

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

Minutes

of Annual General Meeting held 7th June 2006

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

Manchester City Council (MCC) departments – MCG: Manchester City Galleries, ML: Manchester Leisure, MLDP: Manchester Learning Disability Partnership (NHS), NMP: North Manchester Partnership (NCA: North City Arts, Zest: Healthy Living Project).

1. Present: Ann Williams (ML North Area Parks warden), Harry Gorton, Jean Finch, Kylie Ward (ML North Area Parks manager), Lawrence Jerome, Mark Hackett (Charlestown councillor, MCC Executive member for Culture & Leisure), Mervyn Romain, Peter Milner, Ray Malone, Shelly Meadows, Shirley McCardell (Zest Harpurhey & Moston Hub coordinator), Suzanne O'Callaghan, Terry Maher, Winifred Page.

2. Apologies for absence: Barry Noble (ML Play Areas Development manager), Neil Ashton.

3. Election of Trustees and Officers. Basil Curley (Charlestown councillor), Eric Hobin (Charlestown councillor), Jean, John Biggs (Charlestown TARA chair, Whitemoss Youth Club Development coordinator), Mark, Neil, Peter, Rose Mason, Sam McCormick, Shelly and Suzanne elected Trustees. Neil, Mark, Peter and Jean elected Chair pro tem, Deputy Chair, Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

4. Minutes of previous meeting 1.3.06 (revised Minutes dated 7.6.06) agreed as true record.

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

5.1 Kylie: *"Private contractors, not ML staff, now do grounds maintenance - grass cutting, shrub pruning, litter picking...including weekends to clear up after drinking...should receive better standard of work..."*

5.2 **Lifebelts** not provided around Lake because too heavy, used as toys, get stolen. More *"No Swimming"* notices to be installed. North Area Parks wardens to be trained re water safety, risks & hazards, and rescue using inflatable dinghies and shore based rescue using e.g. branches & ropes.

5.3 Another 4 **kissing gates** to be installed - Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) certified. Kylie: *"They will slow motorbikes down but some can get through..."*

5.4 Another 5 **lecterns** to be installed. Check 3.6.06 of existing information boards:- 2 vertical display boards: contained up-to-date info; 7 lecterns: 2 contained up-to-date info, 1 contained out-of-date info, 4 contained no info/no perspex cover.

5.5 **Lakeside Café** (see also item 5.6) closed 29.4.06, leaseholder David Wilson left. Over 20 applications for lease; open to all to apply. Kylie: *"...not competitive tender but who ML considers will run Café to benefit of Clough...make biggest contribution in terms of service to Clough...sustainable business plan...must be professionally run..."* Some members said Café (with only toilets in Clough apart from those at Visitor Centre) should be considered as an essential service/public amenity and therefore should be let rent free if open all year, 7 days a week, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

5.6 Members believe **Boathouse** (see also items 5.5, 5.7) is underused, underdeveloped, largely wasted asset - ripe for renovation. Suggestion e.g. to open up interior (remove partition and false ceiling) creating flexible community space for exhibitions, concerts, meetings, workshops, functioning alongside privately run café. Also suggestion rowing boats (if boating reintroduced) housed in Boathouse once again. Perhaps MCC with Trust could obtain grant for interior remodelling. Mark: *"...there could be a break when Café closed for rent free period (if not already rent free) to allow works to be done..."* Kylie says MCC in-house architectural service could survey building and put forward ideas for redesigning interior. Community Technical Aid Centre (CTAC) volunteer architect may be willing to do same.

5.7 Winifred & others worried that reintroducing **boating** would probably destroy the quite diverse aquatic bird life by e.g. destroying nests - Grebes presently nesting off west side of Island which has not happened before in recent years.

5.8 **Tree Preservation Order** (TPO) application for 16 trees, within David Lewis Recreation Ground perimeter, along Lewis Avenue. No progress. Kylie: *"...new guidelines...there's no reason why MCC shouldn't get this TPO..."*

5.9 John says there are **plans to build houses** on site of former Clough Top Boys School (later North Manchester High School for Girls annexe) adjacent to Shackcliffe Green/White Walk, upper reach of Clough. Site managed by MCC Education Department. Suggested alternative to building houses: incorporate into Park and reforest.

5.10 Survey of Ancient Woodland **trees felled without MCC authorization** during November and December 05 by groups of offenders supervised by Probation Service in 3 areas of Clough. Survey, carried out 25.2.06 by Peter & Neil, attached to letter dated 30.5.06 from Mark to Greater Manchester Probation Service: *"...I am very concerned about the standard of supervision (of offenders) and the failure to act on existing woodland management and biodiversity plans. This is unacceptable and is a failure to act responsibly...your thoughts about how joint work can be taken forward...within clear policy and operational guidelines...consideration should be given to the scope and appropriateness of projects undertaken..."* Copies of survey and letter distributed.

BOGGART HOLE CLOUGH COMMUNITY ACTION TRUST

Protecting and revitalizing Boggart Hole Clough Ancient Woodland Park

6. Conservation (see also items 5.6 - 5.10, 7.1, 8.2, 8.3, etc). **Restoring Ancient Woodland biodiversity.** Nature Conservation Group & Wildlife Gardening Club volunteers – particular thanks to regulars Harvey Keeley, Neil Ashton, Rose Mason, Sean Keeley – working with Peter on Saturdays: in areas cleared of invasive Rhododendron during 2003-4, planted 50 Hawthorn, 40 Holly, 20 Silver Birch, 10 Pedunculate Oaks, 10 Sessile Oaks, 10 Hazel, 5 Rowan, 5 Goat Willow saplings thereby bolstering these same native species already present in these areas but depleted by invasive Rhododendron. Thanks to MCC for purchasing our *wish list* of saplings.

7. **Healthy activities, Play & Sports** (see also items 6, 8, etc).

7.1 **Wheels for All** (Cycling Projects, Pendlebury) scheme enabling people with learning and/or physical disabilities to ride adapted cycles in Clough on regular basis. Saul Mearns (ML North Area Parks warden) and Ann continue running popular weekly Wednesday sessions on Athletics Track. Northfield Day Centre (New Moston) parents' group £3K contribution towards running costs e.g. staff training, insurance, buying/hiring/maintaining cycles. Other sponsors include: North Manchester Primary Care Trust/Patient & Public Involvement in health (PPI), MLDP Fighting Fit, Gaddum Centre, Kellogs. Budget managed by Zest. Unltd £5K grant bid unsuccessful. £5,391.05 PPI grant bid submitted 24.5.06 (£391.05 of this bid is for Conservation Volunteers' expenses – see item 6).

7.2 Proposed **new Play Areas** at Charlestown side of Clough. Barry forwarded draft plan showing Under-8s playground on site of former playground behind Visitor Centre, and Over-8s playground, Multi-use games area & Skatepark located on meadow to left of path from Visitor Centre to Angel Hill. Latter location criticised: inappropriate site as divorced from other facilities and not overlooked (e.g. by houses) therefore more liable to be vandalized. Suggestion should be 2 skateparks – Junior & Senior. Priority: Under-8s playground. To be arranged: meeting to consider other possible sites and consultations regarding alternative designs from different manufacturers for Under-8s playground.

8. **Arts & Heritage** (see also items 5.6, 6, etc).

8.1 **Summer Sunday afternoon Musical events.** Meeting 3.5.06 Visitor Centre: Ada Nzeribe (NCA Cultural Regeneration officer), Ann, Mark, Neil, Peter, Saul, Shirley. Ada: "*NCA's budget been cut because Neighbourhood Renewal Budget being reduced year on year...*" Ada proposes themed musical events on 4 Sunday afternoons in August: 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th. Suggestions for themes: Local musicians focus, Families with young children focus (Teddy Bears' Picnic, Madhatter's Tea Party, face painting, dressing up), Afternoon Teas & Tea Dance with Swing bands, Foods of the World & World Music, West African music (e.g. Kora: 21-stringed harp/lute), Japanese music (e.g. Shakuhachi flute, Koto zither), Chinese violin & flute, Thumb piano, Marimba, Woodwind. Louise Wiley (NCA Events organizer) meeting Peter & others interested 12.6.06 for walkabout / further discussion.

8.2 **Local Schools History & Arts Boggart Project** (see also item 8.3). Three MCC CAS:H grants totalling £9K to promote wider awareness & appreciation of Clough's history & environment, involving North Manchester High School for Boys (NMHSB) and 5 Primary Schools - Charlestown, Crosslee, Holy Trinity, Moston Fields, St John Bosco. Budget managed by Zest. Project consultant: Julie Evans (NMHSB Community Arts director); Community artists: Saira Knowles (MCG) & Katy McCall (MCG). School children's tours of Clough with school teachers plus Julie, Saira, Katy, Shirley, Elaine Monk (Zest Blackley & Charlestown Hub coordinator), Ann, Saul, Peter: exploring, studying, discussing the mythology of Boggarts and their Ancient Woodland habitat to create Boggart dances, masks, paintings, sculptures, songs & stories. Julie 27.4.06 email: "...*The response (to the project) from pupils, staff & parents has been tremendous...*" Project exhibition/celebration: 21.6.06 Visitor Centre & environs.

8.3 **St John's Eve Event** 23.6.06 (pilot event with idea of annual event) complementing Local Schools History & Arts Boggart Project (item 8.2) which works up to this event. Event celebrating Clough's heritage (including Schools Boggart Project exhibition, documentary exhibition exploring Clough's literary connections, talks re 19th century local resident, radical & writer, Samuel Bamford, dialect prose, poetry & musical performances, lantern procession commemorating traditional gathering of St John's Fern seeds on St John's Eve) and 10 preparatory events (poetry evenings, lantern-making workshops). Heather Mawhinney (PhD in Comparative Literature), project facilitator, withdrew from project at end of April; project unmanageable for remaining volunteers. Meeting 3.5.06 Visitor Centre (see item 8.1): event postponed with intention to redevelop project's ideas in more manageable formats over next several years. Voluntary Action Manchester (VAM) Community Learning Chest £1,713.73 grant returned; letter dated 22.5.06 from Helen Taylor (VAM Finance & Monitoring Team): "...*please be assured that this will not jeopardize any future grant applications that you may make to VAM...*" Also informed of postponement: MCC Voluntary Sector Team (re Neighbours' Day grant bid) and booked performers & speakers; letter dated 2.6.06 from guest speaker Dr Robert Poole (Samuel Bamford biographer): "...*I hope that something similar will be possible in the future as the project develops, and I would of course be pleased to be involved...*"

8.4 Kylie proposes MCC *Valuing Older People* grant bid for e.g. **brass bands concert** in September at Lakeside. Kylie & Shelly to work on application.

9. Security (see also items 5.2, 5.3, etc). Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership: Greater Manchester Police (GMP) & MCC Local Tasking meetings initiated operation putting **GMP off-road motorbike squad** into north Manchester; successful operation in Clough one weekend: 14 warnings issued to motorbikers & 4 motorbikes confiscated. Kylie: "*I will get hold of Clough related crime statistics for the Trust...*"

10. **Treasurer's report** (see also items 5.6, 7.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, etc). Copies of accounts distributed.

10.1 Cheque for £137.20 received from Ron Baines (**collection by volunteers** 7.5.05 outside Harpurhey Asda: £62.00 + collections & raffles at Summer 2005 Saturday afternoon Lakeside concerts: £75.20).

11. Next quarterly **Executive Committee Open Meeting** – Wednesday 13th September 06, 6 p.m., Visitor Centre.