

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

Minutes
of Executive Committee Open Meeting held 5th September 2007
at Boggart Hole Clough Visitor Centre, Charlestown Road, Manchester, M9 7DF.

BHCCAT: Boggart Hole Clough Community Action Trust.

MCC: Manchester City Council. MCC departments - **ML:** Manchester Leisure, **NMR:** North Manchester Regeneration, **Zest:** healthy living project.

1. Present: Frankie Mananasy, James Rothwell, Jean Finch (BHCCAT treasurer), Ken Hill, Kylie Ward (ML North Area Parks manager), Mark Hackett (BHCCAT deputy chair, Charlestown councillor), Mervyn Romain, Peter Milner (BHCCAT secretary), Ray Malone, Saul Mearns (ML North Area Parks warden), Shirley McCardell (*Zest* Harpurhey & Moston Hub coordinator), Steve Hamilton, Theresa Riley.

2. Apologies for absence: Ada Nzeribe (NMR Cultural Regeneration officer), Joan Kavanagh (BHCCAT chair pro tem), Lee Mather (Charlestown Police Community Support officer), Michael Kane (MCC Executive member for Arts & Leisure, Northenden councillor), Suzanne O'Callaghan.

3. Minutes of Annual General Meeting 6.6.07 (revised Minutes dated 5.9.07) agreed as true record.

4. Rochdale Road Residents Action Group (RRRAG). MCC's Lakeside Regeneration proposals and initial artist's impressions of Rochdale & Charlestown Roads corner pedestrian gateway proposal emailed to BHCCAT members and RRRAG. Elicited written responses from RRRAG members B. A. & A. B. Neale, J. M. Royal, Jake Kendal, Janet Shephard, M. H. Wese, Margaret Murray, N. Whitehead. These responses quoted from in items 5.2, 5.8, 8.1 below. Document available containing unedited RRRAG comments. Comments forwarded 15.8.07 to Kylie.

5. ML management (see also items 6, 7, 8, 9, etc).

5.1 Notice for this 5.9.07 meeting emailed 20.8.07 to all ML officers at Visitor Centre but Notice not put in any **lecterns**. Suggested that Trust members put Notices for meetings etc in lecterns. Kylie says will issue Trust with key for lecterns.

5.2 Recently renovated **Angel Hill War Memorial**. RRRAG members (see item 4): "...Relocate war memorial to Rochdale / Charlestown road junction... Not sure about moving the war memorial... but feel it needs to be protected from vandals – could a fence not be erected around it – but be able to open for Remembrance Day..." Kylie: "Angel Hill is the monument's historic place... we could perhaps open up a line of sight to Rochdale & Charlestown Roads corner..." Holes opened up in plinth behind new stone inserts. Kylie says will order repairs.

5.3 Green Flag awarded for 7th consecutive year. Award ceremony in Leeds, last year in Birmingham: both years only one place allocated for BHCCAT members. Kylie says will request Green Flag allocate more places. Copy of Green Flag Assessment requested.

5.4 Event 5.8.07 Visitor Centre environs: **opening of new Under-8s Playground** / raising Green Flag / Teddy Bears Picnic. Sunny weather, approximately 600 people over the 2-3 hours. See also items 5.3, 5.5, 10.

5.5 Suggestion to follow up new Under-8s Playground with **new Over-8s Playground** in Visitor Centre vicinity made of more natural materials (e.g. timber framed) and style of equipment (e.g. space nets). Skateboard facility also suggested.

5.6 King William IV Angling Society, which manages 9 areas of water in North Manchester including those at Heaton Park, interested in managing Clough's **Fish Pond**.

5.7 Clough perimeter at **Weybourne Avenue**. Japanese Knotweed, rubbish accumulated, fires. Perimeter fence to be installed to stop cars backing up and dumping rubbish; Japanese Knotweed to be sprayed.

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5.8 MCC Lakeside regeneration proposals: "...post mounted hanging baskets... creation of a main entrance consisting of arch top walk through... mixture of native and species trees around circumference of the lake... native bulbs and wildflower plants around the lake between trees to create a splash of colour throughout the year... installation of perimeter fencing around the lake..." BHCCAT members: "...not tackling real issues - renovating & reopening Old Boathouse Café, and keeping area clean... prefer plant only native trees & flowers... why need for *installation of perimeter fencing around the lake* ?..." RRRAG members (see item 4): "...No fencing around the lake! Spend the money on improving the lake facilities e.g. café, boats, seating, plants... Is it necessary to "Rail-off" the lake?..."

6. Old Boathouse Café tendering and renovation proposals to realize full potential of this wasted asset. Café closed throughout 2007 to date. Failure to carry out any renovation work during prolonged closure. Clough's heritage building falling into dereliction through neglect.

6.1 Meeting 21.6.07 at Café: Chaz Farghaly (ML Contracts & Development manager), Kylie, James, Jean, Steve, Mark, Peter. Kylie: "Preferred contractor proposes £50k input for new false ceiling, safety flooring, tiling, steel kitchen units, till, safe, tables, chairs, gutters, painting in & out..." Café and boats storage area would have to be separate areas as will be run by different organizations – Mark suggests transparent partition between the 2 areas. Other suggestions: maximize Café area, with moveable tables & chairs, to create a flexible community space for holding events; false ceiling is claustrophobic therefore remove false ceiling to open up interior revealing roof beams & real ceiling as at Heaton Park Lakeside Café. Chaz: "**MCC would like to match preferred contractor's investment in the building...** Asset Management – reinvestment in building stock... long term opportunity to do something absolutely stunning..." Copy of MCC Condition Survey requested.

6.2 Kylie: "...reintroduction of boats on hold... Asset Management - to secure condition of building rather than improvements. Initial assessment: needs new roof... Roof spec £65k... ML money: £2.5k on toilets and £1.5k on transparent partition between Café and boat storage area... Prospective tender - preferred contractor investing £50k - new floor, false ceiling, kitchen, etc... They will open Café all year round, 7 days a week, from at least 10 a.m. to 4 p.m... 5-year contract not actually signed yet by Eamonn O'Rourke (ML Head of Leisure & Sports)... **Grand opening scheduled for Easter 2008...**" Members: "...this amounts to a total projected expenditure in the building of £119k including for a new roof and new false ceiling... for this level of investment surely possible to reveal high spacious interior with exposed roof beams... missed opportunity... CCTV would protect investment..." Kylie: "CCTV only good if being monitored which means revenue cost..."

7. Nature Conservation (see also items 5.7, 5.8, etc).

7.1 Proposed Local Nature Reserve designation. Email 11.6.07 from Jon Follows (MCC Green City Project officer): "...The process to designate is going very well – you will have seen the letter of endorsement from Natural England [see BHCCAT Minutes 6.6.07 AGM]. However we have hit a delay with the land ownership details as many parts of the Clough contain leaseholds. I am currently discussing the best way forward with our Legal dept, but I doubt we will be able to go to July's Executive committee..."

7.2 Draft Biodiversity Management Plan created by Ecology Services UK Ltd (director Pat Waring) emailed to BHCCAT members. Positive feedback. Plan in line with BHCCAT Wildlife Regeneration *restoring natural woodland biodiversity* project begun 2002 (see item 7.7). Visitor Centre 14.8.07 meeting: Jon, Saul, Peter. Review Draft Biodiversity Management Plan. Minor queries for Jon to clarify with Pat. Agreed good plan for increasing Clough's conservation value.

7.3 Suggestion MCC & BHCCAT apply for grant to commission contractor to carry out **Full Biodiversity Survey** including phased habitat survey and protected species survey – baseline for future reference for measuring / monitoring progress of biodiversity improvement (see item 7.2).

7.4 Lowther Forestry 17.8.07 completed felling & removal of Manchester Poplars. Kylie to request Lowther Forestry / Biota for **map of Clough showing location of 50-60 bat & bird boxes** which they were supposed to install, as part of their contract, to compensate for loss of habitat due to felling.

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7.5 Lake biodiversity enrichment. Proposal to create experimental island reed bed involving volunteers. Saul collecting materials (recycled bricks & welded mesh for gabions) in Visitor Centre yard. Programme for June / July 2008 ? Water level would need to be lowered. Apply for grant for volunteers' expenses e.g. insurance, waders, tools, refreshments, publicity, and for additional materials e.g. clay and reed rhizomes / seedlings.

7.6 Email 10.7.07 from Stephanie Banks (MCC Environmental Awareness officer): "...I am coordinating a number of activities for this year's Clean up the World campaign... anything that raises awareness of or takes action against climate change... we are also very keen to promote activities that are undertaken throughout the year..." Email 10.8.07 from Stephanie to John Howard (ML North Area Parks Assistant manager), Joe Walsh (MCC Arboricultural officer) and others: "...further to the meeting a few weeks ago with Peter Milner we would like to carry out the project discussed – **extending the ponds and planting some native trees to extend into the meadow**... I have been approached by Corporate Personnel to identify a team building activity for 15 senior managers such as Richard Paver and Jon Redfern and this looks like an ideal opportunity. They have asked for the event to take place on October 8th... Peter and Joe, please can I take advice from you in terms of what types of tree we need to buy – Peter mentioned Oak trees..." Email 31.8.07 from Stephanie: "...I will be ordering 150 Oak whips... I hope to get some good publicity out of the event and use it as an opportunity to encourage more volunteers to join Peter's group..."

7.7 Wildlife Regeneration volunteers restoring natural woodland biodiversity with Peter on Saturdays (see also items 7.2, 12). Particular thanks to regulars Paul McCrystal and Steve. Among other tasks: in lower Fish Pond Clough above main avenue, fell over abundant semi-mature Sycamores; wood to be used to reinforce sides of new seasonal pond.

7.8 Walk lower Boggart Hole Clough brook 23.6.07: Bill Harrop (Community Network for Manchester Transport Pool coordinator), Dan Silver (North Manchester Community Network Neighbourhood Engagement worker), Dot Keller (Friends of Blackley Forest chair), Tricia Jones (Environment Network for Manchester coordinator), Steve, Peter. Investigate possible **link for people & wildlife from River Irk to Clough along route of Clough brook**. Houses built 2003 over lower ¼ mile of Clough brook near confluence with Irk, so link blocked & broken along this section. Clough brook piped beneath Rochdale Road separating 2 woodland areas: road elevated here so feasible to construct underpass wide enough to allow passage through for brook, animals, pedestrians, cyclists. "Irk Valley Local Plan... January 2007... NMR... The Irk Valley Trail to include a cycle & walking trail traversing the entire length of the Irk Valley and its tributaries which will be available from all... main destination park sites, enabling safe, non-motorised circulation from the City Centre... Linkages & Connections which will essentially be open spaces that serve to link the park elements as a continuous corridor... Develop interventions for sites which are severed by major roads... to create better connectivity..."

8. Rochdale & Charlestown Roads corner, site of building demolished 2004 (see also items 4, 5.2).

8.1 RRRAG responses to MCC's **initial artist's impressions of proposed corner pedestrian gateway** (2 designs 9871 and 9872): "...9871 looks like entrance to Klu Klux Klan or homage to Harry Potter... 9872 not grand enough, this is the first glimpse of Clough to visitors to city exiting M60, it is uninspiring. Could we not have a circular or more organic arch over the entrance ? In both designs two blocks and a stump feature [traffic lights electronic box]. Could we detract from these necessary but negative and ugly features by providing large planters either side of the stump... Name of park in wrought iron on gateway – wrought iron railings around perimeter to side gate... Keep entrance in present position on Rochdale road... To create an entrance at [this corner] would create a serious hazard for all users... could be a danger to both pedestrians and drivers... 9871 much too harsh... 9872 much better – requires rounded arch with name incorporated in wrought iron letters... I am well impressed with this idea for the Clough entrance... I would however like to see an arched top to the entrance..."

8.2 MCC's initial artist's impressions of proposed corner pedestrian gateway viewed at 21.6.07 meeting at Cafe (see item 6.1). Wrought iron sharp angled structure over gate criticised – looks too mechanical; better something more organic looking, or better still simply an arch with *Boggart Hole Clough* written across it. Suggestion for chicane at gateway to stop motorbikes entering and to slow down pedal cycles leaving. Kylie says will order **revised artist's impressions**.

8.3 For further consultation need plans, including artist's impressions, showing **options elaborating various ideas suggested for this site** over last couple of years e.g. corner pedestrian gateway, closed railed corner, car park, sculptured timber monolith / totem pole, replica Iron Age timber Roundhouse, beacon tree e.g. Giant Redwood.

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9. Healthy activities, Play & Sports (see also items 5.4, 5.5, 7.7, etc). **Wheels for All** scheme enabling people with learning and/or physical disabilities to ride adapted cycles under supervision in Clough. Ann (ML North Area Parks warden) and Saul run weekly Wednesday afternoon and Friday morning sessions on athletics track. Intention: move towards independent Clough Wheels Club - Boggart Bikers.

9.1 Boggart Bikers Family Funday 1.7.07, 1 - 4 p.m., athletics track. Organized & sponsored primarily by *Zest*. Poster: "...bring your own bikes, bring the kids bikes and join in the fun... adapted cycles for loan to people with disabilities... bike races for all age groups... cycle coaching sessions... assistance with bike repairs... information stalls..." Rain - 20 people turned up despite rain – rained off. Intend rerun last week of October to coincide with schools half term. *Zest* will collect names and contact details of those interested to form Boggart Bikers Club.

9.2 Bid for £6,941 to *Local Network Fund for Children & Young People* via *Community Foundation for Greater Manchester* successful – letter dated 6.6.07. To purchase **adapted cycles for children with a range of disabilities** enabling them to ride cycles suited to their needs. Pedal Tricycles (small & medium), Pedal Cycles (Quadcycle & GoKart), Hand Cycle, Hydraulic portable hoist, Insurance of this equipment, and Health & Safety training for parents and carers to independently access the equipment.

9.3 Kylie: "ML team is **reviewing staffing of Wheels for All to make it sustainable...** we could run Wheels every day, there's a huge demand..." Shirley: "...scheme needs to be mainstreamed into Council Services... pulling together meeting with Primary Care Trust, Fighting Fit, Sports Development..."

10. Arts & Heritage (see also items 5.2, 5.8, 6, 7, 8, etc). **Summer 2008 Musical Picnics**. Intention: apply for another Charlestown MCC CASH grant to put on another Teddy Bears Picnic (see item 5.4). BHCCAT wishes to partner MCC in developing / delivering further events, e.g. world music concert with the Grand Union Orchestra, but Harpurhey & Moston CASH grants unavailable as Clough considered by MCC to be outside these wards.

11. Anti-social behaviour / Safety & Security: see items 5.2, 5.7, 6.2, 8.1, 8.2, 9.2, 12.

12. Training. Peter (BHCCAT Volunteers coordinator) attended Fundamentals of Health & Safety in the Workplace course 12.7.07 at Harpurhey Community Centre, and First Aid – Appointed Person course 16.7.07 at Abraham Moss College. Sponsor: Scarman Trust. Provider: Capsarius Training.

13. Treasurer's report (see also items 7.3, 7.5, 9.2, 10, etc). Copies of accounts distributed.

14. Next quarterly **Executive Committee Open Meeting** – arrangements left in abeyance.