

Agenda Item: 7

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

20 July 2004

REPORT NO : /2004 FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

FOR INFORMATION

NAME OF WARD:
Welsh Harp, Dollis Hill, All

WELSH HARP RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT PLAN

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 This report presents progress on the Welsh Harp Reservoir Management Plan and related issues. The Welsh Harp Reservoir Management Plan is a joint Management Plan between the three main land-holding and land-managing organisations in the vicinity: Brent Council, British Waterways, and the London Borough of Barnet.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report and that officers will be completing the remaining stages of the Local Nature Reserve designation.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None specific, but some of the priorities identified in the Management Plan will require additional resources if they are to be implemented in the future. For Brent Council Parks Service, the Management Plan is implemented and improvements programmed via the Brent Parks Service Parks Strategy, and Operational Plan. Thus implementation is partially dependent upon revenue and capital budgets for grounds maintenance and for parks management. The Parks Service pursues other sources of finance and opportunities for partnership working that may become available.

3.2 Local Nature Reserve: The costs associated with the preparation of the Designation and the publication of the Public Notices has been provided for in the Brent Parks Service 2004/5 revenue budget. That expenditure had been programmed by the Parks Service for early in the 2004/05 financial year (but implementation is dependent on progress as noted below). Once the Local Nature Reserve has been designated, it is not expected that the Local Nature Reserve will require any additional finance over and above the current financial arrangements. However, the designation may provide opportunities for grant applications.

4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None specific.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Welsh Harp Management Plan co-ordinates current environmental works in the Reservoir area, and highlights works that are a future priority.

5.2 The designation of the Local Nature Reserve will help to protect the wildlife of the Reservoir area and the interpretation of the biodiversity interest.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) and previous legislation, the land owners / managers are required to obtain consent from English Nature before undertaking management or other works on the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). CROW increases the responsibility on the land owners to improve the management of SSSIs. The Act also encourages land owners to produce Management Plans for the SSSI, which when approved by English Nature, enable the carrying out of the management works specified in the Management Plan. This can reduce the administrative problems inherent in having to obtain consent for each individual item of management work.

6.2 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949: This Act enabled the designation of the proposed Local Nature Reserve at the Reservoir.

6.3 DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

None specific.

7.0 DETAIL

Welsh Harp Management Plan

- 7.1 The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan is kept under review by officers of the land owning and land managing organisations. An annual review is undertaken in approximately July each year, and then reported to Committee for the Committee's recommendations. Since 2001, when the CROW Act came into force, officers have included in the Management Plan process the additional responsibilities detailed in the CROW Act.
- 7.2 The current version (10 November 2003) of the Management Plan is that signed by English Nature on 15 May 2003 and as amended by the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee on 9 December 2003. Both versions of the Management Plan are available on the internet at www.Brent.gov.uk/parks (from there go to the 'Brent Biodiversity Action Plan homepage and then navigate via the Brent Reservoir Action Plan). English Nature have indicated that for minor changes to the Management Plan, there is no need to seek their formal consent, though an electronic copy of the amended version has been deposited with English Nature.
- 7.3 Officers of the three land holding organisations and of other land managing organisations will be meeting to discuss the Management Plan works before the next meeting of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee after that of 20 July 2004. The meeting will consider both the annual review of the Management Plan; and the management work itself. Management and enhancement works that are not currently undertaken will be prioritised with a view to seeking potential finance or other resources for their implementation. Comments from Members of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee are welcome in advance of that meeting and can be sent to Brent Council Parks Service (at the address below), to Barnet's Greenspaces Quality Officer (Leisure and Youth), or to British Waterways (Mike Manuel) as appropriate.
- 7.4 Capital Ring: It is expected that Transport for London will complete the improved signage of the entire route of the Capital Ring through Brent including that at the Brent Reservoir in the late summer of 2004.
- 7.5 British Waterways will be updating the Committee on the proposed works that they are undertaking to the dam wall and its vicinity. As part of this work, British Waterways are holding discussions with Brent Council with respect to a terrestrial bund within Neasden Recreation Ground (zones 7E and 7A).
- 7.6 Heritage Lottery Award: Maintenance of the projects is on-going.
- 7.7 Fly-tipping and pollution: The Environment Agency is continuing an investigation of fly-tipping and pollution incidents on the south-east shore of the Brent Reservoir. Officers from Brent Council, British Waterways, and English Nature are also involved.

Neasden Pavilion

- 7.8 Brent Council Parks Service has been seeking a new use for the derelict pavilion building in Neasden Recreation Ground. As previously reported to this committee, any use will need to be compatible with the function of Neasden Recreation Ground as a public open space; and with the Council's Unitary Development Plan. The Parks Service is still awaiting for the preferred applicant to provide a business plan with relevant information, before the proposal can be considered further.

Local Nature Reserve

- 7.9 At the previous meeting of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee on 24 February 2004, a report detailed the actions that have been taken by the two local authorities at the Brent Reservoir, in consultation with English Nature, to complete the designation of the Local Nature Reserve.
- 7.10 The current situation is similar to that reported to the WHJCC meeting on 24 February 2004. Brent Council are in a position to proceed with the designation over land within the London Borough of Brent. However, English Nature have indicated that the Declaration will need to be undertaken jointly with Barnet Council. Barnet Council are awaiting committee approval before the Designation can proceed.

Biodiversity Action Plan

- 7.11 Current information on the Biodiversity Action Plans relating to the Brent Reservoir and Welsh Harp area can be accessed via the Brent Council Parks website at www.Brent.gov.uk/parks or via www.Brent.gov.uk
- 7.12 A list of the species that are candidates for local Species Action Plans has been prepared.

Kingsbury and Welsh Harp Reservoir Open Day

- 7.13 The Kingsbury and Brent Reservoir Open Day was held on Spring Bank Holiday Monday 31 May 2004. Unfortunately, a number of venues were unable to open this year. The event included a guided walk to the Reservoir.

8.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Details of Documents:

- 8.1 Local Nature Reserves in England. A Guide to their Selection and Declaration. English Nature. 1999.
- 8.2 Dated correspondence and other documents referred to in the Report.
- 8.3 Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Mr Leslie Williams, Environmental Policy Officer, Brent Parks Service, 660 Harrow Road, Wembley, Middlesex

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