

Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

Thursday 16 March 2023 at 7.00 pm
This will be held as an online virtual meeting

Agenda Pack

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Agenda Item 1

MEETING
WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

DATE AND TIME

**THURSDAY 16TH MARCH, 2023
AT 7.00 PM**

VENUE

VIRTUAL [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
1.	Minutes	5 - 10
2.	Absence of Members	
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4.	London Borough of Barnet - Welsh Harp Update	11 - 16
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Decisions of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

Held as an online meeting on Wednesday 23rd November 2022 at 7.00 pm

AGENDA ITEM 1

Members Present (in remote attendance):

Councillor Anne Clarke (Chair)	London Borough of Barnet
Councillor Parvez Ahmed	London Borough of Brent
Councillor Mary Mitchell	London Borough of Brent
Councillor Rishikesh Chakraborty	London Borough of Barnet
Councillor Liz Dixon	London Borough of Brent
Councillor Saqib Butt	London Borough of Brent
Doug Alexander	Environment Agency
Lewis Elmes	Environment Agency
Neil Earnshaw	Canal and River Trust
Suzanne Morpurgo	Brent Parks Forum
John Shepherd	Welsh Harp Sailing Association
Manfred Starkl	Welsh Harp Sailing Association
Judy Shepherd	West Hendon Community Forum
Daniela	Friends of the Welsh Harp
Livia Forte	Friends of the Welsh Harp
Ben Watt	Cool Oak Group
Liz Hall	West Hendon Residents Association
Dianne Murphy	London Wildlife Trust
Martin Francis	Member of the public
Leila Taheri	Friends of the Welsh Harp
Philip Atkinson	Phoenix Canoe Club
Derrick Chung	West Hendon Residents Association

1. MINUTES

AGREED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Ernest Ambe and Councillor Andrea Bilbow.

3. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET WELSH HARP UPDATE

Cassie Bridger (Assistant Director of Greenspaces & Leisure, Barnet Council) introduced the report providing an update relating to on-going site management issues affecting Welsh Harp Reservoir.

Ms Bridger noted in the report the reference regarding the services Parkguard provided to Barnet Council which ceased on 30th September of this year with the team in the process of exploring future options to support the administrations future model of park rangers. A report will be taken in early 2023 to the Environment & Climate Change Committee with more information to follow.

There have been no reported illegal encampments during the previous quarters and the Councils Greenspaces and Leisure Team continue to work closely with the Barnet Community Safety Team, the Local Police and other partners to identify and remove encampments when notified.

Ms Bridger noted that there has been quite significant progress on the West Hendon master plan since the last meeting and in relation to procurement process which is currently live.

She also informed that in partnership with the Landscape Institute the Council has been delivering a two-stage design competition to secure a multi-disciplinary design team. Stage 1 has been completed and evaluated receiving 19 entries and the Council is shortly due to announce the three successful design teams who will be move forward to Stage 2 of the competition process. A future update will come back to this meeting.

ACTION: MS BRIDGER/MR GUNYON

Barnet Council have also seen the introduction of a biodiversity manager who joined at the end of August and is currently working with an ecologist in the conservation department on the biodiversity action plan which will be in progress in the new year. Lewis Elmes from the Environment Agency offered assistance in relation to the biodiversity action plan once the work commences.

Cllr Mitchell asked about the opportunity for Barnet to reach out to Brent Council on their biodiversity work and if the priorities on this can be aligned. Ms Bridger informed that this is currently in its infancy stages of gathering evidence and the team will then commission a specialist service to engage with partners and stakeholders for engagement with lots of opportunities to make this successful. Leslie Williams advised that Brent does have a biodiversity action plan, however it is somewhat dated and much of the content has been incorporated in various planning strategies within Brent.

Leila Taheri asked if glyphosate will be reviewed within the biodiversity plan and Ms Bridger noted that there is a specific workstream looking at this with a number of different strategies which will crosscut against it.

6. LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT - WELSH HARP MANAGEMENT PLAN

Leslie Williams (Project Officer, Brent Council) presented a report outlining progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan since the last meeting of the Committee and during the 2022/23 year to date. The Management Plan is jointly managed by the three mainland-holding organisations: Brent Council, the London Borough of Barnet, and the Canal & River Trust.

He noted that the vision group includes the 3 main landowners as well as Thames 21, the London wildlife trust and The Greater London Authority and noted that progress is being made with a brief expected in early December and a public exhibition to be held in the spring. The Canal and River Trust will host the vision and a brief overview will be put on their website for the public's information.

Mr Williams informed that the work is continuing on the management plan with partners and the updated work is appended to the report which includes some of the main issues that affect the Welsh Harp.

Visits during the summer of 2021 and 2022 indicated that the previous work on the northern shore at the Welsh Harp Open Space has benefited a range of plants within the marshland vegetation along the edge of the reservoir while retaining a variety of trees on the shoreline landscape.

The Council is continuing to consider options for the Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre site. Officers from Commercial Property are also liaising with enquirers to understand their aspirations and requirements on a non-committal basis. Thames 21 are providing some limited services for the year of 2022/23 while discussions continue for a longer-term solution for the future of the Centre. Mr Williams thanked those who gave feedback and encouraged any further ideas to be sent to him.

The Healthy Walks scheme has continued with walkers following social distancing guidelines and also advised there have been some discussions with the Environment Agency on the trash screens as there has been evidence of unauthorised activity.

He informed of a pollution incident in the wooded marshland between the trading estate, whereby it is possible that cement dust has gone into the water. The dust is not organic, or oil based so the Environment Agency continue to monitor this.

Mr Williams also informed that the team are working on a walking route from Wembley Park to the Welsh Harp and back to provide a greener route. He is hoping for this to be signposted in the new year.

Brent are also currently looking at a longer term plan for the Staples Corner site with visibility of the Welsh Harp and access for visitors.

Doug Alexander confirmed that the field team clear the Priestly Way trash screen regularly however digging works are taking place outside the gate restricting access and if this is ongoing it could impact the collection of the trash screen and see a significant amount of waste and vegetation accumulating which could lead to increased amounts of litter reaching the Welsh Harp itself and also could lead to an increased risk of flooding. It was agreed that Doug would send the details of this to Mr Williams for his information and see if this can be resolved.

ACTION: DOUG ALEXANDER

Manfred Starkl informed that he and other members of the Welsh Harp Sailing Association usually help with the removal of the trees that are blocking the shaded areas and asked if those trees which are due to be cut down can be marked up with paint so the other groups on the Welsh Harp can agree to this also and save any confusion for the volunteers who will be carrying out this. Mr Williams noted that discussions on the trees continue with all the groups on the Welsh Harp on this issue.

John Shepherd asked about the Barnet side and that discussions had previously taken place with the developers at Brent Cross regarding silt traps and if there is any update on this to stop the silt coming down into the harp. Mr Williams advised that he was unaware of these discussions however was aware that the silt was coming from the Staples Corner area. The Chair advised that she had also raised this issue previously and that an update would come to the next meeting.

ACTION: MS BRIDGER

John Shepherd also asked about the strategic review of future planning for the harp and if this is still current. Mr Williams noted that an external consultant had collated the overall vision and that there had been some consultations in the earlier part of this year with wider discussions as the material available opens the public exhibition.

7. UPDATE FROM FRIENDS OF THE WELSH HARP

Leila Taheri presented the report continuing with its grassroots conservation and community activities.

Activities that have taken place since the last meeting in July include:

- Conservation events including 30 volunteers removing litter from the Eastern Marsh, Northern Marsh, and Cool Oak Lane with Barnet Council removing the collected items
- Conservation event in collaboration with two local synagogues including 40 volunteers removing litter from the Eastern Marsh, Northern Marsh, public bird hide, and Cool Oak Lane. Volunteers also started work at the 'rat feeding station', removing plastic mesh and preparing the compacted soil for future planting.
- The group also managed to secure pro bono creative time from an advertising agency to produce posters now around the Welsh Harp on bird feeding, and anti littering

Future activities were discussed as outlined in the report and the question was asked if any assistance can be offered with coppicing. Can CRT or the council assist with the coppicing? Phil Atkinson offered assistance from The Phoenix Canoe club along with Dianne Murphy of the London Wildlife Trust also offered to assist with the loaning of saws.

Leila Taheri also noted that Barnet Council had generously pledged to match the £1632 that has been crowd funded already and expressed her thanks to Barnet colleagues for this. She asked if the funding could also be matched from Brent. Cllr Mary Mitchell suggested making an application for funding from the 'Brent Together Towards Zero' grant which gives organisations up to £5000 for one off projects and initiatives to help tackle the climate and ecological emergency.

Ms Bridger thanked Leila and the wider Friends of Welsh harp on all their efforts to date and noted that despite the group already being put in touch with officers at Barnet she would pass on the details of the Biodiversity Officer, Harriet Duffield on future proofing the harp.

Ben Watts gave an update on the nesting islands which have arrived with the team helping to instigate this at a cost of £55k to the Canal River Trust via a third party. The next thing to look forward to is the scheduled replacement of the breeding rafts with 40 of these in a terrible state of disrepair. The first ten of these will be arriving soon in a staged replacement plan. He noted that the heavy siltation at various points of the Marsh will

affect the placing of the rafts until there is a longer term plan on the silt issue however lots of good work has been continuing and the vision is the next thing will be arriving soon.

Lewis Elmes informed that there was funding available within the Environment Agency for community groups that could possibly be sourced and agreed to see if this could be a possible source of funding for the harp in relation to the water testing and silt issue.

ACTION: LEWIS ELMES & DOUG ALEXANDER

Manfred Starkl gave an offer of assistance of boats in relation to the placing of the breeding rafts on the harp.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Suzanne Morpurgo from Brent Parks Forum gave an update in relation to the Education Centre and the continued partnership working with various community groups in Brent. A scheduled meeting will take place on 26th November with Thames 21 and these groups at the building and the outcome of this will be fed back at the next WHJCC with a view to make the education centre a strong hub of activity for the community.

Derrick Chung noted the Silkstream area by the industrial estate by the Halfords Bridge is in need of a clean up and asked for both the Environment Agency and Thames Water to look into this.

The Chair made the suggestion of an early Spring social event and asked for anyone with ideas to email them direct to her

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT

NONE.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 16th March 2023

The meeting closed at 7.53 pm

Councillor Anne Clarke
Chair

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Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

16 March 2023



Title	London Borough of Barnet Welsh Harp Update
Report of	Executive Director, Adults, Communities and Health
Wards	West Hendon
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	None
Enclosures	None
Officer Contact Details	Matthew Gunyon, Head of Greenspaces matthew.gunyon@barnet.gov.uk 0208 359 7403

Summary

To provide an update to the committee in relation to Council activities during Quarter 4 (Dec-March 2023) in respect of the Welsh Harp / West Hendon Playing Fields.

Officers Recommendations

1. That the committee note the contents of this report.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

1.1 The Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee (WHJCC) is comprised of Canals and Rivers Trust, Brent Council, Welsh Harp Conservation Group, Welsh Harp Sailing Association and Barnet Council. The committee is a consultative committee and meets on a quarterly basis.

1.2 During December 2022 – March 2023 (Quarter 4), the Council progressed a series of activities in relation to the management and operation of West Hendon Playing Fields / Welsh Harp. The committee are requested to note the following;

1.3 Management and Operations

There have been no reported illegal encampments during Q4, the Councils Greenspaces and Leisure Team continue to work closely with the Barnet Community Safety Team, the Local Police and other partners to identify and remove encampments when notified.

The service is reviewing our volunteer support mechanisms across the whole portfolio in order to ensure all groups have safety systems and appropriate procedures and insurances in place to support any volunteer activities.

The team have been working with the West Hendon Allotment Society to explore an allotment extension project to reclaim old derelict plots within the allotments demise and create a sustainable open space where community food growing is integrated into a wildlife conservation approach to managing the area.

Some improvement and clearance works have been completed to the closed car parking area within Woodfield Park, some additional works are to be completed after which the car park will be made available for the Football and Canoe Clubs to utilise during periods of high use.

1.4 West Hendon Playing Fields Master Plan

1.4.1 The outline business case for the West Hendon Playing Fields Master plan was approved at Policy and Resources Committee 16 June 2021. This included capital funding of £18.8m to deliver the scheme.

The Council also remains in dialogue with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and the Football Foundation in relation to the submission of future funding applications to deliver court and pitch improvements at West Hendon Playing Fields.

1.4.2 In partnership with the Landscape Institute the Council has been delivering a two-stage design competition to secure a multi-disciplinary design team. Stages 1 and 2 have been completed and evaluated. Three organisations were taken to through to Stage 2, LDA Design, Ove Arup & Partners Ltd and Southern Green. The winning bidder will be announced shortly.

1.5 **Welsh Harp and SSSI management**

1.5.1 Working with our in house and contract network we will be developing an updated litter management regime across the whole of the Welsh Harp and surrounding environs.

1.5.2 The council in partnership with Brent Council, Canals and Rivers Trust, The GLA, The London Wildlife Trust and Thames 21 is developing an overarching Vision for the Welsh Harp and a review of the Management Plan.

Full update is subject to a separate agenda item.

2. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The terms of reference of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee include that it considers and co-ordinates all the interests of recreation, leisure, maintenance and nature conservation with the object of protecting the Welsh Harp Reservoir and surrounding open land as a unique environment for both recreation and wildlife conservation.

3. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

3.1 N/A

4. **POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

4.1 The Council will continue to develop the new and emerging policies as set out in section 1.2.1 of this report.

5. **IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

5.1 **Corporate Priorities and Performance**

5.1.1 Following the declaration of a climate emergency, delivering and implementing the Sustainability Strategy, Climate Action Plan, Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and Biodiversity Strategy is a key corporate priority for the Council.

5.2 **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.2.1 The programme of activities listed within this report are delivered within existing resources, some initiatives or tasks may require additional investment which will be considered in the development of new policies and assessed through the Councils budget setting process.

5.3 **Social Value**

5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and

environmental benefits. Before commencing a procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 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.

5.4.2 As set out in the Terms of Reference of the Joint Committee:
“to consider and co-ordinate all the interests of recreation / leisure / maintenance / nature conservation and statutory requirements of the Canals and Rivers Trust (CRT) and the Environment Agency at the Welsh Harp; with the object of protecting the Welsh Harp Reservoir and surrounding open land as a unique environment for both recreation and wildlife conservation”.

Barnet’s Constitution – Article 8 – Joint Arrangements- states at paragraph 8.1 that the Council may establish joint arrangements with one or more Local Authorities. Such arrangements may involve the appointment of a Joint Committee with these Local Authorities.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 *There are no risk management issues associated with this report.*

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 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.

The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies **to have due regard** to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services

5.7 Corporate Parenting Principles

5.7.1 N/A

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 The Consultative Committee continues to meet on a quarterly basis, the committee comprises the land owners, legislative bodies, and third sector volunteer groups who work within the reserve to deliver positive outcomes.

5.9 Insight

5.9.1 None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

6.2 [West Hendon Playing Fields Outline Business Case – Policy and Resources Committee 16 July 2021, Agenda Item 9](#)

6.3 [Parks and Open Spaces Update – Environment and Climate Change Committee 9 June 2022, Agenda Item 9](#)

6.4 [Welsh Harp Vision Update – Environment and Climate Change Committee 6 September 2022, Agenda Item 14](#)

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Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

16th March 2023

AGENDA ITEM 5

Report from the Corporate Director of Resident Services

Welsh Harp Management Plan

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	1
Background Papers:	▪
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Leslie Williams, Project Officer, Parks Services, Brent Civic Centre. Email: Leslie.Williams@Brent.gov.uk Tel: 020 8937 5628

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report presents progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan since the last meeting of the Committee and during the 2022/23 year to date. 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.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 Members are asked to note the Report.

2.0 Detail

3.1 Welsh Harp 'Vision':

The Canal & River Trust and other partner organisations will update the Committee on the 'Welsh Harp Vision' project that involves also Barnet Council, the London Wildlife Trust, Greater London Authority and Thames 21. A launch of the Vision is expected during in the spring of 2023.

3.2 Management Plan:

The current version of the Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan, (dated 2016 but a long-term management plan) is available from Brent Council. Refer to the Action Plan (3.3).

Website links to parts of the Welsh Harp are at:

[Neasden Recreation Ground | Brent Council](#)

[Welsh Harp Open Space | Brent Council](#)

[Welsh Harp Reservoir | Brent Council](#)

3.3 Action Plan:

The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan includes an Action Plan that lists current year progress and actions that may require a longer time - frame and/or for the resources to be identified to undertake the action. For this committee the Action Plan is updated as Appendix A. The Action Plan provides notes and updates on issues and projects, rather than listing the details in this covering report. The 'Progress' column indicates current progress. Note that the assessments of need / progress are subjective, as also explained by the text comments. For Brent Council, additional notes are provided in the following paragraphs:

3.4 Marshland work:

There were no works during the current season but the need remains for a programme of works that provides for a range of conservation, landscape and recreational (water wind sports) needs, while retaining also a variety of trees within the marshland. Work on a rotation of shoreline sections annually, could provide a basis for discussion.

3.5 Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre:

Currently, discussions with the Council and Ward Councillors are in progress to consider the next steps towards a viable Centre. Thames 21 are continuing to provide some limited services.

3.6 Healthy Walks programme:

The walking programme continues. For details please email healthyliving@brent.gov.uk

3.7 Pollution incidents:

A pollution discharge was reported in November 2022, arising from outfalls into a watercourse through the southern woodland and into the Brent Reservoir. This was found to contain suspended solids, possibly of cement washings or drilling slurry. Similar discharges resumed in late December 2022 and early January 2023, and were found to contain similar material plus other waste, indicating the possibility of two sources. The Environment Agency investigated both incidents and may be in a position to provide more details.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan is primarily a land-use document to guide land managers and others in the maintenance, management and legislative issues affecting the land management of the Brent Reservoir and associated land. The Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan also has a forward planning role, particularly in identifying the needs of land management over timeframes into the future.
- 4.2 The actions in the accompanying Action Plan (Appendix A) are achievable over varying time-frames, though many are not affordable within existing budgets in the short term. The actions will be closely monitored, prioritised and re-profiled to ensure there are existing resources available to mitigate against any possible overspends. More details of works are included in Appendix A. Where those works are not currently achievable, the Action Plan highlights key issues. Works are only undertaken when approved by the service responsible for delivering the works within existing approved budgets.
- 4.3 As is being reported to the Committee, the main land-holding organisations at the Welsh Harp and some other organisations are currently working on a 'vision' exercise, which will include a review of possible sources of funding and income for those works currently not affordable

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp is a designated 'Site of Special Scientific Interest ('SSSI')'. Section 28E of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 ('CROW') and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) sets out the duties in relation to SSSIs. 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). Natural England will issue consent, which may have conditions or refuse consent. It is a criminal offence to carry out a listed operation without Natural England's consent or to ignore any conditions of a consent which may result in an unlimited 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 a SSSI. When advice is obtained from Natural England prior to carrying out the works, an explanation of how the Council has taken into account any advice Natural England has given should be provided –

The Council must be able to show that it considered alternatives that could reduce the impact on the SSSI and the methods being used are those that cause as little damage as practicable to the land:-

The Council should demonstrate how it has assessed differing interests (including the special interests of the SSSI) before deciding to go ahead with the works.

- 5.2 It is good practice for landowners 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, when exercising their statutory functions, must have regard to the conservation of biodiversity, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions.
- 5.4 Section 28Q of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 requires the owner of land included in a SSSI to inform Natural England within 28 days of any changes in ownership or occupation of the site, including leases, easements and rights.

6.0 Equality Implications

- 6.1 Decision makers must have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. The public sector equality duty is set out at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and is as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

In terms of advancing equality of opportunity, this means to:

- (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- (iii) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

In terms of

- (a) Tackling prejudice, and
- (b) Promoting understanding,

The relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race,
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil partnership

6.2 At this stage, no potential adverse impact arising from the recommendations in this report has been identified. However, the equalities implications identified in the Equality Analysis will continue to be considered and assessed as further data / information is obtained or becomes available during the implementation process.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

7.1 None specific.

8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

8.1 None specific.

<p>Peter Gadsdon Corporate Director Resident Services</p>
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APPENDIX A. WELSH HARP / BRENT RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT PLAN: ACTION PLAN FOR 2022-2023

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.

Officers of the main land-holding organisations at the Welsh Harp and some other organisations are working on a ‘Vision’ exercise which will include a view of the future of the Welsh Harp.

The Action Plan here tracks current year progress on the existing Management Plan while also highlighting projects with a longer timeframe.

Note also the draft of a Forward Work Programme for the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee that has been previously tabled by Barnet Council.

RAG colour coding is subjective and may take account of both the significance of the issue and of any progress.

Action	Lead	Budget	Approximate timetable	RAG status (text column provided for use if plain printing)	Progress: 2022-23 to 16 th March 2023
Welsh Harp Vision	Canal and River Trust, Barnet Council, Brent Council, Thames 21, London Wildlife Trust, Greater London Authority.	Funding and/or resources for the Vision have been provided by the partner organisations.	Publication expected in the spring of 2023.	Amber – in progress	Developing a vision and options for the Welsh Harp. Appointed in 2021, a consultancy has been preparing information and consulting with the local communities and others, reporting to the Vision’s Strategy Group (see list of ‘Lead’ organisations).

River Brent Catchment Management Plan – the Brent Reservoir is on the River Brent.	All; led by Environment Agency / Thames 21 / London Boroughs within the River Brent Catchment.		2011 - ongoing	Amber – in progress, with large challenges to improve the River catchment.	River Brent Catchment Partnership Action Plan published at: see website: https://www.thames21.org.uk/catchment-partnerships/brent/
Dam wall and reservoir: statutory responsibility to maintain dam wall, associated structures and the dam	Canal and River Trust (CRT)	Canal and River Trust	Maintain. On-Going	Green	Dam wall and mechanism maintained to operational and statutory standards. Statutory inspection and works conducted in January to February 2021.
Maintain open water for water sports	Welsh Harp Sailing Association (WHSA)	Undertaken by volunteers of the (WHSA)	On-Going	Green	Monitoring and actions by Welsh Harp Sailing Association.
Sailing Infrastructure: club-houses, boats, and service areas.	Sailing Clubs	Maintained by the Canal and River Trust; and by the sailing clubs.	On-going	Green	The Welsh Harp Sailing Association and clubs maintain the water sports infrastructure. See also Phoenix Canoe Club.
Bird hides: maintenance of the hides; the surrounding vegetation (sightlines) and habitats.	Welsh Harp Conservation Group / others		On-going	Green	The WHCG organise winter projects at and near to the hides.

Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre	Brent Council, Thames 21		Brent Council are leading on the future of the Education Centre, while Thames 21 who have managed the Centre since January 2016, currently ore recently, maintaining a presence.	Red	Brent Council hope to provide an update during the spring of 2023 on the future of the Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre. Thames 21 are continuing to provide limited services from the Centre on a temporary basis.
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. There are some areas for biodiversity within the Dors Close Allotments.	Green	Barnet Council: West Hendon Allotments are Self-Managed. Brent Council: Allotments Strategy: Birchen Grove Allotments and Dors Close Allotments.
Open spaces, pitches, paths, Capital Ring, and parks furniture.	Barnet, Brent	Existing maintenance resources. Barnet; and Brent public realm budgets.	On-going.	Amber	Maintenance, particularly of the well-used paths and features.
Signage; and interpretative signage.	Brent / Barnet.		In progress: February 2023.	Amber	Maintained. The Canal & River Trust are currently preparing a set of new interpretative panels.

Parks infrastructure	Brent / Barnet			Green	<p>Parks infrastructure is checked at appropriate frequencies.</p> <p>Birchen Grove Car Park: Mini-humps installed in January 2020.</p> <p>Silver Jubilee Park Car Park: resurfaced and line-marked: January 2020.</p> <p>Cool Oak Lane Car Park: Barnet.</p>
Monitoring: wildlife, and indicators	WHCG; and public authorities.	Mainly by volunteers of WHCG.	On-going	Amber – diverse wildlife but potential for improvements	<p>See the most recent 2021 report (published in July 2022) by the Welsh Harp Conservation Group, available on their website and via the following link:</p> <p>Publications – Welsh Harp Conservation Group (wordpress.com)</p> <p>Programme of activities led by Welsh Harp Conservation Group for: refer to the website.</p>

Grasslands and cutting	Barnet, Brent	Maintenance: within existing resources. Restoration work is currently unfunded.	On-going – seasonal effects with various cutting frequencies for different types of grassland.	Green	Grasslands: A grassland maintenance schedule introduced by Brent Council across the Borough (including at Neasden Recreation Ground) from spring 2018 includes emphasis on improving biodiversity value of amenity grassland. Sown areas of bee-friendly plants were added in 2019. Cutting of these areas is usually in September or October. At Neasden Recreation Ground the grasslands complement existing rough-grassland habitats both at Neasden Recreation Ground and at the Welsh Harp Open Space.
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.	Amber	Paths maintained but some have narrowed with scrub growth, particularly at Neasden Recreation Ground (see notes on Marshland). The lower grassland path at the Welsh Harp Open Space is narrow. Work in 2020 aimed at reducing encroaching scrub, but the path width could benefit from occasional cutting.
Sailing and sports development	WHSA: Welsh Harp Sailing Association and constituent clubs.	Undertaken by volunteers of WHSA.	On-Going	Amber	Led by the sailing and water sports clubs. Phoenix Canoe Club are working on proposed improvements to their club facilities for water sports, particularly for educational use; and for a café accessible from the Welsh Harp / Capital Ring path.

Litter	Brent Council. Barnet Council. Canal & River Trust. Thames 21. Environment Agency.	Landowners: Brent Council, Barnet Council, Canal & River Trust. Leaseholders. Also much volunteer involvement.	On-going.	Red	<p>The January to February 2021 temporary partial drawdown of the water level within the Reservoir revealed large quantities of litter, waste and alluvium (silt). Of the alluvium, the Canal & River Trust have stated that the full removal is logistically beyond any resources that are currently available. Resources are focusing on removing the more accessible and the more conspicuous material and/or where removal could provide other benefits.</p> <p>The Canal & River Trust mapped some of the larger items and those were subsequently removed.</p> <p>There has been much activity by the wider community to clear, where it is safe to do so; material near on the shorelines.</p> <p>During the summer and early autumn of 2021, volunteers of The Welsh Harp Group moved approximately 200 previously fly-tipped tyres from the woodland on the southern side of the Reservoir, to an open area for subsequent collection by the Canal & River Trust.</p> <p>There remains, in addition to litter and rubbish in the reservoir; fly-tipped waste in the wooded wetland on the southern shore of the reservoir; and issues related to the inflow of waste on the Silk Stream and River Brent. A proportion of that waste is of materials fly-tipped into the rivers upstream.</p>
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River trash traps: at inflows of Dollis Brook, and Silk Stream	Environment Agency	Budget provided by the Environment Agency	Maintenance of Priestley Way trash screen - weekly.	Amber / Red	<p>The Environment Agency clear accumulations of litter from the trash screens on the tributary rivers entering the reservoir, at the Silk Stream and at the River Brent.</p> <p>The Environment Agency clear and remove the material on a maintenance schedule; which for the Priestley Way (Staples Corner) trash screen is once weekly. As the screens collect waste that has been deposited in the river upstream, frequent and large quantities of waste can continue to accumulate in the river upstream of the screens. Inevitably, some smaller items will flow through the screens into the reservoir.</p>
Clean up projects	The community		On-going.	Amber / Green: Much has been achieved, but much is beyond the safe reach of shore work.	As noted above, where safe to do so, litter clean-up projects have been organized over several years by the Welsh Harp Litter Pickers and by residents near to Neasden Recreation Ground. More recently that has involved also The Friends of the Welsh Harp; and The Welsh Harp Group at Neasden Recreation Ground and a range of other volunteers.
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.	Amber	WHCG have a programme for maintenance of bird rafts. Works are outside of the bird breeding season of March to August inclusive. Recent problems with access to the rafts for maintenance due to alluviation.
Reedbeds: remove young trees	WHCG – volunteer projects. Canal & River Trust.	Volunteer projects are held annually to maintain the reedbeds.	Remove young trees. On-going. Autumn / winter.	Amber	The Canal & River Trust reduced and removed in early 2022, some willows in the reed bed in the eastern marsh.

Reedbeds: remove young trees and marginal encroachment	Canal and River Trust	£85,000 PPL funding	Removing young trees and vegetation overhanging margins	Amber	In early 2022, The Canal & River Trust made improvements in the eastern marsh including removal of some debris and reduction of willow growth where that is causing obstructions or affecting other habitats. There is potentially more to be done.
Reedbeds: increase	All	Natural growth is encouraged, so costs are low, but need to remove young trees.	Periodic reviews as part of Biodiversity Action Plans.	Amber	Habitat maintained. Estimates from GIS aerial images suggest that the area of reedbed increased by 0.09 ha between 2008 and 2016. As at 2021 there are reedbeds on the main arm of the reservoir in the eastern marsh, on the shore of Neasden Recreation Ground near to the dam wall; and on the shore of the Welsh Harp Open Space.
Wet woodland	Canal and River Trust, Barnet, Brent	Largely self-managing.	On-going.	Amber	Largely self-managing. Rubbish noted during the water drawdown of Jan-Feb 2021 which needs to be extracted; and the possibility of some additional materials since.
Woodland	Brent, Barnet, WHCG, Canal and River Trust	Largely self-managing. Un-funded: management of woodland to increase diversity, but potential for creative use of material.		Amber	Where permanent, woodland at the Welsh Harp is largely self-managing. If resources were available, some areas could be enhanced. However, where willow and other tree species are encroaching onto other habitats, for example marshland or reedbeds, then management is required to maintain the mix of habitats, particularly at the margins of the Reservoir.

Marshland: maintain	Brent Council, Welsh Harp Sailing Association, Canal and River Trust.	Increase the extent of the marshland around the shores of the Reservoir for nature conservation, landscape, and to increase wind for water sports (by Reducing excess growth of trees).	Reduce young tree growth on shores of Neasden Recreation Ground, Welsh Harp Open Space.	Amber	<p>During the past two decades, Willow and scrub growth has exceeded the rate of management work on those sections of the shoreline with marshland habitat. Estimates from GIS aerial images suggest that the area of marshland (including fen, marsh and swamp) reduced by 0.3 ha between 2008 and 2016, due to succession to scrub woodland.</p> <p>Discussions from 2018 onwards by the Canal & River Trust, the Welsh Harp Sailing Association and Brent Council, led to a consent for works from Natural England and a programme of winter works from February 2019.</p> <p>January and February 2020: Continuation of work in marshland edge by Welsh Harp Sailing Association on north shore (Welsh Harp Open Space). Works continued from September 2020 to late 2020.</p> <p>2020: Northern shore. Due to Covid restrictions, work was postponed in January to February 2021. Works have temporarily paused for discussions with partners.</p>
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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 for nature conservation, landscape, and to increase wind for water sports.	Amber	Marshland habitat at risk of scrub encroachment. See the comments for 'Marshland maintain', above.
Marshland: orchids	WHCG, Brent	Marshland work by Brent Council. Volunteer work by WHCG.	WHCG to provide information.	Status currently not known.	As for Marshland, above. Several of the species of marshland orchids present at the Reservoir would benefit from relatively open (un-shaded) situations or may have other specific requirements.
Marshland and habitats (northern arm of Reservoir)	Barnet, Barratt PLC		Restoration of shore by Phase 1 of West Hendon Redevelopment.	Amber	Refer to Barnet. A section of the shoreline near to Cool Oak Lane bridge, has previously been completed. Discussions are in progress regarding other works in the northern arm of the Reservoir.
South-bank boardwalk	Canal and River Trust	Canal & Rivers Trust budget: periodic work.	As required.	Red / Amber	The remnants of the previous boardwalk have been collected up by volunteers. A section of the original boardwalk and a small footbridge remain in place after repairs by volunteers.

<p>Invasive species: Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and other invasive species. Invasive species at the Welsh Harp extends also to a number of other species where growth is across paths, excessively shading marshland or causing other issues.</p>	<p>Canal and River Trust, Barnet Council, Brent Council</p>	<p>Brent Council Parks actions: Knotweed Reduced at the Brent Reservoir including at Neasden Recreation Ground; and Giant Hogweed at the Welsh Harp Open Space. Barnet Council have Reduced Knotweed near to Cool Oak Lane bridge and Giant Hogweed elsewhere.</p>	<p>Control of these species requires continuing attention: timely short-term control; control at the time of other works; and as part of longer term management.</p>	<p>Red</p>	<p>On-going by Barnet Council, Brent Council, and the Canal and River Trust. The Brent River Catchment Partnership are investigating how to improve control along the whole catchment; and knowledge is shared between partners of the River Brent Catchment Partnership. Thames 21 working with Brent Council and others, have treated some Knotweed and Giant Hogweed on the River Brent section downstream of the dam wall (spring / summer 2021). There are similar projects upstream in Barnet.</p> <p>Spring 2022: Brent: Control of Giant Hogweed at the Welsh Harp Open Space near to Wood Lane. Barnet: Similar work on invasive species.</p> <p>Autumn 2023: Completion of control programme for Japanese Knotweed and visible Giant Hogweed between Quainton Street Open Space and the foot of the Welsh Harp dam wall.</p>
<p>Cool Oak Lane bridge. Cool Oak Lane bridge and Wood Lane traffic.</p>	<p>Barnet Highways (leading) in consultation with Brent Highways.</p>	<p>Barnet Council and others.</p>	<p>New pedestrian bridge in place.</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Pedestrian footbridge alongside historic, vehicular footbridge.</p>
<p>West Hendon Playing Fields</p>	<p>Barnet Council</p>	<p>Barnet Council</p>			

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**Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee – Meeting dates for the 2023/24
Municipal Year**

AGENDA ITEM 7

Committee members will be aware the administration of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee meetings is shared between Barnet and Brent. From July 2023 Brent will take over the administration of the meetings and prepare the papers and minutes.

Committee members are asked to note the dates for the forthcoming meetings that were recommend by Brent and approved at the Barnet Council meeting of 28th February 2023.

Dates for the forthcoming meetings are confirmed as:

27th July 2023

23rd November 2023

19th March 2023

Brent have proposed an updated start time for the meetings as 6pm and committee members are asked to agree this or continue with the current time of 7pm.

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