

# DECISIONS OF THE WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

31 March 2009

\*Councillor John Hart (Barnet) (Chairman)  
\*Councillor Will Motley (Vice-Chairman) (Brent)

## Councillors:

\*Tom Davey (Barnet)  
Mary Farrell (Brent)  
\*Julie Johnson (Barnet)  
James O'Sullivan (Brent)  
Hugh Rayner (Barnet)  
Bob Wharton (Brent)

## Organisation

Brent Sports Council  
British Waterways  
Environment Agency  
Greater London Assembly  
Hendon Rifle Club  
Hendon Rifle Club  
Hendon Rifle Club  
Local Agenda 21  
London Wildlife Trust  
London Wildlife Trust  
Natural England  
Old St Andrew's Residents' Association  
Princes Park Youth Football Club  
Training Ship Broadsword  
Welsh Harp Conservation Group  
Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre  
Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre  
Welsh Harp Sailing Association  
Welsh Harp Youth Sailing Base  
West Hendon Community Forum  
Woolmead Residents' Association

## Representative

David Carter  
\* Jon Guest  
Martin Everett  
Mike Waite  
Peter Castle  
A Jefferson  
Klaus Schuricht  
Molly Savage  
\* Clive Cohen  
John Colmans  
Kate Mitchell  
John Thompson  
Jon Bell  
Commander G F Beck  
\* Roy Beddard  
Jeff Bartley  
Harry Mackie  
Brian Turgoose  
Vacancy  
\* Judy Shepherd  
\* Geoffrey Johnson

\*denotes Member present

\$ Denotes Member absent on Council Business

Also in attendance were:

Jenny Warren – Barnet Greenspaces  
Paul Frost – Barnet Democratic Services  
Jonathan Regal – Barnet Democratic Services  
Leslie Williams – Brent Parks Service  
Patricia Davila – Barnet Legal Services

## 1. MINUTES (Item 1)

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 January 2009 be approved as a true and accurate record.

**2. MATTERS ARISING (Item 2)**

Money raised for the display of the Welsh Harp

Councillor Hart informed the Committee that a sum of £100 had been raised in order to fund a display which will give information of the history of the Welsh Harp. The display of images, laminated with text, will make up an exhibition for schools and libraries in Barnet and Brent. An announcement will be made when the exhibition is completed.

Use of pesticides and herbicides

Clive Cohen (London Wildlife Trust) raised concerns regarding the impact of pesticides and herbicides and encouraged both Councils to stop using harmful chemicals.

Roger Jones thanked

Councillor Hart informed the Committee that Roger Jones, Barnet Assistant Director in Environment had left the Council and thanked him for his contribution. Jenny Warren told the Committee that a temporary arrangement had been put in place with Greenspaces reporting to Lynn Bishop.

**3. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS (Item 3)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hugh Rayner (Barnet), Councillor Mary Farrell (Brent) and Councillor Bob Wharton (Brent).

**4. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS (Item 4)**

No interests were declared.

**5. WELSH HARP MANAGEMENT PLAN (BRENT) (Item 6)**

Leslie Williams presented a progress report from Brent's Director of Environment and Culture detailing progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan and related issues.

The Committee during deliberations raised the following issues:

a) Wild Grass and Flowers in Queens Park,

Leslie Williams informed the Committee that the following wildflowers were currently being sown:

|                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Achillea Millefolium | Prunella Vulgaris       |
| Centaurea Nigra      | Ranunculus Acris        |
| Knautia Arvensis     | Bupthalmum Salicifolium |
| Leucanthemum Vulgare | Dianthus Carthusianorum |
| Malva Moschata       | Lychnis Coronaria       |
| Origanum Vulgare     | Salvia Nemorosa         |
| Primula Veris        | Papaver Orientale       |

b) British Waterways

Jon Guest (British Waterways) gave details of the community clean-up project which took place on Thursday 26 and Sunday 29 March 2009. The success highlighted the removal of waste that led to a vast improvement along the broad walk. Councillor Julie Johnson suggested that further projects should take place every quarter and made such recommendation to the Committee. Councillor Hart said that co-ordination between both Councils and the Friends of the Welsh Harp should be conducted in order to undertake further clear-up parties.

**Action:**

A meeting to be established by Leslie Williams between Barnet and Brent Council, British Waterways and Welsh Harp Conservation Group, with the Environment Agency and Natural England being invited to the meeting.

c) Events

The Committee discussed The Healthy Walks Programme which will continue until March 2010. Further details of events for those interested were on Brent Council's website [www.brent.gov.uk/sports](http://www.brent.gov.uk/sports) or the Brent Council Sports Services can be contacted on 0208 8937 3707.

d) National Indicator 197

Both Leslie Williams and Jenny Warren gave detail on how this indicator will be measured. It was noted that each Borough will be scored separately and data will be available to view on both Councils website. Brent reported that the Welsh Harp as a SSSI and LNR was included within the NI. Jenny Warren advised this not to be the case with the NI specifically excluding these areas.

**Action:**

Officers from both Boroughs to provide clarification to the next meeting regarding the inclusion of the Welsh Harp within the NI.

e) Cycle Route

The Committee expressed concerns relating to the proposed cycle route. The Committee were concerned that the proposals could incur volumes of tarmac through the proposed increase of cycle paths and amendments to current paths. The consultation period had run from 23 January to 6 March 2009, but it was noted that comments should still be sent to Sustrans. Further detail can be found on the Sustrans website [www.sustrans.org.uk/goal](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/goal).

Councillor Julie Johnson read a statement from the London Barnet Wildlife Trust, which outlined the negative effect that the cycle route might have on the area. Jon Guest (British Water Ways) stated that the Cycle Path should not have a negative effect on the Sites of Special Scientific Interest, SSSI.

**Action**

That a letter be sent to Sustrans by Paul Frost on behalf of the Committee to outline concerns raised along with comments which will identify the review process of the cycle lane.

**RESOLVED** – That the progress report on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan and related issues be noted.

**6. WELSH HARP MANAGEMENT PLAN (BARNET) (Item 7)**

Jenny Warren presented a progress report from Barnet's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport detailing progress on the Welsh Harp Management Plan and related issues.

The Committee during deliberations raised the following issues:

a) Japanese Knotweed Control Programme

Jenny Warren informed the Committee that the programme and ongoing works will take place to treat the Japanese Knotweed during 2009/10. This information was well received by the Committee.

b) Risk Assessment for the Welsh harp

The draft risk assessment for the Welsh Harp was reported to the Hendon Environment Sub-Committee on 23 September 2008. The Committee, therefore, discussed measures to ensure all possible dangers are highlighted to the public over the summer months in order for visits to enjoy the Welsh Harp safely. Councillor Julie Johnson expressed concerns and highlighted the dangers of deep water and undercurrents; and stated the importance of visible signage. John Guest (British Waterways) told the Committee that in the areas where there is deepwater and undercurrents, there is adequate signage and further mentioned that he will be consulting the Sailing Club in order to provide further signs. Jenny Warren informed the Committee that a British Waterways Safety Officer had visited the Welsh Harp and believed the signage to be adequate within the Borough of Barnet. She also stated that regular litter patrols will again be carried out throughout the summer and advice will be given to swimmers as a result.

Leslie Williams (Brent Council) noted that signage was the best method of communicating risk to visitors including swimmers and stated that the Brent website also highlights such risk.

**Action:**

That a meeting be arranged by Leslie Williams with both Councils, British Waterways and the sailing club to ensure all measures are being taken to prevent swimming and report back to the Committee.

c) Replacement Bird Hide

Jenny Warren told the Committee the good news that the Heritage Lottery Fund had granted permission to replace the hide with the WHJCC's previously agreed proposal. This would now have to wait until after the nesting season and would include consultation with the Welsh Harp Conservation Group.

d) Unwanted Fishermen

The Committee discussed and learnt that fishing is being conducted on the Welsh Harp. Councillor Julie Johnson told the Committee that the pontoon in the old sailing base was a particular hotspot and action must be taken. It was noted that park wardens are not able to enforce by-laws as their position is advisory.

**Action:**

That Leslie Williams arrange a meeting between both Councils and British Waterways to discuss the prevention of fishing. Jenny Warren to review access through the sailing base.

**7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Item 8)**

A. Barbeque Area

The Committee noted that visitors often have barbeques within the Welsh Harp. Councillor Julie Johnson suggested that perhaps the disused car park could be used as a site to hold such barbeques. Jenny Warren reminded the Committee that currently no parks within the Borough allow the use of barbeques and if the Committee wanted to hold a trial period this decision would have to be reported through the Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee.

**Action:**

That Jenny Warren to seek a decision from Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee recommending a barbeque area be provided as a trial within the Welsh Harp/Woodfield Park.

B. The Management Plan

Councillor Julie Johnson said that the Management Plan does not reflect the number of people that use the Welsh Harp. John Guest (British Water Ways) enquired whether any data was available regarding visitor numbers. Jenny Warren and Leslie Williams confirmed that there were no data available. Councillor Hart asked the Committee for volunteers to record a count throughout the summer as it is expected to be a busy summer if the weather is good.

**Action:**

That Councillor Julie Johnson organise volunteers to count the number of visitors during the summer.

C. The Information Centre

Councillor Julie Johnson asked Jenny Warren if the information centre could be refreshed. Jenny Warren noted this request and said she will report back to the Committee.

**Action:**

Jenny Warren to collaborate with Brent, British Waterway's and the Welsh Harp Conservation Group to overhaul the current information at all the information centres.

D. A Welsh Harp Event and 175th Anniversary

Clive Cohen (London Wildlife Trust) suggested that an event could be established during the Summer to promote the Welsh Harp. Councillor Hart reminded the Committee of the 175th anniversary of the Welsh Harp and suggested that the event and anniversary could occur on the same day.

E. A contact for the Environment Agency

The lack of representation was noted by the Committee who asked that they be encouraged to come to future meetings as their attendance was vital.

8. **ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT (Item 9)**

There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 8.15pm