

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

**Minutes of Executive Committee 11<sup>th</sup> March 2009 Open Meeting**

held at the Boathouse Café, Lakeside, Boggart Hole Clough, North Manchester.

**BHCCAT:** Boggart Hole Clough Community Action Trust.

**MCC:** Manchester City Council. MCC departments – **ML:** Manchester Leisure, **Zest:** healthy living project.

**1. Present:** Anne O’Neil, Brian O’Neill, Ellen O’Connor, Gary McCaffery, Joan Kavanagh (BHCCAT Chair), Ken Hill, Kylie Ward (ML North Area Parks Manager), Margaret Carr, Mark Gumbs (MCC Cycling Officer), Mark Hackett (BHCCAT Deputy Chair, Charlestown Councillor), Mervyn Romain, Peter Milner (BHCCAT Secretary), Sam McCormick, Saul Mearns (ML North Area Parks Warden), Sean Stevenson, Shaun Stevenson, Shirley McCardell (Zest Harpurhey & Moston Hub Coordinator), Suzanne O’Callaghan, Thomas Rooney, Veronica Kirkpatrick (Charlestown Councillor).

**2. Apologies** for absence: none.

**3. Minutes of Executive Committee 15.10.08 Open Meeting** (revised Minutes dated 11.3.09) agreed as true record.

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

**4.1** Kylie proposes **sand play pit** beside new Charlestown Road playground. Agreed.

**4.2 Fish Pond Clough footbridge railings.** MCC repairs railings but they are repeatedly vandalized.

**4.3** Sam says **footbridge at bottom of 99 Steps** treacherously slippery. Needs non-slip surface.

**4.4** Kylie: “Bright red **dog poo** bins... illegal to let dog foul... zero tolerance... fixed penalty notice... need description of offending dog & owner, also car registration...”

**4.5 ‘Please do not feed the Canada Geese’ signage.** Members request bigger, simpler & more signs around the Lake & Fish Pond.

**5. Boathouse Café.** Closed since December 2006. Exterior & interior now renovated.

**5.1** Sunday 1.3.09. Café **reopening event** attended by about 30 people including Graham Stringer MP & Cllr Amesbury (MCC Executive Member for Arts & Leisure).

**5.2** Joan: “Kylie has said that **exposing the roof beams & rafters** is not off the agenda for the longer term to create a more spacious interior...”

**5.3** Request for **notice board** in the café.

**5.4** Kylie: “Café will **reopen for business 17.3.09**... open 11.30am to 3pm every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Sunday... we’re looking to get café open 7 days a week... Manchester Fayre (MCC catering trading arm running Heaton Park café etc) will run café initially... haven’t got business plan as such... will put out to tender after get up & running as going business concern... fully fitted with CCTV & alarming from this weekend...”

**6. Arts events.**

**6.1 Lakeside Music** similar to afternoon concert series Summer 2005.

**6.2 Teddy Bears’ Picnic,** annual event since 2006.

**6.3** Meetings developing MCC *CASH* grant bids to Charlestown, Harpurhey & Moston wards to finance events above. Hexagon Tower (Blackley Village) 20.11.08: Heath Cole (MCC Charlestown Ward Support Officer), Joan, Peter. Visitor Centre 4.2.09: Heath, Ada Nzeribe (MCC North Manchester Cultural Regeneration Officer), William, Kevin Healy, Brian Crook, Joan, Peter. Visitor Centre, 23.2.09: William, Kevin, Brian, Jean, Joan, Peter. Hexagon Tower 5.3.09: Ada, Heath, Peter.

**6.4** Purple Expressive Arts (local community theatre group) performed ‘**Boggarts of the Clough - A Fairy Tale Play**’ in the Clough 6.9.08. Intention for further episode during summer 09 of the ‘Boggarts of the Clough’ saga.

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## 7. Healthy activities, Play & Sports (see also items 4.1, 6, 8).

**7.1 Strollers group** guided walks. Tuesdays assembling 1.30pm at the Visitor Centre, led by Ann (ML North Area Park Warden) and Saul.

**7.2 All Abilities Cycling.** Wheels For All scheme enabling people of all abilities / disabilities to ride adapted / non-adapted cycles under supervision on athletics track. Intention to establish Boggart Bikers All Abilities Cycling Club.

**7.2.1** Athletics Track 29.10.08, 12-3pm, Cycling For All Open Day. Attendance: 50.

**7.2.2** Visitor Centre 20.2.09 meeting: Shirley, William Eastwood (ML North Area Parks Assistant Manager), Mark G, Hermine Briffa (Wheels For All / Cycling Projects), Joan, Peter. William: "Asset Management Plan – condition survey of athletics track – damage - wear & tear... longer term aspiration: perhaps dedicated cycle track..." Mark G: "...tracks made of resin bonding, tarmac... arrange mini bus to visit track at Watchtree, Cumbria... pushing for city wide coordinator for adapted cycles across city - to bring in funding we need a paid worker... we need fun bikes to keep people off disability bikes – bike polo, bike hockey, bike rocket ball... children's trikes for 2-6 year olds..."

**7.2.3** Shirley: "...can't keep up with number of sessions could put on..." Joan: "...environment friendly track which would fit in nicely with the Clough..." Mark G: "...Saturdays 40-50 people... more volunteers would make project more sustainable... average £300K for new track... or adapt existing track... arrange mini bus to look at various tracks of different types..."

**8. Boggart Conservation Volunteers Team Wildlife Regeneration Project** (ongoing since 2002), restoring natural waterways & woodland biodiversity health, led by Peter.

**8.1 Every Saturday** assembling 10am at the Boathouse Café. Thanks to participants Andy Speak, Chinakiso Achulu, Dion & Michael Riley & dog Tara. Particular thanks to regulars Paul McCrystal & Steve Hamilton.

**8.1.1** Continue weekly count of waterbirds (Waterbirds Survey 2004-2009 on website).

**8.1.2** Lower reach Fish Pond Clough. Continue removing invasive Rhododendron. Transplant to this area Hawthorn, Holly, Oak & Silver Birch saplings from nearby nursery where temporarily planted 2007.

**8.1.3** Plant 250 acorns collected in Clough.

**8.2** New initiative re **regenerating brooks**. Thanks to all participants.

**8.2.1** Jennifer Bridgeland (Environment Agency [EA] Flood Incident Management Technical Specialist) emails Peter 22.10.08 enquiring re conservation opportunities for EA volunteers.

**8.2.2** Saturday 1.11.08. Paul, Steve, Michael & Peter meet Jennifer, with husband, & Saul. Propose EA & BHCCAT teams work at lower reach Fish Pond Clough to take brook partially out of culvert by removing sections of pipe & create seasonal pond to ameliorate flash flooding & increase biodiversity. Jennifer: "its EA policy to open up culverts, to take streams out of culverts - 'Making space for water'..."

**8.2.3** Friday 5.12.08. Seven EA volunteers including Jennifer, plus BHCCAT volunteers Paul, Steve & Peter, plus Saul. Lower reach Fish Pond Clough – dig out 3 sections of old ceramic pipe.

**8.2.4** BHCCAT team on subsequent Saturdays. Remove 4<sup>th</sup> section of pipe. Store pipe sections nearby for reuse elsewhere e.g. to take brooks under woodland footpaths. Fell over abundant semi-mature Sycamores – saw into lengths – use for posts to reinforce pond edges. Downstream end of pond build dam of piled earth to act as car barrier & increase pond's water holding capacity.

**8.3 Northwards Housing Ltd** (NHL) Sponsorship Fund £500 grant for conservation volunteers credited 8.2.08. Project evaluation doc (9.11.08) emailed 11.11.08 to Julie Goreham (NHL Resident Involvement Officer).

**8.4** Sam & Peter complete **Big Lottery Reaching Communities** grant application stage 1 for conservation volunteers' expenses for 3 years with aim to register 40 new members. Capital (equipment including hand tools, safety clothing, ICT)) £9,750 + revenue (insurance, refreshments, commuting, publicity, etc) £11,100 = £20,850 total. Posted 9.2.09.

**9. Fish Pond** (see also item 4.5). Kylie: "King William IV Angling Society (King Billy) has been given fishing lease / licence to manage Fish Pond... EA to survey waters, write report & recommendations – will copy report to Trust... King Billy awarded MCC CASH grant for fish refuges to protect against cormorants, aquatic plants, jetty for fishing from wheelchairs, fishing tackle..." Sean: "...stuff fishermen throwing in is pollution... nutters – getting boozed up..." Joan: "We'd like to see information sharing & proper liaison & partnership between the Angling Society, the Council & the Trust..."

**10. Manchester Poplars replacement planting** – 650 Poplars felled & removed from Clough during 2007 as considered unsafe due to venturia populina disease. Proposed avenue of Sessile Oaks at Charlestown Road entrance agreed at 9.1.08 meeting re Manchester Poplars replacement planting options (Minutes on website).

**10.1** Site meeting 6.11.08: Joe Walsh (MCC Arboricultural Officer), Saul, Peter. Look at avenue from Charlestown Road towards the Lake with view to planting Oaks along straight section of its length on both sides with green weld mesh guard around each tree.

**10.2** Woodville Centre (Cheetham Hill) 15.1.09 meeting: Joan, Joe, Peter. Joe: “Tree retailers - Barcham, Cambridge... we need 40 Oaks...”

**10.3** Visitor Centre 6.2.09 meeting: Joe, Kylie, Mark H, Saul, Joan, Peter. Joe: “No money to buy trees this financial year. Buy next financial year 09-10... plant autumn 09...” Mark H: “£3m of MCC money was allocated for city wide Manchester Poplars replacement planting – not all of this can have been spent...”

**10.4** Joan: “...forward planning stage... we hope Joe is ordering the Oaks... planting October 09... Peter & I will keep on seeing that everything is going according to plan...” Kylie: “...planting has been delayed because original plan was for *trees of interest*, not more of the same... money for the trees will be found...”

**11. Valentine Brow Garden** beside Rochdale Road, sometimes referred to as a Peace Garden.

**11.1** Visitor Centre meeting 18.11.08: Kylie, Joan, Peter. View MCC’s proposed plan. Kylie: “...makeover... reflect theme of climate change... golden gravel bed... rocks... multi stemmed Yucca... Mediterranean type planting... easier to maintain plants with year round colour... more sustainable way of planting - move away from bedding plants... summer annual bedding unmaintainable... showpiece for passers-by...” Peter said prefer garden left thickly carpeted with moss as at present. Joan concerned that original layout of low stone walls preserved.

**11.2** Kylie 1.12.08 emails scan of plan to Peter – forwarded to members same day.

**11.3** Some members dislike this proposal but most are supportive.

**12. Booth Hall Children’s Hospital**, adjacent to Clough across Charlestown Road.

**12.1** MCC ‘North Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework’, 2004: “...A specific opportunity exists on the site of Booth Hall Children’s Hospital at the edge of Boggart Hole Clough, for high value family accommodation...” (page 95). Peter (independently, not in role as BHCCAT Secretary) submitted 4.2.08 to MCC Planning Strategy: ‘Twelve suggestions for Site Specific Allocations in the Irk Valley’ document outlining alternative planning proposals for this & other sites (doc on BHCCAT website) as contribution to MCC ‘Local Development Framework. Core Strategy Issues & Options Consultation 4.12.07 – 4.2.08: suggestions for Site Specific Allocations’.

**12.2** Outline Planning Application submitted 25.6.08 to MCC by Central Manchester NHS Trust for demolition of buildings, except for central administration building for conversion to apartments, and erection of 2 & 3 storey houses. Ecological Scoping Survey by Cameron Crook & Associates, June 08. Email above application & survey to BHCCAT members 19.10.08.

**12.3** Possible Section 106 agreement (planning obligation: legal agreement between developer & planning authority & any others that have an interest in the site) - planning gain money for facilities / improvements in Clough.

**12.4** Some members oppose change of use of site from children’s amenities / services to a gated community of *unaffordable* upmarket residential housing. However, other members support the proposed development.

**13.** Zest £304.98 grant credited 10.12.08 for purchase of **camcorder** to record, develop & promote BHCCAT’s work. Sony Camcorder Starter Kit Bundle purchased 22.1.09.

**14. Safety & Security** – see items [4.2](#), [4.3](#), [5.4](#), [10.1](#).

**15. Treasurer’s report.** Copies of accounts distributed. See also items [6.3](#), [8.3](#), [8.4](#), [13](#).

**16. Annual General Meeting:** Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2009, 6pm, at the Boathouse Café.