

MEETING

WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

DATE AND TIME

TUESDAY 14TH MARCH, 2017

AT 7.00 PM

VENUE

HENDON TOWN HALL, THE BURROUGHS, NW4 4BG

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

Chairman: Councillor Sury Khatri

Vice Chairman: Councillor Amer Agha

Councillor John Hart
Councillor Devra Kay

Councillor Adam Langleben
Councillor Liz Dixon

Councillor George Crane
Councillor Roxanne Mashari

Organisation

Canal and River Trust
Environment Agency
Welsh Harp Sailing Association
Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Training Ship Broadsword
Princes Park Youth Football Club
Brent Sports Council
Hendon Rifle Club
West Hendon Residents Association
Friends of York Park

West Hendon Community Forum
Local Agenda 21
Woolmead Residents' Association
Phoenix Canoe Club
Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre
Natural England
West Hendon Allotment Society
London Wildlife Trust

In line with the Public Participation and Engagement Rules, requests to submit public questions or comments must be submitted by 10AM on the third working day before the date of the committee meeting. Therefore, the deadline for this meeting is Thursday 9th March at 10AM. Requests must be submitted to Abigail Lewis 020 8359 4369 abigail.lewis@barnet.gov.uk

You are requested to attend the above meeting for which an agenda is attached.
Andrew Charlwood – Head of Governance

Governance Service contact: Abigail Lewis 020 8359 4369 abigail.lewis@barnet.gov.uk
Media Relations contact: Sue Cocker 020 8359 7039

ASSURANCE GROUP

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
1.	Minutes	5 - 14
2.	Absence of Members	
3.	Disclosable Pecuniary interests and Non Pecuniary interests	
4.	Report of the Monitoring Officer (if any)	
5.	London Borough of Barnet - Welsh Harp Management Plan	15 - 24
6.	London Borough of Brent - Welsh Harp Management Plan	25 - 34
7.	BARRATTS - Update presentation on the West Hendon Regeneration	
8.	PHONEIX CANOE CLUB- Presentation of plans to re-generate the Phoenix Canoe Club	
9.	Any Other Business	
10.	Any Other Items that the Chairman Decides are Urgent	

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Decisions of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

29 November 2016

Members Present:-

AGENDA ITEM 1

Chairman: Councillor Sury Khatri
Vice-Chairman: Councillor Amer Agha

Councillor John Hart

Councillor Adam Langleben

Also in attendance

Tracey Sawyer-London Borough of Barnet
Leslie Williams-London Borough of Brent
Liz Hall-West Hendon Allotment Society
Roy Beddard-Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Neale Hider-Environment Agency
Derrick Chung- West Hendon Residents' Association/Friends of
York Park
Diane Murphy-London Wildlife Trust
Daniella Levene -Friends of Welsh Harp (Thames21)
John Shepherd-Welsh Harp Sailing Association
Julie Johnson-Local Agenda 21
Clive Cohen-London Wildlife Trust
Catherine Cullen-London Wildlife Trust
Phil Atkinson- Phoenix Canoe Club
Eric Holroyd-Barratt London
Geof Johnson- Woolmead Residents' Association

1. MINUTES OF 10 JULY 2016

Clive Cohen from the London Wildlife Trust requested that when Councillors are not able to attend they should send their substitute. Councillor Khatri responded that this will require change to the Constitution of both Barnet & Brent and agreed to take this forward with governance officers. (**Action:** Cllr Khatri)

Leslie Williams from the London Borough of Brent made a correction on p.2 of the minutes that there is no budget available to introduce a kingfisher bank. Mr Cohen mentioned that the minutes of the last meeting should include a reference to the new officer Catherine Cullen that joined the London Wildlife Trust. At the time of the meeting she had been post for 2-3 days and her role was around S106 funding related to the warden for the Welsh Harp and the impact on the SSSI by the development of the area.

Mr Cohen asked what would happen in the absence of budget being available. Mr Williams responded that kingfishers do not nest in high density so a kingfisher bank

would not have a great impact. Brent is part of the River Brent Catchment Partnership who are investigating a project to remove redundant timber toe-boarding from sections of the riverbank, upstream and downstream of the Welsh Harp. The more natural riverbanks may benefit several species of wildlife.

Mr Roy Beddard from Welsh Harp Conservation Group mentioned that there are probably two kingfisher nests. There is evidence that there is breeding taking place this year. They have seen birds passing in the breeding season carrying fish which is an indication that breeding is taking place.

A kingfisher bank would be very expensive to build, it's not very clear where it should be placed and it would disturb other habitants. Mr Beddard expressed his opinion that a kingfisher bank is not needed and that there are other high priority issues that need to be addressed.

Neale Hider from the Environment Agency said that there are some smaller versions of a kingfisher bank and they are installing some in another area. A sand Martin bank would have a greater impact on the site than a kingfisher bank. There are other sand Martin sites which are expanding because of good breeding success and a feasibility study could be done for a sand Martin's site to be installed on one of the islands in the Welsh Harp.

Ms Julie Johnson from Local Agenda 21 asked whether the committee can be advised of costs involved before any action is taken.

Mr Cohen added that a sand Martin bank would be adding another environment to the purpose of the Welsh Harp.

Mr Hider added that they are able to provide costings for a sand martin bank and look into the different options of a kingfisher bank and a sand martin bank and bring a report to the next Committee meeting. The report can also include funding options and possible locations.

Councillor Hart seconded Mr Hider's proposal.

The Committee unanimously agreed the recommendation and it was therefore **RESOLVED:**

That the Environment Agency would look into costs for a sand Martin bank, the different options for a kingfisher bank and sand Martin bank, funding options and possible locations and bring a report at the next Committee meeting.

Mr Beddard added that there is evidence that a properly constructed sand Martin bank could be efficient. He added that a sand Martin bank needs to be considered along with other issues in the priority list.

The 2015 report from the Welsh Harp Conservation Group was an action from the last minutes and it was circulated by the governance officer prior to the Committee meeting.

Mr Cohen mentioned that it would be helpful to clearly mark the actions that arise from each meeting in the minutes.

Mr Beddard mentioned tree felling has been taking place again and he is not aware of who is responsible for this. The incident took place over a week ago. Mr Cohen added that if tree felling is observed then people should dial 101 for them to investigate and they are present very quickly.

Regarding the action on page 3 of the minutes of the last meeting, the Chairman said he wrote to the Canal and River Trust but has not received a response yet.

Regarding the question on rat control in the last minutes, the Chairman referred to the information which was circulated by Mr Williams.

Ms Tracey Sawyer from the London Borough of Barnet also added that in Barnet there is an internal pest control. Daniella from Friends of Welsh Harp mentioned that there is a need to educate people not to feed the birds because this is what is causing this issue. Mr Geoffrey Johnson from Woolmead Residents' Association also added the issue is created when people throw bread in the bank.

Subject to the changes being taken into account, the Committee agreed that the minutes of the last Committee held on 19 July be approved as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Councillor Kay, Councillor Dixon, Councillor Mashari, Nathan Smith (Barratts) and Rosanna Chambers (London Wildlife Trust) had sent their apologies for the meeting.

3. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor	Nature of Interest	Details
Councillor Langleben	Pecuniary interest	Trustee of the West Hendon Estate Community Trust Fund

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET - WELSH HARP MANAGEMENT PLAN

Ms Sawyer introduced the report which related to the London Borough of Barnet Welsh Harp Management Plan.

Ms Sawyer informed the Committee that her team conducted regular patrols for rough sleepers and located 8 persons behind the allotments. This was done on a weekly basis and felt that her team were on top of the problem. Since then there haven't been any reports of any further encampments

There has been effective work in regards to the treatment of knotweed and hogweed. Some additional areas for the hogweed were identified and these are to be targeted. They will be also monitoring before the next stem injection.

The treatment is carried out around June/July and surveys take place around May. Mr Cohen added that it is important to apply the treatment before flowering. This was noted.

Ms Sawyer informed the Committee that if they identify knotweed and hogweed in other areas they should email parks@barnet.gov.uk

Ms Catherine Cullen from London Wildlife Trust requested a current map that shows all the areas that have been injected. The Committee unanimously agreed. **(Action: Ms Tracy Sawyer)**

Ms Sawyer also added that they have completed the contract procurement process for bigger litter bins and they were going to order them and would be installed in the near future. Councillor Hart asked whether these bins were for dual purpose, both for recycling and other waste. Tracey responded that these bins are only large bins. Ms Daniella Levene asked whether these bins were bird proofed and Ms Sawyer responded that these bins will have lids.

Ms Johnson from Local Agenda 21 asked whether there are any signs placed across the Welsh Harp that notify people that the water is deep because a lady from West Hendon drowned. Ms Sawyer responded that there were 'no swimming' signs on site but would investigate into placing larger signs in the water and which could be installed.

Ms Liz Hall from the West Hendon Allotment Society stated that the 'no fishing' signs were ineffective. Mr John Shepherd from the Welsh Harp Sailing Association added that there is a need to patrol the area to tackle illegal fishing. However signs by itself do not deter but need regular patrols of the area.

Mr Hider added that checks can be carried out to see if people have a licence and prosecute if necessary. Mr Shepherd added that even if people have licences, fishing is not allowed. Mr Hider said that the only thing they can do is engage with the enforcement team and he agreed to forward details and contacts. **(Action: Mr Hider).**

NB: POST MEETING

Subsequent to the meeting Mr Hider advised that:

"I have spoken to one of our enforcement officers regarding illegal fishing at the Welsh Harp.

Our officers are only allowed to check for valid rod licences to see if people have paid their licence fee. However, I'm informed that since last April it has become a criminal offence to fish a water without the land owners permission.

Firstly, we have to ensure that there are sufficient notices on site with the correct wording - 'no fishing – it is now a criminal offence to fish without the landowners consent'. We can help with wording if needs be. These signs would have to be in the water at strategic points (usually access points) to avoid being defaced or removed.

When patrolling officers need a reference point on site to ensure people have ignored or deliberately gone against instruction notices and not just missed them. That's why sufficient and appropriate signage has to be in place. With the winter and cold weather with us hopefully fishing on the Harp will be in decline, signs need to be in place for spring .

Once this is in place our enforcement officer/team is prepared to visit the site to check rod licences - and prosecute if they do not have such documents - but will need to be accompanied by a representative of the land owner (and possibly police to enforce the

illegal fishing act itself). If anglers present do have a rod licence he can only warn and advise individuals that they are not fishing legally.

To assist with a site visit it would be helpful for any reports of fishing to be collated and a record kept – days of the week, times and where on the Harp so that we can establish the most likely time to encounter anglers.”

“ We have established an initial working group to explore the possibilities and opportunities of installing a sand martin nesting bank at the Welsh Harp. It consists of myself, Catherine Cullen (Welsh Harp Ranger – London Wildlife Trust) and Roy Beddard (Welsh harp Conservation Group). We are planning to conduct a meeting/site visit on the 1st February. “

“I have received some feedback from our Fisheries enforcement officer who visited the welsh Harp on 11th January.

In reference to appropriate signage for enforcement purposes (see below) - he only found those (attached) in close proximity to, and either side of Cool Oak lane bridge west side. There was no mention of the site being a protected site –SSSI.

He did find evidence of fishing on the northern reservoir – silk stream, where bivvies (fishing tents) had been erected for overnight fishing. There is we believe an interest in catching the carp in this waterbody. Apparently on the angling grapevine there are rumoured to be a few but quite big carp here – in excess of 30lbs – so attractive to specimen hunters. These are likely to be serious fishermen - so would probably have rod licences. He also found evidence of fires and potential fishing from less ‘professional’ anglers along the north bank of the main body of the reservoir.

The signage , and fishing activity, appears to be from land within the Borough of Barnet. There are reference points (signage here) which the fishermen would have passed (and ignored) en route to their position on the northern reservoir.

Prosecuting fishermen for fishing without landowner consent (even if they possess rod licences) is down to the land owner and a civil action. Either Canal & River trust or LB of Barnet should enforce this. It is not for constabulary or EA to do.”

Mr Shepherd said that he has reported rough sleepers in the Neasden recreation side to Brent. Mr Williams acknowledged that there has been one report and which had been dealt with.

Recommendation: unanimously agreed the recommendation.

It was therefore **RESOLVED:**

That the Committee considered and noted the contents of this report and made comments on the contents of the report.

Mr Beddard added that there have been issues with damage done to the bird hyde behind Woolmead Avenue. The door was open and the locks were broken. He is not certain if the damage was caused by the rough sleepers; it could have been vandalism. He tried to contact SNTs but there was no response. This happened either on Saturday afternoon or Monday morning. Ms Sawyer agreed to raise the matter with the SNTs (**Action:** Ms Sawyer).

6. LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT-WELSH HARP MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr Williams introduced the report which related to the London Borough of Brent Welsh Harp Management Plan.

He outlined that Brent have undertaken an exercise to look at areas of habitats and there seems to be an increase in reed beds but a reduction in marshland.

Regarding rough sleepers there had been one report.

Mr Sawyer also added that the healthy walks programme continues at the reservoir.

Councillor Hart said that the redevelopment of Brent Cross and those attractive aspects of it will be returned to its natural shape.

Mr Shepherd asked whether Brent was planning to look at the erosion of the beach. The Chairman requested that this should be reported at the next Committee meeting and Leslie agreed to report this at the next meeting (**Action: Mr Williams**).

Councillor Langleben invited the resident Ms Jackeline Parsons to make a comment.

Ms Parsons addressed the Committee and said that she lives very near the small lake by the Welsh Harp and referred to an incident that happened a few months ago regarding a floating dead swan. Ms Parsons said the swan was floating for weeks and it was distressing. She also raised the issue of security as there is abuse on the Welsh Harp, it was not safe to walk on one's own and mentioned that the fence in the Silkstream by the park had been smashed again. There have been previous incidents with dead swans. She had contacted several agencies but no one helped.

She received a call from Sanctuary and they said that if she took the swan there, they could establish how it died.

Ms Parsons also mentioned that there are rough sleepers around the Staples Corner area. Residents can also hear gun shots during the night.

She also requested that protection needs to be provided to these animals because they are having a rough time. She also mentioned that there is illegal fishing, bonfires, swimming and barbecues taking place.

Mr Shepherd agreed with the points that Ms Parsons raised and he added that foxes kill swans and people fish them and consume them.

The Chairman responded to Ms Parsons said that the Committee has noted the points she raised and will investigate to see what can be done.

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Mr Shepherd requested for patrols in that area now that there is no breeding taking place.

Mr Hider mentioned that if there is a dead swan during the breeding season taking a boat through would cause a number of young bird casualties if someone intervenes. It was agreed that during the March-June period Mr Shepherd can contact Mr Beddard to see how to best approach such incidents.

Mr Cohen asked whether Mr Shepherd could help to remove some of the debris that exists. Mr Shepherd responded that they are already picking logs and they would be happy to do so if needed however, they are not allowed to go near the margins of the Harp.

Mr Beddard mentioned that there is excessive debris in the eastern marsh and he is not sure whether the boats could deal with that. This is a responsibility for contractors rather than volunteers. There is also natural debris in the Harp and this is not an easy task. They can work along the edge but not far in.

Mr Shepherd added that this is what the management plan should be addressing. He also suggested that an efficient method would be using a hovercraft.

The Chairman asked Brent Council what are the possibilities of getting professional help. Brent agreed to provide a report to the next meeting regarding Brent's policy for removing dead animals from the Reservoir. (**Action:** Mr Williams)

The Committee noted the Welsh Harp Management Plan from the London Borough of Brent.

7. AOB

(1) Mr Cohen asked Mr Beddard what are the measurements of the rafts in the new reserve in Hackney because they are looking into building some rafts.

He also asked whether there are any chestnut trees because there is a particular moth on the leaf of the chestnut which is causing a disease and is damaging the growth of conkers and strength of chestnut tree. He requested if the leaves could be cleared up and composted. The Chairman requested to include this in the next report to the Committee. (**Action:** Ms Sawyer)

(2) Mr Cohen added that it was agreed in a previous occasion that any Committee reports should be sent by post in advance of the meeting so that they can be considered internally.

(3) There is a rough sleeper issues, fishing issues and Mr Cohen requested that a leaflet be produced so that this can be given to rough sleepers in order to make them aware on what the position is and they would be punished.

The Allotment society added that not all issues on the Welsh Harp are caused by rough sleepers.

The Chairman requested Barnet officers to look at the issue of signage. Ms Sawyer responded that when people are caught in the Harp, their IDs are taken and they need to report to the immigration office to receive those documents back. During operations, all IDs and photographs are recorded. They also get CPN notices when they are caught.

(4) The Chairman welcomed Eric Holroyd from Barratt London. Mr Holroyd a copy of presentation slides and offered an update to the Committee on the West Hendon regeneration.

The majority of demolition has been undertaken. After demolition is finished Barratt will start building phase 3b in the new year. Phases 3b and 3c are due to complete in late 2018, this is a 18 months building programme.

Planning condition 40 requires monitoring of the potential construction-related noise on water birds associated with Welsh Harp and particularly Great Crested Grebe. Initial monitoring found no evidence on breeding or wintering waterfowl. The mitigation and monitoring strategy was agreed with LBB/Natural England in 2013 and included monitoring in 2 locations overlooking the northern arm of the Welsh Harp.

Although no significant demolition took place in 2014, and no planning condition requirement Barratts voluntarily continued monitoring in 2015-2016.

Mr Holroyd outlined the outcomes of the report and explained that the great crested grebe continued to breed successfully in the northern arm of the reservoir during the monitoring period (2015-16). There have been no behavioural responses by great crested grebe to noise stimuli recorded during the monitoring period. The evidence was minimal regarding significant disturbance to other waterfowl that could be attributed to construction-related noise. Noise data indicated that baseline noise levels are relatively high and as result of this, construction work beginning and ending does not significantly change the noise profile at the Welsh Harp. These findings provide no evidence that indicates that the integrity of the Welsh Harp has been affected as a result of development at West Hendon and this conclusion is consistent with the previous monitoring report (PBA 2015)

Planning condition 42 requires monitoring of the potential effects of recreational noise on water birds associated with Welsh Harp and particularly on the Great Crested Grebe.

The approach to monitoring was agreed with Natural England in September 2015.

The monitoring included visits during winter months (2015/16) and during the first breeding season (March-July 2016) prior to the first occupation of phase 3A in June 2016. Surveys were also completed every 2 weeks during the winter and the breeding season from six survey locations. The data collected established that recreational activity in the areas adjacent to the SSSI including walking, feeding birds and dog walking, with boating activity was limited to the southern part of the reservoir.

No recreational disturbance was noted to great crested grebe during the breeding season and there is no evidence that the integrity of the SSSI is currently being eroded by recreational disturbance. There was no evidence to suggest that recreational disturbance events significantly affect the breeding or wintering waterfowl communities

Species found to be subject to disturbance were common and ubiquitous waterfowl attracted into certain areas of the reservoir to benefit from artificial feeding. These congregations of birds, close to the publically accessible areas of the bank, are inevitably periodically disturbed by people and their dogs.

Surface water drainage system is designed to ensure the flows from the redevelopment site are controlled and do not exceed those pertaining to the original site for all storm events up to an including the 1 in 100yr event with a 20% allowance for climate change . This is achieved using a flow control devise to 289l/s which is below the calculated peak flow from the existing development of 303l/s. Excess rainfall in exceedance events will temporarily be stored within the attenuation tank and released at a steady rate no greater than the peak design rate of 289l/s. In addition to increasing the lag time between rainfall and discharge the system treats the rain water to improve the quality of the water entering the Welsh Harp.

Mr Holroyd added that they aim to create as minimal disturbance as possible with the creation of the bridge. Regarding the attenuation tank there no live data was available. They have installed one attenuation tank to date and would install five more. The Chairman asked Mr Holroyd to clarify where is the attenuation tank situated. Mr Holroyd indicated the location of the attenuation tank is shown in the master plan.

Ms Johnson asked how many trees were being demolished. Mr Holroyd responded that this information is not available but can be reported back at the next meeting. (**Action:** Barratts)

Mr Johnson also asked whether the bridge is being extended. Mr Holroyd responded that they are creating a DDA compliant bridge that is why it's being extended.

Mr Johnson also added that a lorry went past the bridge a few weeks ago. Mr Holroyd responded that this has been reported to the local authority and that it is the responsibility of the local authority.

Mr Beddard asked when the damage in the old bridge going to be repaired. Mr Holroyd added that they reported that incident to the local authority and there was some work done but not sure whether that is relevant to the incident that Mr Beddard was referring to. The Chairman requested Mr Johnson to provide a copy of the photo of the damage on the bridge. Mr Holroyd agreed to send correspondence regarding the bridge incident and the Chairman agreed to take this forward. (**Action:** Cllr Khatri)

Mr Holroyd also added that for the bridge and the second bridge, the applications will be submitted and there will be a statutory consultation. If they can they will try and avoid breeding season.

Mr Hider asked how far out from the bridge is the pedestrian bridge and Mr Holroyd clarified that they are going to expand the bridge 45 metres. Mr Hider asked why there is a cycling requirement for the bridge and Mr Holroyd responded that this is a S106 requirement. They had a pre-application with the Environment Agency. Councillor Agha, added that this discussion has already taken place when the planning permission was considered.

Mr Cohen responded that he didn't think that the planning application has been agreed. Mr Cohen also asked in order to avoid disturbance that the bridge should be built outside of the breeding season.

Councillor Langleben asked whether the developer is providing any education on the SSSI on the Welsh Harp and what measures are in place for bin collections since the Welsh Harp will be used more by residents.

Mr Holroyd said that Barratts is launching the community space on their website where people can raise their views and concerns. Ms Cullen said that they should get more people involved in the area.

Mr Hider asked when will they send a local welcome pack to new residents and whether there is a way to add information about the welsh harp.

Mr Holroyd responded that this is very important and that there is a possibility to add this information for existing and new residents. They would also research on what groups live around the area.

8. **ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT
NONE.**

The Chairman reminded the Committee that the next meeting is on 14 March 2017

The meeting finished at 21:20

	<p>Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee</p> <p>14 March 2017</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Title</p>	<p>Welsh Harp Management Plan</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Report of</p>	<p>Street Scene Director</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards</p>	<p>West Hendon</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Urgent</p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Key</p>	<p>None</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Enclosures</p>	<p>None</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Officer Contact Details</p>	<p>Matthew Gunyon, matthew.gunyon@barnet.gov.uk 0208 359 7403</p>

Summary
<p>To update the committee regarding the on-going site management issues and report the position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR).</p>

Recommendations
<p>That the committee consider and note the contents of this report and to invite the committee to make comments on the contents of the report.</p>

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

1.1 The Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee comprises of British Waterways, Brent Council, Welsh Harp Conservation Group, Welsh Harp Sailing Association and Barnet Council. The committee is a consultative committee only and meets on a quarterly basis.

1.2 The committee is invited to note and make comments on the on-going site management issues during this quarter as follows:

1.3 Illegal encampments

Details of all the encampments to date have been stated in the table below.

Name of Park	Month	Number of individuals
Welsh Harp	October 2015	2
Welsh Harp	November 2015	0
Welsh Harp	December 2015	0
Welsh Harp	January 2016	0
Welsh Harp	February 2016	0
Welsh Harp	March 2016	0
Welsh Harp	April 2016	0
Welsh Harp	May 2016	13
Welsh Harp	June 2016	0
Welsh Harp	July 2016	0
Welsh Harp	August 2016	0
Welsh Harp	September 2016	0
Welsh Harp	October 2016	8
Welsh Harp	November 2016	0
Welsh Harp	December 2016	0
Welsh Harp	January 2017	0
Total to date		23

The Council continues to work closely with the local Safer Neighbourhood Team to move on illegal encampments which also includes wider authorities such as the UK Border Agency. The area is monitored regularly with swift action taken to remove the encampments. No further encampments have been found.

Possible options to prevent the number of encampments that are both costly to the Council and damaging to the local environment have been discussed at previous committees. It was decided that no further action was required.

1.4 Japanese Knotweed / Hogweed Control Programme.

A new two year contract commenced in early July 2016, this is to follow on from the previous three year programme that has seen a significant reduction in the presence of knotweed throughout the site.

A full survey of the site was carried out and treatment of the knotweed has been completed via stem injection. Appendix 1 shows all the identified locations of invasive species that are treated by the term contractor

1.5 Litter

In the low season (winter) the area is litter picked and the bins are emptied twice a week, and in the high season (summer) the frequency increases to four times a week. There are occasional action days on the site which includes litter picking by local volunteers in the accessible areas. A survey of

the number and condition of the litter bins has been carried out, this identified existing bins which need replacing and areas where newly installed bins are required. A new contract is being written to supply and install litter bins within Barnet parks and open spaces, once the contract is awarded this will allow new litter bins to be installed within all Barnet parks including the Welsh Harp.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The terms of reference of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee include that it considers and co-ordinates all the interests of recreation, leisure, maintenance and nature conservation with the object of protecting the Welsh Harp Reservoir and surrounding open land as a unique environment for both recreation and wildlife conservation.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 None

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

The committee note the actions being implemented as set out under section one.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2015 – 2020 identifies as one of its Corporate Priorities that Barnet's parks and open spaces will be amongst the best in London. The need to develop more innovative ways of maintaining its parks and green spaces, including through greater partnerships with community groups and focus on using parks to achieve wider public health priorities for the borough.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 Any costs incurred from the programmes and initiatives will be met within the existing Street Scene budget.

5.3 Social Value

- 5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. Before commencing a procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these

benefits for their area or stakeholders.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to safeguard, protect and enhance sites of special scientific interest. The Local Authority has the power under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 to acquire, declare and manage nature reserves. However, English Nature must be consulted by the Authority in the use of the powers given by section 21. The 1949 Act states that a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) must be managed in such a way to ensure that use of the site does not result in any damage to its natural features.

5.3.2 The Terms of Reference of the Joint Committee, as set out in its Constitution, include :

“to consider and co-ordinate all the interests of recreation / leisure / maintenance / nature conservation and statutory requirements of the British Waterways Board and the Environment Agency at the Welsh Harp; with the object of protecting the Welsh Harp Reservoir and surrounding open land as a unique environment for both recreation and wildlife conservation”.

5.3.3 Barnet’s Constitution – Article 8 – Joint Arrangements- states at paragraph 8.01 that the Council may establish joint arrangements with one or more Local Authorities. Such arrangements may involve the appointment of a Joint Committee with these Local Authorities.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 Parks and Open Spaces benefit all sectors of the community by improving the local environment. Maintenance is carried out according to the management plan and takes into account requests from residents, users and Members. Improvements are made, wherever possible, to ensure equal access for all users.

The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies **to have due regard** to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services

5.7 Consultation and Engagement

5.7.1 The Consultative Committee continues to meet on a quarterly basis, the committee comprises of the land owners, legislative bodies, and third sector volunteer groups who work within the reserve to deliver positive outcomes.

5.8 **Insight**

5.8.1 None

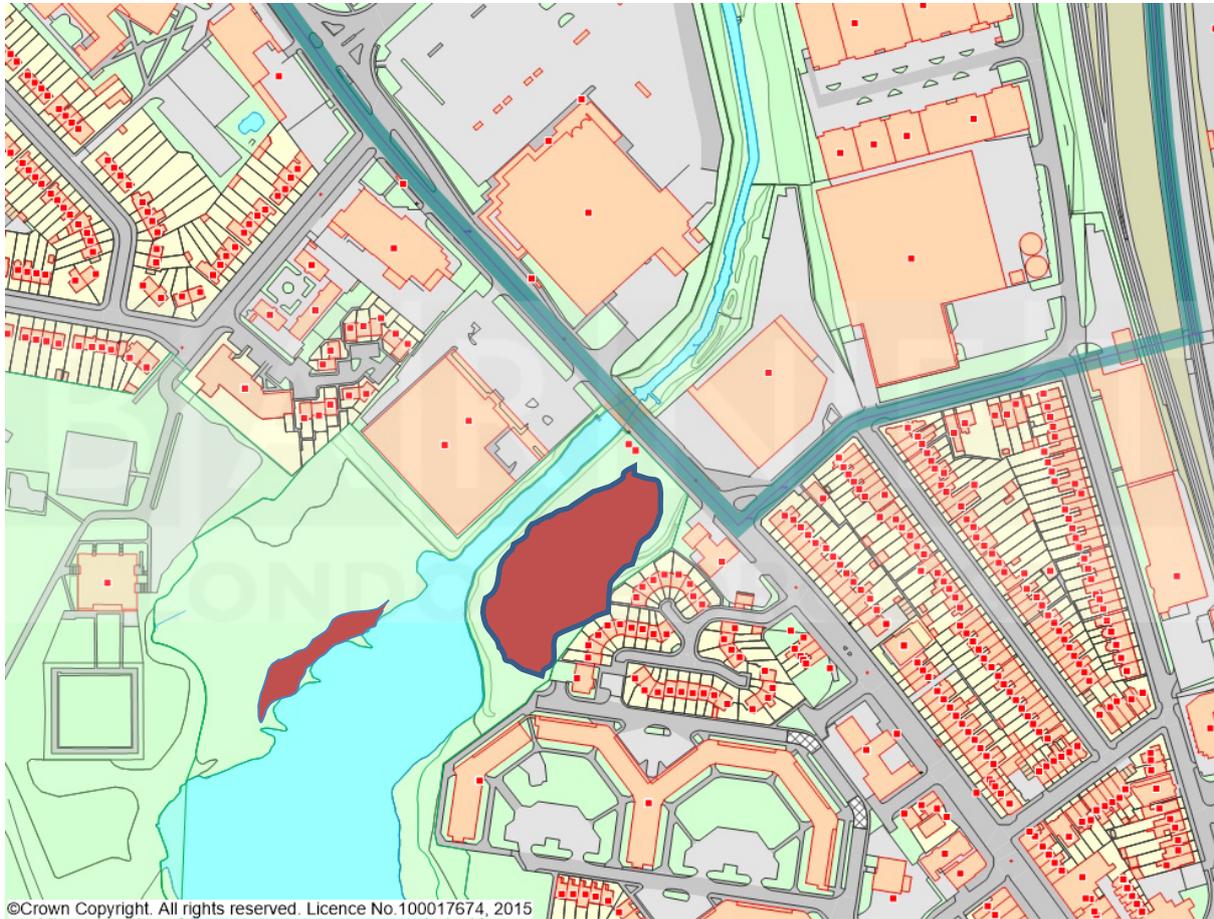
6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

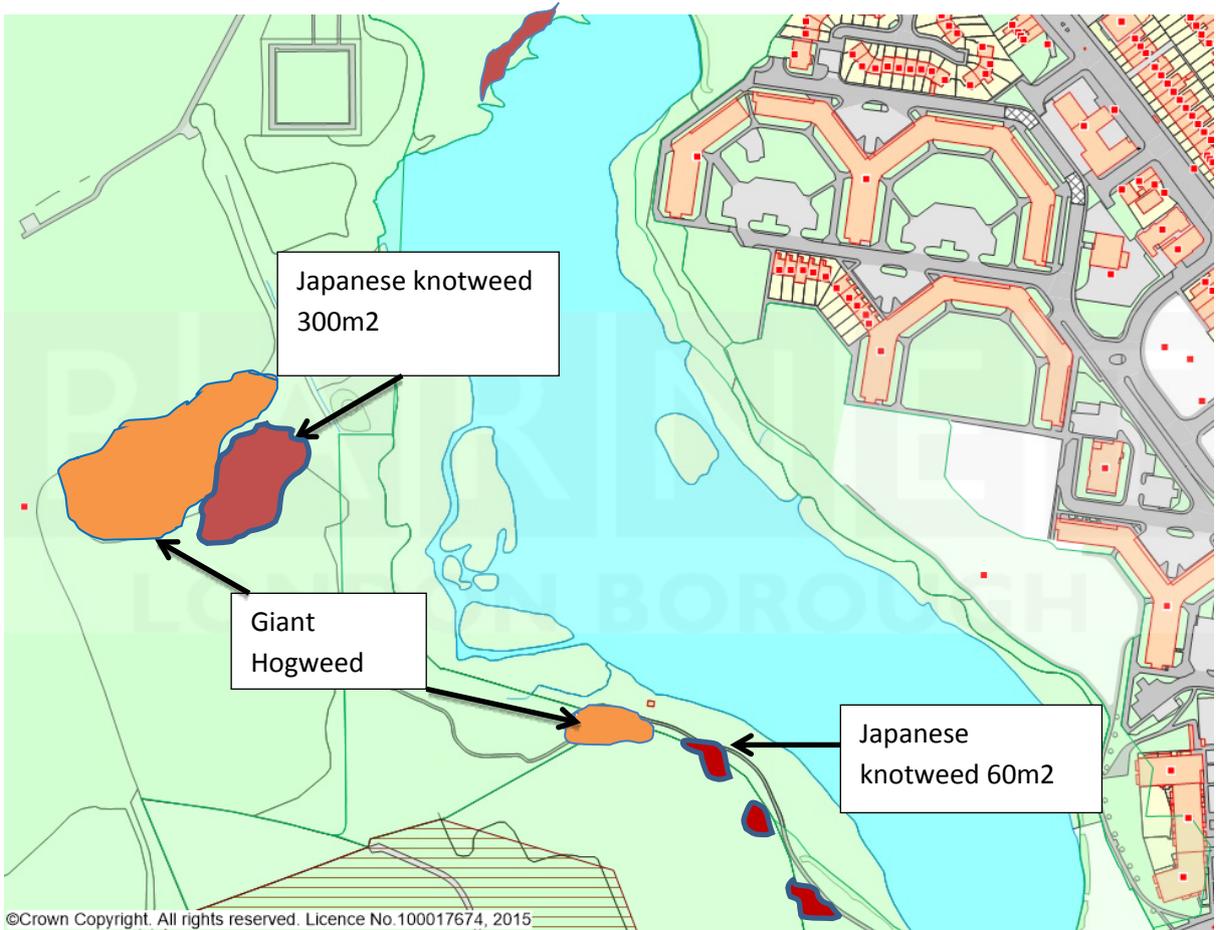
The Welsh Harp Management Plan can be found on Brent Council's website: www.brent.gov.uk/parks in the biodiversity section.

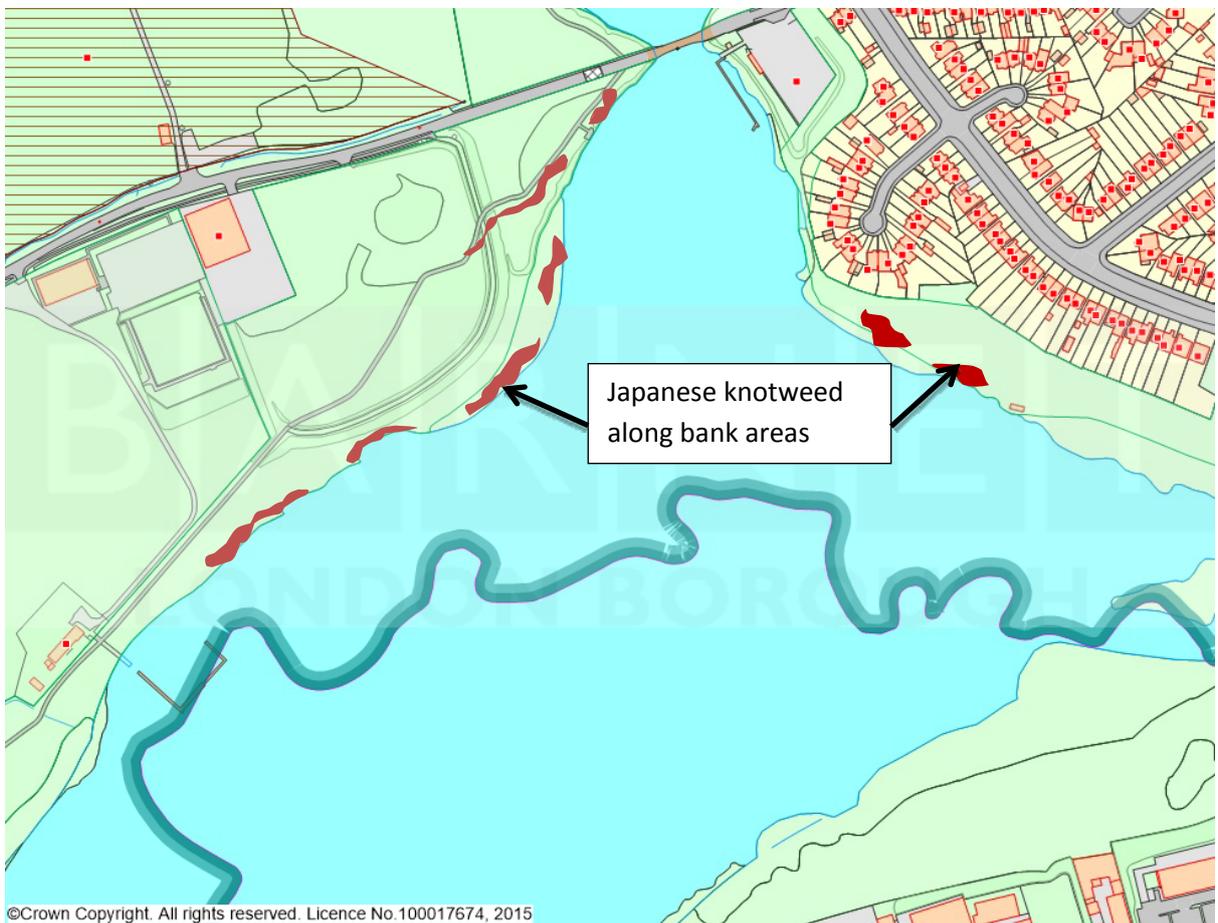
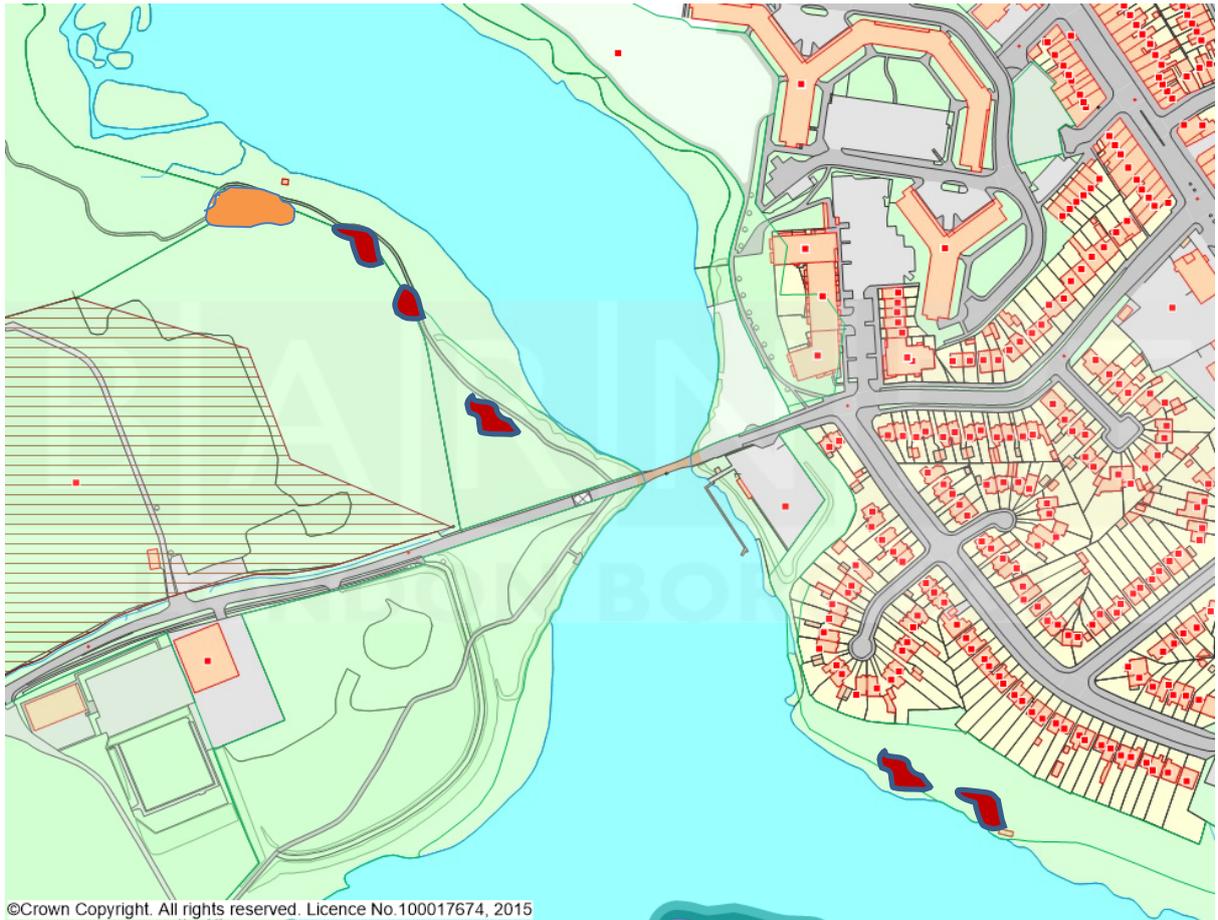
Appendix 1 – Invasive Species Locations

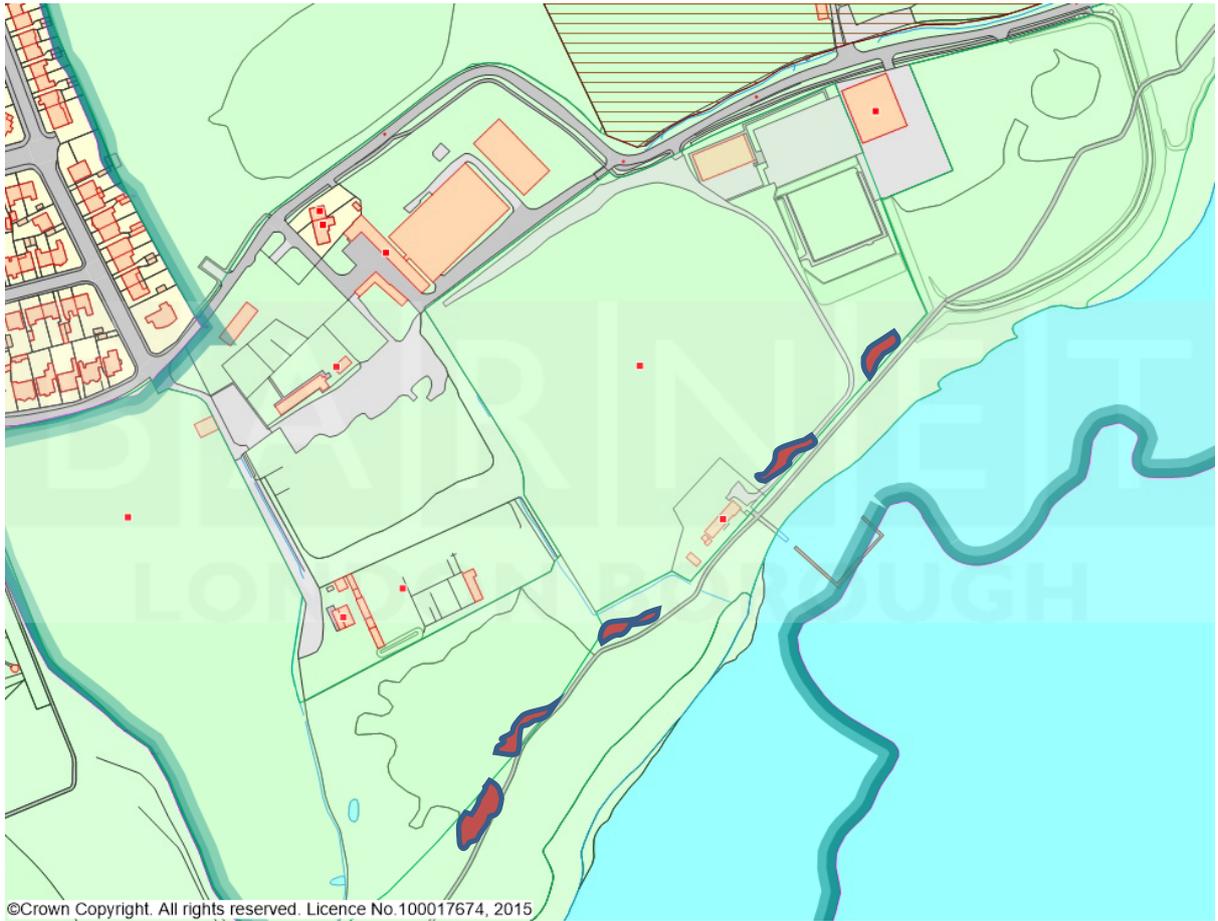
West Hendon Playing Fields and Welsh Harp

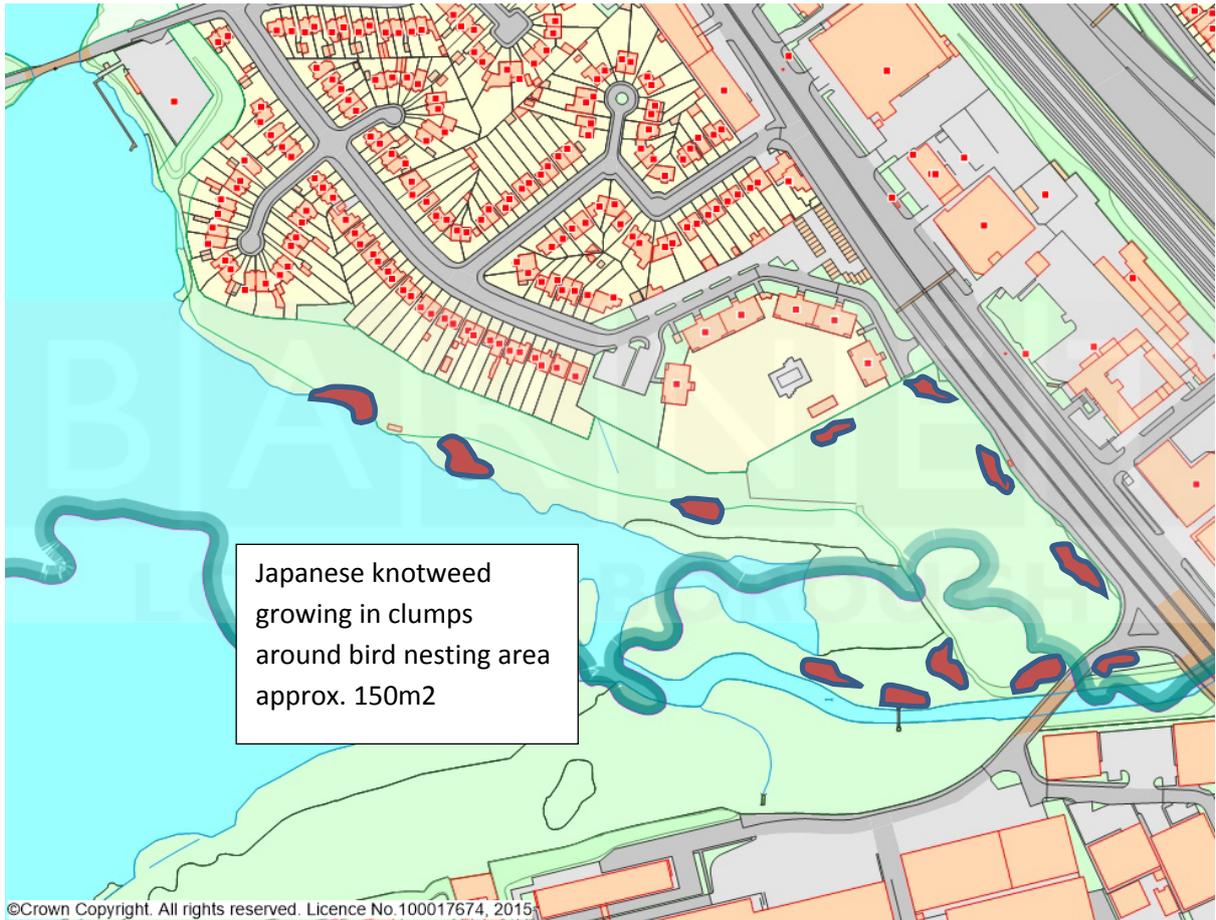
The Orange areas are Giant Hogweed and the red are Japanese Knotweed.











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AGENDA ITEM 6
Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee
14 March 2017

Report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration & Environment

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 2016/17 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 and River Trust.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the Report.

3.0 DETAILS

- 3.1 The current version of the Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan (dated 15 March 2016) is available on the Brent Council website at <https://www.brent.gov.uk/media/16404048/brent-reservoir-welsh-harp-management-plan-15-03-2016.pdf>
- 3.2. The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan includes an Action Plan for the current year; which for this committee report is updated as Appendix 1. The 'Progress' column summarises current progress.
- 3.3 Byelaws. Brent Council officers are investigating the supporting evidence that would be needed to support an application to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) using the guidance of the new DCLG process.
- 3.4 Rough sleepers: No reports since the last meeting.

- 3.5 Promoting Sport and Physical Activity sessions: The Council are encouraging organisations who organise sport or physical activity to promote their contact details and/or activities on the Open Sessions portal at <https://app.opensessions.io/> This is searchable by the public, so enabling people to locate physical activities by type or in their locality. If needed, help with registration is available from hello@opensessions.io and/or from Brent Council Cultural Services.
- 3.6 The weekly walks programme at the Welsh Harp continues. Walks generally attract 15-25 people and are led by a walk leader. These take place on Thursdays from 10-11am meeting at Birchen Grove Car Park, Kingsbury NW9. The walks are free of charge. A review of the walks programme has been undertaken and this has included public consultation via the Brent Council website on Healthy Walks and Outdoor Gyms. Options to consider will include a possible reduction in the number of walks offered and the use of volunteers to lead walks. Brent may pilot a walk with a volunteer to see how effective it is before rolling it out across the whole walks programme. It is hoped that there will be a walk on offer at Welsh Harp, in some capacity.
- 3.7 Removal of timber toe-boarding. The Catchment Toe-boarding Removal Working Group of the (River) Brent Catchment Partnership met in January 2017. They are investigating an initial batch of projects upstream of the Brent Reservoir in Barnet, and downstream in Ealing. They reported that they wish to defer until a later date a presentation to the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee. The aims of the project are to remove timber toe-boarding where it is redundant and not serving a purpose, from a significant length of the banks of the River Brent. The aims are to naturalise more of the river. The works will also benefit bankside vegetation and wildlife which will benefit having more natural substrate near to the water-line and for some distance above.
- 3.8 Arrangements for the removal of dead animals and debris in the water. Neither Brent Council nor their public realm contractors have direct access to boats at the Reservoir; and which is on Canal and River Trust land. If dead animals were reported to the Council and were near to the shoreline, then depending upon the circumstances the Council may be able to affect removal. Similarly, the Council is not normally in a position to remove floating debris from the open water.
- 3.9 Erosion at Neasden Recreation Ground: Erosion of the banks of the reservoir near to the dam wall, on the Neasden Recreation Ground side of the Reservoir were noted at the last meeting. Erosion here appears to be primarily of the surface due to the popularity of the area with visitors, possibly affected also by grazing Canada Geese. The Parks team walked the area in the autumn of 2016. One option is to reduce some of the overhanging branches from encroaching scrub, so as to diffuse the visitor pressure over a wider viewing area.
- 3.10 Tree pests and diseases: Committee asked for information on diseases and pests affecting trees, particularly in relation to the Horse Chestnut. Background information is available on the Forestry Commission website at: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pestsanddiseases>

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.

5.0 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, 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, 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. When advice is obtained from Natural England prior to carrying out the works an explanation of how the Council has taken into account any advice Natural England has given should be provided –

The Council must be able to show that it considered alternatives that could reduce the impact on the SSSI –

The Council should demonstrate how the Council has assessed differing interests (including the special interests of the SSSI) in deciding to go ahead with the works.

- 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.

6.0 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 (IF APPROPRIATE)

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 include:
Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan (version 15 March 2016).

CONTACT OFFICERS

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Amar Dave
Strategic Director, Regeneration & Environment

APPENDIX 1. WELSH HARP / BRENT RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT PLAN: ACTION PLAN FOR 2016-2017

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: 2016-17 to 13 February 2017
Dam wall and reservoir: statutory responsibility to maintain dam wall, associated structures and the dam	Canal and River Trust (C&RT)	C&RT	Maintain. On-Going	Dam wall and mechanism maintained as required to operational and statutory standards.
Maintain open water for water sports	Welsh Harp Sailing Association (WWSA)	Undertaken by volunteers of the (WWSA)	On-Going	Monitoring and actions by Welsh Harp Sailing Association.
Sailing and sports development	WWSA: Welsh Harp Sailing Association and constituent clubs.	Undertaken by volunteers of WWSA.	On-Going	Led by the sailing and water sports clubs.
Clean up projects: including some control of invasive plants.	Thames 21 Environment Agency	Provided by Thames 21. Work on site by volunteers.	On-going.	Thames 21 clean-up projects on Brent and tributaries.
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.	Maintenance is 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	The Welsh Harp Sailing Association and clubs maintain the water sports infrastructure.

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 programme in 2016-17 for maintenance of bird rafts. Works are outside of the bird breeding season of March to August inclusive.
Bird hides: maintenance of the hides; the surrounding vegetation (sightlines) and habitats.	Welsh Harp Conservation Group / others		On-going	The WHCG are expecting to organize up to three projects around the hides during the winter of 2016/17.
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.
Reedbeds: increase	All	Natural growth is encouraged, so costs are low, but need to remove young trees.	Periodic reviews as part of Biodiversity Action Plans.	Habitat maintained. Estimates from GIS aerial images suggest that the area of reedbed has increased by 0.09 ha between 2008 and 2016.
Marshland: maintain	Brent Council, Welsh Harp Sailing Association, Canal and River Trust.	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).	Alternate years: reduce young tree growth on shores of Neasden Recreation Ground, Welsh Harp Open Space.	Willow growth appears to be exceeding management work on the shoreline. Estimates from GIS aerial images suggest that the area of marshland (including fen, marsh and swamp) has reduced by 0.3 ha between 2008 and 2016, due to succession to scrub woodland.
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.	Marshland habitat at risk of scrub encroachment. See the comments for 'Marshland maintain', above.
Marshland: orchids	WHCG, Brent	Marshland work by Brent Council. Volunteer work by WHCG.	WHCG to provide information.	As for Marshland, above. Most species of marshland orchids present at the Reservoir would benefit from relatively open (unshaded) situations.
South-bank boardwalk	C&RT	Canal & Rivers Trust budget: periodic work possibly averages £500 / year.	As required.	
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 have reduced Japanese Knotweed near to Cool Oak Lane bridge.	Barnet have reduced Japanese Knotweed near to Cool Oak Lane bridge. Brent have reduced Japanese Knotweed at Neasden Recreation Ground.	The Brent River Catchment Partnership are investigating how to improve control along the whole catchment. Operational knowledge is also shared via the River Brent Catchment Partnership.
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.	Paths maintained.

Woodland	Brent, Barnet, WHCG, C&RT	Largely self-managing. Un-funded: management of woodland to increase diversity, but potential for creative use of material.		Largely self-managing, but control of willow and other scrub required in marshland at edge of Reservoir.
Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre	Thames 21, (Brent)	Thames 21 are managing the Centre following a Community Asset Transfer from Brent Council.	Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre re-opened from January 2016.	Thames 21 have managed the Centre from January 2016.
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, commenced in 2013.	West Hendon Allotments: self-managed. Brent: Allotments Strategy: Birchen Grove Allotments and Dors Close.
Open spaces, pitches, paths, Capital Ring, signage, interpretative signage, and other parks furniture. Litter collection.	Barnet, Brent	Existing maintenance resources. Barnet; and Brent public realm budgets.	On-going.	Maintained; and well-used. Rough sleepers: see Committee report for updates.
Feasibility of traffic analysis / signage for Wood Lane	Barnet Highways (leading) in consultation with Brent Highways.	See the proposals as part of the West Hendon re-development.	See the proposals for the bridge.	Cool Oak Lane bridge and proposals related to West Hendon development.
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 2016/2017. Included birds (weekly); butterflies (April to September).
Signage	Brent / Barnet.			Maintained.
Parks infrastructure	Brent / Barnet			Parks infrastructure is checked at appropriate frequencies.

River Brent Catchment Management Plan	All; led by Environment Agency / Thames 21.		2011 -	Action Plan published at: http://www.thames21.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/brent_river_corridor_improvement_plan_final_2014.pdf
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