



MINUTES OF THE WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Tuesday 28 November 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Agha (London Borough of Brent) (Chair), and Councillors Ahmed (London Borough of Brent), Hart (London Borough of Barnet), Langleben (London Borough of Barnet) and Farah (London Borough of Brent). Also present were Julie Johnson (Local Agenda 21), Dianne Murphy (London Wildlife Trust), Phil Atkinson (Phoenix Canoe), Haynes (Welsh Harp Conservation Group), John Shepherd (Welsh Harp Sailing Association), Derrick Chung (West Hendon Residents' Association / Friends of York Park) and Geoffrey Johnson (Woolmead Residents' Association).

1. Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members

The following apologies were received:

- Roy Beddard (Welsh Harp Conservation Group)
- Clive Cohen (London Wildlife Trust)
- Councillor Crane (Brent)
- Catherine Cullen (London Wildlife Trust)
- Liz Hall (West Hendon Allotment Society)
- Councillor Kay (Barnet)
- Councillor Khatri (Barnet and Vice Chair)
- Councillor Mashari (Brent)
- Julie Shephard (West Hendon Community Association)

Councillor Farah (Brent) was present as a substitute member of the committee for Councillor Crane.

Andrew Haynes (Secretary of WHCG) was attending on behalf of Roy Beddard.

2. Declarations of interests

Councillor Langleben declared that a personal interest as he was a trustee of the West Hendon Estate Community Trust Fund. He further declared for purposes of transparency that his spouse was employed by Brent Council.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 July 2017 be approved as a correct record.

4. Matters arising (if any)

Park Furniture

An update was sought on the larger bins to be installed at the Welsh Harp. Matthew Gunyon (Partnership and Development Manager, Greenspaces Team) advised that the procurement process for the contract for park furniture had been slightly delayed but would be awarded at the start of the new calendar year.

Silk Stream

An update was sought on what actions had been taken in response to reports provided at the past two meetings regarding debris and rubbish dumped in the Silk Stream. Matthew Gunyon advised that he had identified that the land in question was in the control of Barnet Council and a site visit would be arranged with the relevant team. Discussion had been held with the planning regarding the possibility of opening up access to dissuade anti-social behaviour. Dianne Murphy (London Wildlife Trust) cautioned that this could have a negative impact on birdlife in that area.

Attendance by the Canal and River Trust

It was agreed that the Canal and River Trust be contacted to encourage attendance at future Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee.

5. Management Plan (Barnet)

Matthew Gunyon (Partnership and Development Manager, Greenspaces Team) introduced the report. The committee heard that no reports of illegal encampments had been received. A procurement exercise had been launched for landscape design services for Barnet Council's two new Sports Hubs. The consultant would be asked to look at Woodfield Park in parallel to West Hendon Playing Fields and the Ball Court would also be picked up through this process. The consultant would be required to undertake stakeholder engagement as well as a full public consultation. Matthew Gunyon concluded his introduction by referring the committee to the advice set out in the report provided by Barnet Council's in-house pest control service. Dianne Murphy (London Wildlife Trust) advised that the ecology concerns set out in this advice related only to use of poison within the SSSI and not to use in homes.

In response to queries raised by the committee, Matthew Gunyon confirmed that signs regarding littering would be installed once the new Parks Furniture contract was in place in the new calendar year. The contract for enforcement officers was currently under review and an update would be provided in due course. With regard to the spread of the Oak Processionary Moth, the core zone was gradually getting closer to the Welsh Harp. The residents in Woolmead Avenue who had dug a drainage ditch from their premises into the Welsh Harp had been written to and advised that they either needed to repair the damage or Barnet Council would do so on their behalf and recharge the costs. The bird hide that had been vandalised and burnt had now been refurbished in such a way as to discourage overnight use.

Derick Chung (West Hendon Resident's Association) emphasised that it was important that in relocating the ball court, the size of the facility was not reduced and noted that parents would not be happy with it being located across the bridge and out of sight of their homes. Eric Holroyd advised that some of these concerns were raised at the consultation and explained that the regeneration scheme provided for a number of different play areas aimed at different age ranges. It was confirmed that there was sufficient space at the West Hendon Playing Fields to accommodate a multiuse playing space.

6. Management Plan (Brent)

Leslie Williams (Strategy and Service Development Officer) introduced the report, thanking the committee for the reports of illegally dumped rubbish at Neasden Recreation Ground provided at the last meeting and advising that on removal, the volume of rubbish had amounted to a lorry load. The committee further heard that Giant Hogweed had been reported at two locations at Neasden Recreation Ground. Brent Council were investigating control of the plant. It had also been identified that the boardwalk in the Reservoir land beyond the eastern edge of Neasden Recreation Ground had damaged sections. The boardwalk also incorporated a small footbridge over the brook that flowed from Dollis Hill / the North Circular Road to the Reservoir. The landowner had been contacted; and as far as was practicable, access had been cordoned off to the start of the boardwalk.

Dianne Murphy (London Wildlife Trust) reported that there was a large pile of bags and rubbish which had been dumped at Birchen Grove. Leslie Williams confirmed that he would follow this matter up.

7. **Environment Agency - Verbal Report (if any)**

None.

8. **Planning Issues (if any)**

Planning Application - Tower

The committee considered the following planning application: **(Ref 17/4597) - Installation of a 25 meter high lattice tower to be situated adjacent to the south-western corner of the Welsh Harp reservoir, Embankment South of Welsh Harp Sailing Club, Birchen Grove, London, NW9.**

A number of concerns were raised by the committee, including:

- A tower had already been erected next to the Welsh Harp Sailing Club, though not in the location stated. It was unclear whether this was a temporary measure. This tower stood out, was unsightly and was not sited within tall trees as the planning application stated.
- The application was poorly worded and implied through lack of clarity that it was submitted by the Welsh Harp Sailing Club who had subsequently received complaints.
- The impact of the tower on birdlife and wildlife in the area. This was not adequately addressed by the application.

The committee noted that a petition had been established to object to the erection of a tower in a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

RESOLVED: That the concerns of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee be sent to the relevant Planning Department.

West Hendon Estate Regeneration

Eric Holroyd (Barratt Metropolitan Limited Liability Partnership (LLP)) advised that the reserved matters planning application regarding Phase 5, Phase 6 and the Silk Stream Bridge was currently being prepared. Construction on these phases was not due to commence until 2022/23; however, it was necessary to submit the reserved

matters planning application within three years of the approval of the outline planning application, which had been granted in 2013.

Eric Holroyd informed the committee that a consultation event had been held on Wednesday 22 November at the Community Hub on the West Hendon Estate. The committee received a detailed overview of the information provided at the event and copies of the display boards were tabled for the committee's consideration.

In response to queries raised by the committee, Eric Holroyd advised that an ecologist was employed by Barratt Metropolitan LLP to monitor the impact of construction and overall development on wildlife. The Silk Stream Bridge had been placed in dense wetted woodland, away from the water. The bridge would be made from noise-minimising materials and the edges had been designed to shelter movement. The bridge was not located near a breeding site. The reserved matters application, would include a detailed technical note from the ecologist setting out enhancements that had and would be made to improve the biodiversity of the area. These included removing invasive plant species and adding signage to provide information on the wildlife of the area. A series of approvals from the Environment trust, Natural England and the Canal and River Trust would also be required to move forward with the detailed proposals. As part of the planning permission granted in 2013, Barratt Metropolitan LLP was obliged to monitor the impact of construction on birds and wildlife and it was found that the greatest disturbance for birds was caused by large packs of dogs being walked in the area. The roof space of the new properties was divided between solar panels and green or brown roofs. In addition, bird and bat boxes and bricks were embedded in the development, as agreed with Natural England. Barratt Metropolitan LPP also funded the Warden position for the SSSI. Discussions were also being held with the London Wildlife Trust regarding the development of an overall strategy for the Welsh Harp.

Eric Holroyd further responded that a new public square and six new retail units to include a supermarket and coffee shop would be built as part of the phase of development currently underway. Major highway works had also been undertaken, including the provision of new paving, street furniture, lighting and 65 pay and display parking bays. Work was being done with existing traders to explore how to diversify the public offer. £30k funding had been secured by Barratt and this would be matched by Barnet Council to support this work. The possibility of accessing further funding from the GLA would be explored.

A number of queries regarding parking were raised. Eric Holroyd advised that the number of parking places provided for the development complied with Barnet's policy and the surrounding roads would be designated CPZ for residents. Councillor Langleben advised that the low take up of parking spaces provided for the residents of the development could in part be due to the significant initial charge made for the parking space. Eric Holroyd advised that he would explore this issue with Barnet Council.

During the discussion, the following actions were agreed:

- i) Eric Holroyd to share with the committee:
 - the results of the monitoring of bird and bat boxes and green roofs with the committee.

- information on the rafts installed
 - a note from the ecologist appointed by Barratt Metropolitan LPP regarding the habitat provided in the buildings.
- ii) Eric Holroyd to feedback to Barrett homes regarding councillor access to the residents in the development.

The Chair thanked Eric Holroyd for his contribution to the meeting.

9. Date of next meeting

The committee noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 13 March 2018.

10. Any other urgent business

Welsh Harp Education Centre

Edel Fingleton (Thames 21) advised that Thames 21 managed the Welsh Harp Education Centre (WHEC). The organisation wanted to expand provision, engage the community and be more involved with what was happening in the reservoir. A bid would be submitted for Brent Community Infrastructure Levy funding to enable the WHEC to run a community engagement project encompassing a taster programme to inspire the community and other stakeholders to use the centre. Members of the committee were asked if they would be willing to write a letter of support with regard to the bid and if so, to contact Edel Fingleton directly.

Littering by footballers using pitches

Matthew Gunyon (Partnership and Development Manager, Greenspaces Team) advised that this issue had been discussed with the lettings officer in contact with the clubs booking the pitches to ensure that the terms of booking were made clear regarding this matter. Unfortunately, this was an ongoing enforcement issue and it was necessary to be able to evidence who had left the litter. The pitches were also used casually without permission of the council.

The meeting closed at 9.33 pm

CLLR AGHA
Chair