



Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

14 March 2013

Report from the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services

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 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 Detail

Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan

- 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/pks.nsf/pages/LBB-67>

Management works

- 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 here as Appendix 1. The 'Progress' column summarises current progress.

- 3.3 Work has been undertaken to reduce, by coppicing, the growth of willow trees on the shores of the main arm of the Reservoir, at the Welsh Harp Open Space and at Neasden Recreation Ground. This winter, work has been undertaken on both sides of the Reservoir to catch up with the programme of work. This work serves several purposes: conserving the marshland habitat and flora; benefits sailing and water sports by reducing the wind shadow on the reservoir; and maintains the open views across the reservoir and open spaces.

3.4 Planning Application for Multi-Use Games Area

The planning application for the construction of the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) was approved on 19 November 2012. Officers from Sports and Parks Service have appointed a consultant to finalise designs and specification of the MUGA. Invitations to quote were sent to contractors affiliated to the Sport And Play Construction Association (SAPCA – the industry body for the construction of sports facilities). ETC Sports Surfaces Ltd were the successful contractor. Works are expected to start on 12th March 2013 and take six weeks.

Sports and Parks Service will also plant approximately six metres of hedgerow (Hawthorn and *Rosa rugosa*) along the existing hedgerow near the site of the MUGA in the autumn. This is to compensate for the loss of some of the hedgerow (approximately two metres) removed to allow for a footpath to run from the MUGA to the existing recreation ground footpath alongside the A406 road.

Planning details are at:

<https://forms.brent.gov.uk/servlet/ep.ext?extId=101150&reference=109324&st=PL>

Events / Other

- 3.5 Brent Council Sports and Parks Service organises weekly leader-led Healthy Walks. Those interested in taking part 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
- 3.6 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>

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

- 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:

Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan.

Contact Officers

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