

MEETING

WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

DATE AND TIME

WEDNESDAY 16TH JULY, 2014

AT 7.00 PM

VENUE

HENDON TOWN HALL, THE BURROUGHS, NW4 4BG

TO: MEMBERS OF WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (Quorum 3)

***Councillors**

Chairman: To be Appointed
Vice Chairman: To be Appointed

London Borough of Barnet Councillors

John Hart	Adam Langleben	Dr Devra Kay
Sury Khatri	Agnes Slocombe	

London Borough of Brent Councillors

Parvez Ahmed	George Crane	Harbi Farah
Roxanne Mashari		

Organisations

West Hendon Allotment Society	Training Ship Broadsword
Brent Sports Council	Welsh Harp Conservation Group
British Waterways	Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Environment Agency	Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre
Environment Agency	Welsh Harp Sailing Association
Hendon Rifle Club	West Hendon Community Forum
Local Agenda 21	Woolmead Residents' Association
London Wildlife Trust	British Waterways
Natural England	Training Ship Broadsword
Princes Park Youth Football Club	West Hendon Residents' Association
	/Friends of York Park

You are requested to attend the above meeting for which an agenda is attached.

Andrew Nathan – Head of Governance

Governance Services contact: Paul Frost 020 8359 2205 paul.frost@barnet.gov.uk

Media Relations contact: Sue Cocker 020 8359 7039

The London Borough of Barnet on 15 July will be reviewing appointments to the Committee, and therefore the above Barnet Members of the Committee may be subject to change.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
1.	Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman	
2.	Minutes	
3.	Absence of Members	
4.	Declarations of Members' Personal and Prejudicial Interests	
5.	London Borough of Brent - Reservoir Management Plan	1 - 10
6.	Any Other Business	
7.	Any Other Items the Chairman Decides are Urgent	

FACILITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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You should proceed calmly; do not run and do not use the lifts.

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Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

16 July 2014

AGENDA ITEM 5

Report from the Strategic Director Environment and Neighbourhoods

For Action

Wards Affected: ALL

Report Title: Welsh Harp Management Plan

Forward Plan Ref: Not applicable.

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan since the last meeting of the Committee and during the 2014/15 year to date. 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; which for this report is detached from the Management Plan and updated as Appendix 1. The 'Progress' column summarises current progress.
- 3.3 Brent Council's Executive have awarded Brent's public realm (street maintenance) contract to Veolia which became operational from 1 April 2014. This will be joined from 1 September 2014, by the parks grounds maintenance works that are currently undertaken in-house by the Sports and Parks Service. All the public realm and parks grounds maintenance works will be carried out by Veolia from 1 September 2014. At the Welsh Harp this will apply to the Welsh Harp Open Space including the car park, to Neasden Recreation Ground, and to Silver Jubilee Park to the north.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan is a long-term document and not all works are feasible in the short-term. Works listed in the management plan include the programmed operational works and longer-term works to maintain, restore and enhance the Welsh Harp area. Works are undertaken only where the budgets or resources are available. Programmed operational works are undertaken only within the existing budgets.
- 4.2 A significant amount of work is undertaken, or in kind, by the voluntary sector, and by the volunteers of the sailing clubs, conservation groups and other community organisations. In addition, the Council and partners, endeavour where feasible, to seek additional funding from grants and other sources.

5 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, and also public bodies, 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 site of special scientific interest ('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.
- 5.4 The owner of land included in a SSSI has a legal duty to inform Natural England within 28 days of any changes in ownership or occupation of the site, including leases, easements and rights.

6 DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

7 STAFFING / ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS (IF APPROPRIATE)

- 7.0 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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Sue Harper
Strategic Director Environment and Neighbourhoods

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APPENDIX 1. WELSH HARP / BRENT RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT PLAN: ACTION PLAN FOR 2014-2015

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. This Action Plan tracks progress of current year priorities and projects.

Action	Lead	Budget	Approximate timetable	Progress: 2014-15 year to 4 July 2014
Dam wall and reservoir: statutory responsibility to maintain dam wall, associated structures and the dam	Canal & River Trust (C&RT)	C&RT	Maintain. On-Going	Dam wall maintained as required to operational and statutory standards.
Maintain open water for water sports	Welsh Harp Sailing Association (WHSA)	Undertaken by volunteers of the (WHSA)	On-Going	WHSA have commenced clearing of weed, summer 2014.
Sailing and sports development	WHSA: Welsh Harp Sailing Association and constituent clubs.	Undertaken by volunteers of WHSA.	On-Going	A five-year Water Sports Development Plan was prepared in 2013 with Welsh Harp users.
Clean up projects: including some control of invasive plants.	Thames 21 Environment Agency	Provided by Thames 21. Work on site by volunteers.	Projects: A further clean-up project was held in early August 2013 on the shores of Neasden Recreation Ground (and at the River Brent at Tokyngton).	Thames 21 have organized a community clean-up event downstream at St David's Close on 28 June 2014.
River trash traps: at inflows of Dollis Brook, and Silk Stream	Environment Agency	Budget provided by the Environment Agency	Maintain, On-going. Rubbish at the trash screen is cleared several times a year. Material disposed off-site.	Maintain, On-going. Rubbish at the trash screen is cleared several times a year. Material disposed off-site.

Sailing Infrastructure: club houses, boats, and service areas.	Sailing Clubs	Maintained by the C&RT; and by the sailing clubs.	On-going	Refer to Sailing Clubs for an update. A five-year Water Sports Development Plan was prepared in 2013 with Welsh Harp users.
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.	WHCG have a works programme in 2014-15 for maintenance of bird rafts. Movement of some silt banks in winter 2013/14, possibly due to high water flows, has affected access for works.
Reedbeds: remove young trees	WHCG	Volunteer projects are held annually to maintain the reedbeds.	Remove young trees. On-going. Autumn / winter.	Led by the WHCG. Autumn / winter works are programmed by the WHCG.
Reedbeds: increase	All	Natural growth is encouraged, so costs are low, but refer to the need to remove young trees.	Periodic reviews as part of Biodiversity Action Plans.	Some evidence e.g. from aerial images, of long-term increase in area but rates of increase have not been estimated.
Marshland: maintain extent	Brent Council, Welsh Harp Sailing Association, Canal and River Trust.	Estimated at £700 per year.	Alternate years: reduce young tree growth on shores of Neasden Recreation Ground, Welsh Harp Open Space.	Works appear to be not keeping up with growth of trees on and near shoreline. Works by Brent Council Parks on both shores in February 2014 but not in winter 2013/14. However, willow managed by Sailing Clubs on shores of Welsh Harp Open Space in early 2014 in consultation with Natural England.
Marshland	Barnet, Barratt PLC		Plans submitted for restoration of shore by Phase 1 of West Hendon redevelopment.	Refer to Barnet.

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 (where trees are reduced)	Refer to draft of Catchment Management Plan. Marshland habitat has increased since early 1990s at Welsh Harp Open Space and Neasden Recreation Ground where conservation work has been undertaken. However, some trees have regrown in more recent years.
Marshland: orchids	WHCG, Brent	Marshland work by Brent Council. Volunteer work by WHCG.	WHCG to provide information.	Orchids usually benefit from well planned marshland conservation. Marshland works to take into account the location, and potential for enhancing populations of orchids.
South-bank boardwalk	C&RT	Canal & Rivers Trust budget: periodic work possibly averages £500 / year.	As required.	Boardwalk had more damage in early 2014. Condition to be assessed by C&RT in March 2014.
Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed	C&RT, Barnet Council, Brent Council	No budget: works undertaken as part of other works; or with grant funding. Barnet: three-year programme. Brent: grant funding used in 2011-13, c. £1,500	Complete the control within the SSSI at Neasden Recreation Ground. Barnet:	Control at SSSI at Neasden R G 2011 and 2012. Follow-up treatment undertaken 2013.
Wet woodland	C&RT, Barnet, Brent	Largely self-managing.	On-going.	Largely self-managing.

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.	Cutting of mown paths undertaken. Loss of acid grassland is a concern: scrub has encroached in each area of acid grassland. October 2013: WHCG undertook annual clearance of oak scrub in higher ground of West Hendon Playing Fields. 2013/14: Barnet have cut bramble from one field.
Woodland	Brent, Barnet, WHCG, C&RT	Largely self-managing. Unfunded: management of woodland to increase diversity, but potential for creative use of material.	Planting of disease-resistant Elms, winters 2011/12 and 2012/13.	Some areas could benefit from more active management particularly where scrub is encroaching on acid grassland or on marshland.
Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre	Brent	Brent Council and external funding.	On-going. 23.10.2013: WHEEC reports that bookings are at a high level	Centre is maintained. Bookings maintained. Update at WHJCC meeting
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. Biodiversity improvements at Dors Close, 2013.	West Hendon Allotments: self-managed. Brent: Allotments Strategy: Birchen Grove Allotments and Dors Close Allotments included in service improvement. Biodiversity improvements at Dors Close.
Open spaces, pitches, paths, Capital Ring, signage, interpretative signage, litter and dog bins,	Barnet, Brent	Existing maintenance resources. Barnet; and Brent grounds maintenance budgets.	On-going.	Maintained; and well-used.
Feasibility of traffic analysis / signage for Wood Lane	Barnet Highways (leading) in consultation with Brent Highways.	.	New: 18.07.2012	Barnet are leading.

Monitoring: wildlife, and indicators	WHCG; and public authorities.	Mainly by volunteers of WHCG.	On-going	Programme of activities led by Welsh Harp Conservation Group for 2014. Includes birds (weekly); butterflies (24 weekly transects in 2013); and fungi. Walks: and one planned by Natural Magic (2014/2015).
Signage	Brent / Barnet.			Inspected: 2012. Most of Brent's signage up to date: but Brent are investigating the interpretative signage. Barnet will review their signage.
Parks infrastructure	Brent / Barnet			Brent: inspected by Sports and Parks Service. Bird hides: WHCG cleared vegetation to improve views: Aug./Sept/ 2013. Main hide was re-roofed in November 2013.
River Brent Catchment Management Plan	All; led by Environment Agency		2011 -	The Action Plan is available for public use. Progress on several issues.

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