



## Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2007

### Report from the Director of Environment and Culture

For Information

Wards Affected:  
ALL

### Report Title: Welsh Harp Management Plan

Forward Plan Ref:

#### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report presents progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan and related issues. 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 agree the reviewed Management Plan.

#### 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. Annual reviews, undertaken near to July each year, are reported to Committee for their recommendations. Since 2001 this has included the additional responsibilities of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 in relation to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

- 3.2 The Management Plan was signed by English Nature (now Natural England) on 15 May 2003. Subsequent amendments have been reported to this Committee. Natural England have indicated that there is no need to seek their consent for minor changes to the Management Plan. The current version of the Management Plan is available on the internet at [www.Brent.gov.uk/parks](http://www.Brent.gov.uk/parks) . A map of the zones is also provided on the internet; and is attached to this report.
- 3.3 Following the last review in early 2006 officers have reviewed the Management Plan and have suggested minor changes. The draft revision of the Management Plan should be available on the Brent Council website about one week before the WHJCC meeting.
- 3.3.1 In addition, comments were received concerning the management of zone 2 north of Cool Oak Lane bridge; and of tree management at the Reservoir. These issues will be subject to discussions by officers and by statutory organisations before details are presented to Committee.

#### **Management works**

- 3.4.1 Minor improvements were made to the Welsh Harp Open Space as part of the Green Flag process. These included improved access to the woodland, and improved seating and litter bins.
- 3.4.2 Brent Council have undertaken a review of their statutory Public Rights Of Way (PROW) at the Welsh Harp; and will provide way-marking for the PROW from Townsend Lane across Silver Jubilee Park towards the Welsh Hendon Playing Fields of Barnet.

#### **Dam wall works**

- 3.5 Reinstatement work including the removal of quantities of buried rubble was undertaken by contractors to British Waterways and the grassland area is now establishing to a standard suitable for amenity use.

#### **British Waterways**

- 3.6 An update report has been requested from British Waterways either as part of this report or separately within the main Committee agenda. British Waterways have also provided comments that have been included in the Management Plan review process.

#### **Environment Agency**

- 3.7 It is hoped that an update report will be available from the Environment Agency, either as part of this report or separately within the Agenda.

## **Green Flag Award application**

- 3.8 The judging for the Green Flag Award application by Brent Council Parks Service for the Welsh Harp Open Space took place in May to June 2007. The results are awaited. The Green Flag Award is a national scheme with the aim of improving the standards of green spaces and is maintained by annual external inspection. The Green Flag Award particularly considers whether the green space is welcoming, addresses health and safety, cleanliness and maintenance, sustainability, conservation, and whether there is community involvement in the management of the green space.

## **Biodiversity Action Plan**

- 3.9 Brent Council is currently reviewing the Borough Biodiversity Action Plan and a report will be considered by the Council's Executive. The implications of the new Biodiversity Duty will also be considered.

## **Heritage Lottery Award**

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

## **3.11 Kingsbury and Welsh Harp Reservoir Open Day**

The annual Kingsbury and Welsh Harp Reservoir Open Day was held on Spring Bank Holiday Monday 28 May 2007.

## **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 / 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.
- 5.2 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.
- 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 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**