Events

- 3.9 Brent Council Sports Service continue their Healthy Walks Programme (currently to March 2009). At the Welsh Harp these meet at the Welsh Harp Open Space car park, Birchen Grove, every Thursday (except on Bank / Public Holidays) from 10am-11am. The walks are 'low to moderate' in pace. The nearest bus routes are numbers 182, 245, 297 and 302. For further details contact Brent Council Sports Service, tel: 020 8937 3707, [www. Brent.gov.uk/sports](http://www.Brent.gov.uk/sports).

Biodiversity Action Plan

- 3.10 The Government have launched 'National Indicator 197', which aims to monitor the proportion of Local Sites (all Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)) where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented. The detail of the guidance may be subject to further revision. The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir is included in this process but the guidance explains that Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are excluded from the analysis, so Brent will be reporting on those areas of the Welsh Harp SINC that are not within the SSSI. Though Council officers will make the initial assessment, part of the process involves public scrutiny of the analysis. This will be undertaken via the Local Sites Partnership (basically the respective site contacts for the Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership) – in this case the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee and constituent members; and also possibly by means of public comment via web-pages. More information will be available during the next few months; and the first assessment will cover the five-year period to 31 March 2009. Following analysis, this initial reporting round should be concluded in June / July 2009.

- 3.11 Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS): 2008 is the first reporting round since 2005 for the national Biodiversity Action Reporting System. Our update will include reporting on the declaration of the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Local Nature Reserve.
- 3.12 The Mayor of London / Greater London Authority have prepared a detailed consultation draft for the 'Geodiversity of London' which is available on the following link:
<http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/planning/geodiversity.jsp>

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 None specific, but some of the priorities identified in the Management Plan will require additional resources and decisions by, as appropriate, Brent Council, Barnet Council or British Waterways, if they are to be implemented in the future. For Brent Council Parks Service, the Management Plan is implemented and improvements programmed via the Brent Parks Service Parks Strategy, and Service Plan; both of which derive from the Council's Corporate Strategy. Thus implementation is partially dependent upon revenue and capital budgets for grounds maintenance and for parks management. The Parks Service pursues other sources of finance and opportunities for partnership working that may become available.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), land owners or occupiers are required to give notice to and consult with Natural England for any operation in an area of land that is of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features; and Natural England will issue a consent for the works unless the operation is likely to have a significant impact on any of the notified features of interest on the site. CROW (and section 28G of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) places a duty on all public bodies to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of the authority's functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of the site.
- 5.2 It is good practice for land owners or occupiers to produce Management Plans for the SSSI, which when approved by Natural England, enable the carrying out of the works specified in the Management Plan. This can reduce the administrative work inherent in obtaining consent for individual items of management work.
- 5.3 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 requires that from 1 October 2006 all public authorities in England and Wales have a general duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no diversity implications.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

- 7.1 None specific.

8.0 Environmental Implications

- 8.1 The Welsh Harp Management Plan co-ordinates environmental works in the Reservoir area.

Background Papers

Dated correspondence and other documents referred to in the Report including:

Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan.

Equality Impact Assessment Completion Form: Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee:
Welsh Harp Reservoir Management Plan: 20 January 2005. Form dated 06b.01.2005.

Contact Officers

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