

	<p>Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee</p> <p>Tuesday, 31 October 2006</p> <p>Report from the Director of Environment and Culture</p>
For Information	Wards Affected: ALL
<p>Report Title: Welsh Harp Management Plan</p>	

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report presents progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan and related issues. The Management Plan is a joint Management Plan between the three main land-holding and land-managing organisations in the vicinity: 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 Management Plan

- 3.1 The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan is administered by officers of the land owning and land managing organisations. An annual review is undertaken in approximately July each year, and then reported to Committee for the Committee's recommendations. Since 2001, officers have included in the Management Plan process the additional responsibilities of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to produce Management Plans for SSSIs.
- 3.2 The Management Plan was signed by English Nature on 15 May 2003. Subsequent amendments have been reported to this Committee. English Nature have indicated that for minor changes to the Management Plan, there is no need to seek their formal consent.
- 3.3 The most recent re-drafting of the Management Plan was completed earlier in 2006; and that version will serve until the next review in 2007. The current version of the Management Plan is available on the internet at www.Brent.gov.uk/parks (from there go to the 'Brent Biodiversity Action Plan homepage and then navigate via the Brent Reservoir Action Plan). A map of the zones is also provided on the internet; and a copy of the map is also attached to this report.
- 3.4 Dam wall works – British Waterways have substantially completed their works to the dam wall. However, the reinstatement work at Neasden Recreation Ground, which was used by British Waterways as a work site, has taken longer than anticipated. Brent Council Parks Service is continuing to discuss the reinstatement needs with British Waterways.

Cross-boundary working and enforcement

- 3.5 Cross-boundary working and enforcement: A further rave event took place on the night of Saturday 29 to Sunday 30 July 2006, apparently by a different organiser than of the previous raves at the site. The Council received evidence that another rave was being organised for the following weekend of 5-6 August 2006. Following further investigations, the organisers of both sets of sets of raves were identified. With the co-operation between the Parks and Environmental Services of both Brent and Barnet, Environmental Health officers obtained an Injunction Order from Willesden County Court. The Injunction was taken out against both organisers, to cover the prospective event on 5-6 August 2006, and any future events at the Welsh Harp or on land in the ownership of the two Councils. Officers from Brent Council Parks Service also staffed the entrances to the site on the night of 5-6 August 2006.
- 3.6 A meeting between officers representing Barnet and Brent Parks was held on 3 October 2006 to discuss future joint action and communications. A further meeting with Environmental Health and Park officers has been arranged for 23 November 2006.
- 3.7 Vehicle access – Checks are undertaken on the perimeters of the sites as necessary. During the weekend of 16-18 September 2006, an attempt was made to cut through the steel post of a gate using an angle-grinder. The damage was to two-thirds of the way through the post. This was welded and repaired on the following Monday.
- 3.8 Other issues – The litter bin near to the ‘Tadpole Pond’ has been replaced. This is the fourth time recently that this bin has had to be re-inserted or replaced. Various campers in tents were removed from the open spaces and on British Waterways land, on both sides of the Reservoir during the summer. Wardens of Brent Council Parks Service have also attended a number of barbecue incidents.

Heritage Lottery Award

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

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 None specific, but some of the priorities identified in the Management Plan will require additional resources 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 Operational Plan. 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. The Welsh Harp Project Group will discuss the financial implications of projects within the remit of that group.

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 / managers are required to consult with English Nature for any operation in the list of ‘Potentially damaging operations’; and English Nature will issue a consent for the works unless the operation is likely to have a significant impact on any of the notified features of interest on the site.

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 of the site. CROW also encourages land owners to produce Management Plans for the SSSI, which when approved by English Nature, 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.

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 current environmental works in the Reservoir area, and highlights works that are a future priority.

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

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