



# Brent

## Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

Thursday 26 March 2026 at 6.00 pm

This will be held as an online virtual meeting

### Membership:

#### Members

Councillors:

Krupa Sheth (Chair)

Rishikesh Chakraborty (Vice-Chair)

Ernest Ambe Esq

Alan Schneiderman

Andrea Bilbow

Parvez Ahmed

Vacancy

Arshad Mahmood

#### Representing

London Borough of Brent

London Borough of Barnet

London Borough of Barnet

London Borough of Barnet

London Borough of Barnet

London Borough of Brent

London Borough of Barnet

London Borough of Brent

### Membership Continued:

#### Organisations

Brent River Catchment Partnership

Canal and River Trust

Cleaner Earth UK

Cool Oak

Environment Agency

Friends of Welsh Harp

Hendon Rifle Club

London Wildlife Trust

Natural England

Phoenix Canoe Club

Princes Park Youth Football Club

Silkstream Friends

Silver Park Jubilee Residents Association

Thames 21

Thames Water

Training Ship Broadsword

Trustee of WHCG

Welsh Harp Conservation Group

Welsh Harp Sailing Association

West Hendon Allotment Society

West Hendon Residents' Association / Friends of York Park

Barratt London

**For further information contact:** Rebecca Reid, Governance Officer  
Rebecca.Reid@brent.gov.uk

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## **Notes for Members - Declarations of Interest:**

If a Member is aware they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest\* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent and must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If a Member is aware they have a Personal Interest\*\* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent.

If the Personal Interest is also a Prejudicial Interest (i.e. it affects a financial position or relates to determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission, or registration) then (unless an exception at 14(2) of the Members Code applies), after disclosing the interest to the meeting the Member must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item, except that they may first make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the matter, provided that the public are allowed to attend the meeting for those purposes.

### **\*Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:**

- (a) **Employment, etc.** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit gain.
- (b) **Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of election; including from a trade union.
- (c) **Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between the Councillors or their partner (or a body in which one has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) **Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) **Licences**- Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) **Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which the Councillor or their partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) **Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

### **\*\*Personal Interests:**

The business relates to or affects:

(a) Anybody of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management, and:

- To which you are appointed by the council;
- which exercises functions of a public nature;
- which is directed is to charitable purposes;
- whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including a political party of trade union).

(b) The interests a of a person from whom you have received gifts or hospitality of at least £50 as a member in the municipal year;

or

A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting, to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral ward affected by the decision, the well-being or financial position of:

- You yourself;
- a member of your family or your friend or any person with whom you have a close association or any person or body who employs or has appointed any of these or in whom they have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000, or any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are a director
- any body of a type described in (a) above.

# Agenda

Item	Page
<b>1 Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2 Declarations of interests</b>	
Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, the nature and existence of any relevant disclosable pecuniary or personal interests in the items on this agenda and to specify the item(s) to which they relate.	
<b>3 Deputations (if any)</b>	
By prior arrangement with the Chair, persons who are not members of the Committee may attend to address the Committee on a particular issue or item. Any members of the public wishing to address the committee should submit their request seven days before the meeting to the contact officer named on the agenda. The request will then be passed to the Chair for consideration.	
<b>4 Minutes of the previous meeting</b>	1 - 10
To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 24 November 2025 as a correct record.	
<b>5 Matters arising</b>	
<b>6 London Borough of Barnet - Welsh Harp Management Plan</b>	11 - 20
To provide an update to the Committee in relation to Council activities during Quarter 2 (Jul-Sept 2025/26) in respect of the Welsh Harp / West Hendon Playing Fields.	
<b>7 London Borough of Brent - Welsh Harp Management Plan</b>	21 - 38
This report presents progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan since the last meeting of the Committee and during the 2025/26 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.	
<b>8 Update from the Canal &amp; River Trust</b>	
To receive an update from the Canal & River Trust on the ongoing restoration works within the north marsh of the Welsh Harp.	

## **9 Brent Catchment Partnership: Update on Community Group Activities**

To receive an update from the Brent Catchment Partnership on community engagement and activity undertaken by the organisations represented on the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee.

## **10 Date of Future Meetings**

Members are asked to note the provisional schedule of meetings agreed between Brent & Barnet for the 2026-27 Municipal Year:

- Monday 13 July 2026 at 6PM to be hosted online by the London Borough of Barnet
- Monday 16 November 2026 to be hosted online by the London Borough of Barnet
- Monday 8 March 2027 to be hosted online by the London Borough of Barnet

These dates will be subject to final confirmation by each respective borough in approving their calendar of meetings for the 2026-27 Municipal Year.

## **11 Any other urgent business**

No business other than that appearing on the agenda shall be transacted at the meeting unless the Chair decides that it is urgent. Any member of the Committee wishing to raise an item of urgent business should provide sufficient notice to permit consideration by the Chair.

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## LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

### MINUTES OF THE WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE Hosted as an online meeting (via MS Teams) by Brent Council on Monday 24 November 2025 at 6.00 pm

#### PRESENT:

#### Councillors:

Councillor Krupa Sheth	London Borough Brent – Chair
Councillor Rishikesh Chakraborty	London Borough Barnet – Vice Chair
Councillor Alan Schneiderman	London Borough Barnet
Councillor Parvez Ahmed	London Borough Brent
Councillor Mary Mitchell	London Borough Brent
Councillor Arshad Mahmood	London Borough Brent

#### Organisations:

Ben Watt	Cool Oak Group
John & Judy Shepherd	Welsh Harp Sailing Association
Ben Macmillan	Canal River Trust
Leila Taheri	Friends of Welsh Harp
Dianne Murphy	London Wildlife Trust.
Phil Atkinson	Phoenix Canoe Club
Lewis Elmes	Environment Agency
Hannah Reid	Thames 21
Manfred Starkl	Welsh Harp Sailing Association

Officers: Matthew Gunyon (LB Barnet Head of Greenspaces & Trees), Leslie Williams (LB Brent Project Officer), Harriet Duffield (LB Barnet Biodiversity and Conservation Officer), Chris Whyte (LB Brent Director Public Realm), Rosie Whicheloe (LB Brent Principal Ecology Officer), Sheri Odoffin (LB Barnet Senior Project Manager), Kelly Eaton (Head of Parks and Green Infrastructure) & James Kinsella (LB Brent Governance & Scrutiny Manager) and Rebecca Reid (LB Brent Governance Officer)

#### 1. Apologies for Absence and Clarification of Alternative Members

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ernest Ambe Esq (LB Barnet) and Councillor Bilbow (LB Barnet).

#### 2. Declarations of interests

There were no declarations of interests made during the meeting.

#### 3. Deputations

No deputations were received.

#### **4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meetings held on Monday 21 July 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

#### **5. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### **6. London Borough of Barnet - Welsh Harp Management Plan**

Matthew Gunyon (LB Barnet Head of Greenspaces & Trees) was invited to introduce a report from the London Borough of Barnet on the Welsh Harp Management Plan. Members' attention was drawn to section 1.4 of the report concerning the West Hendon Playing Fields Master Plan. It was reported that Cabinet had approved the delivery of the Master Plan through a phased approach. The first phase would include the provision of a new playground, the refurbishment of existing tennis courts and the construction of a 3x3 basketball court. Installation of these facilities was expected in Spring 2026. The playground had been subject to a public consultation which had recently closed, and officers were reviewing the outcomes to update the design. Members were further advised that a future phase of the Master Plan related to the provision of a football pitch using plastic materials. This element remained at feasibility stage in collaboration with colleagues from the Football Foundation. If progressed, it would be subject to a planning application.

In referring to section 1.5 of the report, Matthew Gunyon provided an update on the Welsh Harp and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) management. Works had commenced on the North Marsh with site clearance, and the compound was based within West Hendon Playing Fields, utilising facilities there for waste removal. The Council was working with conservation volunteers to deliver a series of habitat management activities and sessions, which were taking place every Wednesday from 10am to 3pm throughout the winter.

Matthew Gunyon also updated members on the planning enforcement case relating to a property in Woolmead Avenue. Members were informed that a retrospective planning application had now been submitted and was progressing through the Council's planning process for consideration and review. In respect of the Silkstream Bridge, it was reported that colleagues from Barratt had provided an update. A workshop session had taken place in July 2025, followed by a further session in August 2025 with members. Barratt colleagues were continuing to work through the design process for the bridge, and a series of communications would be issued in the near future via newsletters and website updates.

The Chair thanked Matthew Gunyon for introducing the report and then moved on to invite questions and comments from the Committee in relation to the London Borough of Barnet - Welsh Harp Management Plan:

- As an initial query, Welsh Harp JCC members (via Microsoft Teams Chat) questioned whether officers had considered the environmental implications of using plastic materials for the proposed football pitch given its proximity to a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). In response, Matthew Gunyon (LB Barnet, Head of Greenspaces and Trees) confirmed that the use of plastics for the football pitch was being carefully considered in collaboration with the Football Foundation. It was explained that the Foundation had developed a series of measures to contain potential leakage and that the location of the pitch had been selected with regard to the nearby SSSI. It was further stated that these matters would be addressed during the feasibility, design and planning stages.

Concerns were expressed that consultation with the Football Foundation alone was insufficient and stressed the importance of involving independent environmental advisers given the sensitivity of the SSSI. In response, Matthew Gunyon clarified that consultants were working alongside the Football Foundation, which was a partner in the programme should the project proceed to funding and planning application stages. It was also noted that the Foundation had extensive experience in delivering such facilities and worked with a range of designers and providers. It was confirmed that consultees, including Natural England and others, would be engaged as the process advanced.

- Details were sought on whether residents had been involved in the workshops concerning the proposed Silkstream Bridge. In response, Matthew Gunyon confirmed that the workshops had involved councillors and colleagues from Barnet's Regeneration team. Following on from the previous question, members questioned whether there were plans to involve residents in decisions around the Silk Stream Bridge affecting them. In response, Sheri Odoffin (LB Barnet, Senior Project Manager) explained that the planning application for the Silkstream Bridge had been approved several years ago as part of the West Hendon regeneration estate proposals. It was confirmed that residents had been consulted during that process and that once planning permission was granted, further approval was not required. However, it was emphasised that ongoing engagement remained important and that stakeholder engagement had commenced, including statutory organisations. It was further added that Barratt intended to roll out its Engagement Strategy to share information with the community. Matthew Gunyon provided further clarification that the West Hendon development referred to the housing scheme on the West Hendon estate and not to the West Hendon Playing Fields Master Plan.
- Further concerns were expressed by a member that despite being a resident for several years and actively involved in the Welsh Harp community, they had never been consulted on the bridge plans. It was further noted that many new residents were also unaware of the proposed Silkstream Bridge.

As no further issues were raised at this stage of the meeting the Chair thanked officers and Welsh Harp JCC members for their contributions and it was **AGREED** to note the update provided.

## 7. London Borough of Brent - Welsh Harp Management Plan

Leslie Williams (LB Brent Project Officer) was then invited to introduce a report from the London Borough of Brent on the Welsh Harp Management Plan. An update was provided on the Welsh Harp Vision. Members heard that officers from Barnet, Brent and other partner organisations had met recently to discuss progress and interpretation initiatives. It was noted that several small innovations had been made, some of which were reflected in later agenda items.

In reporting on marshland restoration work at Neasden Recreation Ground on the southern edge of the reservoir, Leslie Williams confirmed that this work had been undertaken in partnership with the Canal and River Trust, the Conservation Volunteers and the Sailing Association. It was additionally stated that good progress had been achieved, including works completed at the end of Winter in February 2025 and further works undertaken during Autumn 2025. Approximately 150 metres of marshland had been partially restored, and steady progress was continuing.

An update was also provided on the Welsh Harp Centre, now known as the Welsh Harp Education Centre. It was explained that the centre would provide opportunities for young people aged 16 and above with special educational needs and disabilities during term time, with provision for community use at other times. The programme for young people would focus on developing vocational skills, including horticulture, and preparing Brent's young people for adulthood. It was confirmed that the building programme had reached stage 2 design, which had been approved by Brent Council's project team. A pre-application meeting had taken place with the local planning authority to outline the current design and obtain feedback. Recruitment was underway for a staff member within Brent Council's Children, Young People and Community Development team to oversee the Welsh Harp Centre, including curriculum development and liaison with community groups. It was expected that the post holder would commence in January 2026. In the interim, discussions were ongoing regarding short-term use of the buildings.

It was further reported that Barnet and Brent Councils had hosted events at the Welsh Harp Open Space to address invasive species. These events had included learning from other London organisations about species control and had been considered highly valuable. Members were further advised that the Canal and River Trust had submitted an application to undertake investigatory work on the dam wall, requiring access across Neasden Recreation Ground. This work was now scheduled for January and February 2026, revised from the previously anticipated timing of November and December 2025. It was also confirmed that Brent Council's Parks Service was preparing interpretative maps for entrances to Welsh Harp Park currently without maps. In addition, the Canal and River Trust were developing interpretation signage for its designated locations at the reservoir. Brent Council's Parks Service was also investigating the reduction of scrub around the interpretative point at Welsh Harp Open Space to reopen views towards the reservoir.

In continuing the presentation of the report, Rosie Whicheloe (LB Brent Principal Ecology Officer) provided an update on the biodiversity habitat land bank. It was explained that the land bank was linked to new legislation on Biodiversity Net Gain and aimed to enhance habitat within Neasden Recreation Ground. It was confirmed that the project was at an early stage and had secured Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) funding for a feasibility study. Initial findings were expected

early in the following year. It was emphasised that the purpose of the initiative was to retain habitat within the borough. The project sought to maintain nature, biodiversity and vegetation locally.

The Chair thanked Leslie Williams and Rosie Whicheloe for introducing the report and then moved on to invite questions and comments from the Committee in relation to the London Borough of Brent - Welsh Harp Management Plan:

- Welsh Harp JCC members queried whether enabling access via Neasden Recreation Ground for the Canal and River Trust and its contractors to conduct tests on the dam wall infrastructure would involve any dewatering of the Welsh Harp. In response, Leslie Williams (LB Brent Project Officer) confirmed that the works did not involve dewatering and explained that the investigations related to the dam wall structure itself. It was noted that the Canal and River Trust could provide further details. In considering the response, Manfred Starkl (Welsh Harp Sailing Association) observed that the Canal and River Trust and its contractors had already commenced drilling into the dam and were undertaking investigative works. He reported that water levels had been maintained during these activities. It was additionally stated that the works had been ongoing for approximately one week.

As no further issues were raised at this stage of the meeting the Chair thanked officers and Welsh Harp JCC members for their contributions and it was **AGREED** to note the update provided.

## **8. Update from the Canal & River Trust**

Ben Macmillan (Canal River Trust) was invited to provide an update on from the Canal & River Trust. In presenting, details were provided on the ongoing restoration works within the north marsh of the Welsh Harp, which had commenced in late October 2025. It was reported that the works were progressing well. Detailed presentation slides were shared with the Committee, including photographs illustrating the current state of the restoration. It was confirmed that contractors on site had provided positive feedback regarding the project.

The Chair thanked Ben Macmillan for the update and then moved on to invite questions and comments from the Committee in relation to the information provided.

As no specific questions were raised in relation to the update provided by the Canal and River Trust, a member took the opportunity to raise points connected to the update provided by Barnet under item 6 above, with the following being noted:

- In referring to earlier comments made, a member expressed concern that the scope of the West Hendon Playing Fields project had changed significantly and noted that consultation with residents had taken place a decade ago. The member emphasised that this was a public forum and that such matters should be discussed openly. In response, Matthew Gunyon (LB Barnet Head of Greenspaces & Trees) acknowledged the concerns raised and confirmed that the matter related to two separate projects: the West Hendon Playing Fields Master Plan and the West Hendon Estate. It was further stated that coordination

would take place between his team, which was responsible for the playing fields, and Sheri Odoffin's contacts with Barratt regarding the Silkstream Bridge.

## **9. Date of Future Meetings**

RESOLVED that the following date for future meetings of the Joint Consultative Committee, scheduled to be held online and hosted by LB Brent, be noted:

- Thursday 19 March 2026 at 6pm

## **10. Any Other Business**

### **10.1 Thames 21: Update on Community Group Activities**

Hannah Reid (Thames 21) was invited to introduce an item and provided an overview of community group activities. In presenting to the Committee, it was acknowledged that a significant amount of work was undertaken beyond the programmes delivered by the Council and the Canal and River Trust, including contributions from volunteer groups and initiatives led by the Brent Catchment Partnership. It was highlighted that receiving updates on water quality monitoring programmes relevant to the Welsh Harp may be of interest to the Committee. Hannah Reid proposed the introduction of a standing agenda item led by the Brent Catchment Partnership to present updates on community activities and invited feedback from volunteer and community groups attending the meeting on whether they would support this approach and whether they would be willing for the Partnership to coordinate and prepare a written report for inclusion in future agendas.

The Chair thanked Hannah Reid for the update and then moved on to invite questions and comments from the Committee in relation to the information provided, with the following being noted:

- A member, representing Friends of the Welsh Harp, thanked Hannah Reid for acknowledging the contribution of volunteer groups and the significant time and effort invested over the past decade. The member expressed a desire for volunteer groups to be taken seriously and for their work to be recognised appropriately, noting that volunteers dedicated time and energy outside of their full-time employment.
- An additional member emphasised the importance of addressing water quality at these meetings and noted that sailing activities took place throughout the week, including sessions involving children, and stressed the need for regular updates on water quality and on measures taken by Barnet to manage pollution entering the Welsh Harp.

In concluding the presentation of the proposal to the Committee, Hannah Reid (Thames 21) recommended that data collected through the Brent Catchment Partnership be compiled into a report for future meetings and suggested emailing community groups to request updates on actions undertaken during the previous three months, which would then be incorporated into the report for inclusion in the agenda.

The Committee welcomed this proposal and agreed that it would enhance engagement with community stakeholders. As a result of the outcome of the discussion, the following recommendation identified was **AGREED** that a standing item titled 'Update on Community Group Activities', to be led by the Brent Catchment Partnership, be added to future agendas.

#### 10.2 Cool Oak and Welsh Harp Conservation Group: Summary of views on the CRT Restoration project and Silk Stream Bridge Proposal

Ben Watt (Cool Oak Group) was invited to introduce an item summarising the views of Cool Oak and the Welsh Harp Conservation Group regarding the Canal and River Trust (CRT) Restoration Project and the Silk Stream Bridge proposal. In presenting, it was highlighted that two contrasting developments were currently taking place on the North Marsh at the Welsh Harp. It was reported that, following a proposal submitted by Cool Oak Group in 2022, the Canal and River Trust had commenced restoration works on a substantial area in the north-western corner of the site, approximately equivalent to the size of two football pitches. This area formed a key part of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which it was felt had been neglected for over 30 years since the last significant restoration works. It was noted that this work had been possible due to £500k worth of funding secured via the Canal and River Trust to deliver the works. Upon completion, the restoration would revitalise a large section of wetland, representing a significant improvement for a previously deteriorated area. Both the Cool Oak Group and the Welsh Harp Conservation Group commended the Canal and River Trust for progressing this initiative, which was described as transformational and an example of appropriate stewardship of an SSSI.

By contrast, Ben Watt highlighted concerns regarding the proposed Silk Stream Bridge on the north-eastern side of the North Marsh, situated approximately 100 metres from the restoration site. It was reported that Barratt London had recently informed local residents that construction of the bridge was unlikely to commence before the end of 2026. It was noted that the bridge was intended to be a private structure for public use, with Barratt London funding the initial build. However, the potential for ongoing maintenance costs to be charged to Hendon Woodside residents through their service charges was also highlighted as a concern with residents already contributing to the upkeep of the Cool Oak Lane footbridge.

Concern was expressed that the new bridge would present significant engineering challenges, given its proposed length of approximately 200 metres across wet silt and marshland. Ben Watt warned that, should Barratt complete the construction, the maintenance costs for residents would be considerable and potentially unaffordable for many households, particularly in the context of the current cost-of-living pressures. Ben Watt further observed that Barnet Council had promoted the bridge as a symbol of regeneration and connectivity. However, it was argued that the practical benefits had diminished significantly. It was felt that the £18 million redevelopment of the adjacent playing fields had been reduced to a limited scheme comprising a small number of tennis courts, a playground and drainage improvements. The primary school originally planned for the estate, which would have utilised the bridge, was no longer scheduled for construction. Consequently, Ben Watt felt that the bridge was likely to be underused and represented poor value for residents. Additional concerns were raised regarding safety and environmental impact. It was stated that the bridge

would create opportunities for anti-social behaviour, vandalism, fly-tipping and other issues. It was noted that the planning proposal had described the bridge as a 'treetop walk', despite the fact that local trees were predominantly crack willow rooted in unstable marshland, which frequently collapsed. It was emphasised that the project would cause irreversible harm to the north-eastern section of the SSSI, which supported numerous protected species. This was contrasted with the restoration works on the north-western side, which were enhancing habitats and biodiversity.

In concluding the presentation, Ben Watt summarised that the Council possessed statutory powers to cancel the project and could renegotiate contracts and legal agreements if necessary. He contended that the bridge offered minimal practical benefit, prioritised developer-led regeneration over genuine community need, and risked generating political opposition. Ben Watt therefore urged the Council to consider the wider community interests and ensure these took precedence.

The Chair thanked Ben Watt for his presentation and then moved on to invite questions and comments from the Committee in relation to the information provided, with the following being noted:

- In addressing the comments made during the presentation to the Committee, Councillor Schneiderman stated that it was unfair to suggest that he had opposed restoration works on the North Marsh. It was clarified that funding constraints affected numerous projects across the Council and that this did not imply a lack of support for the restoration works, which were in fact part-funded by the Council through a section 106 agreement.

In relation to the proposed Silk Stream Bridge, Councillor Schneiderman noted that the matter had been discussed extensively by the Committee and confirmed that the bridge had received planning approval some time ago. It was noted that Barratt intended to proceed with construction and had the authority to do so. It was acknowledged that the process had taken longer than anticipated but confirmed that Barratt's ecologist would need to engage with stakeholders to explain the potential impact and the mitigation measures in place to ensure that the bridge could be constructed without compromising the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Councillor Schneiderman expressed the hope that a meeting would be arranged in the near future to enable members and member organisations on the Committee to raise concerns directly with Barratt's ecologists and to receive responses. It was further noted that the West Hendon development plans were being delivered in phases and would not proceed at the scale originally envisaged.

- A member of the Welsh Harp JCC queried whether the development of the proposed Silk Stream Bridge was a finalised decision. In response, Matthew Gunyon (LB Barnet, Head of Greenspaces and Trees) confirmed that the planning application had been approved several years ago enabling construction to proceed.
- An additional member of the Welsh Harp JCC expressed the view that circumstances had changed since the original decision and suggested that Barnet Council could relieve Barratt of the obligation to construct the bridge in

light of new information. The member highlighted concerns regarding the environmental impact, the perceived lack of amenity value and the potential financial burden on residents. It was suggested that Barnet Council should acknowledge that the bridge may have appeared beneficial at the time of approval, but that a review was now warranted.

- In noting that discussions regarding the bridge had been ongoing for many years, a member recalled objecting to the proposal from the outset, primarily due to its impact on wildlife. The member stated that an alternative route had previously been considered but rejected. It was understood that the bridge had originally been justified by the need to provide access for a proposed school adjacent to the playing fields; however, as the school was no longer part of the development, the member argued that the necessity for the bridge should be reassessed. The member also noted that the bridge had not been initiated by Barratt but had been imposed as a planning obligation, which should now be reviewed by Barnet Council.
- A further member emphasised the strength of local opposition and reported that residents had been promised a meeting to discuss the proposal, which had not yet taken place. The member urged that such a meeting be arranged to allow residents to express their views. Welsh Harp JCC members further stated that residents were strongly opposed to the bridge and were concerned about the financial implications, particularly in relation to service charges. Members reported that residents were unaware of existing contributions towards the maintenance of the Cool Oak Lane footbridge and expressed concern that similar costs would apply to the new bridge with the construction of the bridge highlighted as a condition originated from Barnet Council.
- In considering the earlier comments raised by members, Sheri Odoffin (LB Barnet, Senior Project Manager) noted that she was present at this meeting to ensure that feedback was conveyed to Barratt. It was confirmed that Barratt intended to provide opportunities for views to be heard and explained that regeneration schemes were complex and long-term. It was additionally noted that decisions made at a specific point may often be implemented at a later date, which could result in changes to the make-up of the local community. It was emphasised that while decisions could not always be revisited, there would be opportunities to engage on the delivery of the project. The need to respect statutory authorities was highlighted, such as Natural England and Barnet Council's ecologists, who were responsible for safeguarding the natural environment, while also recognising community concerns. It was further stated that Barratt was operating in a challenging economic climate and would not proceed with the bridge if it were not viable with the bridge recognised as a significant commitment.
- Welsh Harp JCC members expressed further concern regarding the involvement of Natural England, stating that their engagement had been limited and that objections had been raised at the time of the original proposal with the bridge no longer felt to be justified, given its environmental impact, financial cost and reduced amenity value. It was asserted that the Council retained statutory powers to halt or amend the project and urged reconsideration.

- In summarising, a Welsh Harp JCC member concluded by stressing the importance of enabling members and member organisations of the Committee to present their concerns directly to Barratt's ecologists and to receive responses.

In seeking to bring consideration of the item to a close, the Chair thanked officers and Welsh Harp JCC members for their contributions towards consideration of the matter.

As a result of the outcome of the discussion, it was **AGREED** that the request for Barratt to provide an opportunity for members and member organisations to express their views regarding the proposed Silk Stream Bridge be referred back for consideration and action.

The meeting closed at 6:52PM.

COUNCILLOR KRUPA SHETH  
Chair

	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">26 March 2026</p>
<b>Title</b>	London Borough of Barnet Welsh Harp Update
<b>Report of</b>	Executive Director, Adults, Communities and Health
<b>Wards</b>	West Hendon
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	No
<b>Key</b>	None
<b>Enclosures</b>	None
<b>Officer Contact Details</b>	Matthew Gunyon, Head of Greenspaces and Trees <a href="mailto:matthew.gunyon@barnet.gov.uk">matthew.gunyon@barnet.gov.uk</a> 0208 359 7403
<h3>Summary</h3>	
To provide an update to the committee in relation to Council activities during Quarter 3&4 (Oct-Mar 2025/26) in respect of the Welsh Harp / West Hendon Playing Fields.	

<h2>Officers Recommendations</h2>
1. That the committee note the contents of this report.

## Why this report is needed

- 1.1 The Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee (WHJCC) is comprised of the Canal and River Trust, LB Barnet, LB Brent, Welsh Harp Conservation Group, Welsh Harp Sailing Association, Friends of the Welsh Harp and the Phoenix Canoe Club. The committee is a consultative committee and meets on a quarterly basis.
- 1.2 In summary, during the financial year 25/26, LB Barnet have:
- Spent over £210,000 on [site improvements](#), including providing £150,000 match funding to CRT Wings on Water project and £17,000 on repairing the footpath network.
  - Planned and funded 15 training and/or engagement sessions, including field recorder days with The Biological Recording Company, species surveys and rewilding webinars with Citizen Zoo, and volunteer training and wildlife walks with TCV.
  - In addition to these sessions, TCV have been running weekly habitat management days (Welsh Harp Wednesdays). As of Feb 2026, these events have supported
    - 306 volunteer hours
    - 39 new volunteers
    - collection of 22 bags of litter
    - habitat management of 1204 m<sup>2</sup> (this includes the reedbed and bramble management, blackthorn coppicing, and gorse patch restoration)
    - creation of 146m of dead hedging
  - Treated 2,775m<sup>2</sup> of Invasive Non-Native Species, including giant hogweed and Japanese knotweed.
  - Removed and disposed of litter daily and fly tipping when reported, most recently 4 tonnes from Priestly Way.
- 1.3 During Quarter 3&4 (Oct-Mar 2025/26), the Council progressed a series of activities in relation to the management and operation of the Welsh Harp and West Hendon Playing Fields. These activities have been categorised under the main themes of the [Welsh Harp Vision](#), a document written and adopted by the Welsh Harp Strategy Group in 2023 aiming to improve the site for both people and wildlife.

## 2. Place

### 2.1 Care

- 2.1.1 LB Barnet, assisted by contractors and colleagues in Street Scene, have undertaken two major clearances of fly tipping at Priestley Way this quarter. Four tonnes of waste was removed in February 2026.
- 2.1.2 LB Barnet have appointed contractors to litter pick the bankside area upstream from the Silk Stream trash screen, scheduled April 2026. Access arrangements are being coordinated with the Environment Agency.

2.1.3 A series of volunteer litter picking events have been organised by the Friends of the Welsh Harp over the autumn and winter, with collection and clearance resources provided by LB Barnet and the events supported by the Pheonix Canoe Club.

## 2.2 Governance and oversight

2.2.1 LB Barnet is a member of the Thames21 Brent Catchment Partnership and continues to work with stakeholders on the biggest issues facing the Brent River catchment, which includes the Welsh Harp. Officers attend working group meetings, such as the invasive non-native species (INNS) control group, which has recently produced an interactive map to show INNS locations and treatment plans ([www.innsmapper.org](http://www.innsmapper.org)). The long-term aim of the group is to eradicate Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed across the catchment, all of which are present at the Welsh Harp, as Schedule 9 species it is illegal to plant or allow them to spread. As a result, LB Barnet has engaged a specialist contractor to carry out spot treatment of 2775m<sup>2</sup> of giant hogweed. Japanese knotweed treatment is in progress, with additional locations identified using INNS tracker.

2.2.2 LB Barnet continues to work in partnership with LB Brent, Canal and River Trust, The GLA, The London Wildlife Trust and Thames 21 in delivering the overarching Vision for the Welsh Harp, Welsh Harp Management Plan and Brent Catchment Partnership & Action Plan. In November 2025, LB Barnet attended a meeting organised by LB Brent attended by CRT and Thames 21 to discuss progress on the actions of the Welsh Harp Vision. An update on the action plan was submitted to LB Brent in February 2026 and we are updating the next meeting date.

## 2.3 Identity and Heritage

2.3.1 See section 5.2.

## 3. Environment

### 3.1 Biodiversity

3.1.1 Work has progressed on the 'Wings on Water' project, aiming to restore a large area of the North Marsh. The project has been managed by CRT and partially funded by LBB (£150,000) and the Kusuma Trust. CRT to provide updates on the progress of this project.

3.1.2 The Welsh Harp was one of several sites across London that Citizen Zoo carried out a survey for German Hairy Snails. Although none of these species were recorded, common species and a species previously not recorded in the borough were found. More information here: [Conservationists unite to save London's rare 'German' hairy snail - BBC News](#).

3.1.3 [The Conservation Volunteers](#) (TCV) continue to run their weekly habitat management sessions, Welsh Harp Wednesdays, every Wednesday from 10am – 3pm throughout winter and into spring. These sessions focus on habitat management and enhancement work, informed by the site management plan and suggestions from key stakeholders. LB Barnet has provided £2850 of funding for storage and tools for the work. The work aligns with the aims of the Welsh Harp Vision, for example creating dead hedges to define areas for people and wildlife and enhance the habitats present.

3.1.4 In addition to the habitat management days, TCV are also holding 10 community engagement sessions and volunteer training days at the site throughout 2026, details [here](#).

3.1.5 Citizen Zoo and The Biological Recording Company are also running six training and engagement events throughout 2026. These include a rewilding webinar about ospreys and water voles at the site, as well as field recorder days that aim to engage residents and collect baseline species data for the site. More details [here](#).

3.1.6 A full schedule of events funded and coordinated by LB Barnet are below:

Date	Start	End	Topic	Location	How to sign up
19/02/26	19:00	20:30	Urban Rewilding at the Welsh Harp	Online Webinar	<a href="#">Webinar: Could the Welsh Harp one day support ospreys and water voles? Tickets, Thu, Feb 19, 2026 at 7:00 PM   Eventbrite</a>
28/02/26	10:00	13:00	What to do with green waste (A guide to dead hedging)	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">How to Create Habitat Structures Tickets, Sat, Feb 28, 2026 at 10:00 AM   Eventbrite</a>
22/03/26	10:30	12:00	Signs of Spring - Wildlife Walk	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">Signs of Spring at Welsh Harp Tickets, Sun, Mar 22, 2026 at 10:30 AM   Eventbrite</a>
28/03/26	10:00	13:00	Meadow Management	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">Creating and Managing a Meadow Habitat Tickets, Sat, Mar 28, 2026 at 10:00 AM   Eventbrite</a>
01/04/26	10:30	15:30	Earthworm Sampling Day	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">Earthworm Sampling Day Tickets, Wed, Apr 1, 2026 at 10:00 AM   Eventbrite</a>
19/04/26	10:30	12:00	Bumblebee Walk - Wildlife Walk	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">Bumblebee Walk Tickets, Sun, Apr 19, 2026 at 10:30 AM   Eventbrite</a>
21/04/26	10:30	15:30	Invertebrate Field Recorder Day	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">Invertebrate Field Recorder Day Tickets, Tuesday, Apr 21 from 10:30 am to 3:30 pm   Eventbrite</a>
23/04/26	09:30	16:30	Environmental Leadership Training	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">Environmental Leadership Training Tickets, Thursday, Apr 23 from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm   Eventbrite</a>
01/05/26	10:00	13:00	How to run Environmental Education Events	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">How to Run Environmental Education Events Tickets, Friday, May 1 from 10 am to 1 pm   Eventbrite</a>
15/05/26	10:00	16:30	Environmental Risk Assessment Training	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">Environmental Risk Assessment Training Tickets, Friday, May 15 from 9 am to 4:30 pm   Eventbrite</a>
17/05/26	10:30	12:00	Dragonfly and Damselfly survey - Wildlife Walk	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">Dragonfly and Damselfly survey Tickets, Sun, May 17, 2026 at 10:30 AM   Eventbrite</a>
30/05/26	10:30	12:00	Butterfly Walk - Wildlife Walk	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">Butterfly Walk Tickets, Sat, May 30, 2026 at 10:30 AM   Eventbrite</a>

Date	Start	End	Topic	Location	How to sign up
24/06/26	10:00	16:00	Botany Field Recorder Day	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">Botany Field Recorder Day Tickets, Wed, Jun 24, 2026 at 10:00 AM   Eventbrite</a>
19/09/26	10:00	16:00	Plant Gall Field Recorder Day	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">Plant Gall Field Recorder Day Tickets, Sat, Sep 19, 2026 at 10:00 AM   Eventbrite</a>
15/10/26	10:00	16:00	Fungi Field Recorder Day	Welsh Harp	<a href="#">Fungi Field Recorder Day Tickets, Thu, Oct 15, 2026 at 10:00 AM   Eventbrite</a>

3.1.7 LB Barnet have provided updated habitat management information to LB Brent for their annual review of the site management plan.

3.1.8 LB Barnet have supported bird ringing (carried out by an appropriate licensed person) at the Welsh Harp, which has seen coots, Canada geese and swans ringed this winter. Citizen science data collected as part of this project will contribute to national and international bird population and distribution research.

## 3.2 Water

3.2.1 No updates during this reporting period (Q3 & Q4 25/26).

## 3.3 Climate Resilience

3.3.1 Street trees have been planted on West Hendon Broadway (winter 25/26), helping to create habitat corridors and green the residential areas around the Welsh Harp.

## 4. Wellbeing

### 4.1 Health and wellbeing

4.1.1 No updates during this reporting period (Q3 & Q4 25/26).

### 4.2 Sport and Recreation

4.2.1 The West Hendon Playing Fields project is progressing with a phased approach to delivering the masterplan, as approved by Cabinet in July 2025.

4.2.2 The phased approach will have an initial focus on improvements to existing facilities. Design work is continuing for access and drainage improvements. Refurbishment of the existing tennis courts, the introduction of a new 3x3 basketball court and installation of a new playground are scheduled to start on site in spring 2026, subject to seasonal conditions.

4.2.3 The subsequent phase is working towards the masterplan and Playing Pitch Strategy aspirations for a Sports Hub, within current budget limitations. Feasibility for a 3G pitch has been completed, in collaboration with the Football Foundation, as the initial step towards a planning application in the coming months and a subsequent funding bid.

### 4.3 Connection to Nature

4.3.1 In addition to the habitat management days, TCV are also holding 10 community engagement sessions and volunteer training days at the site throughout 2026, details [here](#). and linked in the table above. The engagement days, aimed at local residents and those that might be new to the site are proposed on the following dates:

- Signs of Spring – 22nd March - 10.30am – 12.30pm
- Bee Walk – 19th April – 10.30am – 1pm
- Dragonfly/Pond Survey – 17th May - 10.30am - 12.30pm
- Butterfly Walk – 30th May – 10.30am-1pm

## 5. **INCLUSION**

### 5.1 **Access and Movement**

5.1.1 In winter 25/26, LB Barnet assigned £17,000 of capital funding to the upgrade of the footpath network, addressing the waterlogging and flooding issues that leave stretches inaccessible during the winter months. Repairs to drainage culverts was undertaken autumn 2025, with surface repairs to be undertaken spring 2026.

### 5.2 **Knowledge**

5.2.1 LB Barnet have worked with CRT to agree the locations of new lectern-style interpretation panels at key locations around the reservoir. These include information on the biodiversity, history and heritage of the site. Of the ten proposed, two of the proposed locations fall on LB Barnet land:

- Near the bird viewing platform off Cool Oak Lane (what3words: ///expect.quest.stop)
- Near Phoenix Canoe Club (what3words: ///retail.bets.silent)

## 6. **Planning Updates**

6.1 Between December 2025 and January 2026 Barratts submitted a range of information to LBB Planning on discharging planning conditions related the consented Silkstream Bridge Planning application.

6.2 The below was submitted to the Local Planning Authority for review:

- [26/0442/CON | Submission of details of condition 2 \(Materials\) pursuant to planning permission 18/1163/RMA dated 26/10/18 | Silk Stream Bridge West Hendon Estate London NW9 7EZ](#)
- [26/0539/CON | Submission of details of condition 5 \(Woodland Management Plan\) pursuant to planning permission 18/1163/RMA dated 26/10/2018 | Silk Stream Bridge West Hendon Estate London NW9](#)
- [26/0540/CON | Submission of details of condition 6 \(Ecological Management Plan\) pursuant to planning permission 18/1163/RMA dated 26/10/2018 | Silk Stream Bridge West Hendon Estate London NW9](#)

- [26/0541/CON | Submission of details of condition 7 \(Woodland/Bird Features\) pursuant to planning permission 18/1163/RMA dated 26/10/2018 | Silk Stream Bridge West Hendon Estate London NW9](#)

These documents will also be reviewed by Natural England.

- 6.3 Regarding Barratt’s Silkstream Bridge Engagement Strategy, Barratt’s Building Relations Team have confirmed that they are carrying out ground investigation surveys to finalise aspects of the design for the new bridge, which have been shared with the Canal River Trust, Natural England, the LPA and Barnet Regeneration Officers, before construction of the bridge starts later this year. They also confirm that information on the bridge will be available on an accessible web page.
- 6.4 In April 2023 LB Barnet were alerted to concerns relating to the SSSI as a result of development from a property in Woolmead Avenue. This has remained under review by the Councils Planning Enforcement team who have worked with Natural England to review and resolve matters, issuing an enforcement notice in May 2023. Subsequently a retrospective application for construction work (23/2569/RCU) was refused by the London Borough of Barnet Planning Dept. A further notice was issued in November 2023, outlining a requirement to demolish and remove materials from the property (ENF/0522/23). An appeal was issued in 29 January 2025, and the Council's decision was upheld (24/00031/ENF). An independent inspector has provided up to 29th July 2025 to comply with the terms of the enforcement notice or obtain relevant consents. On 17<sup>th</sup> October 2025, a retrospective planning application was submitted ([25/4177/RCU | Erection of a single storey rear outbuilding. \(Retrospective application\) | 38 Woolmead Avenue London NW9 7AY](#)) pending consideration. On 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026, the planning department informed Greenspaces “the case is now closed. This is because it was determined that the outbuilding falls within permitted development. The reason an enforcement notice was served is because the main dwelling was believed to be flats, in which case permitted development rights are removed. However, the agents have proven that when the outbuilding was constructed, the main dwelling house was in fact a single dwelling and is still a single dwelling.”. The Greenspaces Service is looking into the issues of encroachment and works undertaken inside the open space land and boundary.

## **7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 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.

## **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

8.1 N/A

## **9. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

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

## **10. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **10.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

10.1.1 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.

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

10.2.1 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.

### **10.3 Social Value**

10.3.1 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.

### **10.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

10.4.1 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.

10.4.2 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.

## 10.5 Risk Management

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

## 10.6 Equalities and Diversity

10.6.1 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

## 10.7 Corporate Parenting Principles

10.7.1 N/A

## 10.8 Consultation and Engagement

10.8.1 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.

## 10.9 Insight

10.9.1 None

## 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 The Welsh Harp Management Plan can be found on Brent Council's website: [www.brent.gov.uk/parks](http://www.brent.gov.uk/parks) in the biodiversity section.

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

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

- 11.4 [Welsh Harp Vision Update – Environment and Climate Change Committee 6 September 2022, Agenda Item 14](#)
- 11.5 [West Hendon Playing Fields Masterplan Update – Cabinet 22 July 2025, Agenda Item 22](#)

	<p align="center"><b>Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee</b> 26 March 2026</p>
	<p align="center"><b>Report from the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration</b></p>
	<p align="center"><b>Lead Member – Cabinet Member for Public Realm &amp; Enforcement (Councillor Krupa Sheth)</b></p>
<p><b>Welsh Harp Management Plan update (Brent)</b></p>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Non-key
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	One Appendix A: Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan: Action Plan for 2025-2026.
<b>Background Papers:</b>	
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Leslie Williams, Project Officer, Parks Services, Brent Civic Centre. Tel: 020 8937 5628 Email: <a href="mailto:Leslie.Williams@Brent.gov.uk">Leslie.Williams@Brent.gov.uk</a>

## 1.0 Executive Summary

1.1. This report presents progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan since the last meeting of the Committee and during the 2025/26 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.

## 3.0 Detail

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

3.1.1 This report updates members on the issues and progress for the Welsh Harp area. These relate to the Borough Plan Priorities. The Welsh Harp contributes to the priority of A Cleaner Greener Future and also to some of the other priorities. The Welsh Harp provides publicly accessible green space, opportunities for water sports, space for recreational exercise, habitats and biodiversity, contributes to flood control within and beyond the Brent area; and provides a landscape to enhance the surrounding residential, community and commercial neighbourhoods. The Welsh Harp contributes to strategies including the:

- Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy 2021-23
- Flood Risk Management Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027.

Further details of these and of other strategies can be found at:

<https://www.brent.gov.uk/the-council-and-democracy/strategies-priorities-and-policies>

## 3.2 Background

### 3.2.1 Welsh Harp 'Vision':

The 'Welsh Harp Vision' was published in July 2023. The Vision has been prepared by the Canal & River Trust, Barnet Council, Brent Council, the London Wildlife Trust, Greater London Authority, Thames 21 and other partners. The partner organisations remain in contact and several of the projects mentioned below and in the Action Plan appendix involve increased partnership working.

### 3.2.2 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 (3.2.3).

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](#)

### 3.2.3 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 actions. For this committee the Action Plan is updated as Appendix A. The Action Plan provides

notes and updates on issues and projects. The 'Progress' column indicates current progress.

#### 3.2.4 Marshland work:

On the southern shore of the Brent Reservoir at Neasden Recreation Ground works have continued to restore the marshland edge of the reservoir. A length of the reservoir edge footpath has also received attention and now enables more and better views of the reservoir. Primarily these are achieved by sensitively reducing scrub. The project is led by the Canal & River Trust, The Conservation Volunteers, Welsh Harp Sailing Association and Brent Council Parks. The works have a consent from Natural England. The tree works seasonally took a break by the end of February, due to the bird breeding season.

#### 3.2.5 The Conservation Volunteers

The Conservation Volunteers have continued a two-year programme of events in Brent, focused on parks and other sites that have, to date, received only limited or no conservation volunteer activity. Seasonal works continued at Neasden Recreation Ground and the Welsh Harp during the winter of 2025/26.

#### 3.2.6 Maintenance:

Grounds maintenance continues with the parks' grounds maintenance contractor, Krinkels Ltd. The Parks service have managed issues relating to people sleeping rough; and since the last meeting, within the Welsh Harp Open Space.

#### 3.2.7 Fly-tipping and littering

The issues of littering and fly-tipping have continued, for example, towards the west of Neasden Recreation Ground and more recently also near to the edge of the eastern marsh. Issues about litter and fly-tipping in parks can be reported on the FixMyStreet app, which also provides for photographs to be uploaded at the same time. The Council can also be contacted by email or other contact options.

#### 3.2.8 Welsh Harp Centre:

The Centre will provide opportunities for young people aged 16+ with SEND during curriculum time, with provision for community use at other times. The provision for young people with SEND will focus on developing vocational skills, such as skills in horticulture and environment and land management, as well as offering opportunities to better prepare Brent's young people with SEND for adulthood.

In respect of the building programme the stage 2 design has now been approved. The Council's project team had a pre-planning application meeting

scheduled in November with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to outline the current design and obtain feedback. The LPA feedback and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders will influence the next stage of spatial design.

In terms of provision, Brent Council's, Children, Young People & Community Development team have recently recruited a staff member who will have oversight of the Welsh Harp Centre including curriculum development and liaison with community groups. All plans regarding the offer for children and young people with SEND will be co-produced with all relevant stakeholders, with initial meetings currently being scheduled.

### 3.2.9 Healthy Walks programme:

The walking programme continues. The Welsh Harp walks are on Thursdays from 10am to 11am, meeting at the Welsh Harp Open Space end of Birchen Grove, Kingsbury NW9. For details, please see the walking website at:

[Walking for Health - Welsh Harp | Brent Council](#)

### 3.2.10 Pollution incidents

Monitoring is in progress at one site with the involvement of the River Brent Catchment Partnership and the Clean Up the River Brent group.

### 3.2.11 Pulley Wheel sculpture

The Canal & River Trust sculpture is expected to be moved to its permanent position at Neasden Recreation Ground in 2026.

### 3.2.12 Invasive species

Brent Council Parks Service has continued to control Invasive species at the Welsh Harp.

### 3.2.13 Investigatory works on the dam wall

Brent Council are enabling access, via Neasden Recreation Ground for the Canal & River Trust and their contractors, to conduct some tests on the dam wall infrastructure. The tests commenced in February 2026.

### 3.2.14 Interpretation

Brent Council Parks Service are preparing some interpretative maps for some of the Welsh Harp Park entrances currently without maps. Brent Council are also working in partnership with the Canal & River Trust on interpretation signage for locations at the reservoir, both on the southern and northern sides of the reservoir.

Brent Council Parks Service arranged for the reduction of scrub around the interpretative gazebo at the Welsh Harp Open Space, to re-open some of the view/s towards the reservoir.

### 3.2.15 Biodiversity habitat land bank

Through Brent's NCIL (Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy) funding, a portion has been allocated to explore the creation of a habitat bank at Neasden Recreation Ground. A scoping exercise is currently underway with the delivery so far of biological data from GIGL (Greenspace Information for Greater London), and habitat mapping. Topographical, utilities and soil services are currently being procured. This information, along with detailed financial assessment will enable us to understand the feasibility of the initiative. We hope to have more news in early April.

## 4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 The Safeguarding, Partnership and Strategy, with the Property and Assets teams of Brent Council are conducting consultation relating to the Welsh Harp Centre.

The Welsh Harp Education Centre Project stakeholder engagement is outlined above in paragraph 3.2.8. Officers are in the process of finalising a communications strategy for the project. This will include actions to inform ward members; local residents and other relevant, interested parties as to the development of the new education centre.

## 5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 The Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan serves primarily as a land-use document, intended to guide land managers and other stakeholders in relation to the maintenance, management, and legislative considerations affecting the Brent Reservoir and its surrounding areas. It also plays a forward-planning role by outlining potential land management needs over the longer term.
- 5.2 The actions set out in the accompanying Action Plan (Appendix A) reflect a range of potential activities that could be delivered over varying timeframes, subject to resource availability and service-level approval. All proposals will be monitored, reviewed, and re-profiled as necessary to align with available resources. No works will proceed without the necessary approval from the relevant service and confirmation that suitable budget provision is in place.
- 5.3 As noted in the update to the Committee, the principal land-owning organisations at the Welsh Harp, along with other stakeholders, are engaging in a 'vision' exercise. This will explore long-term aspirations and consider potential funding and income opportunities to support currently unfunded priorities, subject to further review.

## 6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp is a designated 'Site of Special Scientific Interest ('SSSI').
- 6.2 SSSIs are sites which are designated by Natural England (for sites in England) and given legal protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act ('WCA') 1981 because they are recognised as being of special interest by reason of their flora, fauna, geological or physiological features.
- 6.3 There are two main types of duty that arise under the WCA 1981 in relation to sites that are designated as SSSIs.
- 6.4 For owners/occupiers:
  - 6.4.1 There is a requirement to give prior notification (under section 28E, WCA 1981) before carrying out any operations that are specified by Natural England (as part of the SSSI designation) as requiring notification to be given. The owner/occupier cannot lawfully carry out any such operation unless Natural England has given their written consent, or the operation is carried out under the auspices of a management agreement made under one of the applicable statutory provisions or under a management scheme arising under section 28 of the WCA 1981. Failure to comply may result in the commission of an offence.
- 6.5 For various types of public body (including local authorities):
  - 6.5.1 When such bodies are exercising their functions in a way that is likely to affect the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which the site is an SSSI, they have a statutory duty (under WCA 1981, section 28G) to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of the relevant flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features. This is a broad duty and is triggered when the features relevant to the site's designation are likely to be affected.
  - 6.5.2 Public bodies are also required (under WCA 1981, section 28H) to give notice to Natural England before they carry out, in the exercise of their functions, operations likely to damage any of the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which an SSSI is of special interest. It is important to note that this duty also applies where the operations would not take place on land or other feature that is itself included in an SSSI; the issue is the likelihood of damage to the relevant features arising from the proposed operations. In response to receiving notification, Natural England may assent (either with or without conditions) or refuse assent; if no response is received within 28 days, they are taken to have refused assent.
  - 6.5.3 Where Natural England do not assent, or the authority proposes to carry out the operations otherwise than in accordance with the terms of the assent, the authority must not carry out the operations, unless they have

notified Natural England of the date on which they propose to start the operations, and how, if at all, they have taken account of any written advice received. When carrying out the operations the authority must carry these out in such a way as to give rise to as little damage as is reasonably practicable in all the circumstances to the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features which cause the site to be of special interest. Account must be taken of any advice that has been received from Natural England. There is also an obligation to restore the site to its former condition, so far as is reasonably practicable, if damage does occur.

- 6.5.4 A parallel duty arises (under WCA 1981, section 28I) where the public body is responsible for authorising or permitting a third party to carry out operations which are likely to damage any of the features causing the site to have been designated, again including where those operations would not themselves be within the SSSI. The public body is obliged to consult with Natural England before deciding whether to give permission for the operations to be carried out, and a similar process applies to that described above if Natural England advises against permitting the operations.
- 6.6 The Action Plan 2024-25 that is the subject of the present report notes various matters relating to WCA duties in relation to an SSSI (see, for example, the entry under ‘marshland: maintain’ to a programme of works for the southern shore consented by Natural England).
- 6.5 The status of a site as an SSSI is also relevant in the event of a planning application being received for development. In these circumstances, the local planning authority dealing with an application will need to ensure that it complies with all relevant notification requirements and applies any applicable national and borough level planning policies relating to SSSIs.
- 6.6 Since 1 January 2023, bodies including local authorities are under a statutory duty, introduced originally by the Environment Act 2021, to conserve and enhance biodiversity. This is envisaged as a proactive duty, rather than simply a duty to have regard to the objective of conserving and enhancing biodiversity. Active management of resources such as Brent Reservoir/Welsh Harp may contribute towards the meeting of that duty.

## **7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

- 7.1 As this report provides a general update, there are no immediate EDI implications.
- 7.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty, as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have a “protected characteristic” and those who do not share that protected characteristic. The protected characteristics

are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

- 7.3 Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- 7.4 At this stage, no potential adverse equality impact arising from the activities in this report have been identified. However, the equalities implications identified in the Equality Impact Assessment will continue to be considered and assessed as further data / information is obtained or becomes available during the implementation process. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) relating to Brent Council's activities outlined in these reports, particularly in respect of the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plans is in the process of being updated.

## **8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

- 8.1 The Brent Reservoir, whilst originally constructed as part of a waterways transport system, now has a role in managing the flow of the River Brent. The Reservoir has a number of in-built systems and associated procedures that help to reduce the risk of flooding to the urban communities downstream, during and following high-rainfall events.
- 8.2 The Brent Reservoir and the wider Welsh Harp area have important roles in the conservation of biodiversity. The Brent Reservoir is a Site of Special Scientific Interest on account of the significance of its wildlife.

## **9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

N/A

## **10.0 Communication Considerations**

- 10.1 The Welsh Harp 'Vision', healthy living initiatives and the provision of information about the Welsh Harp have been mentioned in this report.

**Report sign off:**

***Jehan Weerasinghe***

Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and  
Regeneration

## APPENDIX A. WELSH HARP / BRENT RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT PLAN: ACTION PLAN FOR 2025-2026

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 timeframes, though many are not affordable in the short term.

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

Progress is indicated within the text and may include the priority of the issue, risks and progress.

Action	Lead	Budget	Approximate timetable	Progress: 2025-26 to 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
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.	Published in late July 2023.	A vision and possible options for the Welsh Harp.
Implementation of the Welsh Harp Vision	Canal and River Trust, Barnet Council, Brent Council, Thames 21, London Wildlife Trust, Greater London Authority.	The Vision team are investigating potential grant sources. The first is a potential application to the Heritage Lottery Fund.	On-going	Opportunities to include the Welsh Harp in grant applications are reviewed.

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.		Ongoing since 2011.	River Brent Catchment Partnership Action Plan published at: <a href="https://www.thames21.org.uk/catchment-partnerships/brent/">https://www.thames21.org.uk/catchment-partnerships/brent/</a>
Dam wall and reservoir: statutory responsibility to maintain dam wall, associated structures and the dam	Canal and River Trust (CRT)	Canal and River Trust	Works: October 2023 to May 2024.	Dam wall and mechanism maintained to operational and statutory standards. Statutory inspection and works conducted in January to February 2021. Works, involving pre-drawdown of the Reservoir, October 2023 and reservoir refilled by late May 2024. Tests by CRT in progress February 2026.
Maintain open water for water sports	Welsh Harp Sailing Association (WHSA)	Undertaken by volunteers of the (WHSA)	On-going	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	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	The WHCG organise winter projects at and near to the hides.

Welsh Harp Centre	Brent Council, Thames 21		Brent Council are leading on the future for an Education Centre, while Thames 21 are currently maintaining a presence.	Brent Council Cabinet, May 2023 report. Consultation discussions with local organisations: June 2024.
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.	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.	Maintenance, particularly of the well-used paths and features.
Signage; and interpretative signage.	Brent / Barnet.		The C&RT have a series of interpretative signs in design.	Jan-Feb. 2026: The Canal & River Trust and Brent Council are preparing a set of new interpretative panels for the Brent (north and south sides) and for areas within Barnet. Brent Council have opened a view of the reservoir as seen from the interpretative gazebo at the Welsh Harp Open Space. Preparations are in progress by the Canal & River Trust for the installation of a sculpture. New entrance signage in preparation by Brent Council (early 2026).

Parks infrastructure	Brent / Barnet			<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>Early 2026: Replacement litter bins and benches in preparation.</p>
Monitoring: wildlife, and indicators	WHCG; and public authorities.	Mainly by volunteers of WHCG.	On-going	<p>See the most recent available, for 2022 (published in June 2023) by the Welsh Harp Conservation Group, available on their website and via the following link:</p> <p><a href="https://www.welshharp.org.uk/publications">Publications – Welsh Harp Conservation Group (wordpress.com)</a></p> <p>Programme of activities led by Welsh Harp Conservation Group for: refer to the website.</p> <p>During 2026, Barnet Council are also organizing a range of practical and online interpretative events. Details from Barent Council.</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.	<p>Grasslands: A grassland maintenance schedule introduced by Brent Council across the Borough (including at Neasden Recreation Ground) from 2018 includes emphasis on improving the 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. There are also rough-grassland habitats both at Neasden Recreation Ground and at the Welsh Harp Open Space. Late 2024: some local additional seeding by The Conservation Volunteers towards the western part of Neasden Recreation Ground.</p>

Grasslands: paths cutting	Barnet, Brent	Maintenance: within existing resources. Restoration work is currently unfunded.	Spring to autumn.	<p>Paths maintained but some have narrowed with scrub growth, particularly at Neasden Recreation Ground (see notes on Marshland).</p> <p>The lower grassland path at the Welsh Harp Open Space is narrow.</p>
Sailing and sports development	WHSA: Welsh Harp Sailing Association and constituent clubs.	Undertaken by volunteers of WHSA.	On-Going	<p>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.</p>
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.	<p>Several clean-ups have been organized since January 2021. The Canal &amp; River Trust have cleared some larger items from the reservoir, while the CRT and community organisations have held several clean-up events of the margins of the reservoir. During the de-watering of the reservoir from late 2023 into early 2024, litter other waste materials were cleared from some margins of the reservoir.</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. The river-borne waste is almost entirely litter and fly-tipped waste from the river catchment upstream.</p> <p>The clearing of litter and fly-tipping in the public open spaces of the Welsh Harp is a responsibility of the grounds maintenance contractors of either Barnet or Brent Council. Or of the Canal &amp; River Trust. For Brent, issues can be reported using the FixMyStreet app, but please select 'Parks' on the first set of options which takes the user to a dedicated page for parks.</p>

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.	<p>The Environment Agency clear accumulations of litter and fly-tipping 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 fortnightly. 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. That is what the screens were designed to do. Inevitably, some smaller items will flow through the screens into the reservoir.</p> <p>The Environment Agency have issued, from August 2024, new advice that only trained and authorized personnel, should access the trash screen within the fenced enclosure.</p>
Clean up projects	The community		On-going.	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; The Welsh Harp Group at Neasden Recreation Ground; and Clean Up the River Brent group.
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 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.	The Canal & River Trust reduced and removed in early 2022, some willows in the reed bed in the eastern marsh. Since February 2025, scrub trees are being removed from where they are shading the western reedbed at Neasden Recreation Ground.

Reedbeds: remove young trees and marginal encroachment	Canal and River Trust	£85,000 PPL funding	Removing young trees and vegetation overhanging margins	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.
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.	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. 2023: C&RT works to create alcoves in the reedbed in the Eastern Marsh.
Wet woodland	Canal and River Trust, Barnet, Brent	Largely self-managing.	On-going.	Largely self-managing. Quantities of fly-tipping remain to be extracted.
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.		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, reedbeds or some grasslands, then management is needed 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.	<p>During much of the past three 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 &amp; 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 to 2021.</p> <p>For the southern shore, a programme of works was detailed by the C&amp;RT Ecologist in early 2024 (and previously consented by Natural England). The Canal &amp; River Trust, Brent Council, the Welsh Harp Sailing Association; and The Conservation Volunteers re-commenced work on the southern shore (Neasden Recreation Ground) in January-February 2025. For 2025-26, works recommenced in September 2025. .</p>
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.	Marshland habitat at risk of scrub encroachment. See the comments for 'Marshland maintain', above.
Marshland: orchids and other marshland plants	WHCG, Brent	Marshland work by Brent Council. Volunteer work by WHCG.	WHCG to provide information.	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, Canal and River Trust		Restoration of shore by Phase 1 of West Hendon Redevelopment.	Riparian zone covered by CRT Wings on Water Project.
Northern arm of the Reservoir	Barnet, Barratt PLC, Canal and River Trust		2025-2026: habitat enhancement	Canal and River Trust's Wings on Water project (part funded by Barnet and Kasuma Trust) has restored and enhanced wetland features (last managed in the 1980s) in the northern arm of the reservoir. The earthworks will restore ponds and channels on the western edge of the north marsh, with native wetland planting, fencing and a viewing screen being installed in 2026.
South-bank boardwalk	Canal and River Trust	Canal & Rivers Trust budget: periodic work.	As required.	The remnants of the previous boardwalk have been collected 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>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. Thames21 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 and Barnet: Control of Giant Hogweed at the Welsh Harp Open Space near to Wood Lane.</p> <p>Autumn 2023: Completion of Riverside Connections 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>2024-2025: Giant Hogweed: Control commissioned by Brent Council Parks, particularly downstream at sites towards Alperton.</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>Pedestrian footbridge alongside historic, vehicular footbridge.</p>
<p>West Hendon re-development</p>	<p>Barnet Council, Barratts.</p>	<p>Barnet Council</p>		<p>Refer to Barnet Council update.</p>
<p>West Hendon Playing Fields</p>	<p>Barnet Council</p>	<p>Barnet Council</p>		<p>Refer to Barnet Council update.</p>