



## Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

9 November 2011

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

For Information

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 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.

### 3.0 Detail

#### Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan

- 3.1 The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan is available on the internet at the Brent Council website [www.Brent.gov.uk/parks](http://www.Brent.gov.uk/parks)
- 3.2 Updated information has been incorporated into a working draft of the Management Plan but further work is required to update the work recommendations for each zone.
- 3.3 A digital map of the management zones has been is in preparation; and a draft is attached to the Agenda. Some of the detail of the sub-zones has been omitted.

- 3.4 Water pollution. The issue of misconnections was raised at the last meeting of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee. While responsibility for some sections of private sewers was transferred to the water companies from 1 October 2011 (see water / sewerage company websites for information), most misconnections are expected to remain on the private land upstream of the water company's direct responsibility.
- 3.5 Blue-green algae: The Environment Agency reported evidence of blue-green algae downstream of the Welsh Harp on 8 August 2011; and this followed reports from the Reservoir itself on 1 June 2011. The Environment Agency will be reporting separately on the Agenda for other issues.

### **Management works**

- 3.6 Water weed issues: The Welsh Harp Sailing Association have been leading on the problem of excessive water weed on the Reservoir.
- 3.7 Japanese Knotweed: Comment was made at the previous meeting of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee on differences in the techniques for the control of Japanese Knotweed, as applied by Barnet and Brent Councils. While there will be differences due to the practicalities of individual projects; in relation to the application technique, the most recent advice from British Waterways and from the regulatory agencies (Natural England), and the Environment Agency is that those agencies would not approve the foliar (spray) application of herbicide within the SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). Stem injection is the preferred method. Stem injection has been used during recent years by Barnet Council to treat Japanese Knotweed at the Reservoir. Brent Council, the Environment Agency and the Welsh Harp Conservation Group have recently arranged for a contractor to undertake control of Japanese Knotweed within and near to the SSSI at Neasden Recreation Ground using stem injection. Follow up-work is due in 2012.
- 3.8 Information on the habitats of the Brent Reservoir is available on the Brent Biodiversity Action Plan on the Biodiversity Action Reporting System) website which is the online system for national reporting of Biodiversity Action Plans: see <http://ukbars.defra.gov.uk/>
- Information for Barnet can also be accessed on the same site.
- 3.9 Maintenance of the Heritage Lottery Fund award project continues.

### **Events / Other**

- 3.10 Brent Council Sports Service and Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre: The Healthy Walks Programme continues to March 2012. 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
- 3.11 Capital Ring: Stocks of the leaflets are available from Barnet, and Brent Councils.

#### **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 Sports and Parks Service, the Welsh Harp Management Plan is implemented and improvements programmed via the Council's Corporate Strategy, service strategies and operational plans. Thus implementation is partially dependent upon revenue and capital budgets for grounds maintenance and for parks management. The Sports and Parks Service pursues other sources of finance and opportunities for partnership working that may become available.
- 4.2 Financial implications of restructuring proposals are detailed in other Council reports.

#### **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. 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.

6.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment was prepared in relation to the proposals for the restructuring of the Warden Service.

## **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 Leslie Williams, Strategy and Service Development Officer, Sports and Parks Service, Environment and Neighbourhood Services, Brent Council, Brent House, 349-357 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 6BZ  
Tel: 020 8937 5628, Reception: 020 8937 5619, Fax: 020 8937 5715  
E-mail: [Leslie.Williams@Brent.gov.uk](mailto:Leslie.Williams@Brent.gov.uk), Internet: [www.Brent.gov.uk/parks](http://www.Brent.gov.uk/parks)

**Sue Harper:**  
**Director of Environment and**  
**Neighbourhood Services**