

APPENDIX A. WELSH HARP / BRENT RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT PLAN: ACTION PLAN FOR 2021-2022

The Management Plan outlines the management considered necessary to sustain the Welsh Harp for wildlife, recreation, landscape, flood-control, economic and other benefits of the reservoir. These are achievable over varying time-frames, though many are not affordable in the short term. Officers of the main land-holding organisations at the Welsh Harp and some other organisations are working on a 'Vision' exercise which will include a review of possible sources of funding and income. This Action Plan tracks current year progress while also highlighting projects with a longer timeframe.

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

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

Action	Lead	Budget	Approximate timetable	RAG status (text column provided for use if plain printing)	Progress: 2021-22 to 3rd November 2021
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.	In progress.	Amber – in progress	Developing a vision and options for the Welsh Harp. Appointed earlier in the year, the consultancy has been preparing information and consulting with the local communities and others.
Dam wall and reservoir: statutory responsibility to maintain dam wall, associated structures and the dam	Canal and River Trust (Canal and River Trust)	Canal and River Trust	Maintain. On-Going	Green	Dam wall and mechanism maintained to operational and statutory standards. Statutory inspection and works conducted in January to February 2021.

Maintain open water for water sports	Welsh Harp Sailing Association (WHSA)	Undertaken by volunteers of the (WHSA)	On-Going	Green	Monitoring and actions by Welsh Harp Sailing Association.
Sailing Infrastructure: club-houses, boats, and service areas.	Sailing Clubs	Maintained by the Canal and River Trust; and by the sailing clubs.	On-going	Green	The Welsh Harp Sailing Association and clubs maintain the water sports infrastructure. See also Phoenix Canoe Club.
Bird hides: maintenance of the hides; the surrounding vegetation (sightlines) and habitats.	Welsh Harp Conservation Group / others		On-going	Green	The WHCG organise winter projects at and near to the hides.
Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre	Thames 21, Brent Council		Thames 21 have managed the Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre since January 2016 but are vacating in the summer of 2021.	Red	Activities at the Centre have been affected by the restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Thames 21 have vacated the Centre from the summer of 2021. Brent Council is in discussion with partners to understand the opportunities at the location as an education centre.
Allotments	Brent, West Hendon Allotment Society	Brent: refer to Allotments and Food Growing Strategy. Barnet: West Hendon Allotments are Self-Managed by the holders.	Allotments are maintained. There are some areas for biodiversity within the Dors Close Allotments.	Green	Barnet Council: West Hendon Allotments are Self-Managed. Brent Council: Allotments Strategy: Birchen Grove Allotments and Dors Close Allotments.

Open spaces, pitches, paths, Capital Ring, and parks furniture.	Barnet, Brent	Existing maintenance resources. Barnet; and Brent public realm budgets.	On-going.	Amber	Maintenance, particularly of the well-used paths and features.
Signage; and interpretative signage.	Brent / Barnet.			Amber	Maintained. The Canal & River Trust are currently reviewing a selection of the signage. Part of the review extends beyond the Canal and River Trust land to other areas of the Welsh Harp.
Parks infrastructure	Brent / Barnet			Green	<p>Parks infrastructure is checked at appropriate frequencies.</p> <p>Birchen Grove Car Park: Installation of mini-humps to deter excessive speeding and other anti-social behavior in car park: January 2020.</p> <p>Silver Jubilee Park Car Park: resurfaced and line-marked: January 2020.</p>
Monitoring: wildlife, and indicators	WHCG; and public authorities.	Mainly by volunteers of WHCG.	On-going	Amber – diverse wildlife but potential for improvements	<p>See the most recent (2020) report on wildlife produced by the Welsh Harp Conservation Group, available on their website and via the following link:</p> <p>Publications – Welsh Harp Conservation Group (wordpress.com)</p> <p>Programme of activities led by Welsh Harp Conservation Group for: refer to the website.</p>

Grasslands and cutting	Barnet, Brent	Maintenance: within existing resources. Restoration work is currently unfunded.	Spring to autumn.	Green	Grasslands: A grassland maintenance schedule introduced by Brent Council across the Borough (including the Welsh Harp) from spring 2018 includes emphasis on improving biodiversity value of amenity grassland. Sown areas of bee-friendly plants were added in 2019. See the following link for areas for areas of spring and summer grassland at Neasden Recreation Ground: https://www.brent.gov.uk/media/16413216/neasden-recreation-ground.jpg
Grasslands: paths cutting	Barnet, Brent	Maintenance: within existing resources. Restoration work is currently unfunded. Current path cutting estimated at £5,000 / year.	Spring to autumn.	Amber	Paths maintained but some have narrowed with scrub growth, particularly at Neasden Recreation Ground (see notes on Marshland). The lower grassland path at the Welsh Harp Open Space is narrow. Work in 2020 aimed at reducing encroaching scrub, but the path width could benefit from occasional cutting.
Sailing and sports development	WHSA: Welsh Harp Sailing Association and constituent clubs.	Undertaken by volunteers of WHSA.	On-Going	Amber	Led by the sailing and water sports clubs. Phoenix Canoe Club are working on proposed improvements to their club facilities for water sports, particularly for educational use; and for a café accessible from the Welsh Harp / Capital Ring path.

Litter	Brent Council. Barnet Council. Canal & River Trust. Thames 21. Environment Agency.	Landowners: Brent Council, Barnet Council, Canal & River Trust. Leaseholders. Also much volunteer involvement.	On-going.	Red	<p>The January to February 2021 temporary partial drawdown of the water level within the Reservoir revealed large quantities of litter, waste and alluvium (silt). Of the alluvium, the Canal & River Trust have stated that the removal is logistically beyond any resources that are currently available to the Canal and River Trust.</p> <p>The Canal & River Trust mapped some of the larger items and those were subsequently removed.</p> <p>There has been much activity by the wider community to clear, where it is safe to do so; and within Covid-19 regulations; material near on the shorelines.</p> <p>During the summer and early autumn of 2021, volunteers of The Welsh Harp Group moved a large number (c. 200 plus?) of previously fly-tipped tyres in the wet woodland on the southern side of the Reservoir, to an open area for subsequent collection by the Canal & River Trust.</p> <p>There remains, in addition to litter and rubbish in the reservoir; one area of fly-tipped waste in the wooded wetland on the southern shore of the reservoir; areas of less-accessible waste around the reservoir; and issues related to the inflow of waste on the Silk Stream and River Brent.</p>
--------	---	---	-----------	-----	--

River trash traps: at inflows of Dollis Brook, and Silk Stream	Environment Agency	Budget provided by the Environment Agency	Maintain, On-going.	Amber / Red	The Environment Agency clear accumulations of litter from the trash screens on the tributary rivers entering the reservoir, at the Silk Stream and at the River Brent. The Environment Agency clear and remove the material on a maintenance schedule but accumulations of material in the river have been evident during recent months.
Clean up projects	The community		On-going but with increased projects while the shoreline has been exposed due to lowered water levels.	Amber / Green: Much has been achieved, but much is beyond the safe reach of shore work.	As noted above, where safe to do so, litter clean-up projects have been organized over several years by the Welsh Harp Litter Pickers and by residents near to Neasden Recreation Ground. More recently that has involved also The Friends of the Welsh Harp; and The Welsh Harp Group at Neasden Recreation Ground and a range of other volunteers organized via social media.
Bird rafts, islands. There are approximately 20 rafts.	Welsh Harp Conservation Group (WHCG)	Volunteer projects are held annually to maintain, repair or renew rafts. .	On-going. Autumn / winter.	Amber	WHCG have a programme for maintenance of bird rafts. Works are outside of the bird breeding season of March to August inclusive. Recent problems with access to the rafts for maintenance due to alluviation.
Reedbeds: remove young trees	WHCG	Volunteer projects are held annually to maintain the reedbeds.	Remove young trees. On-going. Autumn / winter.	Amber	Led by the WHCG.
Reedbeds: remove young trees and marginal encroachment	Canal and River Trust	£85,000 PPL funding	Removing young trees and vegetation overhanging margins	Amber	Led by CRT

Reedbeds: increase	All	Natural growth is encouraged, so costs are low, but need to remove young trees.	Periodic reviews as part of Biodiversity Action Plans.	Amber	Habitat maintained. Estimates from GIS aerial images suggest that the area of reedbed has increased by 0.09 ha between 2008 and 2016. As at 2021 there are reedbeds on the main arm of the reservoir in the eastern marsh, on the shore of Neasden Recreation Ground near to the dam wall; and on the shore of the Welsh Harp Open Space.
Wet woodland	Canal and River Trust, Barnet, Brent	Largely self-managing.	On-going.	Amber	Largely self-managing. Rubbish noted in (during the water drawdown of Jan-Feb 2021) and in the vicinity of the woodland.
Woodland	Brent, Barnet, WHCG, Canal and River Trust	Largely self-managing. Unfunded: management of woodland to increase diversity, but potential for creative use of material.		Amber	Largely self-managing, but control of willow and other scrub required in marshland at edge of Reservoir.

Marshland: maintain	Brent Council, Welsh Harp Sailing Association, Canal and River Trust.	Increase the extent of the marshland around the shores of the Reservoir for nature conservation, landscape, and to increase wind for water sports (by Reducing excess growth of trees).	Reduce young tree growth on shores of Neasden Recreation Ground, Welsh Harp Open Space.	Amber	<p>During the past decade or so, Willow and scrub growth has exceeded the rate of management work on the shoreline. Estimates from GIS aerial images suggest that the area of marshland (including fen, marsh and swamp) has reduced by 0.3 ha between 2008 and 2016, due to succession to scrub woodland.</p> <p>Discussions from autumn 2018 onwards by Canal & River Trust, Welsh Harp Sailing Association, Brent Council; and from summer 2020 with Barnet Council and Welsh Harp Conservation Group.</p> <p>Welsh Harp Open Space: trialled marshland works by Welsh Harp Sailing Association, February 2019.</p> <p>January and February 2020: Continuation of work in marshland edge by Welsh Harp Sailing Association on north shore (Welsh Harp Open Space). Works continued from September 2020 to late 2020.</p> <p>2020: Northern shore. Due to Covid restrictions, work was postponed in January to February 2021. Work recommenced in late September 2021 but has temporarily paused.</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.	Amber	Marshland habitat at risk of scrub encroachment. See the comments for 'Marshland maintain', above.
Marshland: orchids	WHCG, Brent	Marshland work by Brent Council. Volunteer work by WHCG.	WHCG to provide information.	Status currently not known.	As for Marshland, above. Several of the species of marshland orchids present at the Reservoir would benefit from relatively open (un-shaded) situations or may have other specific requirements.
Marshland (northern arm of Reservoir)	Barnet, Barratt PLC		Restoration of shore by Phase 1 of West Hendon Redevelopment.	Green	Refer to Barnet.
South-bank boardwalk	Canal and River Trust	Canal & Rivers Trust budget: periodic work.	As required.	Red / Amber	The Canal and River Trust had plans to restore a boardwalk, though now awaiting the outcome of the Vision exercise.

<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.</p>	<p>Control of these species requires continuing attention: timely short-term control; control at the time of other works; and as part of longer term management.</p>	<p>Red</p>	<p>On-going by Brent Council and Barnet Council. The Brent River Catchment Partnership are investigating how to improve control along the whole catchment. Operational knowledge is also shared via the River Brent Catchment Partnership. Thames 21 working with Brent Council and others, have been working on control of Knotweed and Giant Hogweed on the River Brent section downstream of the dam wall (spring / summer 2021).</p>
<p>Cool Oak Lane bridge. Cool Oak Lane bridge and Wood Lane traffic.</p>	<p>Barnet Highways (leading) in consultation with Brent Highways.</p>	<p>Barnet Council and others.</p>	<p>New pedestrian bridge in place.</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Pedestrian footbridge alongside historic, vehicular footbridge.</p>
<p>River Brent Catchment Management Plan</p>	<p>All; led by Environment Agency / Thames 21.</p>		<p>2011 - ongoing</p>	<p>Amber – in progress, with large challenges to improve the River catchment.</p>	<p>Action Plan published at: see website: https://www.thames21.org.uk/catchment-partnerships/brent/</p>