

Decisions of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

14 March 2017

Members Present:-

Chairman: Councillor Sury Khatri
Councillor Adam Langleben

Also in attendance:

Matthew Gunyon	London Borough of Barnet
Leslie Williams	London Borough of Brent
Roy Beddard	Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Neale Hider	Environment Agency
Samantha Ho	Environment Agency
Derrick Chung	West hednon Residents Association/Friends of York Park
Diane Murphy	London Wildlife Trust
Clive Cohen	London Wildlife Trust
Phil Atkinson	Phoneix Canoe Club
John Shpeherd	Welsh Harp Sailing Association
Geof Johnson	Woolmead Residents Association
Eric Holroyd	Barratt London
Dale Langdale	Hendon Rifle Club
Martin Hall	West Hendon Allotment Society
Liz Hall	West Hendon Allotment Society

1. MINUTES

The Chairman updated the Committee that the request for substitute officers to attend the Welsh Harp meetings on behalf of colleagues who could not attend was still being looked into. The issue would have to be taken through the constitution Committee. (**Action:** Cllr Khatri)

An update on Mr Hider's action point from the last meeting can be found in 'post meeting' part of the minutes on page 4.

Page 5 of the minutes raised the point regarding vandalism. Mr Gunyon will look into the issue and provide an update at the next meeting, (**Action:** Matthew Gunyon).

Page 6 of the minutes an action point for Mr Williams has been covered in 3.9 of the Brent report submitted to this meeting.

Page 7 of the minutes an action point for Mr Williams have been covered in 3.8 of the Brent report submitted to this meeting.

Page 9 of the minutes and action point raised for Mr Holroyd will be covered in his presentation at this meeting.

The Chairman updated the Committee on the damage to Cool Oak Bridge. He said that Contractors are due to submit estimates for repair of the bridge, however the issue was more complicated than first thought due to the bridge being a listed building. He said that

measures were now in hand to have the bridge repaired and updates would be provided to the Committee hopefully at the next meeting.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Councillor John Hart
Councillor Devra Kay
Catherine Cullen from the London Wildlife Trust.
Judy Shepherd from the West Hendon Community Forum
Julie Johnson from Local Agenda 21

3. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor	Nature of Interest	Details
Councillor Langleben	Pecuniary Interest	Trustee on the West Hendon Estate Community Trust Fund

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET - WELSH HARP MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr Gunyon from the London Borough of Barnet introduced the report. Mr Gunyon updated the Committee that there had been no reports of illegal encampments for January 2017 and that the data for February would be available shortly. The key points in regard to illegal encampments are summarised in table 1.3 on page 16 of the report.

Mr Gunyon informed the Committee that maps had been included in the report for sites where Knotweed had been identified. He asked that if any other locations were identified that they are emailed to parks@barnet.gov.uk and these would be investigated.

Mr Cohen told the Committee it was important that all knotweed is treated before it flowers; otherwise the nectar might be collected by bees and enter into the human food chain. Mr Gunyon noted this and said treatment would commence before flowering. Mr Hider agreed with Mr Cohen that it should be treated before flowering, but said it can also be treated after flowering.

Councillor Langleben asked Mr Gunyon whether there was a tender being put through for bins and if so would this be implemented before the beginning of the summer season. Mr Gunyon said a tender was due to commence at the beginning of next week and was hopeful these bins should be in place before the beginning of summer. However the time of implementation is depended on the value of the contract. Mr Gunyon said he would update the Committee on the progress of this. (**Action:** Mr Gunyon)

Mr Dale Langdale said the bins were often overflowing and were not emptied regularly enough. Mr Gunyon said all the bins were on a programme to be emptied and he would look into any bins that had been missed. He asked that any missed bins should be reported to parks@barnet.gov.uk , and these cases would be passed on to a supervisor to sort out.

Councillor Langleben asked whether the bins on the pathway which cut through the West Hendon Estate were Barnet Council or Barrett Homes bins. Mr Holroyd said currently the land could be readopted by the Local Authority if it wished to do so; however the decision had yet to be made. Mr Holroyd assured the Committee that whoever ended up owning the land would ensure that bins were maintained and managed properly and this would be done throughout the process. In the short term, he said, the land would remain with Barratt, however Barratts were in discussion with Barnet Council regarding adoption of the roads, bridges and greenspaces over the long term. Mr Holroyd said that over the summer the bins would be provided on the site by Barratts, and that Barratts and Barnet Council would ensure they work together to ensure a maintenance regime is established.

Mr Shepherd enquired as to how often the bins were emptied as he had found rubbish spilling out of bins in the area. Mr Gunyon said that in the winter season bins were emptied twice a week and this increases to 4 times a week during the peak summer season. Mr Gunyon said during summer the emptying of bins would be assessed and could be increased to up to 7 times a week if required. Mr Gunyon also confirmed that play areas are inspected and emptied every day. Mr Langdale commented that he found the bins were always full. Mr Gunyon said he would take this back to the team to look into. (**Action:** Mr Gunyon)

6. LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT - WELSH HARP MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr Leslie Williams from the London Borough of Brent introduced the report. Mr Williams informed the Committee that the joint management plan for Barnet and Rivertrust can be found on the Brent Council website. The Action Plan is attached as an appendix to the Welsh Harp Management plan report. Mr Williams said that Brent Council were trying to establish a new timetable, however currently there was little progress on this.

Mr Williams told the Committee that there had been no new reports since the last meeting in relation to rough sleepers.

He informed the Committee that Brent was undertaking sport and physical activity sessions, and details of this could be found on the website. He asked that any organisations able to offer activities to residents to go on and log their details on the site or provide a link to a website.

Mr Williams gave an update on the weekly walks at the Welsh Harp and said consultations would take place regarding the programme going forward. He said an update would be given on future arrangements for the walks once received.

Mr Williams said that the removal of timber tow boarding from the river was in progress and that Brent Council was looking to set up projects both up-stream and down-stream of the site.

In relation to the item raised at the last meeting concerning dead Swans in the reservoir, Mr Williams said Brent Council's policy of removal of dead animals was dependant on the circumstances of the incident. He said that the Brent reservoir water was the responsibility of the Canal and River Trust and Brent Council does not have facilities at the site to launch boats into the water to deal with dead animals. He said that if the animal were near to the shore, dependant on the circumstance, Brent Council would endeavour to deal with it.

Mr Williams commented that there was erosion on the recreational ground where it meets the damn wall, and this area is popular with visitors. He said currently no immediate solution had been established, however Brent Council are looking into reducing tree vegetation to spread out over a wider area.

Mr Williams updated the Committee on disease and pests and said there are currently two main pest species affecting the Horse Chestnut. He said there are also a number of insect pests and fungi affecting the trees in Britain and information on these can be found via the Forestry Commission website, links to which could be found in the report.

Mr Cohen enquired about the progression of the Sand Martin Banks. Mr Hider said that he had visited the site in February; Catherine Cullen was unable to attend at the time. Mr Hider said discussions had taken place in regard to possible sites for the banks and the trust had been approached to provide details on embankments that had previously been deployed. Mr Hider said the RSPB would be sending information over to him and plans were on-going.

Mr Langdale said that there were still rough sleepers on the Brent side of the reservoir. Mr Atkinson said blue tarpaulin had been located on the site for two weeks near to BirchEnd Grove. Mr Williams asked Mr Atkinson to email details about this location after the meeting so that it could be investigated.

Mr Cohen flagged the issue of deaths from swimming in recent years; he asked whether signage could be made available in languages other than English. Mr Williams said that advice on the dangers of swimming had been tackled via several approaches. He said safety advice was outlined in the management plan and that there was a limit to the amount of signage that could be provided. He said it was not practical to provide a very large number of signs. Mr Johnson agreed on the impracticality of additional signs and said that pictorial signs were provided which were much easier to understand and were universal across languages.

Mr Atkinson notified the Committee that another illegal encampment near the Canoe Club had appeared and had been there for at least three weeks. Mr Williams said he would follow this up. **(Action: Mr Williams)**

Mr Shepherd said he had enquired about the rough sleepers on the north circular road side and also a caravan which has been there for around six weeks on the Birchend Grove, Mr Williams said he would also follow up these reports. **(Action: Mr Williams)**

Mr Shepherd said that wood that was being cut on the side of the lake and was entering the water and should be cleared. Mr Williams said he was not aware there was wood entering from their side; however he would endeavour to look into the matter. **(Action: Mr Williams)**

Ms Murphy asked whether the open session's portal on the Brent website could include volunteering for work days. Mr Williams said that anything physical could be included which could involve conservation, walking etc. He said that allotments and gardening organisations could put information on the website too. Ms Murphy said she would inform Ms Cullen of this.

Mr Cohen said the Canals and River Trust did not seem to attend the Welsh Harp meetings even though a lot of the issues involved them as they are responsible for water and banks. The Chairman notified the Committee that he had written to the Canal and River Trust requesting their attendance and would keep pursuing this to secure a

representative, however he was yet to receive a reply. Mr Holroyd said he would forward the Chairman contact details of an officer at the Canal and River Trust. Mr Hider agreed a representative would be useful and also could provide details of an officer working at the Trust.

Mr Cohen mentioned in the last meeting (page 3 of the minutes) that there was a problem with rats at the Welsh Harp. Mr Cohen said currently there are staff employed at Barnet Council to deal with rats, however he was not sure this was the case at Brent Council. Mr Cohen asked that a report on how frequently rats are present be produced, so that the rat population could be treated in whatever way necessary. Mr Williams said he would liaise with Barnet Council on their approach to handling rats. **(Action: Mr Williams)** He said currently Brent Council's approach within parks was to discourage bird feeding and encourage education around responsible park use. Councillor Langleben said the issue with rats was a major problem on the estate and the regeneration had exacerbated the issue in some parts. Councillor Langleben suggested Barnet Homes and Barretts needed to consult and cooperate on a solution to the problem. Mr Beddard said that the public feeding animals from the bridge was adding to the problem. Mr Hider suggested the public needed to be encouraged to feed the animals with alternatives to bread such as seeds or lettuce leaves. Mr Holroyd said he would take the comments surrounding better education of feeding to Ms Cullen and potentially investigate appropriate signage.

Mr Gunyon said that Barnet Council could send enforcement officers down to the site if there were any issues regarding fly tipping or littering and issue fines, but agreed engaging and education people was a good first step.

Mr Beddard noted that someone had been spotted on more than one occasion disposing of waste food into the lake. Mr Gunyon asked that details of the day and time of this activity be reported to him so that enforcement officers could visit the site and investigate.

RESOLVED – That the Committee noted and made comments on the report.

7. BARRATTS - UPDATE PRESENTATION ON THE WEST HENDON REGENERATION

Mr Eric Holroyd made a presentation to the Committee updating them on the West Hendon Regeneration plans.

Mr Holroyd told the Committee that Phase 3a of the scheme was completed and work was progressing on Phase 3b and 3c and updated the Committee on the parameters of the buildings and surrounding landscape.

Mr Holroyd said that the planning application for Phase 4 had been submitted to Barnet Council and consultations were carried out earlier in the year. He said he expected the decision to be made in March or April 2017. Mr Holroyd said that work would then take place on the site until 2019. Currently Barnet Council was administering 2 Compulsory Purchase Orders (and which will only be used as a last resort) for the land required to deliver Phase 4. A Public Enquiry was due to take place towards the end of March 2017. Mr Holroyd updated the Committee on the Cool Oak Bridge and said that a planning application for a new pedestrian and cycle bridge had been submitted to Barnet Council in January 2017. He said that the bridge would provide improved access from the development to Woodfield park and West Hendon playing field.

Mr Holroyd updated the Committee on the removal of trees on the estate, he said he was not able to get details on the total number of trees removed, however he informed the Committee that during Phase 3 the intention was to retain as many of the trees as possible. He said that out of the 50 trees, half of them are planned to be removed and replaced with 145 trees, which would significantly increase the number of trees within the estate. Mr Holroyd said plans for the trees in later phases were still to be agreed, but consultation with Barnet Council would happen before any plans were put in place.

Mr Hider enquired about proposals for the land on the opposite side of the road to the estate. Mr Holroyd said that the Canals and River Trust had leased this land to Barnet Council and who then leased this to Barratts. He said in the longer term Barnet Council would look at improvements via s106 and there were plans to provide a type of games area in the location after consultation had been completed. Mr Hider asked if they were open to proposals on what the land could be used for. Mr Holroyd said that this would be a decision for Barnet Council once lease of the land had terminated. Mr Gunyon said that alternative ideas could be considered at the point of consultation.

Ms Murphy asked about changes to buildings on the Broadway and whether older buildings would be demolished to open up the junction during this phase of building. Mr Holroyd said the Broadway had relatively few buildings being demolished as part of the scheme and smaller properties will be removed where the junctions require widening. He said that there was a piece of work being conducted with Barnet Council to look at the retail strategy for the West Hendon Broadway. Ms Murphy also asked about the buildings on Station Road on the north side as there was a nest of House Martins colony present. Mr Holroyd confirmed that they were keen to maintain and protect all life and appropriate investigations would be performed if the building was directly affected. Mr Beddard said the colony situated here was the largest in London. Mr Holroyd told the Committee no work was planned on these buildings for at least a couple of years which would give them time to look into plans. Mr Holroyd said he would discuss the issue with colleagues and all wildlife would be taken into consideration before any work commenced. Mr Beddard said that alternative nests would need to be sought in a suitable site nearby, close to the reservoir with feeding opportunities for them. Mr Cohen said it was critical that new nests were placed facing the same direction as the existing nests.

Mr Cohen said that any felling of trees should be conducted outside of the breeding season. Mr Holroyd said he would consult with an ecologist and that in terms of the 25 trees being taken down over the 4 or 5 year period, these would be removed as late as possible. Mr Holroyd said a survey is conducted prior to every tree being taken down and could be delayed if needed, he stressed that everything possible will be done to mitigate the effects on wildlife.

Mr Chung said that the trees being removed were 50 or 60 years old and the new trees planted would therefore not be a good replacement. Mr Holroyd said that only trees on the site were being replaced and none on the Welsh Harp itself were affected. Mr Chung also enquired about where the new play area would be situated. Mr Holroyd said the ball court was due to be removed from the estate, with two new bridges built across to playing fields. He said they were currently working with Barnet Council for provision of the ball court and once a suitable location had been identified they would fund the development, residents would be consulted first on the best location.

Mr Johnson asked whether Herbert Road would remain open. Mr Holroyd said as he understood it the direction of the one way traffic would be reversed down this road, however the road would remain open and still be one-way. He said there were individual

section agreements for the junctions and these would be publicised to ensure people understand the changes and how they will affect the community. Mr Holroyd also said that work on the bridge would commence in autumn 2017 and was due to be completed by spring 2018, avoiding the breeding season. The pre-fabrication of the bridge would be conducted off site to minimise the effect on the Welsh Harp and then craned into place within 1 or 2 weeks minimising the impact on the Welsh Harp.

Councillor Langleben reiterated to the Committee that he and his colleagues opposed the principle of the scheme due to the loss of hundreds of homes. He asked that the Council commit to re-house within the borough all the residents made homeless as a result.

8. PHONEIX CANOE CLUB- PRESENTATION OF PLANS TO RE-GENERATE THE PHOENIX CANOE CLUB

Mr Phil Atkinson presented a short presentation on the new designs for the Phoneix Canoe Club.

He told the Committee that the design team had finished the plan drawings and they would be submitted for planning permission at the end of the week. He explained the need for the new building was because the existing building was very old and did not accommodate the needs and facilities of the club.

Mr Atkinson explained that Timber had been chosen as it blends in with the surrounding area. The building design incorporates a community café and a company was due to be employed to work with adults with learning difficulties. Mr Atkinson said the new plan meant that the boats were now situated at the front of the building toward the water and that an additional 2 changing rooms had been added.

Mr Cohen asked whether a green roof had been considered as it offered cost savings and would be appropriate for the location. Mr Atkinson said they had been advised that there is so much greenery surrounding the area already that this would not have much additional effect.

.Mr Holroyd said that they had researched sustainability measures and that a green or brown roof was costly, and the plan needed to be deliverable and cost effective. Ms Murphy stated it was difficult to understand how a green roof would not be cost effective. Mr Holroyd said he would take the feedback from the Committee to the architects to re-look at the plans.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Cohen asked that schools be invited to the Welsh Harp to get involved in conservation activities. The Chairman said he would pass this request on to the education officers. **(Action:** Cllr Khatri) Ms Murphy said Thames 21 already ran such a scheme.

10. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

None.

The chairman thanked the Committee Members for attending this year. He updated the Committee that no dates had yet been set for the Welsh Harp Consultative Committee meetings 2017 -2018 which would now be held at Brent Council. The Chairman told the

Committee that as soon as the dates had been finalised they would be circulated. Dates can be found on Brent's website via the following link:
<http://democracy.brent.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=286>

The meeting finished at 8.55pm.