

BOGGART HOLE CLOUGH COMMUNITY ACTION TRUST

Protecting and revitalizing Boggart Hole Clough Ancient Woodland Park

Minutes

of Executive Committee Open Meeting held 14 September 2005

at Boggart Hole Clough Visitor Centre, Charlestown Road, Manchester, M9 7DF.

1. **Present:** Ada Nzeribe (Manchester City Council [MCC] North Manchester Partnership [NMP] Cultural Regeneration officer), Ann Williams (MCC Manchester Leisure [ML] North Area Parks warden), David Wilson (Lakeside Café leaseholder), Heather Mawhinney, James Walmsley (*Community Arts Events* organizer), Jean Finch, John Howard (MCC ML North Area Parks assistant manager), Mervyn Romain, Peter Milner (Trust secretary), Peter Smith, Roger Barnard, Saul Mearns (MCC ML North Area Parks warden), Shirley McCardell (MCC NMP *Zest Healthy Living Project* coordinator), Sue Dippnall, Suzanne O'Callaghan.
2. **Apologies** for absence: Mark Hackett (Trust deputy chair, Charlestown councillor MCC Executive member for Culture & Leisure), Sam McCormick (Trust treasurer).
3. **Minutes of previous meeting 6.7.05** (revised Minutes dated 14.9.05) agreed as true record.
4. **MCC ML management report** (see also items 5, 6, 7, etc).
 - 4.1 **Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)** Disclosure application forms to be completed by all Trust volunteers working with children and/or vulnerable adults. Completed forms to MCC ML Personnel Department, Pink Bank Lane, Longsight, for forwarding to CRB, Liverpool.
 - 4.2 **Green Flag** awarded for 5th consecutive year. Flag Raising ceremony: 27.11.05, 12 noon, Visitor Centre. Award 2005/06 *Assessment:* "...Will benefit from a formal management plan with clearer targets...Evaluation of what you have and where you want to go...Good use of natural regeneration in woodland management by volunteer group..."
 - 4.3 Free **Breakout Sessions** for children daily for 4 weeks starting 1.8.05 during summer school holidays, run by Saul: sports, circus skills, percussion workshops.
 - 4.4 Path between Angel Hill and Visitor Centre **surfaced with tarmac**.
 - 4.5 David W installed **lectern**, supplied by ML, at Lakeside. Now 6 lecterns and 2 vertical display boards in Clough.

5. **Infrastructure regeneration** (see also items 4, 6, etc) 17.8.05 meeting: John, Peter M.

- 5.1 **Japanese Knotweed (JK)**. When Saul completed mapping JK, obtain estimates/tenders from private contractors (e.g. Knotweed Eradication, Leyland: recommend 3-year chemical treatment, monthly site visits) for eradication of largest, densest stand to left of path from Visitor Centre to Angel Hill. This would leave ML to deal with remaining JK e.g. infestation in area around rebuilt wall along path from Oak Bank Avenue. Grantfinder release: Forestry Commission Woodland Improvement Grant.
- 5.2 **Bridges**. Estimates from Jim Mullen (MCC Manchester Engineering Design Consultancy engineer) to replace 2 dilapidated bridges. Footbridge over Fish Pond Clough including railings extended from bridge corners for some distance along ravine edges: £30K. Bridge bottom of path from Oak Bank Avenue: £50K. Grantfinder release: Heritage Lottery Fund Public Parks Initiative.
- 5.3 **Second Children's Playground** (opposite side of Clough from existing playground) perhaps including skate park. Equipment for different age groups – toddlers to teenagers: gap in provision ? Striking architectural/design feature, offering different, distinctive play experience; which sits well within environment; sustainable, vandal-proof. Lappset, Scandinavian company, make timber based products. Berliner Seilfabrik make *Space Nets* climbing equipment - *Spaceball*, *Geodome*. Record Playground Equipment Ltd, Selby, make traditional roundabouts, see-saws, slides, swings, and skateboard equipment, and special needs equipment. Grantfinder release possibly applicable: Banks Foundation (need to enrol with Entrust). Contact Barry Noble (MCC ML Play Development manager).

6. **Conservation** (see also items 4.2, 5.1, etc).

- 6.1 Restoring Ancient Woodland biodiversity. Nature Conservation Group & Wildlife Gardening Club volunteers - particular thanks to regulars Jamie, Leanne, Rose, Sharna, Sue and Tristan - working with Peter M on Sundays. Tasks included (around Fish Pond Clough footbridge) **coppicing Sycamores** and building up eroded path edges with soil retrieved from ravine bottom (woodland trail renovation/soil conservation).

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6.2 **Lake & Island** regeneration. Reports of unpleasant smells emanating from Lake – perhaps caused by algae. Proposed draining of Lake for clearing out rubbish and eradication of invasive Rhododendron from Island. Valve for emptying Lake is broken: £9K estimated repair cost; alternative to hire pump: £600 per week. If draining goes ahead, refilling to begin by 1.2.06: to protect bird life, Lake cannot be empty for prolonged periods, therefore regeneration will have to be completed in stages over several years. John chasing Lake management plans from Platt Fields & Debdale Parks, Chorlton Water Park, etc, to inform consideration of further proposals e.g. construction of gabions (rubble mounds) and fish refuges (floating islands) for planting with oxygenating aquatics.

7. Health activities & Sports (see also items 4.3, 5.3, 6.1, etc). *Wheels for All/Cycling Projects* scheme focused on enabling people with disabilities/learning difficulties to use adapted cycles in Clough on regular basis. Re Cycle Open Half Day taster event 20.7.05, Shirley said: "...good to see so many people enjoying physical activity and laughing...first rung of ladder of ongoing scheme...large number of people with learning difficulties in north Manchester..." *Zest/ML & Wheels For All* under Trust umbrella: successful 26.5.05 bid for £1,475 Voluntary Action Manchester Community Chest grant to fund Cycle Open Full Day event 19.10.05 for main launch of Clough scheme; intend applying for £4K North Manchester Primary Care Trust grant (available for healthy living activity project) for ongoing support of scheme.

8. History & Arts.

8.1 **Heritage Exhibition.** Meeting 15.8.05: Ada, Peter M. Proposed Manchester City Art Gallery (MCAG) curated exhibition re Clough history on same lines as their Heaton Park exhibition including e.g. earliest images of Clough (e.g. possible etchings), original Manchester Corporation plans for Municipal Park, earliest photographs and postcards; images with accompanying text telling story of Clough; to engender local interest/ involvement, increase appreciation/knowledge of Clough; as part of comprehensive review (heritage inventory, ecological surveys, etc) laying foundation for major grant-aid applications. Ada prefers to put research/ exhibitions in hands of local community (e.g. schools) rather than MCAG.

8.2 *Picnic in the Park Lakeside Music* programme: 1 or 2 soloists/ensembles (string quartet, brass quintet, saxophone quartet, guitar & vocals, piano & vocals, guitar & bongos, marimba) played in Café environs 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., on 6 consecutive Saturdays starting 30.7.05. Attendance: one Saturday washed out by rain; other Saturdays, average sitting audience of 50. Proposed expansion for 2006 into weekly summer fairs with acts (mainly but not exclusively music) and stalls. Proposal rejected. Ada: "If bigger events then more money and organization required ...financial contribution from NMP will not increase..." James: "...formula, of 6 consecutive Saturdays, worked...events need enhancing..." Move to 6 consecutive Sundays in 2006: see if greater audiences than Saturdays.

8.3 Peter M proposes "**Boggart-themed Halloween Lantern firework-free/animal-friendly celebration**/performance/ procession event circa 31.10.05...could combine with guided dusk Bat/Wildlife walk...instead of usual, banal, anti-wildlife, noisy firework display circa 5.11.05..." Proposal rejected as for last several years been large audience for fireworks display. Request for quietest fireworks available to be used to minimize distress to wildlife. Fireworks display set for 3.11.05.

8.4 Heather suggests new event for 2006: "...traditionally on **St John's Eve 23 June** people came to Clough to gather the seed of St John's fern for its alleged magical properties...Sam Bamford wrote about this taking place in early 19th century. He lived for a time on Charlestown Road...we could celebrate Clough's heritage, including Boggart folklore, around midsummer, with exhibitions, live performances...Manchester Dialect Society, promote songs of region, available for events..." Other suggestions: "...Chinese floating lanterns...light up Clough with Boggart lanterns creating enchanted, haunted environment...lanterns could be made by children as a school project..." These proposals uniting ideas from items 8.1, 8.2, 8.3. Development meeting: 5.10.05, 6.30 p.m., Visitor Centre.

9. Treasurer's report/funding issues (see also items 5, 7, etc).

9.1 **Current account** balance at 7.9.05 of £1,329.20p.

9.2 Unsuccessful *Awards For All* grant application for £4,416.32p submitted 25.2.05 to cover Administration & Conservation Volunteers projected expenses for one year.

9.3 **Collection** 7.5.05, organized by Ron Baines, outside Harpurhey Asda raised £62.00p. Treasurer not yet received this money.

10. Next **Executive Committee Open Meeting:** Wednesday 30 November 05, 6.30 p.m., Visitor Centre.