

AGENDA ITEM: 7 Pages 5 – 8

Meeting	Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee
Date	31 March 2009
Subject	Welsh Harp Management Plan
Report of	Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport
Summary	To report the position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and on-going site management.

Officer Contributors Jenny Warren, Green Space Services Manager

Status (public or exempt) Public

Wards affected West Hendon

Enclosures None

For decision by Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

Function of Executive

Reason for urgency /
exemption from call-in (if
appropriate) N/A

Contact for further information: Jenny Warren, Green Spaces Services Manager, 020 8359 7803.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the contents of the Report be noted.

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee on 9 December 2003 – approved the proposed boundary of the Local Nature Reserve.
- 2.2 Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee on 15 March 2005 agreed the designation of a Local Nature Reserve on the Welsh Harp.
- 2.3 Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee of 15 June 2005 agreed draft byelaws.
- 2.4 Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee on 5 September 2006 and Cabinet on 16 October 2006 endorsed the draft byelaws for formal approval by full Council on 7 November 2006.
- 2.5 Council formally endorsed the draft byelaws on 7 November 2007.
- 2.6 Hendon Area Environment Sub Committee on 19 June 2008 – Decision 6. That the progress of the Council's Welsh Harp Risk Assessment be examined and reported back to the next meeting. That British Waterways be invited to report back to the Sub Committee on the progress of their Welsh Harp Risk Assessment at the next meeting.
- 2.7 Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee on 02 July 2008 – Item 8, Actions 1 to 7.
1. To arrange the appropriate repair or replacement action to the hide following consultation with the Heritage Lottery Fund and Barnet's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport.
 2. Provide details about the three year weed control programme.
 3. Request the weed control contractors contact Brent Council to assist with any requirements.
 4. Investigate whether weekend emergency calls were being forwarded to Greenspaces.
 5. Request that the Risk Assessment include whether Barnet Council was doing enough to stop swimming by placing signs and whether further enforcement officers were required.
 6. To write to British Waterways to request action against people swimming in the Welsh Harp.
 7. To raise an order to change the emergency number on the visitor information centre.
- 2.8 Hendon Area Environment Sub Committee on 23 September 2008. Decisions:
1. That the Draft Risk Assessment for the Welsh Harp be noted.
 2. That the Council writes to British Waterways advising them to introduce a risk assessment for the Welsh Harp.
 3. That the Risk Assessment be submitted to the Audit Committee to consider the level of assessment.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The ongoing management of the Welsh Harp contributes towards a Clean, Green and Safe Borough, as described in Barnet's Corporate Plan 2008/09 – 2011/12.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

4.1 There are no risk management issues associated with this Report.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

5.1 Parks and Open Spaces benefit all sectors of the community by improving the local environment. Maintenance is carried out according to the management plan and takes into account requests from residents, users and Members. Improvements are made, wherever possible, to ensure equal access for all users.

6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

6.1 For ongoing information the repair and or replacement bird hide to be funded by section 106 contributions up to approx. £6,000.

6.2 For ongoing information the three year programme for the treatment of Japanese knotweed which commenced in 2008 at £1,300 per annum will continue into 2009/10.

7. LEGAL ISSUES

7.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 in relation to the steps to be taken to safeguard, protect and enhance sites of special scientific interest. The Local Authority has the power under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 to provide or secure the provision of any land its area... to be managed as a nature reserve. However, English Nature must be consulted by the Authority in the use of the powers given by section 21. The 1949 Act states that a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) must be managed in such a way to ensure that use of the site does not result in any damage to its natural features and maintains its special interest.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS

8.1 The Terms of Reference of the Joint Committee, as set out in its Constitution, include: "to consider and co-ordinate all the interests of recreation / leisure / maintenance / nature conservation and statutory requirements of the British Waterways Board and the Environment Agency at the Welsh Harp; with the object of protecting the Welsh Harp and surrounding open land as a unique environment for both recreation and wildlife conservation."

9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

9.1. Current ongoing management issues:

9.1.1 Replacement of the bird hide

The replacement bird hide design is still awaiting approval from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

9.1.2 Japanese Knotweed Control Programme

As reported previously, the three year programme to treat the Japanese knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and Giant Hogweed is programmed for ongoing works in 2009/10.

9.1.3 SUSTRANS cycle network – North West Greenways

A public consultation document regarding proposed routes for Greenways for the Olympics and London was launched in January and closed on 6 March 2009. It seeks to provide a network to enable people to walk and cycle more as part of their everyday journeys. The project is to identify a network of Greenways for intended future development across north west London in the London Boroughs of Hillingdon, Ealing, Hounslow, Harrow and Brent. Barnet are not partners in the study, however a route has been identified in the study through West Hendon playing fields and Barnet's section of the Welsh Harp. The Highways department has written to TfL as Barnet has not been consulted, the installation of any cycle paths cannot be undertaken without the landowner's permission.



10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 The Welsh Harp Management Plan can be found on Brent Council's website: www.brent.gov.uk/parks in the biodiversity section.

Legal – JMK
CFO – MG