

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee
6 September 2005

Report from the Director of Environment

For information

Wards affected:
Welsh Harp, Dollis Hill, Fryent, All

Report Title: Welsh Harp Management Plan

Forward Plan ref:

1.0 Summary

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. The Declaration of the Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Local Nature Reserve has been completed.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 [Members are asked to note the report and the Declaration of the Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Local Nature Reserve.](#)

3.0 Detail

Welsh Harp Management Plan

- 3.1 The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan is administered 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, officers have included in the Management Plan process the additional responsibilities of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to produce Management Plans for SSSIs.
- 3.2 The Management Plan was signed by English Nature on 15 May 2003. Subsequent amendments have been reported to this Committee. English Nature have indicated that for minor changes to the Management Plan, there is no need to seek their formal consent.
- 3.3 The current version of the Management Plan has been placed on the internet via Brent Council's website 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). A map of the zones is also provided on the internet; and a copy of the map is also attached to this report.
- 3.4 Barbeques, litter and related issues. Following the further comments at the last meeting of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee (WHJCC) on 15 June 2005, officers have investigated the barbeque issue as part of an internal Environmental Management Programme due for completion in April 2006. This involves a number of tasks including the development of good practice. We have also contacted 19 London and near to London local authorities who are members of an officer level London Benchmarking Club. All 19 prohibited barbeques or fires in parks, though three local authorities did provide dedicated barbeque facilities. Brent Parks Service also appreciates the comments and reports that have been received from the public during the summer and has endeavoured to respond to litter incidents as soon as practicable.
- 3.5. Cross-border working by enforcement officers: Following the comments raised at the last meeting of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee regarding the powers of local authority enforcement officers to operate in the adjacent Borough, the situation appears to be that enforcement officers are authorised to take enforcement action in their own Boroughs only. Officers do however co-operate as far as practicable.
- 3.6 The Parks Service have recently dealt with a number of anti-social behaviour incidents. In late June 2005 it became necessary to temporarily close the car park at Neasden Recreation Ground off Aboyne Road to cars at weekends. In August, there was a 'rave' party involving loud noise at the Welsh Harp Open Space. In the case of the 'rave', Brent Parks Service staff prevented the continuation of the event at the Welsh Harp Open Space.

- 3.7 Access to Woodfield Nursery: Officers of Barnet's Highways and Design team are leading on this issue and are also in contact with Brent Transportation Services to investigate the issues raised at previous meeting of the WHJCC in relation to access to Woodfield Nursery.
- 3.8 Dam wall works. British Waterways are providing an update to the Committee on their works to the dam wall. At Neasden Recreation Ground the construction of the bund is underway.
- 3.9 Priestly Way screen. The Environment Agency have notified the the Parks Service that they are proposing to improve the safety of the rubbish screen on the River Brent near to Priestly Way.

Heritage Lottery Award

- 3.10 The Heritage Lottery Fund extension was completed at the end of July 2005, though some aftercare works will continue as appropriate. Details of the projects have been reported to previous meetings of the WHJCC.
- 3.11 Maintenance of the Heritage Lottery award projects is on-going.

Neasden Pavilion

- 3.12 [British Waterways has contacted Brent Council to investigate the feasibility of the demolition of the pavilion during the works to the dam wall. A number of technical issues are under investigation including issues relating to asbestos, the possible presence of bats, and the costs of the works. At the time of writing, it is expected to be a few weeks before information is available to decide on the feasibility of demolition at the present time. Brent Council Parks Service has been seeking a new use for the derelict pavilion building in Neasden Recreation Ground \(Zone 7E\) and/or to demolish the building. 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. A bat survey may be required prior to demolition.](#)

Local Nature Reserve

- 3.13 Brent Council's Executive Committee agreed the Declaration of the Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Local Nature Reserve on 20 June 2005, the Declaration was made on 21 July 2005; and (at the time of drafting this report), officers of Barnet and Brent are aiming for the publication of the Public Notice on 1 September 2005. A copy of Brent's Public Notice (which is similar to the Public Notice produced by Barnet) is attached to this report.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 None specific, but some of the priorities identified in the Management Plan will require additional resources if they are to be implemented in

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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.

- 4.2 Local Nature Reserve: The Brent Council costs associated with the preparation of the Declaration and the publication of the Public Notices had been provided for in the Brent Parks Service 2005/2006 revenue budget. It is not expected that the management of the Local Nature Reserve will require any additional finance over and above the current financial arrangements. However, the declaration may provide opportunities for grant applications.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the land owners / managers are required to consult with English Nature for any operation in the list of 'Potentially damaging operations'; and English Nature will issue a consent for the works unless the operation is likely to have a significant impact on any of the notified features of interest on the site. 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 of the site. CROW 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.
- 5.2 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949: This Act enabled the declaration of the proposed Local Nature Reserve at the Reservoir.

6.0 Diversity Implications

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

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

- 7.1 None specific.

8.0 Environmental Implications

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

- 8.2 The declaration of the Local Nature Reserve will help to protect the wildlife of the Reservoir area and the interpretation of the biodiversity interest.

Background Papers

Dated correspondence and other documents referred to in the Report including:

Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan.

Report from the Director of Environment to the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee: Welsh Harp Reservoir Management Plan: 15 June 2005.

Equality Impact Assessment Completion Form: Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee: Welsh Harp Reservoir Management Plan: 20 January 2005. Form dated 06b.01.2005.

Contact Officers

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