



**Welsh Harp Joint Consultative
Committee**
24 March 2010

**Report from the Director of
Environment and Culture**

For Information

Wards Affected:
ALL

Welsh Harp Management Plan

Forward Plan Ref:

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 local land-holding organisations: Brent Council, British Waterways, and the London Borough of Barnet.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the Report.
- 2.2 Members are asked to approve the revised Management Plan.

3.0 Detail

Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan

- 3.1 As part of the annual review of the Management Plan, officers of the three main land-owning / managing organisations met to review the Management Plan. To view the draft of the revised Management Plan go to the following link on the Brent Council website:
http://www.bmgresearch.co.uk/brent/KMS/dmart.aspx?NoIP=1&strTab=PublicDMart&filter_Status=1
or on the homepage of the Brent Council website go to 'Find a Service' then the letter 'C' and then to 'Consultation Tracker'. The Welsh Harp Management Plan is located under 'Current Consultations'.

To view the current Management Plan (with zones map), approved by the WHJCC on 10 November 2008, go to www.Brent.gov.uk/parks

- 3.2 An Action Plan of objectives, actions and targets of priorities from the draft Management Plan will be presented to the Committee, in a separate report from Barnet Council. This includes input from discussions that focused on the water-sports priorities and those of habitat improvements. Though the Management Plan, and the Action Plan have an emphasis on land management, both seek to highlight solutions for both recreation and the environment.

Management works

- 3.3 Management works: Coppicing to control the growth of young willows in the marshland at the edge of the Welsh Harp Open Space was undertaken during February 2010.
- 3.4 Weed issues: Organisations affected by the growth of weed in the water, have met to plan management of the issue. The most feasible solution appears to be weed cutting in the water, starting during early stages of the seasonal growth. If early control is delayed or weed growth becomes prolific, both cutting and harvesting may be required which would also involve landing the cut material at selected locations on the edge of the reservoir.
- 3.5 There is recognition that the work during 2010 will require a high level of resources, particularly by the Welsh Harp Sailing Association. Discussions emphasised concern about the on-going need for resources if management of weed needs to be repeated annually in the medium-term.
- 3.6 For the long-term there is recognition that the underlying causes of the weed growth need to be controlled. Whilst the reasons are not fully understood it is possible, given the known ecology of this type of vegetation growth, that the cause is eutrophication (nutrient enrichment). Reducing the nutrient pollution in the water entering the Reservoir could help in this respect. The related problem of alluvial deposition has reduced the depth and the area of water available for water-sports. Removal of effective quantities of alluvium would be a major and expensive operation but which may be required in the long-term.

British Waterways

- 3.7 Clean-up on the southern side of the Reservoir: British Waterways are continuing to lead on this three-year programme. A Community Clean-up is being organised by British Waterways and Thames21 on 13 March 2010.

Environment Agency

- 3.8 The Environment Agency have provided advice on the issue of the management of the weed in the reservoir.

Heritage Lottery Award

- 3.9 Maintenance of the Heritage Lottery Fund award project continues.

Biodiversity Action Plan

- 3.10 Refer to the Management Plan and the draft Action Plan including focus on the priority habitats that are common to more than one of the 'zones' of the Management Plan. Information will also be presented on BARS (Biodiversity Action Reporting System) which is the online system for national reporting of Biodiversity Action Plans. For information that is currently on BARS (listed as appropriate under Barnet or Brent) see <http://www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk/>

Events / Other

- 3.11 Brent Council Sports Service and Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre: The Healthy Walks Programme continues to March 2011. Walks meet 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](http://www.Brent.gov.uk/sports)
- 3.12 Capital Ring: Stocks of the leaflets are available from the Parks Service.
- 3.13 Kingsbury Open Day: Spring Bank Holiday Monday 31 May 2010, 10.30am to 4.pm. The main organisation is currently by St. Andrew's Church. They will also be organising a concert in the Church at 5pm.
- 3.14 "175 Years of Brent Reservoir": Barnet Council's exhibition will be displayed at the London Canal Museum, 12/13 New Wharf Road, London N1 9RT (near to King's Cross and Camley Street), tel: 020 7713 0836 from 14 April to 5 September 2010. Later in the year the exhibition will be shown at the Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre and at the Brent Museum.

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 British Waterways, if they are to be implemented in the future. For Brent Council Parks Service, the Management Plan is implemented and improvements programmed via the Brent Parks Service Parks Strategy, and Service Plan; both of which derive from the Council's Corporate Strategy. Thus implementation is partially dependent upon revenue and capital

budgets for grounds maintenance and for parks management. The Parks Service pursues other sources of finance and opportunities for partnership working that may become available.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), land owners or occupiers are required to give notice to and consult with Natural England for 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. 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 from 1 October 2006 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

- 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 including:

Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan.

Equality Impact Assessment Completion Form: Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee: Welsh Harp Reservoir Management Plan: 20 January 2005. Form dated 06b.01.2005.

Contact Officers

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Mr Leslie Williams, Environmental Policy Officer, Brent Parks Service, 660 Harrow Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA0 2HB. Tel.: 020 8937 5628. E-mail: Leslie.Williams@Brent.gov.uk

Richard Saunders
Director of Environment and
Culture

Name
Title
Unit