



Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

Thursday 14 November 2013 at 7.00 pm
Boardroom - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,
Wembley, HA9 0FJ

Membership:

Members Councillors:	representing	first alternates Councillors:	second alternates Councillors:
Hart (Vice-Chair)	LB Barnet		
Johnson	LB Barnet		
Khatri	LB Barnet		
Rayner	LB Barnet		
Allie	LB Brent	R Moher	Hirani
Hopkins (Chair)	LB Brent	Ashraf	Hashmi
Kataria	LB Brent	J Moher	Crane
Mashari	LB Brent	Kabir	John

For further information contact: Bryony Gibbs, Democratic Services Officer
0208 937 1355, bryony.gibbs@brent.gov.uk

For electronic copies of minutes, reports and agendas, and to be alerted when the minutes of this meeting have been published visit:
democracy.brent.gov.uk

The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting

Membership continued:

Member	Organisation
David Carter	Brent Sports Council
Leela O'Dea	British Waterways
Neale Hider	Environment Agency
Neil Winter	Environment Agency
Peter Castle	Hendon Rifle Club
A Jefferson	Hendon Rifle Club
Klaus Schuricht	Hendon Rifle Club
Molly Savage	Local Agenda 21
Clive Cohen	London Wildlife Trust
Kate Mitchell	Natural England
Jon Bell	Princes Park Youth Football Club
Commander G F Beck MBE	Training Ship Broadsword
Colette Murphey	Training Ship Broadsword
Brain Turner	Training Ship Broadsword
Dr Leo Batten	Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Roy Beddard	Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Harry Mackie	Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre
Julia Touloumbadjian	Welsh Harp Sailing Association
Judy Shepherd	West Hendon Community Forum
Geoffrey Johnson	Woolmead Residents' Association
Jon Guest	Canal and River Trust (formerly British Waterways)
Martin Hall	West Hendon Allotment Society
Derrick Chung	West Hendon Residents' Association / Friends of York Park

Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members

Item	Page
1 Declarations of interests	
Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, any relevant financial or other interest in the items on this agenda.	
2 Deputations (if any)	
3 Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 6
4 Matters arising	7 - 8
The letter written on behalf of the committee to the Mayor of London regarding the redevelopment of the West Hendon Estate is attached for members' information.	
5 Management Plan (Barnet)	9 - 12
This report provides an update on the position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and on-going site management.	
6 Management Plan (Brent)	13 - 20
This report presents progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan. The Management Plan is jointly managed by the three main land-holding organisations: Brent Council, the London Borough of Barnet, and the Canal & River Trust (formerly British Waterways).	
7 Environment Agency - Verbal Report (if any)	
8 Planning Issues (if any)	
9 Date of next meeting	
The next scheduled meeting of the Welsh Harp is on 20 March 2014	
10 Any other urgent business	

Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Democratic Services Manager or his representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 64.



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- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.

Agenda Item 3

MINUTES OF THE WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE **Wednesday 24 July 2013 at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor Hopkins (LB Brent) (Chair), Councillor Hart (LB Barnet) (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Johnson (LB Barnet) and Allie (LB Brent) and Molly Savage (Local Agenda 21), Clive Cohen (London Wildlife Trust), Julia Touloumbadjian (Welsh Harp Sailing Association), Judy Shepherd (West Hendon Community Forum), Geoffrey Johnson (Woolmead Residents' Association) and Derrick Chung (West Hendon Residents' Association / Friends of York Park)

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors Khatri (LB Barnet) and Neale Hider (Environment Agency), Roy Beddard (Welsh Harp Conservation Group) and Harry Mackie (Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre)

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

RESOLVED:

- i. That Councillor Hopkins be elected Chair for the 2013/14 municipal year.
- ii. That Councillor Hart be elected Vice Chair for the 2013/14 municipal year.

2. Declarations of interests

None declared.

3. Deputations (if any)

There were no deputations.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2013 be approved as a correct record subject to the following amendment: the resolution recorded under the item 'Presentation by Barratt Metropolitan LLP - New Regeneration Application, West Hendon' be amended to read:

- i. That the Committee note the contents of the presentation provide by Barratt Metropolitan LLP
- ii. That questions were asked by the committee and the committee was generally in opposition to the plans as presented by Barratt Metropolitan LLP.

5. Matters arising

Members expressed that as an advisory body it would be beneficial to have more detailed minutes taken of the committee's meetings.

RESOLVED:

That for the current and all future meetings of the committee a detailed account of the discussion of the committee be recorded in the minutes.

6. **Management Plan (Barnet)**

Tracey Sawyer (Parks and Open Space Officer – Barnet Council) introduced a report updating the committee on the current position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and outlining on-going site management. The meeting heard that work had been undertaken in partnership with the Hendon Rifle Club to address the issue of fly tipping around the access road. Wooden Bollards had been installed around the green and a drop ATG bollard had been installed.

In the subsequent discussion, the committee raised several queries and issues. Concerns were highlighted regarding people sleeping rough in LNR and occupying disused sporting facilities. Clive Cohen (London Wildlife Trust) noted that otters were successfully being reintroduced, with reports of otters across the country becoming increasingly numerous. In view of this, he proposed that a holt be created in the Welsh Harp in anticipation of otters continuing to colonise new areas. In response, a number of members queried what the likely impact of otter occupation might be on the natural environment and leisure use of the Welsh Harp. A member of the committee noted that a kingfisher bank had previously been established in the area but had since been allowed to silt up.

In answer to the questions and concerns raised, Tracey Sawyer confirmed that she would refer the reports of rough sleeping to the Safer Neighbourhoods Team and Homelessness team, and would look into the condition of the Kingfisher bank. Leslie Williams advised that both Brent and Barnet Council, as well as other boroughs along the river and tributaries of the Brent river had been collaborating on a Brent River Catchment Management Plan. Otters were not yet on the agenda however, as the principal priority in establishing the plan was to improve the habitat of the river and reduce pollution. At the present time, the Welsh Harp was in too poor a condition and was too isolated to present an attractive habitat for otters. Clive Cohen suggested that a holt could be established and forgotten about for the time-being. Otters were very timid creatures and it was unlikely that they would cause disruption to the leisure use of the Welsh Harp.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the report be noted
- ii. That in view of the differing views expressed by the committee regarding the establishment of an otter holt, the officers of both Brent and Barnet explore the implications of this proposal and report back at the next meeting of the committee.

7. **Management Plan (Brent)**

Leslie Williams (Strategy and Service Development Officer) presented a report to the committee setting out the progress made on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan. The committee heard that the construction of a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Neasden Recreation Ground had recently been completed and was now available for use by the local community. Landscaping improvements were scheduled to be made by the contractor which would include the re-seeding of grass areas disturbed by the construction works, and the planting of a hedgerow of Rosa rugosa. The committee was further advised that the Welsh Harp Open Space had been inspected in June 2013 and had retained its Green Flag status. Leslie Williams also provided additional detail with respect to the Brent River Catchment Management Plan, noting that particular attention was being directed towards improving water quality and habitat, and removing physical obstructions to access along the river corridor.

During members discussion, it was queried what publicity had been provided for the new MUGA. Further detail was also sought regarding the condition of Horse Chestnut trees in the area and an update was sought on the treatment of Japanese Knotweed.

Leslie Williams advised that it was likely that the MUGA had been advertised via the sports pages of the website but he would look into this following the meeting. With regard to Horse Chestnut trees, there were currently two diseases that were affecting the trees on a national scale and the tree officers were keeping an eye out for any incidences of these in the locality. Clive Cohen (London Wildlife Trust) added that one of these was a virus known as Bleeding Canker for which there was no known treatment. The other condition was caused by an infestation by a Moth which had migrated from Poland. The only way to control this condition was to collect the leaves that fall in the autumn and dispose of them to prevent re-infestation the following year. This latter issue did not result in the death of the tree but did make it unsightly. Turning to the question regarding Japanese Knotweed, Leslie Williams advised that treatment was on-going. It was considered that the best way to treat this effectively would be to obtain an overview of all the incidences of it within the catchment and this was still a work in progress. This work was enabling main infestations to be addressed as well as key smaller ones to prevent further spread.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

8. Environment Agency - verbal report (if any)

None provided.

9. Planning Issues (if any)

The committee noted with considerable disappointment and concern that the London Borough of Barnet Planning and Environment Committee had granted planning permission to the redevelopment of the West Hendon Estate. The approved scheme would involve the construction of 2,000 homes, with buildings ranging from 2 to 29 storeys. It was also intended that two pedestrian bridges would be built to enable improved access to the Welsh Harp open space and West

Hendon recreation ground. Members of the committee advised the meeting that the scheme would now have to be submitted to the Mayor of London for approval. It was subsequently agreed that a letter should be sent to the Mayor of London expressing the committee's concerns and objections to the proposed development.

A full discussion to agree the issues to be included within the letter was held. Members emphasised that the Welsh Harp was a nature reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It was agreed that the proposed development would cause considerable disruption and therefore harm to the wildlife of the area, in particular due to the process of construction, the size and scale of the development and the resulting increase in population density, and light and noise pollution. That some of the buildings would encompass 29 storeys was highly worrisome in view of the affect this could have on wind currents which could cause birds to fly into buildings or become confused and be displaced. There had been no mention of this latter issue in the application for the scheme. Members further highlighted that one of the proposed pedestrian bridges would span the wetland breeding grounds and it would be impossible for this to not negatively impact the birds nesting in the area, both during construction and afterwards when in use. Migratory birds that used the area included Gadwalls and Wigeons. Furthermore, it was known that there was a colony of Daubenton Bats roosting in the area. Following discussion around the diversity of the species found in the nature reserve, it was agreed that the most recent figures would be obtained on the number of different bird species observed.

As one of only approximately thirty-six SSSIs across London, the area was of considerable value not only locally but also London wide and nationally. A particular concern was expressed that allowing such a scheme would create a precedent and endanger similar areas in the capital. Members noted that both the London and Barnet Plans contained directives regarding the protection of SSSIs. Members considered that the wildlife assessment which had been undertaken were lacking, noting that the proposals for the scheme made no specific mention of the reservoir or of flora and fauna. The committee also noted the views of Natural England which were reported as advising that construction should not go ahead either in Summer or Winter due to the disruption that would be caused to birds. Members further advised that Natural England had also supported the appointment of an SSSI Warden to monitor the impact of the scheme on the SSSI; however, very little detail had been provided regarding the powers of this post and the funding provided was considered insufficient by the committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Chair draft a letter on behalf of the committee representing the concerns highlighted, to be circulated to all members of the committee before being finalised and sent to the Mayor of London.

10. **Date of next meeting**

The committee noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 14 November 2013.

11. **Any other urgent business**

None.

The meeting closed at 8.47 pm

Councillor Hopkins
Chair

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COUNCILLOR ALISON HOPKINS

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT COUNCILLOR
FOR DOLLIS HILL WARD

BRENT CIVIC CENTRE
ENGINEERS WAY
WEMBLEY
MIDDLESEX HA9 0FJ

TEL 07917 717 797

EMAIL cllr.alison.hopkins@brent.gov.uk

WEB WWW.BRENT.GOV.UK



2nd August 2013

Boris Johnson
Mayor of London
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
LONDON SE1 2AA

Dear Mayor Johnson,

West Hendon Estate, Barnet (planning reference: H/01054/13)

I write as chair, and on behalf of, the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee, which includes elected councillors from both Brent and Barnet and is a cross party body. Our charter is to consider and co-ordinate all the interests of recreation, leisure, maintenance and nature conservation together with the statutory requirements of the Canal and River Trust and the Environment Agency at the Welsh Harp (Brent Reservoir) Our resulting objective is to protect the Welsh Harp Reservoir and surrounding open land as a unique environment for both recreation and wildlife conservation.

At our last meeting on the 24th July 2013, the committee noted with considerable disappointment and concern that the London Borough of Barnet Planning and Environment Committee had granted planning permission to the redevelopment of the West Hendon Estate. It was agreed that we would write to you to express our objections to the scheme as it is currently proposed.

Our grounds for objection are based on the environmental impact of the scheme and are therefore in line with our remit.

SSSI endangerment

The Welsh Harp – also known as the Brent Reservoir – is a nature reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). As one of only approximately thirty-six SSSIs across London, the area is of considerable value not only locally but also London wide and nationally. Both the London and Barnet Plans contain directives regarding the protection of SSSIs. This scheme clearly breaches those directives.

The proposed development will cause considerable disruption and therefore harm to the wildlife of the SSSI. This disruption will be caused by the process of construction, the size and scale of the development, the resulting increase in population density, together with light and noise pollution.

We have grave concerns that allowing such a scheme will create a precedent and endanger similar areas in the capital and beyond.

Risk to flora and fauna

We wish to highlight that one of the proposed pedestrian bridges would span the wetland breeding grounds on the SSSI and it would be impossible for this to not negatively impact the birds nesting in the area, both during construction and afterwards when in use. Migratory birds using the area include Gadwalls and Widgeon and it is known that there is a colony of Daubenton Bats roosting in the area.

Some of the buildings will be 29 storeys in height. This will impact on the bird population, especially as they are a mere 20 metres from the water's edge. A particular issue is the effect this will have on wind currents which could cause birds to fly into buildings or become confused and be displaced. There has been no mention of this issue in the application for the scheme.

Inadequate assessments and safeguards

We consider that the wildlife assessments which have been undertaken are lacking, and are deeply concerned that the proposals for the scheme make no specific mention of the reservoir or of flora and fauna.

The committee also noted the views of Natural England which were reported as advising that construction should not go ahead either in summer or winter due to the disruption that would be caused to birds. We are aware that Natural England has also supported the appointment of an SSSI Warden to monitor the impact of the scheme on the SSSI. However, very little detail has been provided regarding the powers of this post and the funding provided is considered insufficient by the committee.

In summary, therefore, we believe that the scheme as currently designed presents a grave risk to the status and environment of one of the very few wild spaces left in London. As a city, we cannot afford to risk endangering and damaging this priceless and very special place.

We urge you to direct the Local Planning Authority to refuse the application or failing that to act as the Local Planning Authority yourself so that the application can be considered fully in the light of all the appropriate development plan policies.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Alison Hopkins

*Chair Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee
Liberal Democrat councillor for Dollis Hill*

Meeting	Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee
Date	14 November 2013
Subject	Welsh Harp Management Plan
Report of	Director of Street Scene
Summary	To report the position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and on-going site management.

Officer Contributors	Tracy Sawyer, Parks and Open Spaces Officer
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards Affected	West Hendon
Key Decision	No
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in	N/A
Function of	Executive
Enclosures	None
Contact for Further Information:	Jenny Warren, Head of Parks, Street Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance, 020 8359 7803.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the contents of the report be noted.

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

2.1 Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee on 23 March 2011 – approved the proposed boundary of the Local Nature Reserve.

2.2 Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee on 15 March 2005 agreed the designation of a Local Nature Reserve on the Welsh Harp.

2.3 Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee of 15 June 2005 agreed draft byelaws.

2.4 Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee on 5 September 2006 and Cabinet on 16 October 2006 endorsed the draft byelaws for formal approval by full Council on 7 November 2006.

2.5 Council formally endorsed the draft byelaws on 7 November 2007.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 The Councils Corporate Plan 2013 – 2016 identifies as one of its Corporate Priorities the need to maintain a well-designed, attractive and accessible place, with sustainable infrastructure across the borough. We will continue to maintain and improve the borough's parks and green spaces for residents to enjoy. But we are determined to do more than this. Encouraging residents to use parks and green spaces as a place for physical activity, entertainment, play and to enjoy nature will help them to improve their health, well-being and encourage a sense of community.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

4.1 There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

5.1 Parks and Open Spaces benefit all sectors of the community by improving the local environment. Maintenance is carried out according to the management plan and takes into account requests from residents, users and Members. Improvements are made, wherever possible, to ensure equal access for all users.

6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

6.1 Any costs incurred from the programmes and initiatives will be met within existing StreetScene budgets.

7. LEGAL ISSUES

- 7.1 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.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS (Relevant section from the Constitution, Key/Non-Key Decision)

- 8.1 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”.

9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

9.1 Japanese Knotweed Control Programme

An annual inspection was carried out during August, this was to monitor the previously controlled areas of infestations and to locate further areas for control. The weed control programme for invasive species will continue, further control measures in the Welsh Harp will be carried out via injection directly into the plant canes. This will reduce any concerns regarding contamination to honey bees from glyphosate that has been sprayed onto the surfaces of the leaves/flowers.

9.2 Rough Sleepers

The police, PIT (Priority Intervention Team) team and Greenspaces met in August at the Verelum Court (Welsh Harp), and carried onto Woodfield Park and then West Hendon Playing Fields. This was to check for illegal encampments and arrange for their removal. Several illegal encampments were located, but evidence showed that they had already been vacated.

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

DECISION TAKER’S STATEMENT

I have the required powers to make the decision documented in this report. I am responsible for the report’s content and am satisfied that all relevant advice has been sought in the preparation of this report and that it is compliant with the decision making framework of the organisation which includes Constitution, Scheme of Delegation, Budget and Policy Framework and Legal issues including Equalities obligations.

Signed
Designation



Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee
14 November 2013

**Report from the Director of Environment and
Neighbourhood Services**

For Action

Wards Affected: ALL

Welsh Harp Management Plan

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan. The Management Plan is jointly managed by the three main land-holding organisations: Brent Council, the London Borough of Barnet, and the Canal & River Trust (formerly British Waterways).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the Report.

3.0 DETAILS

- 3.1 A copy of the Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan is available on the Brent Council website at
<http://www.brent.gov.uk/media/3207383/Brent-Reservoir-Management-Plan.pdf>
- 3.2 The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan includes an Action Plan for the current year; and for this report, this is detached from the Management Plan and updated as Appendix 1. The 'Progress' column summarises current progress.
- 3.3 The construction of a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Neasden Recreation Ground has been completed and is available for use by the local community. A hedgerow of *Rosa rugosa* will be planted in the autumn to compliment the existing plantings. Planning details are at:
<https://forms.brent.gov.uk/servlet/ep.ext?extId=101150&reference=109324&st=PL>
- 3.4 Brent Council Sports and Parks Service organises weekly leader-led Healthy Walks. The meeting point is at the Welsh Harp Open Space car park, Birchen Grove, every Thursday (except on Bank / Public Holidays) from 10am-11am. The walks are 'low to moderate' in pace. For details contact Brent Council Sports Service, tel: 020 8937 3707,
www.Brent.gov.uk/sports

- 3.5 Capital Ring: The Capital Ring is a round-London recreational walking route of about 70 miles and a section passes through the Welsh Harp. The walk can be walked in sections and stocks of the leaflets are available from Barnet, and Brent Councils. Information is also available at <http://www.walklondon.org.uk/route.asp>
- 3.6 Green Flag application. The Welsh Harp Open Space has successfully retained the Green Flag award following the annual inspection.
- 3.7 Brent Council's executive have agreed that Brent's public realm contract should be awarded to Veolia. This will mean that from September 2014 all Grounds maintenance works will be carried out under contract rather than in-house, as currently. At the Welsh Harp this will apply to the Welsh Harp Open Space including the car park, to Neasden Recreation Ground, and also to Silver Jubilee Park to the north.
- 3.8 At the July 2013 meeting, officers were asked to provide a briefing to the next meeting on the status of Otters within the Brent River and the potential for re-introducing Otters to the Brent Reservoir. A summary is provided here; and for more detail please refer to <http://a0768b4a8a31e106d8b0-50dc802554eb38a24458b98ff72d550b.r19.cf3.rackcdn.com/geho1010btdj-e-e.pdf> Populations of Otters have been monitored in England since 1977-79, following reductions in populations that continued into the 1970s. In 1977-79 Otters had been reduced to a presence of less than 6 % of watercourse sites in England; largely confined to sites in south-west England, along the Welsh Borders and with a few fragmented populations in East Anglia and northern England. By 1984-86 the presence had increased to 10%, to 23% in 1991-1994, 36% in 2001-02 and to 59% in 2009-10. Otters have now increased their populations in the upper part of the Thames catchment and are re-colonising eastwards. Otter populations have reached Oxford, and their presence has been observed towards Windsor. They have not yet reached the Brent catchment, but have reached, in small numbers, the Small River Lea near Cheshunt and the River Colne near Uxbridge. The increase in England is attributed to the reduction in toxic pesticides, improved water quality; and consequential increases in fish stocks. Otters are generally shy of proximity with Humans, but some have colonised urban areas. They are unlikely to affect water sports.
- 3.9 The requirement of the Water Framework Directive to bring all watercourses up to good ecological status involves a wide range of partners including the water companies, Environment Agency, local authorities, environmental groups and users of watercourses. The Brent River Catchment Partnership brings together the main partners for the River Brent. If the habitat of the Brent catchment can be improved, particularly by improving water quality; by removing physical obstacles to fish movement along the river, and by improving marginal habitat, then according to the authorities of the recent report, there is a possibility of re-colonisation of the River Brent within the next twenty years. Officers are however of the view that it may be premature to use resources to construct an artificial holt for otters since the nearest viable populations are still some distance from urban London. Rather the priority should be to improve the water quality and river habitat.
- 3.10 The status of Kingfishers at the Brent Reservoir was also raised at the July meeting. The Welsh Harp Conservation Group can probably provide an update. However, Kingfishers have remained present, albeit in low numbers, along stretches of the River Brent near to the Brent Reservoir. They can occasionally be seen at the Reservoir.

- 3.11 The Brent Catchment Partnership, the partnership of local authorities and others working to improve the River Brent and catchment have continued with projects to make best use of resources, for example for the control of invasive species, and encouraging design projects in the catchment that will help to restore the function of the river.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan is a long-term document and not all works are feasible in the short-term. Works listed in the management plan include the programmed operational works and longer-term works to maintain, restore and enhance the Welsh Harp area. Works are undertaken only where the budgets or resources are available. Programmed operational works are undertaken only within the existing budgets.
- 4.2 A significant amount of work is undertaken, or in kind, by the voluntary sector, and by the volunteers of the sailing clubs, conservation groups and other community organisations. In addition, the Council and partners, endeavour where feasible, to seek additional funding from grants and other sources.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, land owners or occupiers, and also public bodies, are required to give notice to and consult with Natural England where they wish to carry out, or cause or permit to be carried out any operation in an area of land that is of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features (this requirement applies to operations within a SSSI, and to operations outside the SSSI that may affect the features of interest); and Natural England will issue consent, issue consent with conditions or refuse consent. Failing to follow this process is a criminal offence which may result in a fine and a restoration order. 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 and enhancement of the site.
- 5.2 It is good practice for land owners or occupiers to produce Management Plans for the SSSI, which when approved by Natural England, enable the carrying out of the works specified in the Management Plan. This can reduce the administrative work inherent in obtaining consent for individual items of management work.
- 5.3 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 requires that all public authorities in England and Wales have a general duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions.

6 DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

7 STAFFING / ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS (IF APPROPRIATE)

7.1 None specific.

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Welsh Harp Management Plan co-ordinates environmental works in the Reservoir area.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Dated correspondence and other documents referred to in the Report include:
Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan.

CONTACT OFFICERS

Leslie Williams, Strategy and Service Development Officer, Brent Council, Sports and Parks Service, Environment and Neighbourhood Services, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9 0FJ. Tel: 020 8937 5628, Reception: 020 8937 1234, Fax: 020 8937 5715. Mobile: 07867 184456

Sue Harper
Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services

**APPENDIX 1. WELSH HARP / BRENT RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT PLAN:
ACTION PLAN FOR 2013-2014**

The Management Plan outlines the management considered necessary to sustain the Welsh Harp for wildlife, recreation, landscape, flood-control, economic and other benefits of the reservoir. These are achievable over varying time-frames, though many are not affordable in the short term. This Action Plan tracks progress of current year priorities and projects.

Action	Lead	Budget	Approximate timetable	Progress to October 2013
Dam wall and reservoir: statutory responsibility to maintain dam wall, associated structures and the dam	Canal & River Trust (C&RT)	C&RT	Maintain. On-Going	Dam wall maintained.
Maintain open water for water sports	Welsh Harp Sailing Association (WHSA)	Undertaken by volunteers of the (WHSA)	On-Going	WHSA cleared weed; summer 2013.
Sailing and sports development	WHSA	Undertaken by volunteers of WHSA.	On-Going	See Welsh Harp Sailing Association and constituent clubs
Clean up projects: including some control of invasive plants.	Thames 21 Environment Agency	Provided by Thames 21. Work on site by volunteers.	Projects: Two projects in 2012.	A further clean-up project was held in early August 2013 on the shores of Neasden Recreation Ground (and at the River Brent at Tokyngton).
River trash traps: at inflows of Dollis Brook, and Silk Stream	Environment Agency	Budget provided by the Environment Agency	Maintain, On-going. Rubbish at the trash screen is cleared several times a year. Material disposed off-site.	Upstream of the Priestly Way screen an oversized willow has been removed which had partially fallen into the river.
Sailing Infrastructure: club houses, boats, and service areas.	Sailing Clubs	Maintained by the C&RT; and by the sailing clubs.	On-going	Welsh Harp Sailing Association and constituent clubs. Refer to Sailing Clubs for an update.

Bird rafts, islands. There are approximately 20 rafts.	Welsh Harp Conservation Group (WHCG)	Volunteer projects are held annually to maintain, repair or renew rafts. .	On-going. Autumn / winter.	WHCG undertake work to the bird rafts outside of the bird breeding season. The most recent work was in winter 2012-2013. WHCG will programme work for autumn / winter 2013/14.
Reedbeds: remove young trees	WHCG	Volunteer projects are held annually to maintain the reedbeds.	Remove young trees. On-going. Autumn / winter.	Led by the WHCG. Autumn / winter works are programmed by the WHCG.
Reedbeds: increase	All	Natural growth is encouraged, so costs are low, but refer to the need to remove young trees.	Periodic reviews as part of Biodiversity Action Plans.	Some evidence of long-term increase in area.
Marshland: maintain extent	Brent Council.	Estimated at £700 per year.	Alternate years: reduce young tree growth on shores of Neasden Recreation Ground, Welsh Harp Open Space	Willow managed on shores of Welsh Harp Open Space, Feb. 2013. Neasden Recreation Ground: Feb. 2013. 2013/14 works due by end of February 2014.
Marshland	Barnet, Barratt PLC		Plans submitted for restoration of shore by Phase 1 of West Hendon redevelopment.	Planning Permission for main part of development approved in summer 2013: this may affect adjacent marshland.
Marshland: increase	Brent, Barnet, Brent Catchment Partnership	.Investigate sources of finance for long-term restoration of river catchment; and for flood alleviation.	Increase the extent of the marshland around the shores of the Reservoir.	Refer to draft of Catchment Management Plan.
Marshland: orchids	WHCG, Brent	Marshland work by Brent Council. Volunteer work by WHCG.	WHCG to provide information.	Marshland works to take into account the location, and potential for enhancing populations of orchids.

South-bank boardwalk	C&RT	Canal & Rivers Trust budget: periodic work possibly averages £500 / year.	As required.	Condition assessed by C&RT
Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed	C&RT, Barnet Council, Brent Council	No budget: works undertaken as part of other works; or with grant funding. Barnet: three-year programme. Brent: grant funding used in 2011-13, c. £1,500	Complete the control within the SSSI at Neasden Recreation Ground. Barnet:	Control at SSSI at Neasden RG 2011 and 2012. Slight regrowth in summer 2012: treated. Follow-up treatment undertaken 2013.
Wet woodland	C&RT, Barnet, Brent	Largely self-managing.	On-going.	Largely self-managing.
Grasslands, paths cutting	Barnet, Brent	Maintenance: within existing resources. Restoration work is currently unfunded. Current path cutting estimated at £5,000/ year.	Spring to autumn.	Cutting of mown paths undertaken. Loss of acid grassland is a concern. Current maintenance aims for no net loss of remaining habitat.
Woodland	Brent, Barnet, WHCG, C&RT	Largely self-managing. Unfunded: management of woodland to increase diversity, but potential for creative use of material.	Planting of disease-resistant Elms, winters 2011/12 and 2012/13.	Disease resistant Elms planted. Other woodland largely stable. Some areas could benefit from more active management particularly where scrub is encroaching on acid grassland or on marshland in the open spaces of Brent and of Barnet.
Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre	Brent	Brent Council and external funding. Details: TBC.	On-going.	Centre is maintained. Bookings maintained. 23.10.2013: WHEEC reports that bookings are at a high level.

Allotments	Brent, West Hendon Allotment Society	Brent: refer to Allotments and Food Growing Strategy. Barnet: West Hendon Allotments are self-managed by the holders.	Allotments are maintained.	West Hendon: self-managed. Brent: Allotments Strategy: Birchen Grove and Dors Close included in service improvement. Biodiversity improvements at Dors Close.
Open spaces, pitches, paths, Capital Ring, signage, interpretative signage, litter and dog bins,	Barnet, Brent	Existing maintenance resources. Barnet; and Brent grounds maintenance budgets: TBA.	On-going.	Maintained; and well-used.
Feasibility of traffic analysis / signage for Wood Lane	Barnet Highways (leading) in consultation with Brent Highways.	TBC.	New: 18.07.2012	Barnet are investigating.
Monitoring: wildlife, and indicators	WHCG; and public authorities.	Mainly by volunteers of WHCG.	On-going	Continuing.
Signage	Brent / Barnet.	TBC	TBC	Inspected: 2012. Most of Brent's signage up to date. Barnet will review their signage.
Parks infrastructure	Brent / Barnet	TBC	TBC	Inspected: 2012. 2013.
River Brent Catchment Management Plan	All; led by Environment Agency		2011 -	Draft plan and catchment partnership in preparation, mid-2013. Thames 21 to advertise for part-time Catchment Officer post from autumn 2013. Post is equivalent to about four-months full time.
Green Flag	Brent		Achieved 2012.	2013 – Green Flag retained.