

MEETING

WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

DATE AND TIME

TUESDAY 19TH JULY, 2016

AT 7.00 PM

VENUE

HENDON TOWN HALL, THE BURROUGHS, NW4 4BG

TO: MEMBERS OF WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (Quorum 3)

Chairman: Councillor Sury Khatri
Vice Chairman: Councillor Amer Agha

Councillor John Hart
Councillor Devra Kay

Councillor Adam Langleben
Councillor Liz Dixon

Councillor George Crane
Councillor Roxanne Mashari

Organisation

Canal and River Trust
Environment Agency
Welsh Harp Sailing Association
Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Training Ship Broadsword
Princes Park Youth Football Club
Brent Sports Council
Hendon Rifle Club
West Hendon Residents' Association /
Friends of York Park

West Hendon Community Forum
Local Agenda 21
Woolmead Residents' Association
Phoenix Canoe Club
Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre
Natural England
West Hendon Allotment Society
London Wildlife Trust

You are requested to attend the above meeting for which an agenda is attached.

Andrew Charlwood – Head of Governance

Governance Service contact: Iphigenia Christophoridou 020 8359 3822
Iphigenia.Christophoridou@Barnet.gov.uk

Media Relations contact: Sue Cocker 020 8359 7039

ASSURANCE GROUP

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
1.	Minutes	To Follow
2.	Absence of Members	
3.	Disclosable Pecuniary interests and Non Pecuniary interests	
4.	Report of the Monitoring Officer (if any)	
5.	London Borough of Barnet-Welsh Harp Management Plan	1 - 6
6.	London Borough of Brent - Welsh Harp Management Plan	7 - 14
7.	Any Other Business	
8.	Any Other Items that the Chairman Decides are Urgent	

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	<p>Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee</p> <p>19 July 2016</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Title</p>	<p>Welsh Harp Management Plan</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Report of</p>	<p>Street Scene Director</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards</p>	<p>West Hendon</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Urgent</p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Key</p>	<p>None</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Enclosures</p>	<p>None</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Officer Contact Details</p>	<p>Tracy Sawyer, Tracy.sawyer@barnet.gov.uk 0208 359 7824</p>

Summary
<p>To update the committee regarding the on-going site management issues and report the position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR).</p>

Recommendations
<p>That the committee consider and note the contents of this report and to invite the committee to make comments on the contents of the report.</p>

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee comprises of British Waterways, Brent Council, Welsh Harp Conservation Group, Welsh Harp Sailing Association and Barnet Council. The committee is a consultative committee only and meets on a quarterly basis.

1.2 The committee is invited to note and make comments on the on-going site management issues during this quarter as follows:

1.3 Illegal encampments

The borough continues to be experiencing illegal encampments, especially with a particular location in the Welsh Harp. This area is located behind the Allotment off Cool Oak Lane. The area has been subjected to repeated incursions. Details of all the encampments to date have been stated in the table below.

Name of Park	Month	Number of individuals
Welsh Harp	July 2014	0
Welsh Harp	August 2014	3
Welsh Harp	September 2014	0
Welsh Harp	February 2015	6
Welsh Harp	May 2015	14
Welsh Harp	June 2015	0
Welsh Harp	July 2015	3
Welsh Harp	August 2015	3
Welsh Harp	September 2015	2
Welsh Harp	October 2015	2
Welsh Harp	November 2015	0
Welsh Harp	December 2015	0
Welsh Harp	January 2016	0
Welsh Harp	February 2016	0
Welsh Harp	May 2016	13
Total to date		46

The Council continues to work closely with the local Safer Neighbourhood Team to move on illegal encampments which also includes wider authorities such as the UK Border Agency. The area is monitored regularly with swift action taken to remove the encampments. No further encampments have been found.

Possible options to prevent the number of encampments that are both costly to the Council and damaging to the local environment have been discussed at previous committees. It was decided that no further action was required.

1.4 Japanese Knotweed / Hogweed Control Programme.

A new two year contract commenced in early July 2016, this is to follow on from the previous three year programme that has seen a significant reduction in the presence of knotweed throughout the site.

A full survey of the site was carried out and treatment of the knotweed has been completed via stem injection. Before the first treatment of the year commences in 2016 a full survey of the site have been carried out.

1.5 Litter

In the low season (winter) the area is litter picked and the bins are emptied twice a week, and in the high season (summer) the frequency increases to four times a week. There are occasional action days on the site which includes litter picking by local volunteers in the accessible areas. A survey of the number and condition of the litter bins has been carried out, this identified existing bins which need replacing and areas where newly installed bins are required. A new contract is being written to supply and install litter bins within Barnet parks and open spaces, once the contract is awarded this will allow new litter bins to be installed within all Barnet parks including the Welsh Harp.

2. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The terms of reference of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee include that it considers and co-ordinates all the interests of recreation, leisure, maintenance and nature conservation with the object of protecting the Welsh Harp Reservoir and surrounding open land as a unique environment for both recreation and wildlife conservation.

3. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 None

4. **POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

The committee note the actions being implemented as set out under section one.

5. **IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

5.1 **Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2015 – 2020 identifies as one of its Corporate Priorities that Barnet's parks and open spaces will be amongst the best in London. The need to develop more innovative ways of maintaining its parks and green spaces, including through greater partnerships with community groups and focus on using parks to achieve wider public health priorities for the borough.

5.2 **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

- 5.2.1 Any costs incurred from the programmes and initiatives will be met within the existing Street Scene budget.

5.3 Social Value

5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. Before commencing a procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 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 acquire, declare and manage nature reserves. 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.

5.3.2 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 Reservoir and surrounding open land as a unique environment for both recreation and wildlife conservation”.

5.3.3 Barnet’s Constitution – Article 8 – Joint Arrangements- states at paragraph 8.01 that the Council may establish joint arrangements with one or more Local Authorities. Such arrangements may involve the appointment of a Joint Committee with these Local Authorities.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 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.

The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies **to have due regard** to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services

5.7 Consultation and Engagement

5.7.1 The Consultative Committee continues to meet on a quarterly basis, the committee comprises of the land owners, legislative bodies, and third sector volunteer groups who work within the reserve to deliver positive outcomes.

5.8 Insight

5.8.1 None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

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Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee AGENDA ITEM 6
19 July 2016

Report from the Strategic Director of Regeneration and
Environment Department

For Action

Wards Affected: ALL

Report Title: Welsh Harp Management Plan

Forward Plan Ref: Not applicable.

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan since the last meeting of the Committee and during the 2016/17 year to date. The Management Plan is jointly managed by the three main land-holding organisations: Brent Council, the London Borough of Barnet, and the Canal and River Trust.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the Report.

3.0 DETAILS

- 3.1 The current version of the Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan (dated 15 March 2016) was updated for the last meeting of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee and is available on the Brent Council website at <https://www.brent.gov.uk/media/16404048/brent-reservoir-welsh-harp-management-plan-15-03-2016.pdf>
- 3.2. The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan includes an Action Plan for the current year; which for this committee report is updated as Appendix 1. The 'Progress' column summarises current progress.
- 3.3 Byelaws. The draft Brent Park byelaws are currently with the Department for Communities and Local Government following changes in the national procedure for approval.
- 3.4 Brent Council's draft Physical Activity Strategy has been published. See: <https://www.brent.gov.uk/your-council/about-brent-council/council-structure-and-how-we-work/strategies-and-plans/a-physical-activity-strategy-for-brent-2016-21/>

3.5 The weekly walks programme at the Welsh Harp continues. Walks generally attract 15-25 people and are led by a walk leader. These take place on Thursdays from 10-11am meeting at Birchen Grove Car Park, Kingsbury NW9. The walks are free of charge.

4.0 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 site of special scientific interest ('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

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

7 STAFFING / ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS (IF APPROPRIATE)

7.0 None specific.

8 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 (version 15 March 2016).

CONTACT OFFICERS

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Lorraine Langham
Strategic Director

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APPENDIX 1. WELSH HARP / BRENT RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT PLAN: ACTION PLAN FOR 2016-2017

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: 2016-17 to 8 July 2016
Dam wall and reservoir: statutory responsibility to maintain dam wall, associated structures and the dam	Canal and River Trust (C&RT)	C&RT	Maintain. On-Going	Dam wall and mechanism 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	Monitoring and actions by Welsh Harp Sailing Association.
Sailing and sports development	WHSA: Welsh Harp Sailing Association and constituent clubs.	Undertaken by volunteers of WHSA.	On-Going	In operation: five year, 2013-2018, Water Sports Action Plan (copy available).
Clean up projects: including some control of invasive plants.	Thames 21 Environment Agency	Provided by Thames 21. Work on site by volunteers.	On-going.	Thames 21 clean-up projects on Brent and tributaries.
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.	Maintenance is on-going. Rubbish at the trash screen is cleared several times a year. Material disposed off-site.
Sailing Infrastructure: club houses, boats, and service areas.	Sailing Clubs	Maintained by the C&RT; and by the sailing clubs.	On-going	The Welsh Harp Sailing Association and clubs maintain the water sports infrastructure.

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 have a programme in 2016-17 for maintenance of bird rafts. Works are outside of the bird breeding season of March to August inclusive.
Bird hides: maintenance of the hides; the surrounding vegetation (sightlines) and habitats.	Welsh Harp Conservation Group / others		On-going	The WHCG are expecting to organize up to three projects around the hides during the winter of 2016/17.
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.
Reedbeds: increase	All	Natural growth is encouraged, so costs are low, but need to remove young trees.	Periodic reviews as part of Biodiversity Action Plans.	Habitat maintained.
Marshland: maintain	Brent Council, Welsh Harp Sailing Association, Canal and River Trust.	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).	Alternate years: reduce young tree growth on shores of Neasden Recreation Ground, Welsh Harp Open Space.	Willow growth appears to be exceeding management work on the shoreline. Works need to be programmed for the season between October and February. Particularly required on the shore-line of Neasden Recreation Ground and of the Welsh Harp Open Space.
Marshland	Barnet, Barratt PLC		Plans submitted for restoration of shore by Phase 1 of West Hendon redevelopment.	Refer to Barnet.

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.	Marshland habitat at risk of scrub encroachment. Works need to be programmed for outside of the bird breeding season of March to August inclusive.
Marshland: orchids	WHCG, Brent	Marshland work by Brent Council. Volunteer work by WHCG.	WHCG to provide information.	Works need to be programmed for outside of the bird breeding season of March to August inclusive.
South-bank boardwalk	C&RT	Canal & Rivers Trust budget: periodic work possibly averages £500 / year.	As required.	Damage reported to Canal and River Trust (winter 2015/16).
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 have reduced Japanese Knotweed near to Cool Oak Lane bridge.	Barnet have reduced Japanese Knotweed near to Cool Oak Lane bridge. Brent have reduced Japanese Knotweed at Neasden Recreation Ground.	The Brent River Catchment Partnership are investigating how to improve control along the whole catchment. Operational knowledge is also shared via the River Brent Catchment Partnership.
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.	Paths maintained.
Woodland	Brent, Barnet, WHCG, C&RT	Largely self-managing. Unfunded: management of woodland to increase diversity, but potential for creative use of material.		Largely self-managing, but control of willow and other scrub required in marshland at edge of Reservoir.

Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre	Thames 21, (Brent)	Thames 21 are managing the Centre following a Community Asset Transfer from Brent Council.	Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre re-opened from January 2016.	Thames 21 are managing the Centre from January 2016.
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, commenced in 2013.	West Hendon Allotments: self-managed. Brent: Allotments Strategy: Birchen Grove Allotments and Dors Close.
Open spaces, pitches, paths, Capital Ring, signage, interpretative signage, litter and dog bins,	Barnet, Brent	Existing maintenance resources. Barnet; and Brent public realm budgets.	On-going.	Maintained; and well-used. Rough sleepers: see Committee report for updates.
Feasibility of traffic analysis / signage for Wood Lane	Barnet Highways (leading) in consultation with Brent Highways.	.See the proposals as part of the West Hendon re-development.	See the proposals for the bridge.	Proposals have been circulated.
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 2016. Included birds (weekly); butterflies (April to September).
Signage	Brent / Barnet.			Maintained.
Parks infrastructure	Brent / Barnet			Parks infrastructure is checked at appropriate frequencies.
River Brent Catchment Management Plan	All; led by Environment Agency / Thames 21.		2011 -	Action Plan published at: http://www.thames21.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/brent_river_corridor_improvement_plan_final_2014.pdf