

Minutes

of Executive Committee 18th March 2008 Open Meeting

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

BHCCAT: Boggart Hole Clough Community Action Trust. **MCC:** Manchester City Council. MCC departments – **MDDA:** Manchester Digital Development Agency, **ML:** Manchester Leisure, **NMR:** North Manchester Regeneration, **Zest:** healthy living project.

1. Present: Basil Curley (Charlestown Councillor), Catherine Hartley (Groundwork / MCC Irk Valley Project Officer), Denise Stirrup, Dorothy Ryan, Jean Finch (BHCCAT Treasurer), Joan Kavanagh (BHCCAT Chair Pro Tem), Joe Walsh (ML Arboricultural Officer), John Biggs (Charlestown Residents Association Chair), John Ryan, Kylie Ward (ML North Area Parks Manager), Lee Mather (Police Community Support Officer [PCSO]), Margaret Carr, Mark Hackett (BHCCAT Deputy Chair, Charlestown Councillor), Peter Carr, Peter Milner (BHCCAT Secretary), Ron Baines, Shirley McCardell (*Zest* North City Hub Coordinator), Suzanne O’Callaghan, Tom Clarke, Tony Campbell (King William IV Angling Society Assistant Secretary).

2. Apologies for absence: Frankie Mananasy.

3. Minutes of Executive Committee 29.11.07 Open Meeting (revised Minutes dated 18.3.08) agreed as true record.

4. North & East Manchester Advertiser 24.1.08 newspaper: “Announcements. Public & Legal Notices... **Declaration of Local Nature Reserve Boggart Hole Clough...** Notice is hereby given by MCC in pursuance of Sections 19 and 21 of National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949... that by the MCC (Boggart Hole Clough, Charlestown) Local Nature Reserve Declaration 2008, made on 16 January 2008, 75.9 hectares of land or thereabouts situated at Boggart Hole Clough, Charlestown, Manchester... has been acquired and is held by the Council, and that the said land is being managed as a Nature Reserve... Susan Orrell, City Solicitor... 24 January 2008.”

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

5.1 ML Manager’s Report written by Kylie. Quoted from below (items 5.3, 5.4, 7.3, 8.2.3, 9.1). Copies distributed.

5.2 Request for breakdown of ML’s 2007-8 and 2008-9 budgets for the Clough.

5.3 Dangerous disintegrating footbridge railings (footbridge over ravine below Fish Pond). *Manager’s Report:* “Replacement railing on the fishing pond bridge... due to be carried out in the near future.” MCC declines BHCCAT offer to apply for grant for new railings.

5.4 Manager’s report: “We are in the process of appointing King William IV as the partner organisation in the **operation of the fishing pond...** The full appointment will be made following the completion of legal documentation from Valuation and Property and a development plan from the club.” Kylie says BHCCAT will receive copy of this ‘development plan’ for consultation.

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6. Healthy activities, Play & Sports (see also items 8.3, 10, etc). **Wheels For All** scheme enabling people with learning and/or physical disabilities to ride adapted cycles under supervision on Clough's athletics track. Ann & Saul (ML North Area Parks Wardens) run weekly Wednesday afternoon and Friday morning sessions. Intention: move towards independent Clough Wheels Club - Boggart Bikers.

6.1 Email 31.11.07 from Shirley re **Boggart Bikers Family Funday 24.10.07**: "...the event was a real success and enjoyed by everyone. We now have a list of people who are interested in helping to start a Cycle Club..." Shirley organizing another family cycling event, integrating adapted & non-adapted cycles, for 22.6.08.

6.2 New **Saturday sessions** 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. started, led by Martin Roberts (MCC Sports Development Officer).

6.3 Local Network Fund for children & young people grant. £6,541 cheque dated 3.10.07 to Cycling Projects, Pendlebury, paid in advance for 5 adapted cycles & portable hydraulic hoist. Delivered to date: midi hand cycle, medium Go Kart cycle & hoist. Deliveries due: petite quadcycle, small tricycle & medium tricycle. £400 cheque (grant remainder) dated 15.1.08 to Cycling Projects as contribution towards cost of training more parents / carers / volunteers to assist leading sessions: leader course 28/9.1.08 at Clough for 3 adults.

6.4 In association with Zest, GB Building Solutions company (undertaking street 'facelift' schemes in north Manchester) arranging **fundraising event** on behalf of Clough Wheels For All.

6.5 Shirley: "...Wheels For All scheme meets real needs... **improves levels of physical activity**... should not be reliant on money from community groups... we need proper support from the Primary Care Trust, the Joint Health Unit and the Council [MCC]..."

7. Boathouse Café.

7.1 Peter M emailed Kylie 17.2.08, 20.2.08 and 27.2.08 requesting update re Café renovation & **reopening scheduled for Easter**. No response.

7.2 Emails from Mark Hesford (North & East Manchester Advertiser newspaper Reporter). 6.3.08: "...the Council tell me that their plans are now as follows: 'The renovation of the building has now begun at a cost of £150,000 and will continue for a further eight weeks. The **commercial operating partner for the facility has decided to withdraw** from the project and as a consequence Leisure Services are reviewing the market to identify the most appropriate replacement. In the meantime interim catering arrangements will be made'..." 10.3.08: "...Pure Innovations [*operating partner*] quote: Business Development Manager Rachel Jones said: 'We had to make a business decision, based on our investment that we would have to put in, and the current market in regards to cafes, which have seen a downturn over the past few years'..."

7.3 Manager's Report: "Work has started on the **refurbishment** of the Boathouse Café... The first stage of the programme will see renovations to the exterior of the building including a new roof and tower at a cost of approximately £150,000. The work funded by Manchester City Council will be followed by a programme of internal works to make the building fit for purpose. We are working with the Environmental Health and Health & Safety teams to ensure that all work progresses as quickly as possible to open the cafe and toilet facilities for visitors to the Clough. In the meantime we will be working with stakeholder groups and members of the community to ensure that any interim facilities meet their specific requirements."

7.4 Kylie: "Come hell or high water the **Café will be up & running in approximately 6 weeks**... Manchester Fayre [MCC catering trading arm running Heaton Park Café etc] may run Café temporarily..."

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8. Nature Conservation (see also item 4, etc).

8.1 Lake & Island. Catherine proposes BHCCAT applies for grant on basis of MCC *Boggart Hole Clough Lake Regeneration Development Plan*, part of *Common Water Body Management Issues & Outline Solutions* document dated 18.2.08. Includes measures to install fence around Island to prevent Canada Geese nesting there and to install buoys or floating ropes on the Lake to prevent Canada Geese landing. However, many BHCCAT members regard these measures (which would affect all birds indiscriminately) as unnecessary if other measures were taken e.g. requesting public not to feed the Lake birds and Canada Geese eggs management. Because of these and other reservations (e.g. proposed indefinite postponement of planting vegetation in Lake), plan considered to require amendment. Catherine says that if BHCCAT not prepared to accept plan as it stands then another partner group will be sought which does accept it. "Arm-twisting".

8.2 Manchester Poplars felled 2007.

1. Meeting 9.1.08 re Manchester Poplar **replacement planting options** (Minutes on website).
2. Email 16.3.08 to Joe from Peter M: "Re Manchester Poplar replacement planting... Good to see David Lewis Rec planting went ahead. BHCCAT members are concerned at the **lack of progress** re the remainder of the replacement planting in the main body of the Clough. You wrote re an earlier Clough planting scheme (22.8.07 email): 'We are provenance zone 302 and whenever possible this should be specified when buying native trees to plant adjacent to an Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW). This so that genetically they are native to our area and their genes won't pollute the trees in the ASNW.' On this basis perhaps we could proceed with planting trees suggested at 9.1.08 meeting (Minutes attached). However, we agreed that these suggestions required further consideration re appropriate species of Lime & Willow, whether or not to plant Yew & Crab Apple, etc. We could hopefully resolve these matters at a meeting at the Clough Visitor Centre with yourself and others interested..."
3. *Manager's Report*: "Manchester Poplar Scheme. The replacement planting has started on **David Lewis**, however a final decision on the planting for the main body of the Clough is still outstanding."
4. Jean: "The Clough looks bare without the Poplars..." Joe: "...we must ensure we plant species which won't destroy the ASNW... I will arrange seminar, perhaps with e.g. **Woodland Trust technical advisers**, and field trip to another ASNW..."
5. Kylie distributes copies of maps of Clough showing locations of **bat & bird boxes** recently installed. It is understood that installation of 50-60 bat & bird boxes, to compensate for habitat loss due to Manchester Poplar felling, was stipulated in Lowther Forestry's contract.

8.3 Wildlife Regeneration volunteers restoring natural woodland biodiversity with Peter M on Saturdays.

1. Particular thanks to regulars Dan Early, Frankie Mananasy, Michael Riley with dog Tara, Noah Mananasy, Paul McCrystal, Steve Hamilton, Sylvie Manansy. During past 3 months, among other tasks: fell over abundant semi-mature Sycamores at top east side Fish Pond Clough; make into posts; install 52 posts on meadow-woodland edge to **delineate marginal expansion of woodland onto meadow** & protect tree whips from being mown down as happened previously.
2. Successful bid to **Northwards Housing Sponsorship Fund** for £500 grant for Wildlife Regeneration project running costs to cover projected conservation volunteers' expenses for 4 months. Letter 6.2.08 from Alison Foster (Northwards Housing Head of Finance): "...We are very impressed with the wildlife conservation work being undertaken at Boggart Hole Clough... The activity is clearly of benefit to the North Manchester community..."

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8.4 Planning application to build 50 houses on site of former Clough Top School adjacent to Clough.

MCC ref 082039/FO/2007/N1.

1. Site visit 5.12.07: Joan, John B, Mark, Peter M, Steve, Veronica Kirkpatrick (Charlestown Councillor). John B: "The houses would **spoil the edge of the Clough**... increased vehicle traffic on narrow roads... we should request consultation meeting..." Mark: "...strike balance between benefits & disbenefits..."

2. BHCCAT 8.12.07 letter emailed to Peter Babb (MCC Head of Planning) objecting to proposals on various grounds (e.g. adverse impact upon Clough's wildlife thus **diminishing Clough's conservation value**, site's history of subsidence, change of use from the site's former educational use to residential housing) and requesting public consultation meeting enabling concerns to be addressed and alternative proposals to be discussed (letter on website).

3. Basil: "Charlestown Residents Association want proposal halved in size... we've asked for **public consultation meeting**... developer will have to convince residents that their plan is a good thing..."

9. Rochdale & Charlestown Roads corner, site of building demolished 2004.

9.1 *Manager's Report*: "Rochdale Road/Charlestown Road Entrance. No progress has been made on the new entrance in this area due to the location of a new lamppost. Leisure Services opinion is that the street furniture currently in place would detract from the overall impression of how we aspire for the entrance to look. We feel another **meeting to explore different options** would be the most appropriate way forward at this time."

9.2 Kylie: "...**addition of new lamp post stymied gateway proposal**... don't think entrance going to work... open up view without entrance..." Arrange to view corner with Strollers group 22.4.08.

10. Arts & Heritage (see also item 8, etc). **Summer 2008 Musical Picnics.**

10.1 Bid for Charlestown ward MCC *CASH* grant of £4,370 for **Teddy Bears Picnic** submitted 27.9.07. Not yet known whether bid successful.

10.2 Purple Expressive Arts (PEA), local community theatre voluntary group, interested to perform variation of their show *Quest for the Sun – a fairy tale about the Boggarts of Boggart Hole Clough* in Clough this summer. Meeting 29.2.08, Woodville Centre, Shirley Road: Stef Portersmith (PEA Director), Joan, Peter M. Arrange Clough walk 31.3.08 to view possible sites for performing scenes. Intended show will include live acoustic music and simple picnic.

11. **Safety & Security** (see also item 5.3, etc). Lee: "...We (PCSOs) are often in the Clough... hiding place for truants... Thursdays & Fridays just after school closing times often when anti-social behaviour incidents occur... enjoying park and not destroying it..."

12. **BHCCAT website**. Original website (www.bhccat.org.uk) became inoperable during 2007 due to outdated software.

12.1 MDDA, Portland Street, meeting 17.12.07: Martine Tommis (MDDA Director), Paul Limbrick (MDDA Digital Development Officer), Peter M. Free website hosting from *wordpress.com* recommended.

12.2 MDDA, Portland Street, 28.1.08: Paul L, Peter M. Free training for Peter M in **website management**.

12.3 Original website address (bhccat.org.uk) criticised as unmemorable; registration allowed to lapse. More memorable domain name *boggart.org.uk* registered 22.2.08, £2.99 per year excluding VAT. Point this domain at new website (hosted by wordpress.com). Begin publicizing new website 1.3.08. Website contributions welcome. Thanks to MDDA for ongoing advice & support.

13. **Treasurer's report** (see also items 6.3, 8.3.2, 10.1, 12.3, etc). Copies of accounts distributed.

14. **Annual General Meeting** arranged for Monday 9.6.08, 6 p.m., at the Visitor Centre.