

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

Minutes

of Executive Committee Open Meeting held 22 September 2004

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

1. **Present:** Amy Dowd, Bill Brookes, David Wilson (Lakeside Café leaseholder), Erin Dowd, Georgie Murgatroyd, Jean Finch, Jo Dowd, John Howard (Manchester City Council [MCC] Manchester Leisure [ML] North Area Parks assistant manager), Mervyn Romain, Mildred Lloyd, Peter Milner (secretary), Ray Malone (deputy chair), Sam McCormick (treasurer), Sean Dowd, Suzanne O'Callaghan.
2. **Apologies:** Frank Dowd, Judith Crook, Rose Mason.
3. **Minutes of previous meeting 30.6.04** (revised Minutes dated 22.9.04) agreed as true record.
4. **MCC/ML management report** (see also items 5, 6, 7, etc).
 - 4.1 **Footbridges regeneration programme.** Renewal of footbridge railings over clough below fish pond and perhaps installation of footbridge approach railings along ravine edge: John says will be put on *wish list* to ML head office. Boggart Hole Clough Brook footbridge below 5-Ways: order for Sovereign Fencing to do repairs costing £1600.
 - 4.2 **Boathouse carpark and main avenues tarmacked** by R and M Development Ltd., cost £43K, paid from MCC/ML central budget.
 - 4.3 Suggestion for *Motorbikes/scooters ridden in this Park will be impounded* notices to be displayed around Clough. Suzanne remembers *Nobody is allowed in this Park after dusk* notices; perhaps they should be reintroduced ?
 - 4.4 Mildred says **Childrens Play Area**, David Lewis Recreation Ground, is *a disgrace* with broken glass etc.
 - 4.5 **Bowling Green**, David Lewis Recreation Ground. Jean says Bowling Club have exclusive use of key to padlocked green. Bowlers wishing to play at different times to club members denied access to green.
 - 4.6 **Green Flag** awarded for 4th consecutive year. Copies distributed of *Judging Feedback Report: ...a wide range of groups and individuals contribute to the success of the park...the involvement of a wide range of community initiatives shows improvement on a broad front...*
 - 4.7 Copies of MCC/ML Clough **Action Plan** (dated 6.00, updated 12.03) and *Management Plan* (dated 04) available.
 - 4.8 **No support for idea to build houses within Clough perimeter** along Charlestown Road floated by Paul Murphy (Moston cllr) at 28.4.04 Bhccat meeting. Sam received letter dated 29.7.04 from Graham Stringer (Blackley MP): *...I and the Labour Councillors for the area remain opposed to developing housing on Boggart Hole Clough... Suzanne: ...has to go to Parliament if wish to take part of public park for building...dispensation allowed during WW2 to build prefabs along Charlestown Road...demonstration held against proposal to build houses circa 1974...*
5. **Conservation** (see also items 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 7, etc).
 - 5.1 **De-oxygenation of lake** with resultant risk of fish deaths. Oxygenation, June 04, by mechanical means using paddle wheel type aerators, as recommended by Environmental Agency (EA) technical officer and carried out by EA personnel, resulted in poisoning of 5 of 7 signets by toxins in silt stirred up by aerators. Oxygenation by biological means surely more suitable and sustainable as outlined in EA leaflet *De-oxygenation* (dated 3.00): *...oxygen levels are replenished by...photosynthesis, in which plants produce oxygen during daylight...Only plants with submerged leaves will oxygenate the water. They include...Hornwort, Water-Milfoil, Water-Crowfoot and Starwort...* The lake is presently almost entirely devoid of plant life.

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5.2 Jean and Suzanne contacted Joe Walsh, MCC Arbor officer, re **Tree Preservation Order** application for 8 trees, within Clough perimeter, along Lewis Avenue.

5.3 **Restoring Ancient Woodland biodiversity** (see also item 8.4). Nature Conservation Group and Wildlife Gardening Club volunteers (particular thanks to regulars Amy, Erin, Frank, Geoff, Georgie, Jo, Leanne, Ray, Rose, Sean, Sue, Tristan, Yasmin) working with Peter on Sundays. Top half of Middle Clough cleared of invasive rhododendron in preparation for seeding selected areas (including e.g. Betony, Bird's-Foot-Trefoil and Lady's Bedstraw wildflower seeds to ameliorate ravine-side erosion) to supplement natural regeneration.

6. Arts, sports, events (see also items 4.5, 5.3, 8.3, etc).

6.1 Sam says **NHS grants** available, £3K per ward, for equipment with health slant. Technically equipment would stay within NHS whilst used by Trust. Suggestions: macs and umbrellas for existing Strollers Goup and walking poles for Speed Walkers for use by new group or individuals. Equipment could be stored at Visitor Centre. Jo to get estimates.

6.2 Requests for summer course of **T'ai Chi** practised in various outdoor locations around Clough. Funding from MCC/North City Arts (NCA) ?

6.3 **Brass music concert** held Sunday 8.8.04 featured Crumpsall Comets and Blackley Brass bands, North Manchester High School for Boys band and Royal Northern College of Music brass quintet. Good attendance, approx 400 through day. No write-up in Advertiser although their photographer present. Permanent bandstand/stage of modern vandal-proof design would allow more frequent, regular music (and theatre) performances potentially producing a distinct musical niche for the Clough e.g. brass-led contemporary jazz. MCC/NCA invited to this meeting but absent.

7. Organizational development. Numerous projects suggested/revisited/evolved during meetings since Bhccat founded in 1999 (including several at this meeting, see above) e.g. eliminating Japanese Knotweed, renovating Angel Hill war memorial including plaques, railings and stonework, with perhaps CCTV installation, creating Woodland Heritage Centre in general area of recently demolished building corner of Rochdale and Charlestown Roads (see Minutes of previous meetings). The Trust must grow organizational capacity to partner MCC in progressing/funding/delivering such projects (see item 8.4).

8. Treasurer's report (see also item 6.1).

8.1 **Change of cheque signatories** completed. New signatories: Sam (treasurer), Mark Hackett (chair), Peter (secretary).

8.2 **Balance** at 13.8.04 of £673.43.

8.3 **Mersey Basin Campaign** granted £277.58 to cover conservation volunteers and fishing expenses during *Mersey Basin Week* beginning of October 04.

8.4 Sam and Peter applying for **grants** to cover Administration volunteers (see item 7) and Conservation volunteers (see item 5.3) ongoing expenses/operational budgets/running costs.

9. Next Executive Committee Open Meeting: Wednesday 15 December 04, 6.30 p.m., Visitor Centre. Members of the local community and any other interested people are welcome to attend BHCCAT 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.