



Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

Thursday 20 March 2014 at 7.00 pm

Boardrooms 3, 4, 5 & 6 - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9 0FJ

Membership:

Members Councillors:	representing	first alternates Councillors:	second alternates Councillors:
Hart (Vice-Chair)	LB Barnet		
Johnson	LB Barnet		
Khatri	LB Barnet		
Rayner	LB Barnet		
Allie	LB Brent	R Moher	Hirani
Hopkins (Chair)	LB Brent	Ashraf	Hashmi
Kataria	LB Brent	J Moher	Crane
Mashari	LB Brent	Kabir	John

For further information contact: Bryony Gibbs, Democratic Services Officer
0208 937 1355, bryony.gibbs@brent.gov.uk

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democracy.brent.gov.uk

The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting

Membership continued:

Member	Organisation
Colette Murphey	West Hendon Allotment Society
Martin Hall	Brent Sports Council
David Carter	British Waterways
Leela O'Dea	Environment Agency
Neale Hider	Environment Agency
Neil Winter	Hendon Rifle Club
Peter Castle	Hendon Rifle Club
A Jefferson	Hendon Rifle Club
Klaus Schuricht	Local Agenda 21
Molly Savage	London Wildlife Trust
Clive Cohen	Natural England
Kate Mitchell	Princes Park Youth Football Club
Jon Bell	Training Ship Broadsword
Commander G F Beck MBE	Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Dr Leo Batten	Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Roy Beddard	Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre
Harry Mackie	Welsh Harp Sailing Association
Julia Touloumbadjian	West Hendon Community Forum
Judy Shepherd	Woolmead Residents' Association
Geoffrey Johnson	Canal and River Trust (formerly British Waterways)
Jon Guest	Training Ship Broadsword
Brain Turner	West Hendon Residents' Association / Friends of York Park
Derrick Chung	

Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members

Item	Page
1 Declarations of pecuniary interests	
Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, any relevant financial or other interest in the items on this agenda.	
2 Deputations (if any)	
3 Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 4
4 Matters arising	
5 Update on the West Hendon Development	5 - 6
A brief update provided by Thomas Wyld (Senior Planning Officer, Barnet Council) is attached for members' information. A representative of Barratt Metropolitan LLP (developer at West Hendon) has also been requested to attend the meeting to report on progress to date and the on-going programme.	
It is anticipated that further information will follow with regard to the outcome of noise monitoring activity on site and the draft roles and responsibilities of the SSSI Warden.	
6 Management Plan (Barnet)	
7 Management Plan (Brent)	7 - 16
This report presents progress since the last meeting of the Committee on 14 November 2013 and during the 2013/14 year on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan. The Management Plan is jointly managed by the three main land-holding organisations: Brent Council, the London Borough of Barnet, and the Canal & River Trust (formerly British Waterways).	
8 Broadsword: use of motor launch safety vehicle on the welsh harp	
This item has been submitted by Brian Turner (Training Ship Broadsword) for committee discussion.	

9 Environment Agency - Verbal Report (if any)

10 Planning Issues (if any)

11 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting will be confirmed following the Annual Council meetings of the Barnet Council and Brent Council.

Members are reminded that Barnet Council will be responsible for the administration of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee for the forthcoming municipal year.

12 Any other urgent business

Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Democratic Services Manager or his representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 64.



Please remember to **SWITCH OFF** your mobile phone during the meeting.

- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.

Agenda Item 3

MINUTES OF THE WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE Thursday 14 November 2013 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor , Councillor and Councillors Khatri (LB Barnet), Rayner (LB Barnet), Hopkins (LB Brent) and Kataria (LB Brent) and Hall (West Hendon Allotment Society), Roy Beddard (Welsh Harp Conservation Group), Geoffrey Johnson (Woolmead Residents' Association) and Derrick Chung (West Hendon Residents' Association / Friends of York Park)

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors Hart (LB Barnet) and Johnson (LB Barnet) and Neale Hider (Environment Agency), Clive Cohen (London Wildlife Trust) and Judy Shepherd (West Hendon Community Forum)

1. **Declarations of interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Deputations (if any)**

None.

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 July 2013 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. **Matters arising**

An update was sought regarding the response to the letter sent on behalf of the committee to the Mayor of London objecting to the proposed development of the West Hendon Estate. The Chair confirmed that a standard response was received and this would be circulated to the committee. Councillor Kataria recommended that members of the committee view the full report from the Mayors Office regarding the development.

The meeting was further advised that Councillor Johnson had written to the Mayor of London and Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Eric Pickles, objecting to the West Hendon Estate development. A brief summary of the responses was provided and the committee heard that both had advised that they would not intervene as approval had been granted by Barnet Council's Planning Committee.

5. **Management Plan (Barnet)**

The committee considered a report providing an update on the current position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and outlining on-going site management. An

annual inspection had been carried out in August 2013 to monitor and identify infestations of Japanese Knotweed. Control measures for invasive species in the Welsh Harp would be carried out via injection directly into the plant canes to mitigate concerns regarding contamination to honey bees. The report also set out action taken regarding rough sleepers. A joint exercise between the police, PIT (Priority Intervention Team) team and Greenspaces had been carried out in August to check for illegal encampments and arrange for their removal. Though several illegal encampments were located, evidence showed that they had already been vacated.

The committee raised a number of issues in the subsequent discussion for the attention of Tracy Sawyer (Parks and Open Space Officer – Barnet Council). It was noted that there were ongoing issues regarding fly tipping resulting from rubbish being left behind at sites of illegal encampments and a member agreed to report this to Barnet’s Greenspaces team. Another site requiring clearing of rubbish and debris was the silt stream by the Bridge on Edgware Road, before and to the left of Halfords. As it was unclear which agency held responsibility for this area, it was agreed that officers identify this and report the matter to the appropriate agency. Members of the committee further advised that concerns had been raised by residents of Woolmead Avenue and Dehar Crescent regarding trees bordering the perimeter, which had not been coppiced for several years.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the report be noted;
- (ii) that officers identify the responsible agency to clear the rubbish in the silt stream by the Bridge on Edgware Road, before and to the left of Halfords.

6. **Management Plan (Brent)**

Leslie Williams (Strategy and Service Development Officer) presented a report to the committee updating members on the progress made with regard to the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan, drawing members’ attention to the action plan and progress column included at Appendix 1 to the report. It was emphasised that the Welsh Harp Open Space had successfully retained a Green Flag award following the annual inspection. The committee further heard that Executive approval had been granted for the award of Brent’s public realm contract to Veolia, meaning that from September 2014 all Grounds maintenance works would be carried out under contract rather than in-house. This would apply to the Welsh Harp Open Space including the car park, to Neasden Recreation Ground.

In accordance with the committee’s request, made at the previous meeting, Leslie Williams provided a brief overview of the prospect of re-introducing otters to the Brent Reservoir. It was explained that the increase of the otter population in England was attributed to reduction in toxic pesticides, improved water quality and consequential increases in fish stocks. It was considered that if the habitat of the Brent catchment could be improved, particularly by improving water quality, by removing physical obstacles to fish movement along the river, and by improving marginal habitat, then there was a possibility of re-colonisation of the River Brent within the next twenty years. However, it would be premature to use resources to construct an artificial holt for otters since the nearest viable populations were still

some distance from urban London. Rather the priority should be to improve the water quality and river habitat.

In the subsequent discussion, the committee sought further information regarding the impact of the public realm contract with Veolia and specifically queried whether any officers that dealt with the Welsh Harp area would be transferred to Veolia. Queries we also raised regarding rough sleepers in the Welsh Harp Area.

Leslie Williams advised that it was possible that some staff might be TUPED over to Veolia but that a further update could be provided at the next meeting of the committee. With regard to rough sleepers, there had been considerable problems in the last year, particularly in relation to Neasden Recreation Ground and other parks in the borough. The council had been working in partnership with the police and homelessness agencies to resolve the issue. It was emphasised that it was important to assist people to access appropriate support services to ensure the issue was effectively addressed.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the report be noted;
- (ii) that an update be provided on the public realm contract at the next meeting.

7. Environment Agency - Verbal Report (if any)

A member of the committee noted that there were proposals to install small rafts or floating islands in the disused part of the north reservoir in October or November. It was understood that the environment agency might have some involvement with this project and clarification was sought regarding whether there was some use of Section 106 monies for the project. It was agreed that this question would be passed to Neale Hider (Environment Agency).

8. Planning Issues (if any)

The meeting was advised that a planning application to revamp the Welsh Harp Sea Cadets building had been approved on 13 November 2013 by Brent's Planning Committee. It was noted that the development was limited to the existing footprint of the building and there had been a number of conditions stipulated to prevent disturbance during development. Members of the committee expressed their approval of the scheme.

9. Date of next meeting

The committee noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 20 March 2014.

10. Any other urgent business

Members attention was drawn to the proposal made as part of the planning application relating to the West Hendon estate that a Warden be appointed to monitor the impact of the development on the SSSI. The committee agreed that clarification regarding this post was required, including details of funding and terms of reference. The committee discussed possible options for obtaining relevant

information from the Warden once appointed and maintaining oversight of the impact of the development on the SSSI. It was subsequently agreed that a report should be sought from Barratt Metropolitan/ the Warden and provided to the committee at least a month in advance of each meeting.

RESOLVED:

that the Chair write on behalf of the committee to the Barnet Planning Department to request details of the SSSI Warden, copying in Barnet's Green Spaces Manager.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm

A HOPKINS
Chair

Agenda Item 5

The SSSI warden post is in the process of being set up but as of yet the role has yet to be fully defined and no post has been created.

The provision within the S106 gives a broad brush definition of the role and a Workshop meeting between Natural England, Canal and River Trust, London Wildlife Trust, Welsh Harp Conservation Group and The Environment Agency is being organised for the week of 3rd March to establish details of an appropriate remit for the position.

One key aspect of this role will be reporting to and attending the WHJCC.

Noise monitoring including observations of impacts upon waterfowl is currently taking place on site with the initial groundworks currently taking place in accordance with conditions attached to the permission. It may be possible to report the findings to date to the March meeting if it is considered that this would be of interest and use to the committee.

I may also be able to provide a draft of the roles and responsibilities for the SSSI warden for comment following the meeting in the 1st week of March.

Thomas Wyld

Senior Planning Officer

Major Developments Development and Regulatory Services London Borough of Barnet, 2nd Floor
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Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee 20 March 2014

Report from the Strategic Director Environment and Neighbourhoods

For Action

Wards Affected: ALL

Welsh Harp Management Plan

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report presents progress since the last meeting of the Committee on 14 November 2013 and during the 2013/14 year on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan. The Management Plan is jointly managed by the three main land-holding organisations: Brent Council, the London Borough of Barnet, and the Canal & River Trust (formerly British Waterways).

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the Report.

3.0 Details

- 3.1 A copy of the Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan is available on the Brent Council website at <http://www.brent.gov.uk/media/3207383/Brent-Reservoir-Management-Plan.pdf>
- 3.2 The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan includes an Action Plan for the current year; and for this report, this is detached from the Management Plan and updated as Appendix 1. The 'Progress' column summarises current progress.
- 3.3 The construction of a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Neasden Recreation Ground has been completed and is available for use by the local community. A hedge of *Rosa rugosa* is due to be planted in early 2014 to compliment the existing plantings near to the MUGA.
- 3.4 In response to the comments at the November meeting, rough sleepers have continued to be a concern, particularly at Neasden Recreation Ground. One went into sheltered accommodation in January 2014 but signed themselves out within a few days. At least one other rough sleeper was present at Neasden Recreation Ground during part of 2013.

- 3.5 Brent Council's Executive have awarded Brent's public realm (street maintenance) contract to Veolia which will become operational from 1 April 2014. Then, they will be joined from 1 September 2014, by the parks grounds maintenance works that are currently undertaken in-house by the Sports and Parks Service. All the public realm and parks grounds maintenance works will be carried out by Veolia from 1 September 2014. At the Welsh Harp this will apply to the Welsh Harp Open Space including the car park, to Neasden Recreation Ground, and also to Silver Jubilee Park to the north.

3 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan is a long-term document and not all works are feasible in the short-term. Works listed in the management plan include the programmed operational works and longer-term works to maintain, restore and enhance the Welsh Harp area. Works are undertaken only where the budgets or resources are available. Programmed operational works are undertaken only within the existing budgets.
- 4.2 A significant amount of work is undertaken, or in kind, by the voluntary sector, and by the volunteers of the sailing clubs, conservation groups and other community organisations. In addition, the Council and partners, endeavour where feasible, to seek additional funding from grants and other sources.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, land owners or occupiers, and also public bodies, are required to give notice to and consult with Natural England where they wish to carry out, or cause or permit to be carried out 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 (this requirement applies to operations within a SSSI, and to operations outside the SSSI that may affect the features of interest); and Natural England will issue consent, issue consent with conditions or refuse consent. Failing to follow this process is a criminal offence which may result in a fine and a restoration order. 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 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.
- 5.4 The owner of land included in a SSSI has a legal duty to inform Natural England within 28 days of any changes in ownership or occupation of the site, including leases, easements and rights.

6 Diversity Implications

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

7 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 include:
Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan.

Contact Officers

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Sue Harper
Strategic Director Environment and Neighbourhoods

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**APPENDIX 1. WELSH HARP / BRENT RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT PLAN:
ACTION PLAN FOR 2013-2014**

The Management Plan outlines the management considered necessary to sustain the Welsh Harp for wildlife, recreation, landscape, flood-control, economic and other benefits of the reservoir. These are achievable over varying time-frames, though many are not affordable in the short term. This Action Plan tracks progress of current year priorities and projects.

Action	Lead	Budget	Approximate timetable	Progress: 2013-14 year to 11 March 2014
Dam wall and reservoir: statutory responsibility to maintain dam wall, associated structures and the dam	Canal & River Trust (C&RT)	C&RT	Maintain. On-Going	Dam wall maintained as required to operational and statutory standards.
Maintain open water for water sports	Welsh Harp Sailing Association (WHSA)	Undertaken by volunteers of the (WHSA)	On-Going	WHSA cleared weed; summer 2013.
Sailing and sports development	WHSA	Undertaken by volunteers of WHSA.	On-Going	See Welsh Harp Sailing Association and constituent clubs. A five-year Water Sports Development Plan was prepared in 2013 with Welsh Harp users.
Clean up projects: including some control of invasive plants.	Thames 21 Environment Agency	Provided by Thames 21. Work on site by volunteers.	Projects: A further clean-up project was held in early August 2013 on the shores of Neasden Recreation Ground (and at the River Brent at Tokyngton).	Thames 21 have organized a community clean-up event downstream on 17 March 2014; and a walk on 18 March 2014.
River trash traps: at inflows of Dollis Brook, and Silk Stream	Environment Agency	Budget provided by the Environment Agency	Maintain, On-going. Rubbish at the trash screen is cleared several times a year. Material disposed off-site.	Upstream of the Priestly Way screen an oversized willow has been removed which had partially fallen into the river.

Sailing Infrastructure: club houses, boats, and service areas.	Sailing Clubs	Maintained by the C&RT; and by the sailing clubs.	On-going	Welsh Harp Sailing Association and constituent clubs. Refer to Sailing Clubs for an update. A five-year Water Sports Development Plan was prepared in 2013 with Welsh Harp users.
Bird rafts, islands. There are approximately 20 rafts.	Welsh Harp Conservation Group (WHCG)	Volunteer projects are held annually to maintain, repair or renew rafts. .	On-going. Autumn / winter. WHCG had undertaken works in the winter of 2013-2013.	WHCG have a works programme in 2013-14 for maintenance of bird rafts. Movement of some silt banks in winter 2013/14 has affected access for works. Small nesting rafts to be placed in northern reservoir, March 2014 (contractors to West Hendon development).
Reedbeds: remove young trees	WHCG	Volunteer projects are held annually to maintain the reedbeds.	Remove young trees. On-going. Autumn / winter.	Led by the WHCG. Autumn / winter works are programmed by the WHCG.
Reedbeds: increase	All	Natural growth is encouraged, so costs are low, but refer to the need to remove young trees.	Periodic reviews as part of Biodiversity Action Plans.	Some evidence e.g. from aerial images, of long-term increase in area but rates of increase have not been estimated.
Marshland: maintain extent	Brent Council, Welsh Harp Sailing Association, Canal and River Trust.	Estimated at £700 per year.	Alternate years: reduce young tree growth on shores of Neasden Recreation Ground, Welsh Harp Open Space. Shores of Welsh Harp Open Space Feb 2013.	Willow managed, on shores of Welsh Harp Open Space and Neasden Recreation Ground due by early 2014. WHSA and CRT undertaking work in consultation with Natural England at Welsh Harp Open Space on 12 March 2014 and possibly later.

Marshland	Barnet, Barratt PLC		Plans submitted for restoration of shore by Phase 1 of West Hendon redevelopment.	Planning Permission for main part of development approved in summer 2013: this will affect adjacent marshland.
Marshland: increase	Brent, Barnet, Brent Catchment Partnership	Investigate sources of finance for long-term restoration of river catchment; and for flood alleviation.	Increase the extent of the marshland around the shores of the Reservoir for nature conservation, landscape, and to increase wind for water sports (where trees are reduced)	Refer to draft of Catchment Management Plan. Marshland habitat has increased since early 1990s at Welsh Harp Open Space and Neasden Recreation Ground where conservation work has been undertaken. However, some trees have regrown in more recent years.
Marshland: orchids	WHCG, Brent	Marshland work by Brent Council. Volunteer work by WHCG.	WHCG to provide information.	Orchids usually benefit from well planned marshland conservation. Marshland works take into account the location, and potential for enhancing populations of orchids.
South-bank boardwalk	C&RT	Canal & Rivers Trust budget: periodic work possibly averages £500 / year.	As required.	Repairs by C&RT, June 2013. Boardwalk had more damage in early 2014. Condition to be assessed by C&RT on 19 March 2014.
Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed	C&RT, Barnet Council, Brent Council	No budget: works undertaken as part of other works; or with grant funding. Barnet: three-year programme. Brent: grant funding used in 2011-13, c. £1,500	Complete the control within the SSSI at Neasden Recreation Ground. Barnet:	Control at SSSI at Neasden R G 2011 and 2012. Follow-up treatment undertaken 2013.
Wet woodland	C&RT, Barnet, Brent	Largely self-managing.	On-going.	Largely self-managing.

Grasslands, paths cutting	Barnet, Brent	Maintenance: within existing resources. Restoration work is currently unfunded. Current path cutting estimated at £5,000/ year.	Spring to autumn.	Cutting of mown paths undertaken. Loss of acid grassland is a concern: scrub has encroached in each area of acid grassland. October 2013: WHCG undertook annual clearance of oak scrub in higher ground of West Hendon Playing Fields. 2013/14: Barnet have cut bramble from one field.
Woodland	Brent, Barnet, WHCG, C&RT	Largely self-managing. Unfunded: management of woodland to increase diversity, but potential for creative use of material.	Planting of disease-resistant Elms, winters 2011/12 and 2012/13.	Disease resistant Elms planted. Other woodland largely stable. Some areas could benefit from more active management particularly where scrub is encroaching on acid grassland or on marshland.
Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre	Brent	Brent Council and external funding.	On-going. 23.10.2013: WHEEC reports that bookings are at a high level	Centre is maintained. Bookings maintained. Update at WHJCC meeting
Allotments	Brent, West Hendon Allotment Society	Brent: refer to Allotments and Food Growing Strategy. Barnet: West Hendon Allotments are self-managed by the holders.	Allotments are maintained. Biodiversity improvements at Dors Close, 2013.	West Hendon: self-managed. Brent: Allotments Strategy: Birchen Grove and Dors Close included in service improvement. Biodiversity improvements at Dors Close.
Open spaces, pitches, paths, Capital Ring, signage, interpretative signage, litter and dog bins,	Barnet, Brent	Existing maintenance resources. Barnet; and Brent grounds maintenance budgets.	On-going.	Maintained; and well-used.

Feasibility of traffic analysis / signage for Wood Lane	Barnet Highways (leading) in consultation with Brent Highways.	.	New: 18.07.2012	Barnet are investigating. Barnet officers to update. 11.03.2014: Information: Barnet officers to update.
Monitoring: wildlife, and indicators	WHCG; and public authorities.	Mainly by volunteers of WHCG.	On-going	Programme of activities led by Welsh Harp Conservation Group for 2014. Includes birds (weekly); butterflies (24 weekly transects in 2013); and fungi. Walks: and one planned by Natural Magic (2014/2015).
Signage	Brent / Barnet.			Inspected: 2012. Most of Brent's signage up to date: but Brent are investigating the interpretative signage. Barnet will review their signage.
Parks infrastructure	Brent / Barnet			Inspected: Brent: inspected by Sports and Parks Service. Bird hides: WHCG cleared vegetation to improve views: Aug./Sept/ 2013. Main hide was re-roofed in November 2013.
River Brent Catchment Management Plan	All; led by Environment Agency		2011 -	Autumn 2013: Thames 21 have appointed a part-time Catchment Officer post on behalf of the partnership. Working copy of Catchment Management Plan in preparation, February 2014.
Green Flag	Brent		Achieved 2012.	2013 – Green Flag retained.

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