

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 14th April 2008
Marple Library**

Present: Robert Wilson, Micaela Wood, Jay Havoleana, Patrick O'Herlihy, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Bill Ardern, Dave Burrows, Adrian Ellis.

2.0 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising.

3.1 BBC Breathing Places Reading Area

Landscape Work and Planting

An invoice for £2,775.30 for the landscape and planting works has been received from the council and this has been paid.

Sculpture

Mark has spoken to Andrew Frost today. Andrew has advised that Dave Myers does not have a suitable piece of wood, however, Dave will deliver and install the sculpture free of charge, which is great news.

Andrew is now proposing to source the raw material from a sycamore tree on his own land and as a result the design will have to change. He has agreed to send a photograph of the tree he plans to use and a new design for the group to consider. Mark will pass them on to members of the group for review when received.

Under-storey Planting & Wildflowers

A site visit to the Reading Circle and other nature areas of the park was undertaken during the meeting and the requirements for further planting of shrubs and wildflowers discussed at length.

Bob expressed strongly his concerns that there was no room in the woodland area behind the library for more shrubs and under storey planting, nor was there much more room in the nature areas running alongside the cinema and the canal.

The group accepted Bob's expert advice on this but Mark explained that decisions must be made regarding how the Breathing Places funds are to be spent. The cost of under-storey planting has been dragging on for several months and needs to be resolved so that proposals for spending the surplus funds can be agreed with the Big Lottery Fund.

Jay stressed that one of the key requirements of the original Breathing Places scheme was to encourage wild birds into the nature areas and it was agreed that it might be necessary to replace some of the whips

ordered by Dave Burrows and already planted in the area behind the library with more suitable varieties.

It was also agreed that the addition of bedding plants to the borders of the pathway approaching the reading circle would be a beneficial enhancement and Bob will identify what is required for this.

Rebecca has asked Jacky Budd for prices for the under-storey planting list proposed some time ago and these are currently awaited.

(Post meeting note: prices received 16th April as follows:

<i>Corylus avellana</i>	2Ltr pot	£1.40 each (feathered whip)
<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	2Ltr pot	£1.60 each (feathered whip)
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	2Ltr pot	£1.40 each (feathered whip)
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	2Ltr pot	£1.90 each
<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	2Ltr pot	£2.55 each
<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	2Ltr pot	£1.40 each (feathered whip)
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	2Ltr pot	£2.55 each
<i>Hedera helix</i>	2Ltr pot	£1.40 each
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	2Ltr pot	£1.40 each (feathered whip)

Bob undertook to discuss the requirement for further plants, shrubs and wildflowers with Jacky and develop a full list of types that he thinks appropriate with quantities and cost to supply that can then be agreed with the BLF.

The Cornus (Dogwood) and Willow whips provided by Dave that have not yet been planted were also discussed. Bob has used some of the Dogwood along the towpath by Oldknow's Warehouse and the rest are currently heeled-in in Brabyns Park to keep them healthy.

It was agreed that the Willows would be planted in the wet areas near the cinema and that they would need to be cut back in the future to prevent them becoming large trees, which can be done on task days. The remainder of the Dogwood will be planted near to the children's play area.

Bird & Bat Boxes

The six old bat boxes have been converted to bird boxes by Terry and re-installed in the woodland areas behind the library and alongside the canal. Sue Caldicott has reported that the one in front of the library office window is in use already!

Hedgehog Boxes

Currently waiting for Terry to create two copies from the box purchased as a template. All three will be installed during a task day once ready.

Jay will check nature books for advice on best locations for installation.

Wildlife Habitats

The insect study centre with built-in solar powered light to attract insects ordered last month has arrived. The cost was £43.75. Mark would like to install it on a nature post in one of the more remote locations in the park, away from the areas generally used by youths. There was scepticism about the likelihood of vandalism but it was agreed to put it to the test. Mark will arrange for the fitting.

Interpretation

This was discussed briefly but it was agreed to give Jay more time to develop her ideas, which can hopefully be reviewed at the next meeting.

Breathing Places Plaque

Siting of the plaque was investigated at the last task day and it was not felt suitable for fixing to one of the trees. Instead a location on the corner of the library was agreed with Sue Caldicott and she has since cleared this with her line-manager.

It is planned that the park's team will fit it during the next task day. Mark will provide a cordless drill for this purpose.

Proposals for spending surplus funds

It is proposed that the following purchases that have already been made will be paid for from the surplus funds; however, there is a degree of risk because full proposals have not yet been put to the BLF:

Whips and wildflowers ordered by Dave Burrows	£180
Nature books	£17
Insect Study Centre	£44

If these items were accepted by the BLF there would remain a balance of approximately £630. It is therefore important that the cost of further planting in the park is determined and other ideas for spending the rest of the money are consolidated into a firm proposal that can be approved before further costs are incurred at risk.

3.2 Basketball Court Fence

The scheme that received planning permission needs to be redeveloped to include 3m high fencing on both sides and to incorporate a chicane opening with steps down to the lower level. An amendment to the planning permission then needs to be sought and a new price obtained.

Unfortunately Rebecca has advised that she does not have time to do this and is unable to prioritise the work. It will therefore have to be placed on hold until Rebecca or one of her colleagues can deal with it.

This is extremely disappointing as there are currently funds of £3,752 available in commuted sums that could be used to pay for it.

3.3 Beech Tree Sculpture

Adrian has only recently returned to work after being on sick leave and Bob was unable to advise if he has managed to speak to Andrew Frost about the replacement apple sculpture.

Bob was also unable to advise on any progress regarding the installation of the ground sculptures. Mark will get in touch with Adrian for the latest situation.

Bob has spoken to Andrew with regard to cleaning and re-oiling the main sculpture and he has recommended using warm water and stiff brushes followed by the application of decking oil, which contains a fungicide. It was agreed to tackle this on the next task day and Mark will purchase some buckets, brushes and decking oil for this purpose.

3.4 Infants Play Area

Mark spoke to Cllr Alexander during her surgery in the library on 5th April regarding the group's frustration at the delays being experienced in completing the works to the play area. Thanks to her intervention the new benches and play table have now been installed and the old benches relocated to the skate park area.

Replacement of the graphics and the blue outline to the former boating pond perimeter remain outstanding. Rebecca has advised Bob that a more experienced sub-contractor than the original one has now been selected to do this and it should be completed within a few weeks.

Mark has received an email from a park user commenting on the paintwork to the fence and the performance of the mini-roundabout. A site visit has confirmed that the paint to the fence is flaking off already and that the roundabout is catching badly, preventing its proper use.

Bob advised that the painters have already returned and begun work to rectify the painting. The problems are said to have arisen due to being done when it was too cold, however the group are concerned that it was due to poor preparation and asked Bob to seek assurances that it would be done properly this time.

Bob also advised that Gareth in Playground Maintenance was already aware of the problems with the roundabout and was addressing them.

3.5 Boules Court.

The senior citizens' petition is going well and apparently at present has 118 signatures demonstrating support for the project.

Mark has looked further at the O2 Community Scheme and confirmed that it may be a suitable source for up to £1,000; however, they say that they consider match-funding requests on an individual basis so we

would have to make an application to find out. It was proposed to see how the fund-raising event at the cinema goes before deciding whether to do this for the boules court.

3.6 Task Days

Last Day – 29 March

With several new faces turning up and lots of wildflowers planted, bird boxes fitted and a stall in the library selling tickets for the Railway Children, the task day went well.

Next Task Day – 26 April

Proposed tasks, subject to turnout, include:

Cleaning and oiling of tree sculpture, planting of Dogwood and Willow whips, fitting of Breathing Places plaque and fitting of hedgehog boxes (if available).

Mark will submit the list of registrations for free parking.

War Memorial Flowerbeds

Ongoing action on Adrian to draw up the planting scheme.

3.7 Fundraising Activities

Arrangements for the special showing of the Railway Children at the Regent Cinema on Sunday 27th April are continuing.

Micaela says that around 60 tickets have been sold so far, which means that our costs will be covered, but there are still a lot left to sell.

Micaela will be targeting the schools this week and is doing everything she can think of to push the tickets. There will also be another session selling them in the library on Friday 25th April.

Mark will forward the details and poster to Patrick, who will ask Di Jackson of the Marple Business Forum to do an email distribution to all the forum members.

It was also agreed that tickets could be sold at the next Carnival Car Boot sale on the morning of the event if there were many left. Jay confirmed that the Carnival Committee would not charge for this.

The event has been featured in the Stockport Express and it is still hoped that ticket sales will pick up as the day approaches.

3.8 Park Cottage

Patrick advised that the band have recently moved from Compstall to the Conservative Club. This is thought to be another temporary arrangement and that they are still pursuing the option of using the

cottage as a permanent home. Bob reported that the council's estates team are currently examining the bands' proposals.

3.9 Pets' Memorial

An email with photos of the pets' memorial in Gatley Carrs Park arrived just as Mark was leaving for tonight's meeting, so there was no time to print them out.

Mark felt that the idea might be more suited to Brabyns Park, perhaps in the pets' graveyard area, but will bring the photos to the next meeting.

3.10 Status of Funds

Outgoings since the last meeting were £2,775.30 on the Breathing Places landscape works, £180 on whips and wildflowers and £43.75 on the Insect Study Centre.

Income during the same period was £72 in Football Prize donations, £35 from Marple Library (who have donated their profits from sales of the Marple & Mellor calendar) and £100 from Marple Local History Society. The latter is a share of the interest earned from the Iron Bridge Restoration fund whilst it was held in the society's account.

Current bank balance:	£5,518	
Committed Funds:	£4,331	
Breathing Places		£3,860
Tree Sculpture		£358
Sundial & Shuttle panels		£53
Ushers at cinema		£60
Working balance:	£1,187	

These figures do not include any income from the Railway Children ticket sales yet, or a recent further football donation of £43.

3.11 Lock 17

Awaiting the outcome of Cllr Craig Wright's efforts to obtain suitable stone kerbs from the ECO Centre.

3.12 Security Cameras

Patrick advised that his enquiries into the possibility of installing security cameras have revealed that the cost is prohibitive and it is not worth pursuing this any further.

3.13 Park Leaflet

Bob passed on the message from Dave that revision and update of the leaflet would be "costly". Mark asked for an actual figure so the group could understand what that meant and confirmation of when the leaflet was likely to be renewed as part of the natural process.

4.0 Monthly Park Report

Bob advised that the bowling season had now started and the main tasks were grounds maintenance and keeping things ticking over.

Bob also advised that the Green Flag inspection was due in the near future and work was geared toward ensuring the park is ready for this.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Iron Bridge Opening Ceremony

Mark advised that a date of 22nd June has been set for a formal opening of the Iron Bridge in Brabyns Park, which was the day after carnival.

5.2 Gardeners' Question Time

Jay wondered if the park would be a suitable venue for Gardeners' Question Time. Mark will look on the Internet and see what information is available on applying for this.

5.3 Paul Howard 30th Anniversary

Mark advised that Paul Howard Menswear on Market Street is seeking ideas for commemorating their 30th anniversary in business by sponsoring a project that benefits the local community. Suggestions can be made in the forum on the Marple Website. Mark has already put forward the boules court and fitness equipment as suggestions for the park.

6.0 Date of next Meeting

Unfortunately, with two bank holidays in May, the library is already booked up on the days the group normally meets, so the next meeting date was arranged for:

Monday 9 June 2008 at 6pm in Marple Library.

The group may also meet on Monday 12th May 2008 if a suitable venue can be found.

List of reminders:

Write to Wyevale Garden Centre regarding sponsorship
Spring task – jest wash and oil the log bench
Spring planting and plaque for Lock 17 Flowerbed
Outdoor Fitness Equipment