



**Welsh Harp Joint Consultative
Committee**
24 July 2013

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

Wards Affected: ALL

Welsh Harp Management Plan

1.0 SUMMARY

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

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the Report.

3.0 DETAILS

- 3.1 A copy of the Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan is available on the Brent Council website at <http://www.brent.gov.uk/media/3207383/Brent-Reservoir-Management-Plan.pdf>
- 3.2 The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan includes an Action Plan for the current year; and for this report, this is detached from the Management Plan and updated as Appendix 1. The 'Progress' column summarises current progress.
- 3.3 The construction of a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Neasden Recreation Ground has been completed and is available for use by the local community. The contractor will return to carry out landscaping improvements including re-seeding of grass areas disturbed by the construction works. A hedgerow of *Rosa rugosa* will be planted in the autumn to compliment the existing plantings. Planning details are at: <https://forms.brent.gov.uk/servlet/ep.ext?extId=101150&reference=109324&st=PL>
- 3.4 Brent Council Sports and Parks Service organises weekly leader-led Healthy Walks. The

meeting point is at the Welsh Harp Open Space car park, Birchen Grove, every Thursday (except on Bank / Public Holidays) from 10am-11am. The walks are 'low to moderate' in pace. For details contact Brent Council Sports Service, tel: 020 8937 3707, www.Brent.gov.uk/sports

- 3.5 Capital Ring: The Capital Ring is a round-London recreational walking route of about 70 miles and a section passes through the Welsh Harp. The walk can be walked in sections and stocks of the leaflets are available from Barnet, and Brent Councils. Information is also available at <http://www.walklondon.org.uk/route.asp>
- 3.6 Green Flag application. The Welsh Harp Open Space was inspected in June 2013 for the re-application for the award of a Green Flag. The results are expected to be announced on or after 26 July.
- 3.7 The Council continues to work with partners of the Catchment Partnership to improve the management of the river.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None specific, but some of the priorities identified in the Management Plan will require additional resources and decisions by, as appropriate, Brent Council, Barnet Council or the Canal & River Trust, if they are to be implemented in the future.
- 4.2 For Brent Council Sports and Parks Service, the Welsh Harp Management Plan is implemented and improvements programmed via the Council's Corporate Strategy and service strategies. Thus implementation is dependent upon revenue budgets for grounds maintenance and for parks management and capital budgets for specific project work. The Sports and Parks Service pursues other sources of finance and opportunities for partnership working that may become available.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, land owners or occupiers are required to give notice to and consult with Natural England where they wish to carry out, or cause or permit to be carried out any operation in an area of land that is of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features (this requirement applies to operations within a SSSI, and to operations outside the SSSI that may affect the features of interest); and Natural England will issue consent, issue consent with conditions or refuse consent. Failing to follow this process is a criminal offence which may result in a fine and a restoration order. CROW (and section 28G of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) places a duty on all public bodies to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of the authority's functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of the site.
- 5.2 It is good practice for land owners or occupiers to produce Management Plans for the SSSI, which when approved by Natural England, enable the carrying out of the works specified in the Management Plan. This can reduce the administrative work inherent in obtaining consent for individual items of management work.

5.3 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 requires that all public authorities in England and Wales have a general duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions.

6.0 DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

7.0 STAFFING / ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS (IF APPROPRIATE)

7.1 None specific.

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

CONTACT OFFICERS

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