

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

**Minutes of Executive Committee 15<sup>th</sup> March 2010 Open Meeting**

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

Boggart Hole Clough Community Action Trust (**BHCCAT**) works in partnership with, among other individuals & organizations, Manchester City Council (**MCC**), the landowner of Boggart Hole Clough (**BHC**), particularly MCC Manchester Leisure department (**ML**).

BHCCAT documents referred to below can be found on our website – www.boggart.org.uk

**1. Present:** Anne O’Neil, Brian O’Neill, Charlotte Caffey, Des Basterfield, Elaine Ganner, Grenville Webster (BHC Model Boat Society Chair), Joan Kavanagh (BHCCAT Chair), Karen Galston, Ken Hill, Margaret Carr, Mark Hackett (BHCCAT Deputy Chair, Charlestown Councillor), Mervyn Romain, Peter Milner (BHCCAT Secretary), Sarah Gorman, Suzanne O’Callaghan, Thomas Rooney, William Eastwood (ML North Area Parks Acting Manager).

**2. Apologies** for absence: Basil Curley (Charlestown Councillor), Graham Stringer (Blackley MP), Jean Finch (BHCCAT Treasurer), Shirley McCardell (MCC Zest Harpurhey & Moston Hub Coordinator).

**3. Minutes of previous Executive Committee Open Meeting 11.3.2009** (revised Minutes dated 15.3.2010) agreed as true record.

**4. Annual General Meeting** took place 10.6.2009. Minutes to be drafted for 2010 AGM.

**5. ML management** (see also items 6, 7, 8, 9, etc).

**5.1 Valentine Brow Garden** beside Rochdale Road, sometimes referred to as a Peace Garden. William: “More plants due to go in... 2 Yucca plants, which cost about £400 each, were stolen - well organized theft... should have been strapped to ground and/or steel pins in roots...” Anne O: “...these types of plants surely too expensive, too tempting to steal...”

**5.2 Fish Pond Clough footbridge railings.** MCC repairs railings but they are repeatedly vandalized. Mark H: “...certain people let out of prison & then vandalism starts again... draw your own conclusions re who is responsible... identify likely vandals with track record of doing damage...”

**5.3 Green Flag** ‘benchmark national standard for parks & green spaces in the UK’ awarded to BHC for 2009-10 which is 9<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. Copy of ‘Assessment’ requested.

**6. Arts events.**

**6.1 Lakeside Music.**

**6.1.1 Meeting 27.3.2009** Visitor Centre: Brian Crook, Heath Cole (MCC Charlestown ward Support Officer), Kevin Healy, Peter, William. Intention for series of summer afternoon concerts as in 2005. Peter to contact heads of music at North Manchester High Schools for Girls & Boys inviting participation of schools’ bands. William says ML will transport schools’ bands’ equipment if required.

**6.1.2 Bids for MCC Charlestown, Harpurhey & Moston wards CASH grants** submitted 26.3.2009 for total of £1,800 to put on 5 concerts. Charlestown ward CASH grant of £802.29 awarded & received, ref 90724. £657.89 spent putting on 4 concerts. Remaining £144.40 to be reimbursed to MCC.

**6.1.3 Copies distributed of BHCCAT ‘Lakeside Music Summer 2009 report’ doc** (31.8.2009) re the 4 concerts.

**6.1.4 Bids for MCC Charlestown, Harpurhey & Moston wards CASH grants** to be submitted shortly for 6 similar concerts for summer 2010.

**6.2 Purple Expressive Arts** (local voluntary community theatre group) performed ‘**Boggarts of the Clough - A Fairy Tale Play**’ in the Clough 6.9.2008. Stef Portersmith (Purple Expressive Arts Director) intends performance of further episode during summer 2009 of the ‘Boggarts of the Clough’ saga.

**6.2.1 Stef & Peter 22.7.2009** walkabout viewing possible performance sites.

**6.2.2 Stef leaves Peter phone message 5.8.2009:** rehearsals discontinued due to illness in family - performance cancelled – “We would like to do it next year if you still want us to...”

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## 6.3 Teddy Bears' Picnic, annual event since 2006.

6.3.1 Meeting 17.7.2009 Visitor Centre: Ada Nzeribe (MCC North Manchester Cultural Regeneration Officer), Heath, Joan, Louise Wyllie (Freelance events organizer), Peter. Suggested donkeys introduced at 2010 Picnic. Joan: "Donkeys have strict working hours and require a lot of care & attention..."

6.3.2 Bid for MCC Charlestown ward *CASH* grant submitted 30.7.09 for £3,303.00 for 2009 Teds Picnic. Grant awarded, ref 100702 – *Acceptance of Conditions of Funding* form signed 4.12.2009 by Peter. Grant not yet received.

6.3.3 Teds Picnic 2.8.2009 Sunday. Good weather, attendance about 500 people. Joan & Peter help with stewarding. Expenses paid by MCC. BHCCAT to reimburse MCC when received grant awarded.

## 6.4 Carol concert in Visitor Centre environs.

6.4.1 Bid for MCC Charlestown ward *CASH* grant submitted 3.12.2009 for £1,589.55 for Carol concert including Christmas tree lights switch on, grotto, refreshments. Grant awarded, ref 100713 – *Acceptance of Conditions of Funding* form signed 4.12.2009 by Peter. Grant not yet received.

6.4.2 Carol concert took place 11.12.2009. Expenses paid by MCC. BHCCAT to reimburse MCC when received grant awarded.

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

7.1 **Strollers group** guided walks. Tuesdays, assembling 1.30 p.m., at the Visitor Centre. Led by Ann Williams & Saul Mearns (ML North Area Parks Wardens).

7.2 **Boggart Bikers All Abilities Cycling Club** (abbreviated below to *Boggart Bikers*). Evolved from *Wheels For All* scheme enabling people of all abilities / disabilities to ride adapted / non-adapted cycles under supervision on athletics track. Led by Ann W & Mark Gumbs (MCC Cycling Officer).

7.2.1 **Dedicated cycle track** suggested (see BHCCAT Executive Committee 11.3.2009 Open Meeting Minutes item 7.2). Apparently cycles wearing out athletics track surface. Perhaps create cycle track running alongside athletics track or track away from athletics track area. Mark G arranges minibus tour 1.5.2009 to view some *Wheels For All* sites. Participants: Ann W, Ian Tierney (Wheels For All / Cycling Projects Manager), Joan, Nicky Boothroyd (MCC Disability Sports Development Manager), Mark G, Peter, Shirley, Stephen Downey (ML East Area Parks Manager).

1. Victoria Park, Warrington – athletics track same as at BHC;
2. Whitby Park, Ellesmere Port – ½ mile circuit consisting of 1 yard wide tarmac footpaths;
3. Litherland Sports Village, Sefton, Liverpool – cycle race track, 1 kilometre long, 4 metres wide.

7.2.2 Meeting 3.9.2009 Visitor Centre: Ann W, Joan, Karen Carter (CTC Manager), Mark G, Peter, Shirley. Mark G: "As agreed the Club has **affiliated with CTC** (Cycle Touring Club) a leading UK Cyclists' Organization... donate bike fleet to CTC so bikes owned by Club under auspices of CTC... bikes will be insured by CTC... a legacy that lives on... we've got to pull together a constitution - the governing document, and a steering group..." Shirley: "...protect the Club's inclusivity... constitution should be as open as possible & include ability to have fundraising social events..."

7.2.3 BHCCAT letter 10.9.2009 posted to CTC, with attached 'Inventory of pedal cycles & related equipment' doc (3.9.2009), making charitable donation of **19 disability cycles** to the CTC Charitable Trust for use at the discretion of Boggart Bikers as an affiliated CTC cycling club.

7.2.4 Meeting 5.12.2009 Visitor Centre: Adrian Lawson (CTC National Office Groups & Members Coordinator), Joan, Mark G, Mary Mitchell (CTC Member), Paul Jenkinson (CTC Member), Peter. Mark G: "...perhaps cycling indoors September to March at North Manchester High School for Boys... business plan – how expand club... need meeting to elect management committee..."

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**8. Wildlife Regeneration Project.** *Boggart volunteer nature conservationists* restoring natural waterways & woodland biodiversity with Peter on Saturdays, and occasional further days by arrangement, assembling 10am at the Lakeside Café. Group liaises with MCC mainly through Saul.

**8.1 Thanks to participants** Anthony Hyland, Bill Flanagan, Bryan Peace, Caitlin Norman, Gary Cleaver, Harry Singh, Liam Cleaver, Stephen Berry, Tom Clarke, Trish Morris. **Particular thanks to regulars** Paul McCrystal, Sarah Gorman, Steve Hamilton.

**8.2** Copies of BHCCAT '**Nature Conservation Delivery Plan 2010-15 Outline**' doc (29.12.2009) distributed detailing projected work of conservation group. Written by Peter in association with conservation group regulars and approved by Saul.

**8.3** Since March 2009 among other tasks (see also item **9.3**):

**8.3.1** Continue weekly **Waterbirds Survey** (begun 2004);

**8.3.2** Resume, after 4 year break, **Canada geese eggs management** on the Island (April) – see item **10.3**.

**8.3.3** Continue work at lower reach of Fish Pond Clough **restoring section of brook** to ameliorate flash flooding & increase biodiversity. Having removed 4 sections of ceramic pipe taking brook underground when not blocked (see BHCCAT Minutes Executive Committee 11.3.2009 Open Meeting, item 8.2): excavate new brook bed & build dam of piled excavated earth with wooden weir overflow to create seasonal pond; 'Dog Pond' suggested as apt name after remains of buried dog found during excavation; reinforce pond edge by hammering in posts made from sawn lengths of Sycamore & Ash etc felled in surrounding area; uproot 2 Beech trees beside pond opening area to more sunlight; carve rudimentary facial features into trunk of largest uprooted Beech & upend trunk into dug hole using Tirfor winch to create wildlife monolith overlooking pond.

**8.3.4** Continue **clearing wood naturally fallen** across paths: including Beech branch across Handrail Brow & Chestnut near main Avenue opposite 99 Steps. Saw branches into lengths, use to reinforce pond edge (see item **8.3.3**).

**8.3.5** Continue **marginal expansion of woodland onto meadow** including linear woodland across meadow with hedge habitat characteristics connecting isolated woodland areas.

1. Plant 10 Sessile Oak whips, 5.12.2009. Donated by Manchester City Football Club.

2. Plant 46 Dog Roses (*Rosa Canina*) & 46 Hazels, 16.1.2010. Donated by Stella Artois *Hedge Fund* supporting Tree Council's *Hedge Tree Campaign* to replenish Britain's depleted hedgerows.

3. Plant 30 Wild Cherry whips, 27.2.2010. Donated by Action for Sustainable Living charity helping people reduce their carbon footprint.

**8.3.6 Extra days** working to restore section of brook (item **8.3.3**): Sundays 24.5.2009, 18.10.2009, 1.11.2009.

**8.4** William 31.7.2009 gives Peter set of keys for a **storeroom** at back of Visitor Centre for storing conservation group's equipment, and key for **car barriers** enabling if required access for vehicle to transport tools to work sites.

**8.5 Grant bids to support Conservation Volunteers.**

**8.5.1** Sam McCormick ('main contact' for application) 15.3.2009 emails Peter: received letter saying bid for Big Lottery *Reaching Communities* grant (see BHCCAT Minutes Executive Committee 11.3.2009 Open Meeting, item 8.4) was unsuccessful. Peter requests Sam forwards copy of letter.

**8.5.2** Sam ('main contact' for application) 15.5.2009 emails bid for O2 *Its your community* £984 grant. Peter 18.6.2009 phones Sam who says she received email from O2 saying bid was unsuccessful. Peter requests Sam forwards email.

**8.5.3** Peter 22.11.2009 emails Sam requesting she forwards copy of letter from Big Lottery & email from O2 for Secretary's records & to learn reasons for failed bids. Peter 21.12.2009 resends above email to Sam. To date Peter received no reply.

**8.5.4** Bid for £1K *Grassroots* grant delivered 26.2.2010 by Peter to Community Foundation for Greater Manchester offices.

**8.6** Various gardening tools bequeathed by **Iris Ireland** for conservation group gratefully received 4.2.2010 by Peter.

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**9. Avenue of Sessile Oaks** at Charlestown Road entrance proposed at 9.1.2008 meeting re Manchester Poplars replacement planting options – see Minutes (14.1.2008).

**9.1** Meeting 25.9.2009 Boathouse Café: Bryan P, Joan, Joe Walsh (ML Arboricultural Officer), Mark H, Peter, Saul, William. Joe: "...40 **Oaks purchased**... trees presently at Barchams in Ely... 6-8 feet high... 35 to be planted by contractors, 5 to be planted by local volunteers... 3 stakes per tree, 2 metre high green wire mesh guards - sturdy, prevent casual damage... probably plant sometime in November..."

**9.2** ML paid £3,080 for Oaks. MCC Charlestown *CASH* grant bid submitted 25.2.2010 to cover **cost of planting & protecting Oaks**. Huperade dug 40 holes: £450 + MCC Contracting Services planted 35 trees in holes: £1,500 + provided weld mesh & 120 stakes: £775 = £2,725.

**9.3** Saturday 5.12.2009. Bryan P, Paul, Peter, Saul, Steve, William, & John Biggs with 5 Charlestown Youth Club members. **Plant last 5 of 39 Oaks** along avenue.

**9.4** Site meeting 29.1.2010 top of Avenue at junction with Oliver Clough: Andy Wernham (P.McGuinness & Co Ltd Manager), Joan, Peter. Discuss proposal for **commemorative plaque on stone block** to mark planting of Oaks & subsequent intended opening ceremony by Lord Mayor (Mark H takes up this position 12.5.2010). Andy suggests sandstone block from Buxton quarry: 2 to 3 feet high, 2 to 2½ feet wide, ¾ to 1 ton weight, with slanted face for plaque. Plaque measure approx 18 inches long x 12 inches high. Perhaps apply for MCC *CASH* grant to cover cost of stone block, plaque, opening ceremony, etc.

## **10. Lakeside regeneration.**

**10.1** Meeting 5.2.2010 Boathouse Café: Chaz Farghaly (ML Head of Parks & Outdoor Leisure), Donna Corry (ML North Area Parks Warden), Graham, Heath, Joe, Kylie Ward (ML Officer), Peter, William. William: "We want to encourage as many people as possible to BHC... increase draw by improving attractions of the park... the **Lakeside is a priority for regeneration**... area looks tired... civilizing the Lakeside... phased approach... the café has been refurbished & reopened... new bins & benches... the Fish Pond's fishing pegs have been improved... there's been thinning & tidying work... we want a designed formal Lakeside treescape perhaps with fruit trees – orchard..." Peter: "Watersides are natural habitat of Alder & Willow trees rather than fruit trees... an orchard around the Lake seems inappropriate, unnatural..." William: "There will be consultation re trees to be planted and any further proposals..."

**10.2** William distributes copies of ML '**Draft BHC Lakeside Development Plan V2**' doc (undated): "This is a working document... I will email this to Peter to forward to BHCCAT Members for comment..." William outlines ML's approach (see item 10.1).

**10.3** Copies of BHCCAT '**Canada geese population management 2009**' doc (28.12.2009) distributed describing licensed management of the Island breeding colony's eggs carried out by BHCCAT Conservation Volunteers. Members reiterate need for bigger & better & more signage requesting people not to feed the Lake birds as being most effective way to reduce Canada geese (and Pigeon) numbers. See also items 8.3.2, 11.4.

**10.4** Copies of Salix River & Wetland Services Ltd web page distributed showing a lake (in Pembroke) similar to BHC Lake with a **reed fringe around lake perimeter** created by Salix to increase biodiversity & reduce blue-green algae. For same reasons Members keen for establishment of reed fringe around BHC Lake perimeter. Salix to be approached for quote. Re earlier proposals for establishing reed beds see BHCCAT 'Lake & Island biodiversity health proposals' doc (16.6.2008).



**11. Lakeside Café.** Closed December 2006. Building renovated inside & out. Reopened 17.3.2009 for business 4 days a week: 11.30am to 3pm every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Sunday. Presently run by Manchester Fayre (MCC catering arm).

**11.1** Meeting 6.8.2009 Visitor Centre: Ken, Kylie Ward (at this date ML North Area Parks Manager), Terry Maher & Thomas. Kylie requested to try to ensure: **1.** Removal on fortnightly basis of driftwood which gathers on slipway in front of café; **2.** Cleaning on weekly or fortnightly basis of windows inside & out; **3.** Notice board put up; **4.** Sloped metal shelving fitted onto flat topped window shutter boxes to stop pigeons landing there & fouling area beneath where people sitting at outside café tables.

**11.2** Thomas says none of the above **concerns** (item 11.1) have been attended to. He mentions several further concerns: **1.** Paint peeling from floor – suggests tiled or wooden floor fitted; **2.** Customers want choice of variety of coffees to buy; **3.** Heaton Park café has van calling weekly to clean toilets – suggests same service for BHC café; **4.** Permanent sign needed advertising café at Charlestown Road entrance; **5.** Proper opening hours sign on door rather than present hand written sign; **6.** “We used to have a ‘Coffin Dodgers’ sign, it was taken down & not put back up after the café refurbishment, Kylie Ward promised it would return...”

**11.3 Inadequate electricity supply** at café - quickly overloaded & fused - can't plug in more than couple of kitchen appliances. Concerts, workshops, etc, will also sometimes require use of electrical equipment.

**11.4** Ken: “At the front of the café there's often bird poo because people feed the birds there. It's unhealthy & unsightly. There should be **big ‘No Feeding Birds’ signs** around outside the café...” See also item **10.3.**

**11.5** Brian O: “The kids playground near the Visitor Centre is so far away from the café – need **narrow gauge railway track & train** to take people from Visitor Centre car park to the Lakeside...”

**11.6** Members want café **open 7 days a week** instead of present 4 days. Mark H: “The café is inadequately advertised... I am of the opinion, it does appear to me, that there's no desire on the part of Manchester Fayre to make it a success... it is not satisfactory... we need a more enthusiastic provider...” William: “ML pays wages of Manchester Fayre staff running the café which is a drain on ML resources... we're negotiating with someone interested to run café... if necessary will put out to tender... we want someone to pay us for privilege of running the café...”

## **12. Electricity substation proposal.**

**12.1** William 13.1.2010 emailed Peter: “We have been approached by United Utilities (UU) re a proposed substation site at **Carill Avenue**, BHC. They are carrying out an asset replacement programme which includes an existing underground substation that is currently situated on the junction of Wharfdale Avenue and Tyndall Avenue. According to UU... it will be necessary to acquire a site for an above ground substation. UU have identified a small piece of land within the Clough as a possible site... I would appreciate if you would send me your comments and views to enable us to progress this matter...”

**12.2** Peter 17.1.2010 emailed William, copied to BHCCAT Members: “...Three UU officers attended BHCCAT's 29.11.07 Executive Committee Open Meeting (Minutes: items 1 & 6.6) to tell us about the... combined sewer overflow underground chamber to be built with control kiosk just within the Clough boundary at the Charlestown Road entrance. They said that 2 or 3 trees would be planted for each of the 4 trees (Hawthorn & Wild Cherry) to be removed. However, it appears that these trees have not yet been planted some 18 months after the sewer infrastructure work was completed. We would feel happier about UU embarking upon building the electricity substation if they would first carry out their undertaking to plant these **replacement Hawthorn & Wild Cherry trees...**”

**13. Safety & Security.** See items **5.1, 5.2.**

**14. Treasurer's report.** Copies of accounts distributed.

**15. Date of AGM & next Open Meeting** left in abeyance.