# Bracken Hall Countryside Centre

## Advisory Group Meeting: Agenda & Introductory Notes

### 23rd October 2019, BHCC Classroom, 6.30pm

1. **Halloween Activity Trail** [more volunteers are required – event runs 4.30-7pm 31st October. Need to find two first aiders]
2. **BTC Child Protection Policy update**. [What is happening in this regard?]
3. **Fire alarm update** [Awaiting updated/expanded quote from cheapest provider – initial quotes range from £800 to £3500!]
4. **Ingleborough Soundscape Project**. [2020 is International Year of Sound (<https://sound2020.org/>) and participant in Ingleborough Soundscape Project (<https://acoustics.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Launch-Event-Flyer-pdf-Natural-England-10-April-2019.pdf>) has negotiated and ringfenced a sum of money to support an outreach project at BHCC.

My initial ideas were circulated:

This is a quick heads up on an opportunity for us to develop some activities, exhibits and outputs (e.g. walks leaflets) to link in with the Ingleborough Soundscape Project. This is looking at what impacts sound has, what generates sound, etc., in that part of the National Park - and the International Year of Sound (2020). A local resident of Baildon and has indicated that the project is looking to have some outreach components. He says that we could do a 12 month project for BH, largely funded externally, along the lines of:

1. Monthly events at BH (e.g. visiting experts to talk/share/explore sounds (e.g. January owl call walk at 4pm, etc.)). There is an indication that they would support the cost of bringing in experts for such events.
2. Outreach – perhaps a roadshow/activities to go into local schools
3. Monitoring & analysing sound (e.g. with their whizzy sound monitoring equipment) – e.g. 24 hours in BH garden, overnight in Shipley Glen etc., etc.
4. Legacy – e.g.
   1. walks leaflets (with sound components – e.g. walks that go down to the stream, past the Toboggan Slide’s site (they'll have to imagine this - or perhaps some sort of smartphone app), along side of Tramway, etc.)
   2. equipment/installations in the Centre (e.g. surround sound speakers driven by a computer to provide sounds around BH perhaps linked to projector(s)). Maybe also something like they have in Leeds City Museum where they have sound hemispheres hung from the ceiling so that you can only really hear if you’re stood underneath (obviously the Exhibition Room is very small and sounds would soon become very muddled if we have lots – maybe we could think about something in the Classroom (again with projection and interaction?) or maybe something handheld like they have at other visitor attractions). We could also do something that brings our exhibits to life – e.g. have noises of the mammals in the taxidermy case, recreate the sounds of the Victorian times on the Glen (huge crowds, steam engines, screaming roller coaster riders) and ancient artefacts (e.g. carving a rock with a deer antler pick, sound of an open fire, domesticated dog, wild animals that are no longer here (e.g. woolly rhino, wolf).

He has indicated that we can use ‘rental of BHCC’ and ‘Manager’s time’ etc. as partial matching funds – talking about possibly something of the order of funding from them of up to £4000 or thereabouts (we could put, for example, 12 x £100 for BH hire for each of the events, 1 hour/week of manager’s time, etc.).

I’m thinking of how we could develop all sorts of activity sheets/events, perhaps in conjunction with other partners (tramway, saltaire stories, etc.)

There's obvious themes - animal calls of all sorts, but also things such as the noises outside human hearing range (e.g. noises of sap rising, flowers opening, etc.)

We obviously need to move rapidly on this - please set aside half an hour and dream about what you would like to have available to you as a visitor/school/volunteer/etc., scribble your ideas down, and send them to me ASAP!

Feedback/ideas from volunteers:

I don't know if any of the following are what you had in mind:

1) You mentioned the Tramway and a smartphone app. How about one that plays Victorian era sounds of trains and station masters and shovelling coal and steam noises etc.? I know that's not directly tram-connected but it's close!

2) With a set of loudspeakers in more-or-less a line, we could make bird noises 'fly' across the room. We couldn't invest in electronic/computer equipment to do that as only professional systems seem to exist and are very expensive! But I could probably do something custom-built

3) I have the bat emulator that works in the ultrasonic range.

4) There is the BQM

5) We could extend the BQM software (or the (new!)tablet software) to cover animals other than birds and mount it on the other display case.

Birdsong linked to photos of the singer!

This sounds (sorry for pun) very innovative and exciting. I think the examples you've given are what I'd be wanting:

1. Animal sounds (calls, movements)

2. Plant biology

3. Weather

4. Victorian/Edwardian entertainment

5. Sounds of pre-history

Perhaps also the sounds of the mining and quarrying activities. Maybe the "urban edge" or "modern intrusions" could also be themes.

Audio guides, sounds linked to images and the use of technology in the centre would each be excellent.

Are oral histories another angle? A reincarnation of the "telephone tapes" where people can record their own accounts of the local area as residents or visitors, past and present.

We need a good idea of what will be offered, who will be involved (e.g. specialists, academics, students, enthusiasts, etc.), and the nature of the legacy (e.g. interactive exhibits, activity leaflets, apps, etc.) ASAP (by early November). Anybody you know that would be suitable to get on board?

1. **Exhibition Room update**. [All artefacts returned to BHCC on 30th September. Information boards rehung, outline plan for rest of the room – based on minimalism – major clear out of unnecessary stuff, leaflets/sales now wall mounted, birdsong unit rewired and painted, lots more besides – guided tour during the meeting. Many thanks to all involved in their tireless pursuit of a better BHCC]
2. **Microscope update**. [Old microscope and cabinet removed. Large flat screen TV offered as a donation – to be wall mounted behind the counter. New microscope system built from commercially available components (e.g. USB microscope (<£100), digital camera (<£50), simple computer (<£150)) and mounted on the counter – accessible to public from main area of Exhibition Room, and from behind the counter]
3. **Improving communication and self-promotion within BTC**. [For example: no publicity at BHCC for launch of Higher Coach Road Nature Trail; BHCC not on Harley-Davidson Event Guide and Map; no BHCC stall at Saltaire Festival event in Roberts Park]
4. **Proposed calendar of Baildon events**. [There are many clashes (e.g. between BHCC and Denso-Marston Nature Reserve (DMNR) – both organizations had bat walks on the same day in June), even for major annual events (e.g. DMNR Celebration Day and Baildon Community Link’s summer event in June). Could we adopt regular monthly slots for similar types of user (e.g. for nature, BHCC could use first weekend of a month, DMNR 2nd Saturday, Coach Rd nature trail, 3rd weekend, etc.) or have a natural history themed sub-calendar? Could we have a priority/protected dates calendar for any significant annual events (e.g. DMNR Celebration Day, Baildon Carnival, etc.)? Our dependency on Facebook and other social media sites makes a Baildon Calendar difficult to pin down and it is difficult for the public to find a definitive calendar of events. Some organizations plan well into the future (e.g. DMNR publishes its programme for the year ahead) whereas others are more short term, particularly where participants may only know of their availability a few weeks in advance.]
5. **BHCC “Library”**. [Part of the Bradford Museums Service loan to BHCC is 7 large boxes of countryside related books. Space is limited at BHCC, conditions aren’t ideal for storing books, and access to the books at BHCC would be severely time limited. Could the new Baildon Library be a potential home for this collection of books?]
6. **Volunteer update**. [One of new batch of volunteers is fully involved at BHCC now. One has turned up to assist without being on the rota. More volunteers are needed – please spread the word]
7. **Preschool sessions at BHCC**. [2nd preschool session attracted 6 parents and associated children. Two parents have been inducted as BHCC volunteers and are willing and enthusiastic about taking this initiative forwards as regular coordinators, planners, publicists, etc.]
8. **Ideas for new events**. [For example: dog friendly/friendly dog day (Spring 2020), soundscape programme (monthly throughout 2020), fossils afternoon (will benefit from use of new microscope), lectures/talks in Exhibition Room (the counter provides a good focus for a speaker, with plenty of space for 20 seated and perhaps 15 standing to either side (or seated on small seats), etc. These are in addition to existing events (e.g. guided walks, apple weekend, artists/artisans sessions).]
9. **Proposed after school forest school sessions – proposed by Spongetree**. [Correspondence from Spongetree: To run Spring (March) to Autumn (Oct) due to darkness times after 4pm and was thinking Tuesday afternoons 3:45pm - 5:45pm., so 2 hours. I would employ 2 members of staff and would like to pay you guys regular rent as we would like to start at Brackenhall and then head down to the woods? So overheads (staff, rent, refreshments and materials) would decide on the amount of children (ratios are 12 - 15 children over 5 years old) as parents would be charged. The sessions would be pre booked like any after school session and we would do the admin on that. Could we store things up there if Sponge Tree purchased a small shed, lock up? As it would be desirable to have our kit up there]
10. **Proposed BHCC publicity leaflet**. [Should we aim to launch this in time for 2020 tourist season and include images of the updated Exhibition Room? Should we have a Baildon area publicity leaflet to encourage people to spend longer in Baildon?]
11. **BHCC as a proposed *Place of Welcome*** [see <https://www.placesofwelcome.org.uk/> for background]