

## **Minutes of 11.2.2011 meeting re Lakeside flora proposals**

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

Boggart Hole Clough Community Action Trust (**BHCCAT**) works in partnership with, among others, Manchester City Council (**MCC**) the landowner of Boggart Hole Clough (**BHC**).

BHC contains Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (**ASNW**) and is a Local Nature Reserve (**LNR**).

1. **Present:** Graham Wightman (MCC North Area Parks Manager), Joan Kavanagh (BHCCAT Chair), Mark Hackett (BHCCAT Deputy Chair, Charlestown Councillor, Lord Mayor), Peter Milner (BHCCAT Secretary), Saul Mearns (MCC North Area Parks Warden), William Eastwood (MCC North Area Parks Assistant Manager).
  2. Apologies for absence: none.
  3. **Background** to this meeting. After receipt of 21.1.2011 email from William outlining MCC's latest Lakeside planting proposals (part of MCC file – see item 4 below), BHCCAT requested a meeting to discuss these proposals & present alternative proposals.
  4. William distributes copies of MCC 'BHC Lakeside planting proposals' 15-page file which includes copies of various emails (first dated 21.1.2011, last dated 9.2.2011) - referred to below as '**MCC file**'.
- The discussion that followed split MCC's proposals into 2 main parts: the area between the Lake & Fish Pond (items 6 & 7 below) and the south-east area of the Lakeside (items 8 & 9 below).
5. Peter distributes copies of BHCCAT 'Lakeside flora proposals' (9.2.2011) 5-page document - referred to below as '**BHCCAT doc**'.
  6. MCC file: "...beds between the two lakes... alternate beds would be planted with **willows**... Each bed will be planted with one variety of willow, suitable for weaving into baskets. Five beds, five different species. These would be coppiced once a year by crafts people who would take the produce in return for their work... Willow Beds... A Podge is a group of short willow trees planted 25cm apart in a straight or curved line that is designed to be pollarded and to mark a boundary rather like a hedge. In effect... a **POLLARDED heDGE**... a simple and effective boundary... harvest colourful willow rods each year for use in craft activities... important to cut annually to achieve usable rods... Vitellina, Basfordiana, Daphnoides 'Oxford Violet', 'Continental Purple', Nigricans, Viminalis, and Bowles Hybrid... Black Maul, Red Dicks, and Britzensis..."

Re proposed 11 varieties of Willows – different species & hybrids: most are British natives, others well established introductions to Britain from Europe, Salix Daphnoides introduced 1820s to Britain from Northern Europe, Salix Viminalis (Common Osier) already growing in BHC.

Saul: "The railings between the 2 lakes have been removed. These Willow podges would create a good replacement barrier which will restrict the movement of Canada Geese between the 2 waters making the general area less hospitable to the Geese encouraging them to go elsewhere preferably out of the Clough altogether..."

Podges of Willows develops BHCCAT's long-standing proposal for more Willows in the Lake environs.

Willows, which grow naturally at watersides, will enhance the site.

No objections to this part of MCC's proposed planting scheme going ahead.

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

7. MCC file: "...beds between the two lakes... Alternate beds would be planted with... **azaleas**..."

Peter: "Azalea are a species of Rhododendron which the 'BHC Biodiversity Management Plan' (Ecology Services UK Ltd, 2007) says should be eradicated as they are non-native species... There are many native shrubs to choose from." Refers to selection of flora illustrated in BHCCAT doc, pages 4 & 5.

Saul: "I agree that it makes no sense planting Rhododendrons in one place & removing them in another... So we are agreed for these beds, instead of Azaleas, upon the following native species – Alder Buckthorn, Blackthorn, Dog Rose, Field Rose, Gorse, Common Broom, Common Barberry."

8. MCC file: email 21.1.2011 from William to Peter - "South Side... small flowering trees – **cherries** and **ornamental crab apples**... five Chinese **Dawn Redwoods**... **ornamental (introduced) oak trees**..."

Apparently all the trees proposed are non-native species. This disregards the 'BHC Biodiversity Management Plan' (Ecology Services UK Ltd, 2007) which was agreed upon by MCC & BHCCAT when the Clough became a LNR as the best way to improve & manage the Clough's natural environment.

Joan: "Danger of spores / seeds of these non-native trees spreading through the Clough which then sprout & grow..."

Mark: "Dawn Redwoods potentially grow to enormous size scattering huge quantities of seeds, cones, leaves, twigs, much of it falling into the Lake..."

Peter: "The Biodiversity Management Plan (see above) repeats over & over that non-native trees should not be planted in the Clough and the highest priority should be given to restoring the ASNW... Planting should strengthen the Park's uniqueness / special character as an ASNW... We must be careful not to damage, dilute, undermine, weaken the ASNW by inappropriate planting..."

Saul: "I agree that we should abide by the Biodiversity Management Plan..."

Agreed: this part of MCC's proposed planting scheme should not go ahead.

9. MCC file: email 3.2.2011 from Joe Walsh (MCC Arboricultural Officer) to Barchamtrees.co.uk, copied to William - "Subject: **Boggart / Tree Planting** ... as discussed, supply the following trees: 1 x P. Accolade ... 1 x P. Kanzan... 1 x P. Okame... 1 x P. Royal Burgundy... 1 x P. Shimidsu Sakura... 1 x P. Shirotea... 1 x P. Shirofugen... 1 x G.T. Sunburst... 2 x Malus Hupehensis... 5 x Dawn Redwoods... 2 x Quercus Frainetto.. 3 x Quercus Palustris... Please arrange for delivery to Boggart Hole Clough Visitors Centre..."

Peter: "The title of this email - 'Boggart / Tree Planting' - suggests that these trees are to be planted in the Clough. But, assuming these are the same trees referred to in William's 21.1.2011 email, we have just decided (item 8 above) against the planting of these trees in the Clough..."

William: "These trees are being delivered to the depot at the Clough Visitor Centre but they will be planted elsewhere around the city, not in the Clough..."

10. **Conclusion.** William: "We are now in agreement re planting between the Lake & Fish Pond (items 6 & 7 above)... The remainder of the Lakeside planting can be discussed further at future meetings..."

The final outcome of an earlier MCC / BHCCAT consultation process was the planting of the Avenue of Sessile Oaks which is widely seen as a great asset to the Clough. The result of this present ongoing consultation should be equally beneficial re the choice of flora for the Lakeside.