

AGENDA ITEM: 6

Putting the Community First



Meeting	Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee (WHJCC)
Date	7 December 2005
Subject	Welsh Harp Management Plan
Report of	Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport
Summary	To report the position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) declaration and site management

Officer Contributors	Interim Head of Environmental Services
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards affected	West Hendon
Enclosures	None
For decision by	Joint Committee
Function of	Executive
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in (if appropriate)	N/A

Contact for further information: Mark Evison, Greenspaces Officer
020 8359 7826

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Joint Committee note the report .

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 9 March 1998, Recreation, Leisure and Arts Committee, resolved to recommend to Council that Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) be declared at the Welsh Harp, Big Wood and Totteridge Fields Nature Reserves. However, the Chief Executive's supplementary report to Council on 21 April 1998 stated amongst others that the Council should not approve the draft byelaws for the Welsh Harp LNR, and that they must be amended as necessary and resubmitted to Committee.
- 2.2 Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee on 9 December 2003 - approved the proposed boundary of the LNR.
- 2.3 Hendon Area Environmental Sub-Committee on 15 March 2005 agreed the designation of a Local Nature Reserve on the Welsh Harp.
- 2.4 Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee of 15 June 2005 agreed draft byelaws.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The ongoing management of the Welsh Harp contributes towards a Cleaner, Greener Borough.
- 3.2 The work also helps deliver the Corporate Plan priority: 'Protecting Barnet's greenspaces'.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 None in the context of this report.

5. FINANCIAL, STAFFING, ICT AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6. LEGAL ISSUES

- 6.1 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.

7. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS

- 7.1 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 and surrounding open land as a unique environment for both recreation and wildlife conservation.”

8. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Local Nature Reserve and Bye-laws

- 8.1 It was reported at the last meeting that the final stage of the declaration process is letter to inform English Nature. This letter was sent by Barnet on 9 September 2005.
- 8.2 The draft byelaws agreed at the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee of 15 June 2005 have been submitted to the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for informal approval. Once informal approval is given the byelaws will go before the Hendon Area Environmental Sub-Committee for referral to the Council in order that application may be made to the Minister for the Environment to sanction them.

Rear of Woolmead Avenue

- 8.3 Five staff members from Asda Colindale took part in the volunteer day to clean up the rubbish and cut back vegetation along the rear of Woolmead Avenue. The event took place on 23 September. It is hoped they will repeat the task in the spring, or next summer.
- 8.4 A further stage of tree management works has been carried out. The waterside willows have been coppiced and pollarded at various heights to provide a varied structure and appropriate screen for the birds on the reservoir. This project will continue next autumn.

Heritage Lottery Fund

- 8.5 The new bird hide on the northern arm of the reservoir was vandalised in the summer. A new metal frame and door and steel plating will be installed in early December.

Security Improvements

- 8.6 To prevent unauthorised vehicles gaining access onto the playing fields 40 bollards were installed on the car park boundary at Woodfield Park in October. A capital fund is available to provide more bollards this winter. The security gates on Cool Oak Lane have been repaired on a number of occasions over the summer period.

9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

Legal: PBD

BT: