

# BOGGART HOLE CLOUGH COMMUNITY ACTION TRUST

Protecting and revitalizing Boggart Hole Clough Ancient Woodland Park

## Minutes

### of Executive Committee Open Meeting held 13<sup>th</sup> September 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:** Barry Gamlin, Basil Curley (Charlestown councillor), Beryl Collier, Beryl Scrymgeour, Bill Brookes, Brian Holmes, Christopher Pendlebury (Group 4 Parks Patrol officer), C. Fayer, C. Hopkins, Dan Silver (North Manchester Community Network Neighbourhood Engagement worker), Debra Clarke, Dorothy Le Moignan, Eric Hobin (Charlestown councillor), Frances Mananasy, Harry Gorton, Iris Hayhurst, Jean Finch (Trust treasurer), Joan Fitzgerald, John Biggs, John Johnson, Jon Follows (MCC Environmental Strategy officer), Julie Summers, June Kirklin, Ken Hill, Kylie Ward (ML North Area Parks manager), Leo Armstrong, Mark Hackett (Trust deputy chair, Charlestown councillor, MCC Executive member for Culture & Leisure), Mervyn Romain, M. Stephenson, Nina Arkell, Norman Clough, Ossie Le Moignan, Paul Askew, Paul Clarke, Peter Milner (Trust secretary), P. Watson, Ray Malone, Reggie Stratton, R. Biggs, R. Duck, Saul Mearns (ML North Area Parks warden), Sidney Scrymgeour, Susan Coulson, Suzanne O'Callaghan.

**2. Apologies** for absence: Ada Nzeribe (NCA Cultural Regeneration officer), Shelly Meadows, Shirley McCardell (Zest Harpurhey & Moston Hub coordinator).

**3. Resignation and election.** Neil Ashton resigned as Trust chair. Basil elected unanimously as chair pro tem.

**4. Minutes of previous meeting 7.6.06** (revised Minutes dated 13.9.06) agreed as true record.

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

**5.1 Angel Hill War Memorial.** Presently scaffolding round monument; statue to be removed for restoration. Angel should be returned to plinth by November.

**5.2 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance.** Recently contractors installed 4 non-DDA compliant kissing gates by mistake; to be rectified. Basil: *"We must be careful not to allow wheelchair access to potentially dangerous areas bearing in mind the Clough's steep slopes and ravines."*

**5.3 Lakeside Café** reopened 8.7.06 (after 10 week closure) with new leaseholder, Gary Gore. Since 8.7.06 Café open irregularly (closed last 9 days) and often opening late and closing early. Suggestion to place Park warden at Boathouse. Harry: *"You can't expect private people to make Café pay. If Probation Service ran Café they wouldn't have to make it pay... should be run as community facility rather than as business..."* Kylie: *"ML couldn't manage to staff Café ourselves with our budget... We're getting somebody in as soon as possible... by beginning Summer 07 new people will be running it with clean uniforms, decent quality food and service similar to Heaton Park Boathouse Café... Probation Service can put tender in..."* Mark: *"Heaton Park Boathouse Café presently run by Manchester Fayre, an MCC catering operation...the Council has made considerable investment in Heaton Park Boathouse Café... Manchester Fayre could put in tender for Clough Café..."* Basil: *"Clough Café is not up to scratch... capital investment has to be put into the building... having only one toilet there is wrong..."*

**5.4 Green Flag** Inspection 21.6.06. Subsequently Green Flag awarded for 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.

**6. Nature Conservation / Wildlife Regeneration** (see also item 9.1, etc).

**6.1 Jon:** *"The Clough lends itself to becoming a **Local Nature Reserve (LNR)**. The city now has 4 LNRs - Blackley Forest, Chorlton Ees, Chorlton Water Park and Clayton Vale. We hope to declare Clough as LNR next year. The Clough is a Site of Biological Importance in Greater Manchester and contains a Semi-natural Ancient Woodland. LNR designation is a high status which Clough deserves..it's a reward, a celebration... LNR procedure...set up Steer group to define LNR boundaries and firm up Clough's general management plan with a more nature focused (biodiversity) action plan... Clough has great interest for people... a Nature Reserve on your doorstep... LNRs are good for people - being in touch with nature..."* Members thanked Jon and warmly supported move towards LNR designation.

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6.2 **Lodge, Island & Fish Pond biodiversity enrichment** proposals to rejuvenate ecologically failing priority habitat (*ponds & lodges*) in Local Biodiversity Action Plan. 2-year programme: create wildlife habitat at western end of Lake allowing for possible reintroduction of rowboating in half of Lake nearest to Boathouse. Aquascience (Bognor Regis) report, recommendations & quotation: "...Lake..locked in an algal-dominated state allowing for little aquatic biodiversity...ammonia released..contaminating the waters downstream...bioremediation measures to improve water quality and increase aquatic biodiversity... silt..being stirred up by..bottom-feeding fish.. exacerbating release of ammonia..transfer to adjacent fishing lake... Treatment of sediment with champagne chalk..to accelerate microbial breakdown of organic fraction in sludge... installation of 48..barley straw units..to suppress..blue-green algae... installation of ..floating reedbeds..to restore..vegetation to..Lake margins... Rowing boat barrier limiting human activity within designated wildlife area... Ecological survey..when development commences..and 1 year after..." - cost £19,900. Trust conservation volunteers to regenerate Island's natural woodland biodiversity - expenses £1,400. ML & Trust to disseminate progress of project to public - £1,500. Total £22,800 cost. 8.9.06 submitted £22,800 grant application to Sita Trust, completed by Catherine Hartley (ML Projects Development officer), Saul and Peter.

6.3 **Woodland conservation volunteers** restoring Ancient Woodland biodiversity (see also item 12). Trust volunteers (Nature Conservation Group & Wildlife Gardening Club) - particular thanks to regulars Anthony Trebilcock, Chris Shaw, Rose Mason - working with Peter on Saturdays: weeded Himalayan Balsam in and between Fish Pond Clough & Middle Clough. For Trust conservation volunteers' ongoing expenses, received: North Manchester Primary Care Trust (NMPCT)/Patient & Public Involvement in health (PPI) £391.05 grant, plus £150 contribution via Zest from FLAMA (Federation of Lightbowne and Moston Associations) Awards for All grant. Thanks to 40 Price Waterhouse volunteers (Business in the Community): directed by ML staff 1.9.06 they weeded Himalayan Balsam around 5-Ways.

6.4 **Japanese Knotweed eradication.** Spraying in July by contractors employed by ML. Many areas missed including stands in woodland at bottom of meadow.

6.5 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: 10 Hawthorn, 14 Holly, 112 Oak, 51 Silver Birch, 28 Willow ([www.bhccat.org.uk/files/25.2.06SurveyOfUnauthorizedTreeFelling.doc](http://www.bhccat.org.uk/files/25.2.06SurveyOfUnauthorizedTreeFelling.doc)). Survey attached to letter dated 30.5.06 from Mark to Greater Manchester Probation Area (GMPA). Letter 12.7.06 to Mark from C. B. Noah (GMPA Interventions & Support Services director): "...I have now received the report of the investigation into the issues raised in your letter of 30.5.06... The report indicates that a number of trees were cut down by offenders on Unpaid Work Orders... I apologise on behalf of GMPA for the removal of the trees... Your suggestion that operational guidelines be agreed is one which GMPA would wish to support..." Woodland work must comply with Ancient Woodland biodiversity restoration programme integral to Local Biodiversity Action Plan. Agreed: this work only suitable for individually supervised *low risk* offenders, unsuitable for supervised *high risk* offenders.

## 7. Proposed **new Play Areas** at Charlestown side of Clough.

7.1 Re proposed **Under-8s and Over-8s Play Areas.** Meeting 17.7.06 Visitor Centre: view various sites. Present: Barry Noble (ML Play Areas Development manager), Eric, Jean, John B, Keith Dunn (MCC Contracting Services officer), Kylie, Peter, Suzanne, Tony Michael (MCC Contracting Services officer). Preliminary decision, for consultation: locate Under-8s playground adjacent to Visitor Centre carpark & Avenue to Angel Hill (overlooked by Visitor Centre - clear line of sight, and convenient - next to carpark), and Over-8s playground behind Visitor Centre (site of Playground which fell into disrepair/removed early 1980s). Barry: "We have capital approval for spending on Under-8s Play Area - £60K set aside." Kylie: "We want to keep play & sports facilities together between Visitor Centre & Lake." Suggestion: lighting & CCTV overlooking proposed Play Area sites installed before play equipment.

7.2 Re proposed **Under-8s Play Area.** Two consultations: 12.8.06 at White Moss Youth Centre and 13.8.06 at Lakeside Café - 5 alternative designs for Under-8s Play Area from different manufacturers displayed with questionnaire. Results of consultations: 5 designs narrowed down to 3. Another consultation to be arranged to narrow 3 designs down to 1.

7.3 Re proposed **site for Over-8s Play Area:** behind Visitor Centre (site of Playground which fell into disrepair/removed early 1980s). Petition of about 100 signatures: "We, the undersigned, are opposed to the planned location of the new adventure playground in Boggart Hole Clough." Petitioners: "The old Playground was damaged, wrecked, taken away, so why put another Play Area on the same site?... People will get no peace from anti-social behaviour, same as before... Police did not want to know... They can't police the existing David Lewis Playground... a Playground will bring in youths at night..swearing..glass..noise..syringes... youths disturbing family life, disturbing kids' sleep..." Kylie: "Responding to the Petition, Barry withdrew proposal to locate Play Area on this site... We don't want to do things people don't want. We want to please as many people as possible..." Eric: "We can't not do things because they might get wrecked. We're not giving in to thugs and drunks... It's because of meetings like this that people have a real influence about what happens in local parks..." Basil: "This proposal has been withdrawn... Council officers will follow the consultative process which means everybody has to be talked to... keep lines of communication clear... We do not do things through stealth..." Alternative locations ?

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### 8. Healthy activities, Play & Sports (see also items 6.3, 7, 9, etc).

8.1 Complaints that local people not allowed to use **Athletics Track** whilst people are bussed in from distant Athletics Clubs.

8.2 **Wheels for All** scheme enabling people with learning and/or physical disabilities to ride adapted cycles under supervision in Clough; Ann Williams (ML North Area Parks warden) and Saul continue running popular weekly Wednesday sessions on Athletics Track. Meeting 22.8.06 Visitor Centre. Present: Ann, Caroline Shockledge (MLDP Fighting Fit manager), Hermine (Cycling Projects, Pendlebury, director), Ian Gillett (Neighbourhood Warden Youth officer), Nichola Anderson (MCC Sports Development officer), Nicky Boothroyd (MCC Sports Development officer), Oliver Loughed (MCC Cycling Development manager), Peter, Shirley. Need inventory of cycles and accessory equipment owned, ordered, loaned. Suggestion should work towards setting up independent Clough Wheels Club run by volunteers with own bank a/c etc. £1K donation from BAE Systems. NMPCT/PPI £5K grant received. £300 contribution via Zest from FLAMA Awards for All grant received. NMPCT/PPI £10K grant bid proposed. Copies of Minutes, taken by Shirley, available.

### 9. Arts & Heritage (see also items 5.1, 6, etc).

9.1 **Boggart Festival** project. Partnership between 5 Primary Schools (Charlestown, Crosslee, Holy Trinity, Moston Fields, St John Bosco), North Manchester High School for Boys, 2 MCG Community artists, Park wardens, Zest and the Trust. Financed by 3 MCC CASH grants totalling £9K. Promoting greater appreciation of Clough's history & environment. School visits to Clough and school work. Children enthralled to learn about this mysterious green space so close to where they live. Mythology of Boggarts and ecology of their Ancient Woodland habitat. Looking after the woodland – wildlife gardening. Respecting the Clough's wild creatures by e.g. not dropping litter. Recreating the local legend: Boggart dances, games, gingerbreads, masks, paintings, sculptures, songs & stories. Mass exhibition/celebration 21.6.06 on field behind Visitor Centre: including 2 more Primary Schools (Lily Lane and Burgess), involving over 300 children and 40 staff, parents and community members. Exhibition to be displayed at North City Library, Harpurhey, and Zion Arts Centre, Hulme.

9.2 **Summer Sunday Musical Picnics**. August 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> - Teddy Bears' Picnic in the woodland, Madhatter's Musical Wonderland in the woodland, Tea Dance by the Lake - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Organized by Ada and Louise Wiley (NCA Events coordinator). No posters advertising last 2 events. Positive feedback but many preferred last year's format - series of 6 small Lakeside concerts. Proposed: bid for MCC CASH grants for 07 musical events amalgamating 05 and 06 formats.

### 10. Anti-social behaviour / Safety & Security (see also items 5.2, 6.5, 7, etc).

10.1 Clough is part of an **Alcohol-free Zone** but not enforced. Complaints re people drinking alcohol in Café environs e.g. 17.7.06 ladies at Visitor Centre said "We're frightened to go to Café with boozers around..." Also reports of youths drinking alcohol at night outside Café, around Visitor Centre and on David Lewis Rec.

10.2 Christopher says re **Group 4 Patrol's work in Clough**: 95% to do with illegal bikes, 5% concerned with alcohol drinking.

### 11. Information Communication.

11.1 **Scarman Trust**, agency providing advice & support to community/voluntary groups. Lynsey Cottle (Scarman Trust Development worker) 8.6.06 met Peter to discuss funding requirements and opportunities. BHCCAT registered 10.8.06 on Scarman Trust online directory of groups. [www.thescarmantrustmanchester.org](http://www.thescarmantrustmanchester.org)

11.2 BHCCAT registered 15.8.06 on **Environmental Network for Manchester** online directory of environmental groups. [www.manchesterenvironment.net](http://www.manchesterenvironment.net)

11.3 Dan says aim of **North Manchester Community Network** is to promote partnership working. [www.northmannet.org](http://www.northmannet.org)

11.4 Proposed: bid for Community Foundation for Greater Manchester grant to purchase **ICT** for use of Trust members particularly the treasurer who has no ICT.

12. **Training**. Sponsored by ML, Peter (Trust conservation volunteers coordinator) attended 26.7.06 ML Parkside Training Centre, Sheepfoot Lane: NSPCC / Sport England *Good Practice & Child Protection Workshop*.

13. **Treasurer's report** (see also items 6.2, 6.3, 8.2, 9.1, 9.2, 11.1, 11.4, etc). Copies of accounts distributed.

14. Next quarterly **Executive Committee Open Meeting** – Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2006, 6 p.m., Visitor Centre.