

BOGGART HOLE CLOUGH COMMUNITY ACTION TRUST

Protecting and revitalizing Boggart Hole Clough Ancient Woodland Park

Minutes

of Executive Committee Open Meeting held 13th December 2006

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

Manchester City Council (MCC) departments - **MCG**: Manchester City Galleries, **ML**: Manchester Leisure, **NMP**: North Manchester Partnership (**NCA**: North City Arts, **Zest**: healthy living project).

1. Present: Ann Williams (ML North Area Parks warden), Barry Gamlin, Basil Curley (Trust chair pro tem, Charlestown councillor), Bill Brookes, Eddie Turnock, Harry Gorton, Jean Finch (Trust treasurer), Ken Hill, Kylie Ward (ML North Area Parks manager), Mark Hackett (Trust deputy chair, Charlestown councillor, MCC Executive member for Culture & Leisure), Mervyn Romain, Norman Clough, Peter Milner (Trust secretary), Saul Mearns (ML North Area Parks warden), Shirley McCardell (*Zest* Harpurhey & Moston Hub coordinator), Suzanne O'Callaghan, Terry Maher.

2. Apologies for absence: Frances Mananasy, Shelly Meadows.

3. Minutes of previous quarterly Executive Committee Open Meeting 13.9.06 (revised Minutes dated 13.12.06) agreed as true record.

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

4.1 Angel Hill War Memorial. 21.9.06 partially corroded bronze Winged Victory statue and plaques (inscribed with names of local people killed in 2 World Wars) removed to National Conservation Centre, Liverpool, where restored and lacquered to prevent future corrosion; statue and plaques returned to plinth 2.11.06. Chipped sandstone plinth also repaired. Work coordinated by MCG. £40K cost paid by MCC. All agreed: excellent job done.

4.2 Green Flag awarded for 6th consecutive year. *Assessment* recommendations include establishing: "...CCTV on recreation area... new building facility on the existing (Visitor Centre) site, with a community meeting room and education centre..." Award ceremony & celebration buffet 26.11.06 Visitor Centre.

5. Nature Conservation / Wildlife Regeneration (see also items 4.2, 7.2, 9.1, etc).

5.1 Birds injured, some fatally, by fishing hooks & lines during 2006. Quoted from emails Peter received 15.11.06 and 16.11.06 from Nigel S. Fowler, Trustee, Three Owls Bird Sanctuary & Reserve, Norden, Rochdale: "...*These are all admittances (from the Clough) during 2006...* [1] *Moorhen. Line around leg imbedded. Unable to repair. Leg removed. Bird in sanctuary aviary;* [2] *Mallard. Line around legs causing swelling and wounds. Line removed. 10 day course of antibiotics. Bird later released;* [3] *Mute Swan. Hook in neck. Removed at vets. Bird released after treatment;* [4] *Canada Goose. Leg badly infected and damaged due to fishing line. Bird had to be put to sleep;* [5] *Cygnets. Line wrapped around beak, down throat and into crop. Lacerations in mouth. Very underweight due to not able to feed. Line removed at vets but bird died two days later;* [6] *Mallard. Hook through beak just above nostrils. Removed at vets. Bird released after course of treatment;* [7] *Canada Goose. Hook in tip of beak. Removed on site. Slightly infected. Bird released after course of treatment;* [8] *Mute Swan. Treble hook and line in leg. It took ½ hour and 3 people to remove the hooks and line safely. The bird had lost a great deal of blood, and chunks of flesh had been ripped from its leg. After a course of treatment during which the bird had no use of its leg at all it was successfully returned to full fitness and put back into the wild... We would not consider returning ANY rehabilitated wildfowl to Boggart Hole Clough until it has been cleaned up sufficiently not to present a danger to their lives..."* Also swan found dead 18.10.06 behind Boathouse – no autopsy so cause of death unknown. Wardens requested to keep record of dead & injured birds and copy to Trust. Ian Hares employed by Environment Agency fishing department is apparently bailiff for Clough waters. Need proper bailiff i.e. frequently on site. Clearly some anglers leave discarded hooks & lines lying around. Kylie: "We will ban anglers from the Park if they don't behave responsibly..." Thorough clean-up required.

5.2 Lodge, Island & Fish Pond biodiversity enrichment proposals to rejuvenate ecologically failing priority habitat (*ponds & lodges*) in Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP): create wildlife habitat at western end of Lake allowing for possible reintroduction of rowboating in half of Lake nearest to Boathouse. Graham Jones (Greater Manchester Ecology Unit LBAP manager) recommended reinforcing proposals with additional reed beds; therefore grant bid to SITA Trust withdrawn. Intention to submit revised bid before next SITA Trust deadline 29.12.06. With view to restoring Island's natural woodland biodiversity, Saul and Peter carried out floral survey 6.11.06.

5.3 Japanese Knotweed. ML & Trust still intend applying for grant to pay private contractors to carry out 5-year spraying programme guaranteeing eradication.

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5.4 Manchester Poplars, 811 in Clough. Most infected with venturia populina disease making them prone to collapse. For public safety therefore most Poplars to be felled. Felling due to begin February 07. Meeting to be arranged: to agree measures for safeguarding Clough's ecological value from effects of felling operations.

5.5 Woodland conservation volunteers restoring Natural Woodland biodiversity. Trust volunteers (Nature Conservation Group & Wildlife Gardening Club) - particular thanks to regulars Anthony Trebilcok, Chris Shaw, Rose Mason – working with Peter on Saturdays: extend and deepen Seasonal Pond on meadow/woodland edge. Drop in number of volunteers attributable to Café closed Saturdays – volunteers need, deserve, enjoy some refreshments. Also thanks to 200 volunteers - *Helping Hands* from Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints: directed by ML staff 23.9.06 weeded Himalayan Balsam and cleared Rhododendron around 5-Ways.

5.6 Tree Preservation Order (TPO) application for 16 trees along Lewis Avenue, David Lewis Recreation Ground. 24.11.06 meeting Visitor Centre: Kylie, Jean, Suzanne, Peter. David Lewis Rec was willed to people of Manchester - was given with conditions; MCC have lost the Deeds. TPOs are administered by MCC: for trees on land owned by MCC they are unwilling to grant TPOs.

5.7 Progress re Local Nature Reserve (LNR) designation. Meeting arranged for 29.1.07: Jon Follows (MCC Environmental Strategy officer), Saul, Peter – to define LNR boundaries and elaborate Biodiversity Improvement Plan; perhaps apply for grant to commission biodiversity survey from e.g. Biota. LNR status should engender / ensure best practice for tackling ecology related problems e.g. those mentioned above: injured birds, failing priority habitat (Lake), invasive floral species, etc.

6. Healthy activities, Play & Sports (see also items 5.5, 7.1, 7.2, etc).

6.1 Wheels for All scheme enabling people with learning and/or physical disabilities to ride adapted cycles under supervision in Clough; Ann and Saul run weekly Wednesday sessions on athletics track. Trial: extra sessions on Fridays 10.30 a.m. - 1.30 p.m., usually 8-10 service users. Scheme has become an essential service. Need to raise funds; could be run with £15K per annum. Social Services send people to project but don't contribute funds. All big employers in area been written to.

6.2 Proposed Under-8s Playground adjacent to Visitor Centre carpark and avenue to Angel Hill: overlooked by Visitor Centre - clear line of sight, and convenient - next to carpark (see also item 9.1). Two consultations 12.8.06 at Whitemoss Youth Club and 13.8.06 at Lakeside Café: 5 alternative designs from different manufacturers displayed with questionnaire - 5 designs narrowed down to 3. Third consultation 4.10.06 Visitor Centre: exhibition, with questionnaire, of 3 designs - result: Proludic design chosen. Email 16.11.06 to Kylie from anonymous writer: *"I am putting in an objection to the Adventure Park, as this will cause problems with the older children who will be using the Park at night time, for their drinking etc and giving residents in the area problems. You say the Park on Dam Head do not have any problems, but this Park is fenced in, which I understand that this Park will not be. So now the older children will have a Park to sit in and also to abuse..."* Kylie: *"...there would in fact be a fence around the proposed Playground..."* Agreed: scheme should go ahead.

7. Arts & Heritage (see also items 4.1, 5, etc).

7.1 Summer 07 Sunday afternoon Musical Picnics. Meeting 27.9.06 NMP office: Ada Nzeribe (NCA Cultural Regeneration officer), Heath Cole (NMP Charlestown & Moston Wards Support officer), Jean, Peter. Proposed: bid for MCC CASH grants to put on 3 events.

7.2 Boggart Festival project, promoting greater appreciation of Clough's history & environment, involved 7 local primary schools bringing 300 children together in Clough 21.6.06. Innovative, successful project laying basis for future *Boggart Festivals* / heritage exploration events. Thanks to *Zest* for managing budget: 3 MCC CASH grants totalling £9K; completed Monitoring & Evaluation Reports submitted 6.12.06 to Heath & Dean Snee (NMP Harpurhey Ward Support officer); MCC to pay *Zest* by budget transfer.

7.3 Fireworks display 4.11.06.

7.4 Carol Singing accompanied by Blackley Brass Band, 15.12.06 Lakeside Café.

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8. Progress re Old Boathouse **Lakeside Café** long-term management and renovation to realize full potential of this largely wasted asset. Café closed from 4.9.06 to 30.9.06. When reopened 1.10.06: open 6 days a week, closed Saturdays. Now apparently to be open only on Sundays ?

8.1 *Save our vital café.* Email 25.9.06 from Peter to Kylie, and email 26.9.06 from Kylie to Peter, re Café closure including lack of toilets decreasing number of visitors to Clough, renovation as multi-purpose community facility, transparency re tender process, etc. See *Save our vital café* doc.

8.2 Steve Dyson (Probation Service Community Payback Team manager) 29.9.06 invited Peter and community members “to spend half a day with Manchester Community Payback Team on our **Informal Insight into Community Payback Tour** that we run for Magistrates, Judges and Home Office officials,” to see projects run by the National Offender Management Service with a view to bidding for tender to run Café. Tour 6.10.06 led by Steve and Paul Anderson (Unpaid Work Unit manager). Tour participants: Barry, Brian Holmes, Eddie, Harry, John Biggs, John Johnson, Ken, Peter, Roger Kirwin. Projects visited: St Vincent’s Laundry, Longsight, and The Angels Community Centre, Gorton, where Rev David Gray (Gorton Monastery Trust Community coordinator) explained that low risk offenders look after reception and will be running the kitchen.

8.3 **Re proposed Probation Service tender bid for Café.** Steve and Paul 19.10.06 met Peter at Café. Paul: “There would always be a supervisor... would be run by low risk offenders... We’d keep Café open 7 days a week including Christmas and Bank Holidays employing people if necessary to keep it open... limited number of offenders on premises at any one time, so always welcoming, convivial, not intimidating, threatening... Perhaps regular Sunday Luncheon Club...”

8.4 Kylie: “Café still in tendering process... **Invitation to tender for catering, boating & fishing at Boggart Hole Clough** - 14 page tender document drawn up by MCC Corporate Procurement Team... 5 year tender, potentially 2 year extension... specifications... Café will be open all year round, 7 days a week; guaranteed opening hours: Summer 10 a.m. - 6.30 p.m., Winter 10 a.m. - 4.30 p.m... ML wants Café to be community based, not too corporate; written in tender document that Community Facility... health & safety... staff will be CRB checked for offences against children... boating & fishing must not harm wildlife... contractors must look after property... full insight into financial record of tender bidders... tender bids to be returned by 30.1.07, contract signed by 5.3.07, contract starts 2.4.07... can’t disclose further information because private tender... Hopefully we won’t have problems with Café ever again... re disputes and problems which community members may report, if necessary MCC can override contractors running Café... contractors will take on building in present condition; we’re waiting on result of Condition Survey... ML has bought 6 rowing boats... Gary Gore, present leaseholder, having problems with staff... if Café remains closed we will put member of staff in...”

9. Anti-social behaviour / Safety & Security (see also items 5.1, 6.2, etc).

9.1 Worries re lack of **lighting and CCTV** for proposed Playground site (item 6.2) and other areas. Barry: “CCTV is challenge for vandals, creates more problems...” Kylie: “I’d love to have CCTV in the Clough...” Infra-red CCTV not need lighting. Need budget to monitor CCTV. Presently lighting on athletics track so cables in place. Mark: “We could start with lighting for Visitor Centre carpark area, and relatively modest lighting on avenue down to Café so not too much light pollution...” Basil: “We could knock a bid together...”

9.2 New **Warning signs, against illegal use of motor vehicles**, installed at 24 entrances to Clough. Sign acts as first warning: once sign been driven past Police can take immediate action by confiscating bikes. Pilot scheme in Clough; could be rolled out across city. Eddie: “Officers who check standards on bikes say often no guards on chain so acts like chainsaw causing terrible injuries... other major defects like no speed control...”

WARNING
ILLEGAL USE OF MOTOR VEHICLES
WILL LEAD TO PROSECUTION
VEHICLES WILL BE SEIZED
WITHOUT FURTHER WARNING
PURSUANT TO POLICE REFORM ACT S.59
GMPA MCC GMP

10. Administration. Bid submitted 2.11.06 to Community Foundation for Greater Manchester for £1,998.31 grant to purchase Information Communication Technology (ICT) for use of Trust members particularly the treasurer who has no ICT.

11. Treasurer’s report (see also items 5.2, 5.3, 5.6, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 9.1, 10, etc). Copies of accounts distributed.

12. Next quarterly **Executive Committee Open Meeting** – Wednesday 7th March 2007, 6 p.m., Visitor Centre.