

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

Minutes

of Annual General Meeting held 6 July 2005

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), Bob Hill, David McCracken (MCC ML North Area Parks manager), David Wilson (Lakeside Café leaseholder), Freyja McCormick, James Walmsley (*Community Arts* Events organizer), Jean Finch, Mark Hackett (Trust chair, Charlestown councillor MCC Executive member for Culture & Leisure), Mervyn Romain, Peter Milner (Trust secretary), Ray Malone (Trust deputy chair), Ron Baines, Rose Mason, Sam McCormick (Trust treasurer), Saul Mearns (MCC ML North Area Parks warden), Shirley McCardell (MCC North Manchester Partnership [NMP] Zest Healthy Living Project coordinator), Sue Dippnall, Suzanne O'Callaghan.
- 2. Apologies** for absence: none.
- 3. Election of trustees and officers.** Bob, David W, Jean, Mark, Peter, Ray, Ron, Rose, Sam, Sue and Suzanne elected as trustees. Ray, Mark, Sam and Peter elected as chair, deputy chair, treasurer and secretary respectively.
- 4. Minutes of previous meeting 27.4.05** (revised Minutes dated 6.7.05) agreed as true record.
- 5. MCC/ML management report** (see also items 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, etc).
 - 5.1 Angel Hill War Memorial** regeneration (see also item 10.7). Request copies Queen's Park Restoration Studios' surveys and estimates re restoring stonework and renewing missing plaques, etc (MCC's £200K restoration of city's war memorials). Mark suggests plaques include names of local people killed on active service since WW2. Also could open up sight-lines/vistas: original sight-lines if they can be identified (probably including e.g. view from seats below Mount Carmel Church, top of Old Road) – maybe original monument plans can be found showing sight-lines - and perhaps new sight-lines, to increase monument's visibility so it becomes focal point/landmark. This increased visibility should also, in turn, inhibit vandalism. Contact Joe Walsh (MCC ML arboriculturist) re feasibility of opening up sight-lines through woodland.
 - 5.2 Green Flag inspection** 7.6.05. David McC, Joe, John Howard (MCC ML North Area Parks assistant manager), Peter and Saul accompanied 2 Green Flag judges on walkabout. Joe recommended Conservation volunteers begin felling/weeding Sycamore saplings/seedlings in areas of monopolization/over-abundance – opportunity for coppicing.
 - 5.3 Tree Preservation Order** (TPO) application for 8 trees, within David Lewis Recreation Ground perimeter, along Lewis Avenue. Suggestion TPO application extended to include whole of Clough's woodland to ensure no trees felled without good reason. David McC to contact Joe.
 - 5.4** David Lewis Recreation Ground **football pitch unsafe/unuseable** because strewn with broken glass.
 - 5.5 Tarmac resurfacing of paths** opposite bottom of 99 Steps & up Handrail Brow, and around Bowling Green, nearing completion.
- 6. Charlestown Ward Service Co-ordination Group** meeting 16.5.05 focussed on Clough. Present among others: David McC, Eric Hobin (Charlestown councillor), Jeff Staniforth (MCC ML City Parks & Operations manager), Julie Connor (MCC NMP manager), Mark, Peter, Shirley.
 - 6.1** Jeff suggests application to English Nature for **Local Nature Reserve** designation to unlock more resources, etc. Complementing application for inclusion in English Heritage *Register of Parks & Gardens of special historic interest in England*, this double designation would give Clough a quite unique and special status.
 - 6.2** Julie proposes **new, enlarged Visitor Centre** to replace, in same general area as, present prefab Visitor Centre. Suggestions that it should serve as Boggart Hole Clough & Bailey's Wood (both Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands) Activity Visitor Centre/Woodland Heritage Centre/Biodiversity Restoration Centre with café, class/meeting rooms, forestry products workshop, specialist Natural Woodland Conservation Management library, exhibition space, offices, storerooms, etc.
 - 6.3** Julie said potential **nature trail link to River Irk was inadvertently thwarted** in 2003 by building new houses over bottom ¼ mile of Boggart Hole Clough Brook between Slack Road and the Irk. Need to explore ways of linking Clough to Irk & Bailey's Wood via nature trails/wildlife corridors/eco-ducts to join Clough to Manchester's evolving Natural Heritage Trails Network – at present Clough cut-off, isolated, stagnant pocket.
- 7. Conservation** (see also items 5, 6, 10, etc).
 - 7.1 Lake & Island** regeneration. Suggestions include e.g. to drain Lake, remove rubbish from Lake bottom, eradicate invasive Rhododendron from Island, remove silt from Lake to Island, construct gabions in Lake for planting with oxygenating aquatics. Need fully worked out, properly considered, costed and funded plan so lake empty for minimal time. John to obtain Lake management plans from Platt Fields & Debdale Parks, Chorlton Water Park, etc, to enable consideration of further alternative options. Sam suggests commission written report of recommendations from freshwater ecologist from e.g. English Nature/Ponds Conservation Trust.

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7.2 Restoring Ancient Woodland biodiversity (see also items 5.2, 5.3, 6, 10). Nature Conservation Group & Wildlife Gardening Club volunteers - particular thanks to regulars Leanne, Maureen, Michael (& Tara), Rose, Sue and Tristan - working with Peter on Sundays. Tasks included pulling out invasive **Himalayan Balsam** throughout Fish Pond Clough and Middle Clough.

8. Arts, sports, events.

8.1 **Funding 8.8.04 Brass music concert.** Voluntary Action Manchester (VAM) Neighbourhood Renewal Community Chest Funding Agreement: Louise McManus (NMP officer taken over North City Arts brief from Tom Sabin) to write *Final Grant Report* due at VAM 31.7.05.

8.2 **Picnic in the Park** Lakeside Music programme drawn up by James: 1 or 2 soloists/ensembles to play in Lakeside Café environs on six Saturday afternoons 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., starting 30.7.05. ML published *Leisure Events* calendar showing 3 Sundays for these concerts. Unaware of this, Peter and James in line with previous meeting's decision for experimentation decided upon 6 consecutive Saturdays.

8.3 *Zest/ML & Wheels For All* under Trust umbrella 26.5.05 bid for £1475.00 VAM Community Chest grant to fund **Cycle Open Day**. Date of VAM's grant award decision requires postponing event to September/October. In meantime Shirley intends mounting Cycle Open *Half Day* event 20.7.05.

9. **Security** (see also items 5.1, 5.4, 10.7). Arboriculturist, private contractor removing diseased Manchester Poplars, threatened by people in car with batons; 3 power saws subsequently stolen.

10. **Projects development review** meeting 29.6.05. Present: David Boothroyd & Steve North (MCC ML Development officers), John, Peter. Preliminary list and prioritization. John to search MCC online Grantfinder system.

10.1 **Japanese Knotweed (JK)** eradication. John to request Saul to map JK. Could then perhaps obtain estimates/tenders from private contractors 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. individual plants on site of demolished building corner Rochdale & Charlestown Roads, and infestation in area around rebuilt wall along path from Oak Bank Avenue.

10.2 **Heritage Exhibition.** Proposed Manchester City Art Gallery curated exhibition re Clough history on same lines as their Heaton Park exhibition to engender local interest/involvement, support major grant bids, etc. Contact Ada Nzeribe (MCC NMP Cultural Regeneration officer).

10.3 **Lake & Island** regeneration, see item 7.1.

10.4 **Footbridges** renewal programme. Footbridge over Fish Pond Clough including railings extended from bridge corners for some distance along ravine sides.

10.5 Second **Children's Playground** perhaps including skate park. Locate near Visitor Centre where there used to be a playground, or picnic area adjacent to Lake, or elsewhere? Possible exhibition of alternative designs.

10.6 **Angel Hill War Memorial** regeneration, see items 5.1, 10.7.

10.7 **CCTV & Lighting.** CCTV for e.g. environs of Boathouse, Visitor Centre, War Memorial. Floodlighting War Memorial. Lighting along some Avenues, etc.

10.8 **Permanent Stage/Bandstand.** Locate in the Dell or picnic area adjacent to Lake or elsewhere? Possible architectural competition/exhibition of alternative designs.

10.9 **Survey/audit of flora & fauna.** Contact Wildlife Trust or Greater Manchester Ecology Unit. To supplement ongoing Botanical Society of the British Isles survey and developing Conservation Volunteers survey.

10.10 **Pond with wheelchair-friendly platform for pond dipping,** on identified marshy site near Visitor Centre. Conservation volunteers could excavate and transplant flora to other areas of Clough. Resulting pond could then be planted with aquatics and platform designed, costed, funded, constructed.

11. **Treasurer's report/funding issues** (see also items 5.1, 6.1, 8, 10, etc).

11.1 **Current account** balance at 1.7.05 of £1914.10p. Copies of accounts distributed. Copies of invoices available.

11.2 Money raised during **collection** 7.5.05, arranged by Ron, outside Harpurhey Asda: £62.00p. To be deposited in current account.

12. **Next Executive Committee Open Meeting:** Wednesday 14 September 05, 6.30 p.m., Visitor Centre. Everyone is 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.

