

APPENDIX A. WELSH HARP / BRENT RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT PLAN: ACTION PLAN FOR 2020-2021

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. Officers of the main land-holding organisations at the Welsh Harp and some other organisations are currently (early 2021) working on a 'vision' exercise which will include a review of possible sources of funding and income. This Action Plan tracks current year progress while also highlighting projects with a longer timeframe.

RAG colour coding is subjective and may take account of the significance of the issue and also of any progress.

| Action | Lead | Budget | Approximate timetable | RAG status (text column provided for use if plain printing) | Progress: 2020-21 to 23rd February 2021 |
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| Dam wall and reservoir: statutory responsibility to maintain dam wall, associated structures and the dam | Canal and River Trust (Canal and River Trust) | Canal and River Trust | Maintain. On-Going | GREEN | Dam wall and mechanism maintained to operational and statutory standards. Statutory inspection and works in progress: January to February 2021. |
| Maintain open water for water sports | Welsh Harp Sailing Association (WHSA) | Undertaken by volunteers of the (WHSA) | On-Going | GREEN | Monitoring and actions by Welsh Harp Sailing Association. |
| Sailing Infrastructure: club-houses, boats, and service areas. | Sailing Clubs | Maintained by the Canal and River Trust; and by the sailing clubs. | On-going | GREEN | The Welsh Harp Sailing Association and clubs maintain the water sports infrastructure. See also Phoenix Canoe Club. |
| Bird hides: maintenance of the hides; the surrounding vegetation (sightlines) and habitats. | Welsh Harp Conservation Group / others | | On-going | GREEN | The WHCG organise winter projects at and near to the hides. |

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| Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre | Thames 21, Brent Council | | Thames 21 have managed the Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre since January 2016. | AMBER | Activities at the Centre have been affected by the restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Discussions are underway to understand the opportunities at the location as an education centre. |
| 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. There are some areas for biodiversity within the Dors Close Allotments. | GREEN | Barnet Council: West Hendon Allotments: self-managed. Brent Council: Allotments Strategy: Birchen Grove Allotments and Dors Close Allotments. |
| Open spaces, pitches, paths, Capital Ring, interpretative signage, and other parks furniture. Litter collection. | Barnet, Brent | Existing maintenance resources. Barnet; and Brent public realm budgets. | On-going. | AMBER | Maintained; and well-used. Signage is in variable condition. The Canal & River Trust are currently reviewing the interpretative panels, located on lecterns at three locations (Neasden Recreation Ground, Welsh Harp Open Space, Cool Oak Lane). |
| Signage | Brent / Barnet. | | | AMBER | Maintained. The Canal & River Trust are currently reviewing a selection of the signage. Part of the review extends beyond the Canal and River Trust land to other areas of the Welsh Harp. |

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| Parks infrastructure | Brent / Barnet | | | GREEN | <p>Parks infrastructure is checked at appropriate frequencies.</p> <p>Birchen Grove Car Park: Installation of mini-humps to deter excessive speeding and other anti-social behavior in car park: January 2020.</p> <p>Silver Jubilee Park Car Park: resurfaced and line-marked: January 2020.</p> |
| Monitoring: wildlife, and indicators | WHCG; and public authorities. | Mainly by volunteers of WHCG. | On-going | AMBER – diverse wildlife but potential for improvements | <p>See the most recent (2019) report on wildlife produced by the Welsh Harp Conservation Group, available on their website and via the following link (try Ctrl and double click if it does not open immediately):</p> <p>https://brentres.wordpress.com/publications/</p> <p>Programme of activities led by Welsh Harp Conservation Group for: refer to the website.</p> |
| Grasslands and cutting | Barnet, Brent | Maintenance: within existing resources. Restoration work is currently unfunded. Current path cutting estimated at £5,000 / year. | Spring to autumn. | GREEN | <p>Grasslands: A grassland maintenance schedule introduced by Brent Council across the Borough (including the Welsh Harp) in spring 2018 includes emphasis on improving biodiversity value of amenity grassland. Sown areas of bee-friendly plants were added in 2019. See the following link for areas for areas of spring and summer grassland at Neasden Recreation Ground:</p> <p>https://www.brent.gov.uk/media/16413216/neasden-recreation-ground.jpg</p> |

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| 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. | AMBER | <p>Paths maintained but some have narrowed with scrub growth, particularly at Neasden Recreation Ground (see notes on Marshland).</p> <p>The lower grassland path at the Welsh Harp Open Space is narrow. Work in 2020 aimed at reducing encroaching scrub, but the path width could benefit from occasional cutting.</p> |
| Sailing and sports development | WHSA: Welsh Harp Sailing Association and constituent clubs. | Undertaken by volunteers of WHSA. | On-Going | AMBER | Led by the sailing and water sports clubs. Phoenix Canoe Club are proposing improvements to their club facilities for water sports, particularly for educational use; and for a café accessible from the Welsh Harp / Capital Ring path. |
| Litter | Brent Council. Barnet Council. Canal & River Trust. Thames 21. Environment Agency. | Landowners: Brent Council, Barnet Council, Canal & River Trust. Leaseholders. Also much volunteer involvement. | On-going. | RED | <p>The January to February 2021 temporary partial drawdown of the water level within the Reservoir has revealed large quantities of litter, waste and alluvium (silt). Of the alluvium, the Canal & River Trust have stated that the removal is logistically beyond any resources that are currently available to the Canal and River Trust.</p> <p>Of the litter, there has been much activity by the wider community to clear, where it is safe to do so; and also within Covid-19 regulations, material near on the shorelines.</p> <p>The Canal & River Trust have indicated that some of the larger items have been mapped for later removal.</p> |

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| River trash traps: at inflows of Dollis Brook, and Silk Stream | Environment Agency | Budget provided by the Environment Agency | Maintain, On-going. | AMBER / RED | <p>The Environment Agency have been contacted to check on the clearance of accumulations of litter from the trash screens on the tributary rivers entering the reservoir, at the Silk Stream and at the River Brent.</p> <p>The Environment Agency clear and remove the material on a maintenance schedule but accumulations of material have been evident during recent months.</p> |
| Clean up projects. | The community | | On-going but with increased projects while the shoreline has been exposed due to lowered water levels. | AMBER / GREEN: Much has been achieved, but much is beyond the safe reach of shore work. | As noted above, where safe to do so, litter clean-up projects have been organized over several years by the Welsh Harp Litter Pickers and by residents near to Neasden Recreation Ground. More recently that has involved also the Welsh Harp Group at Neasden Recreation Ground and a range of other volunteers organized via social media. |
| 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. | AMBER | WHCG have a programme for maintenance of bird rafts. Works are outside of the bird breeding season of March to August inclusive. Recent problems with access to the rafts for maintenance due to alluviation. |
| Reedbeds: remove young trees | WHCG | Volunteer projects are held annually to maintain the reedbeds. | Remove young trees. On-going. Autumn / winter. | AMBER | Led by the WHCG. |

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| 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. | AMBER | Habitat maintained. Estimates from GIS aerial images suggest that the area of reedbed has increased by 0.09 ha between 2008 and 2016. As at February 2021 there are reedbeds on the main arm of the reservoir in the eastern marsh, on the shore of Neasden Recreation Ground near to the dam wall; and on the shore of the Welsh Harp Open Space. |
| Wet woodland | Canal and River Trust, Barnet, Brent | Largely self-managing. | On-going. | AMBER | Largely self-managing. Rubbish noted in (during the water drawdown of Jan-Feb 2021) and in the vicinity of the woodland. |
| Woodland | Brent, Barnet, WHCG, Canal and River Trust | Largely self-managing. Unfunded: management of woodland to increase diversity, but potential for creative use of material. | | AMBER | Largely self-managing, but control of willow and other scrub required in marshland at edge of Reservoir. |

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| 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 (by reducing excess growth of trees). | Reduce young tree growth on shores of Neasden Recreation Ground, Welsh Harp Open Space. | AMBER | <p>Willow and scrub growth is 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.</p> <p>Discussions from autumn 2018 onwards by Canal & River Trust, Welsh Harp Sailing Association, Brent Council; and from summer 2020 with Barnet Council and Welsh Harp Conservation Group.</p> <p>Welsh Harp Open Space: trial marshland works by Welsh Harp Sailing Association, February 2019.</p> <p>January and February 2020: Continuation of work in marshland edge by Welsh Harp Sailing Association on north shore (Welsh Harp Open Space).</p> <p>2020-21: Works commenced in September 2020 organised by Welsh Harp Sailing Association (with the Canal & River Trust; and Brent Council). Northern shore.</p> |
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| 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. | AMBER | 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. | STATUS CURRENTLY NOT KNOWN | As for Marshland, above. Several of the species of marshland orchids present at the Reservoir would benefit from relatively open (un-shaded) situations or may have other specific requirements. |
| Marshland (northern arm of Reservoir) | Barnet, Barratt PLC | | Restoration of shore by Phase 1 of West Hendon redevelopment. | GREEN | Refer to Barnet. |
| South-bank boardwalk | Canal and River Trust | Canal & Rivers Trust budget: periodic work. | As required. | RED / AMBER | The Canal and River Trust have plans to restore a boardwalk in 2021. The Canal & River Trust are looking at options. |

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| <p>Invasive species: Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and other invasive species. Invasive species at the Welsh Harp extends also to a number of other species where growth is across paths, excessively shading marshland or causing other issues.</p> | <p>Canal and River Trust, Barnet Council, Brent Council</p> | <p>Brent Council Parks actions: Knotweed reduced at the Brent Reservoir including at Neasden Recreation Ground; and Giant Hogweed at the Welsh Harp Open Space. Barnet Council have reduced Knotweed near to Cool Oak Lane bridge. Thames 21 are investigating possible systems for mapping of invasive species.</p> | <p>Control of these species requires continuing attention: timely short-term control; control at the time of other works; and as part of longer term management.</p> | <p>RED</p> | <p>On-going by Brent Council and Barnet Council. 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.</p> |
| <p>Cool Oak Lane bridge. Cool Oak Lane bridge and Wood Lane traffic.</p> | <p>Barnet Highways (leading) in consultation with Brent Highways.</p> | <p>See the proposals as part of the West Hendon re-development.</p> | <p>Works in progress: early 2020. Bridge/s: refer to plans for construction works in 2017 (Barnet; Barrett). Damage to existing brickwork by vehicles, 2017.</p> | <p>GREEN</p> | <p>Pedestrian footbridge alongside historic, vehicular footbridge.</p> |

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| River Brent Catchment Management Plan | All; led by Environment Agency / Thames 21. | | 2011 - ongoing | AMBER – in progress, with large challenges to improve the River catchment. | Action Plan published at: see website: https://www.thames21.org.uk/catchment-partnerships/brent/ |
| Welsh Harp Vision | Canal and River Trust, Barnet Council, Brent Council, Thames 21, London Wildlife Trust, Greater London Authority. | | In progress. | AMBER – in progress | Developing a vision and options for the Welsh Harp. |