

BOGGART HOLE CLOUGH COMMUNITY ACTION TRUST
Protecting and revitalizing Boggart Hole Clough Ancient Woodland Park

Minutes

of Executive Committee Open Meeting held 15 December 2004

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

1. Present: Ann Williams (Manchester City Council [MCC] Manchester Leisure [ML] North Area Parks warden), Barry Hodgkinson, Bob Hill, David McCracken (MCC/ML North Area Parks manager), David Wilson (Lakeside Café leaseholder), Jean Finch, Mark Hackett (chair, Charlestown cllr/MCC executive member for Culture & Leisure), Mervyn Romain, Peter Milner (secretary), Ray Malone (deputy chair), Ron Baines, Rose Mason, Saul Mearns (MCC/ML North Area Parks warden), Suzanne O'Callaghan.

2. Apologies: Frank Dowd, Jo Dowd, Judith Crook, Mildred Lloyd, Sam McCormick (treasurer).

3. Minutes of previous meeting 22.9.04 (revised Minutes dated 15.12.04) agreed as true record.

4. MCC/ML management report (see also items 5, 6, etc).

4.1 Bid for £17K Crime & Disorder grant, for **CCTV** in Visitor Centre environs, unsuccessful. ML making city-wide bid for all parks. Presently only Heaton Park and Platt Fields have CCTV. Regarding CCTV in Heaton Park, Mark says: *It works when its switched on!* Once there is some CCTV in Clough would become easier to extend e.g. to Angel Hill War Memorial and Old Boathouse Lakeside Café environs.

4.2 **Steel bar gates stolen:** a set of double gates, Rochdale Road, and a single kissing gate, David Lewis Rec.

4.3 Footbridge at bottom of 99 Steps: **hazardous slippery wood boards** need anti-slip material/coating e.g. netting.

4.4 **Tarmacking** main avenues. £23K quote from R and M Development Ltd., to do last stretch, not previously tarmacked, from Visitor Centre to Angel Hill.

4.5 **Green Flag** award (4th consecutive year) celebration 12.12.04 at Visitor Centre. David McC thanked all involved including Trust volunteers.

4.6 Site of demolished building corner of Rochdale & Charlestown Roads. David McC: *Interim measures: flower bed of daffodils, crocus, bluebells...got hands on another lectern in which to put a map of the Clough etc...besides Green Flag flown at the Visitor Centre we have a spare Green Flag which we could fly here...In the longer term there will be a **Consultation** about what we do with that lower Rochdale Road area...* Trust meeting 30.6.04: Woodland Heritage Centre proposed for area.

4.7 **Wheels for All...***initiative of the Cycling Project for the North West...provide cycles and expertise...partners provide safe and accessible sites ideally suited to the needs of disabled cyclists...*(leaflet dated 10.02). Ann suggests Clough becomes Wheels for All centre/venue perhaps using Athletics Track and/or creating special track. Note: this is self-powered cycling not motorcycling; the riding of motorbikes of various kinds in the Clough, which is illegal, remains a problem.

4.8 Ann received quotation from Environmental Fieldwork Ltd., for £7215 + VAT to create **pond with dipping platform** to be located 100 yards beyond Visitor Centre carpark. Ann suggests Trust could fund this project through grant application. Some scepticism as Trust not been consulted/played no part in developing idea. Copies of plans to be made available. Suggestion that priority should be regeneration of Lake, the Park's central feature (see item 5.1).

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5. Conservation (see also items 4.5, 4.6, 4.8, 8.2, etc).

5.1 **Lake regeneration.** Rose: *The litter, polystyrene cups etc., on the Lake looks awful...* Bob: *The reintroduction of boating is unfeasible as vandalism cannot be controlled...* Other problems: Fish deaths caused by cormorants and water de-oxygenation, and Signet deaths (June 04) caused by paddle-wheel water aerators stirring up silt. Positive note: some aquatic bird species are thriving. Suggestions: develop as bird sanctuary (heronry, swannery, etc) as well as fishery, increase biodiversity by e.g. joining Lake and Pond to produce movement of species and water thus enlarging/enriching ecosystem and reducing stagnation, creating rafts/floating islands of vegetation as fish refuges to protect against cormorants, using gabions and/or rubble mounds as structures on which to establish submerged plants to oxygenate the water. Mark: *We could see how lakes in other parks in the city are managed...*

5.2 **Restoring Ancient Woodland biodiversity** (see also item 8.2). Nature Conservation Group & Wildlife Gardening Club volunteers (particular thanks to regulars Amy, Erin, Frank, Geoff, Jo, Leanne, Ray, Rose, Sean, Sue, Tristan) working with Peter on Sundays continued invasive rhododendron clearance in Middle Clough, and 17.10.04 with Joe Boulter put up Falcon nesting box, lower meadow woodland edge. Jean and Suzanne offer to distribute flyers.

5.3 **Tree Preservation Order (TPO)** application for 8 trees, within Clough perimeter, along Lewis Avenue. Original TPO application made by Suzanne and Jean including site photos and 15 signature petition sent to Planning, Town Hall Extension, was mislaid. Second copy taken 21.6.04 to Planning to be forwarded to Sue Wills, also apparently mislaid! Ann to speak to Joe Walsh, MCC Arboriculturist.

6. Arts, sports, events (see also items 4.7, 5.2, etc).

6.1 **Brass music.** David McC: *Crumpsall Comets Concert band and Blackley Brass band have been awarded lottery money. Leaders of both bands amicable to do a freebie, to play in Clough for nothing...*

6.2 **Wellie Waddle** 1.11.04 and *Santa Stroll* 13.12.04 through Clough to Lake, for children under 4 years old and parents, with Play Bus, arts, crafts, toys, storytelling and free refreshments. Organized by wardens with Sure Start and Zest healthy living project.

6.3 Mark: *We need a wider range of events, improved level of things going on...including perhaps e.g. a **Children's Playground** in vicinity of Visitor Centre, of same high quality of innovative design as Playground opened last year above Farm in Heaton Park...*

7. Security issues: see items 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 5.1.

8. Treasurer's report/funding issues (see also items 2, 4.8, etc).

8.1 **Balance** at 30.11.04 of £471.77.

8.2 **No income** currently to cover Administration and Conservation volunteers operational expenses. David W: *Fishing has declined (see item 5.1) therefore money we used to get from MANCAT, when their students came to fish, which covered some Trust running costs, has stopped...* Sam applying to MCC Change grants programme: *Capacity building grants for community groups.* Further suggestions: car boot sale (needs to be licensed), bring and buy, local business sponsorship. Ray: *possibility of grant in kind in form of drinks for Nature Conservation/Wildlife Gardening volunteers e.g. juice for children, from Princes Ltd., Newton Heath... We will bring our own refreshments (drinks, lunch packs) until funds are in place.*

9. **Next Executive Committee Open Meeting:** Wednesday 16 February 05, 6.30 p.m., Visitor Centre. Members of the local community and any other interested people are welcome to attend Trust meetings on the understanding that only paid-up members of the Trust have a right to vote at the AGM in election of trustees, and during the year only trustees and representatives from affiliated member organizations and co-opted appointees have a right to vote at executive committee meetings.