

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 9th April 2018
Marple Library**

Present: Mick Thompson, Joyce Reed, Bob Wilson, Ian Walmsley,
Cllr Malcolm Allan, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Adrian Ellis, Lorraine Thompson, Patrick O'Herlihy,
Micaela Wood, Terry Wood.

1.1 Minutes of last meeting: Typo: Cllr Allan / Patrick O'Herlihy did not attend.

2.0 Items for discussion with Ian Walmsley

Manager of Greenspace Ian Walmsley was welcomed to the meeting. Ian had been invited at the suggestion of Cllr Malcolm Allan to discuss ways that the Greenspace Team can give further support to the group's activities and projects in the park. Many of the following items have already been discussed with Greenspace Officers Richard Booker or Wayne Bardsley but deferred to the new FY due to funding constraints.

2.1 Painting of Bowling Pavilion / Bowling Hut

The buildings were last painted by the group approximately 4 years ago and are now in need of repainting, particularly the large store doors. The group requested support with the provision of painting materials and consumables. Ian asked for the group's requirements to be specified to Wayne Bardsley. It was also agreed that the following issues would also be raised with Wayne and solutions discussed on site.

Rotten window sill on the Bowling Hut: One of the sills on the Bowlers' Hut is badly rotted and is at risk of allowing water ingress and damage.

Door on tool store: The bottom of the door was rotten and damaged by vandalism several years ago and was repaired by the group. This repair and the rest of the door is now deteriorating badly and is becoming an eyesore and a security risk.

2.2 Painting of Infants Play Area Fence

This is a big job that is now overdue. We last did it in 2014 and before that in 2012. Both times we were able to engage local youth groups to help us and would hope to do so again. There are two aspects of this that we need help with from Greenspace:

Painting materials and consumables: it was agreed these will be spec'd to Wayne.

Jet-washing of fence inside and out to remove dirt and loose paint. On previous occasions we have done this ourselves but it is a very time-consuming job and involves trailing hoses and electrical cable around the site, which is not ideal. Richard Booker has suggested that Greenspace may be able to get the cleaning contractor do this for us and we would like to confirm that. Ian asked that we give Richard as much notice as we can of when it would need to be done.

2.3 Topping up of French Boules Court

The court was built in 2008 and could now do with a top-up of grit-sand material. Greenspace should be able to provide a couple of bags of suitable material and the group will provide the labour. Mark will liaise with Wayne regarding the details.

2.4 Resurfacing of Breathing Place pathway and circle

Also constructed in 2008, the hard-surfaces of the Reading Circle and pathway behind the library have deteriorated over the last couple of years. Resurfacing is beyond the

skills of the group and Ian agreed that Wayne could get prices from some suitable contractors for consideration.

2.5 Tarmac paths around War Memorial and Council Offices

The car park and the main path into the park as far as the War Memorial have recently been resurfaced and are significantly improved. The group has enquired previously about resurfacing of the area around the War Memorial itself and the pathways leading from it to and around the offices. All these are in poor condition with surfaces pot-holed and breaking up. We've been advised that they are "on an list" but if possible the group would like to see these areas resurfaced before the 2018 Remembrance Services in the park and asked if this can be prioritised.

Ian explained that he has a very small budget for tarmac surfaces in all Stockport Park but they were moving to a single estate management system, so it may be possible to get this done. The first step would be to ask Wayne to get some prices.

The Area Committee's delegated Highways budget was suggested as a possible source of funding for this too and Cllr. Allan will investigate the feasibility of applying for this.

2.6 Possible refurbishment of the park toilets

The park toilets were saved from closure in 2011/12 and are now the only public toilets in the whole of Marple. They are very old and tired, they often breakdown and are susceptible to vandalism. In fact they have recently been closed for around a week for repairs due to vandalism and frost damage.

The group would like to see a major refurbishment of the toilets within the next year or two. With this in mind we have already asked for Greenspace to investigate options and schemes for their refurbishment. Ideally these should include comprehensive refurbishment, rather than just ongoing repairs, and would consider newer ideas such as unisex if practical. There is also a very strong desire for them to be made suitable for the disabled. The group are not suggesting that Greenpace must find the funds to do this but we do all need to know the practicality of such improvements and how much they would cost. This would enable funding opportunities to be investigated.

Ian suggested that the first step would be to establish the cost of a study to investigate what the feasible options are and how much they would cost to implement. He will ask Wayne to obtain the cost of an investigative study.

It was debated whether there was any merit in looking into charging for use of the toilets if refurbished but it was decided that they should remain free of charge.

Ian also explained the problems being experienced around the public toilets at Chadkirk, the nature of which we thankfully do not have in the park.

2.7 Filling in of weedy strip alongside car park

The group has tried filling this unsightly strip between the car park and the pavement with gravel but it got kicked everywhere and had to be removed. We've also tried planting it up but they got trampled by people walking over them. Ideally we would like to see this filled with tarmac – perhaps at the same time other work is done in the park. Ian advised that a small job like this was unlikely to get to the top of priority lists when there was so much other call on limited funds and the group accepted this.

2.8 Drainage / flooding of park entrance

The soak-way drain at the park entrance is blocked again and a huge puddle is forming when it rains. Photos of this were shared before the meeting. There is also a problem in that all the surfaces do not fall to the drain, so even when the drain is

working there is still some surface water after heavy rain. Ian agreed to ask Wayne to investigate this and see what solutions may be possible.

2.9 Park benches

Wood preserver: The group has been maintaining park benches since 2011. Greenspace has supported us in recent years by providing Barrettine Wood Preserver for us to treat them with and we would appreciate another supply. Ian advised that we should add it to the list of items requested from Wayne.

Scheme for replacement of existing commemorative benches: The group is regularly approached by members of the public about commemorative benches. We have refurbished all benches in the park and found sponsors for all previously non-commemorative benches. We have also added a number of new ones to the park with the support of Greenspace and members of the public too. A couple of years ago we reached agreement with Anthony Crook of Greenspace that we do not have room in the park for more new benches, so generally we are turning offers down.

However, Anthony advised us a year or so ago about a new Greenspace policy that was being developed which would include a 12 month advertising process for trying to trace the donors of old benches that are reaching obsolescence. If the donors are not found after a year, or if they are not interested in replacing the bench, then they can be replaced by others.

We have 3 such commemorative benches in the park installed in 1988, 1990 and 1993 that we would like to offer for replacement. We have saved these from falling into disrepair in recent years by using parts from other seat and can keep them going for a bit longer but we would like to apply this new policy and try to find the owners so that they can eventually be replaced. Ian agreed to look into the status of this policy and determine if it can be implemented for the benches concerned.

2.10 Relocation of CCTV

Before Christmas we had reports of serious ASB issues at the skatepark.

We raised this with local councillors and asked for a report on the feasibility of relocating the CCTV camera we had installed on Hollins House overlooking the Bowling Green a couple of years ago.

This camera has served us well but since the fencing of the bowling pavilion, and of the green itself, we believe it would serve better if it was relocated to help deal with these new issues.

Councillors were supportive of this request but nothing happened in January so we raised it again at the 31 January AC meeting. Again, councillors were supportive and wanted to reform the Working Group but things still did not happen very quickly.

Eventually in March we received a copy of an email from Johanna Smith saying that it would be discussed with Greenspace and the CCTV Team. Mark met with Richard and Wayne on 12 March to clarify our objectives and asked them to ensure that what we wanted to do using the existing infrastructure was understood by Johanna's team.

Today we've received a response from Richard advising that that SSK (now TLC) have said that the move is possible but the view from the location we have suggested will be restricted by 2 large trees (we knew this but think it may be possible to do a small amount of crown lifting). Alternatively the camera could be moved further around the building, the problem with this being that we would lose the view of the bowling green completely. We don't know exactly where they mean but would guess it is the left hand corner as you face Hollins House.

We are now eager to reconvene the Working Group with Police, Councillors and Officers and make sure that they understand the ASB issues and to determine the best option going forward, how much it will cost and how it can be funded.

Councillor Ingham was involved in the first Working Group, which was led by the now defunct Community Safety Team, and has been pressing for it to be reformed but her term in office is due to finish soon, probably before anything happens.

Councillor Allan agreed that he would pick this up from Cllr Ingham and the group asked Ian and Greenspace to support the reformation of the Working Group too.

2.11 Commemorative tree

A commemorative tree in the field towards the top end of the park that was lost last year was due to be replaced during the first two weeks in January. This hasn't happened. Mark has asked Anthony Crook about this today and he is chasing SSK.

Ian advised that we should drop him a line if there are any items that we feel are not being dealt with in good time, or if we do not get the response we expect.

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 Teen Area / Skatepark Phase II / MUGA

The decision on the planning application is still outstanding. Richard is currently liaising with Canvas on a design change that may address one of the negative comments received before responding in full to the planners.

We will look further at funding if planning permission is granted but Ian did make some encouraging comments on a possible funding opportunity. Ian also reminded that we must be careful to comply with council procurement procedures.

3.2 Bowling Green

New flowerbed: The new flowerbed was created during the 31 March task day. We now need to purchase climbers and other suitable plants and it is hoped to arrange a trip to Grasslands before the next task day on 28 April.

Possible artwork to pavilion: During discussions in the park about painting the pavilion it was realised that we have a large blank "canvas" for a potential artwork under the pavilion canopy. Possible art providers or sources of inspiration were discussed and a number of ideas that could be investigated include SMA and its members, Civic Trust, Tracy at Goyt Mill, Sue Coleman and Marple College. Mark and Joyce will begin sounding out some of these options. It was agreed that artwork should reflect origins of the pavilion as a war memorial built by returning soldiers.

3.3 Play Areas and Play Equipment

We were waiting for some costed schemes for the Springers area from Richard and he has sent through some information on possible equipment late this afternoon. Mark will distribute this amongst members for further consideration.

The intent is that this will be funded by £1,702 in the existing commuted sums pot plus money raised during the Treasure Hunt and possibly with a contribution from our existing funds too. We will know better what we can do when the TH is finished.

3.4 Julian Wadden Family Treasure Hunt

The Event Application has been submitted. *(PMN: and is now approved)*.

Fund-raising is going really well and Di Jackson is doing a fantastic job. We have £782 banked so far and a total of over £1,000 pledged, plus some great raffle prizes.

3.5 Encouraging new volunteers

Little Growers: We've purchased seeds for £11.25 and compostable pots for £10.31. The first event during the 31 March task day went very well considering the weather and 16 pots were taken home by young children. It's intended to repeat the event on 14 and 28 April, the latter alongside the Treasure Hunt.

Marple College students: Mark met with a tutor from Marple College on 20 March and he seemed quite enthusiastic about the college providing new artwork for the Lock 10 lectern. He will discuss with art tutors and students and then get back to us.

Planting for 100th Anniversary of Votes for Women: Terry has made good progress on constructing the 3 sided display board to mount on the stone bird bath in the centre of the circular bed. We now need to decide on and purchase plants in the purple, white and green colours and develop the display material. Lorraine has already identified one poster that looks suitable but we need material for the other sides.

Cllr. Allan suggested that a new local group called Equality Matters may be able to help with this and offered to contact them on behalf of the Friends Group.

3.6 Park Benches

Kay bench: No change – ongoing.

Hard-standings for benches: Waiting for suitable weather to get started.

Visit to Fletcher Moss Park: to be organised when weather improves.

3.7 Park Buildings and Infrastructure

Replacement of Midnight: We may have to look at alternative ideas as nothing has come up via Myers Tree Care so far. Ian will pass on details of an alternative tree surgeon and we may also speak to Wayne Chaisty about a metal-art feature.

Stonework at park entrance: Work is all finished but concrete was smeared all over benches and wall and rubbish left behind. Cllr. Allan has asked SSK to clean up.

Other building and infrastructure items discussed under 2.0 – 2.11

3.8 World War I Centenary Commemorations

Timeline Commemoration: 14 men have been added since the last meeting, including William Goddard today and Walter Hopwood ready for tomorrow. Another four men are due before the end of April, as the Spring Offensive continued.

It was necessary to purchase an extra sheet of black correx to continue the timeline. As this is from the same supplier that we usually get our Perspex from, a replacement clear panel was also ordered for the broken library noticeboard to make best value of the delivery charge. Total cost including delivery was £38.

Permanent display: £1,000 funding was received from Marple AC last week. Material for 4 of the 6 panels was delivered to HB Printing last week too, and they are now working on the final layout for panel 1. A proof is expected in the next week or so.

3.10 Task Days

Last Task Day – 31 March 2018

Created new bed at Bowling Green, added soil to Jubilee Bed and allotment beds. Started maintenance of flowerbeds and launched "Little Growers".

Ad-hoc Task Days: Nothing scheduled.

Next Task Days – 14 and 28 April 2018

Parking is approved. Emails will be sent out when due.

Joyce raised the issue of overzealous digging in the beds displacing bulbs and seeds and warned that we need to take care not to do more damage than good.

Task Day Registration / Risk Assessments

Risk Assessments were reviewed and updated in December and a Task Day Application covering 1 January to 30 June 2018 is approved.

Saturday Task Days in 2018: 14, 28 April, 12, 26 May, 16, 30 June, 14, 28 July, 11, 25 August, 15, 29 September, 13, 27 October, 10, 24 November & 29 December.

Training: We await news of any further dates for training.

Dates are also still awaited for Mick and Bob to do the power-tools training.

Power Tools: Nothing new.

4.0 Funding - Status of Funds

Last statement on 22 March shows a balance of £4,524.66.

2017 accounts have been audited by the McInnes Partnership ready for the AGM.

Income since last meeting (most of this is after the bank statement):

Treasure Hunt Sponsorship

£250.00	DJS Research .
£50.00	Roger Fisher Opticians.
£30.00	John Oldham Plastering.
£90.00	Brian Sharples Funeral Directors.
£50.00	Shop Local Club Card.
£30.00	Marple Electrical.
£30.00	Rhodes and Partners.
£30.00	Imperium PT
£30.00	Marple Drama.
£30.00	Malcolm Shaw Funeral Directors.
£50.00	Marple Physio.
£42.00	Marple Health.
£40.00	Ridings Opticians.
£30.00	S. Duddy Roofing.

Other income

£1,000	Marple Area Committee for Timeline Display.
£25.83	Collected in park.
£10.00	Private donation.
£60.01	Co-Op collection box.

Expenditure since last meeting (not yet reclaimed):

£11.25	Seeds for Little Growers.
£10.31	Biodegradable cups (pots for Little-Growers).
£38.05	Correx for timeline and Perspex for library noticeboard.

Current committed funds are: WWI Display £46 (which will cover correx and Perspex), Plants £72, Time-line Display £1,000 and £96 for Local Giving membership renewal (see below). This leaves a current working balance of £3,871.

A Direct Debit for £96 is due on 23 April to cover this year's Local Giving membership. We got it at half-price last year and the fee has increased this year, so it is quite a lot higher than last year's payment of £36. Total income from Local Giving last year was £1,961, including £335 Gift-Aid that we would not otherwise have been able to claim. So it is clear that membership remains worth it and we will continue for 2018/19.

Income to date since FoMMP was formed is now £109,522 with spends to date of £103,625. Ian acknowledged that this was significant and congratulated the group.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Open Gardens in Marple (7th and 8th July 2018)

We need to put in an application to use the park.

5.2 Augmented Reality Pilot Scheme

This is now underway with four digital characters to find in the park. We have passed back comments recommending that one of them is moved to the canal side walk.

Unfortunately the organisers did exactly what we asked them not to do when we first commented on the proposals and stuck their poster on the front of our noticeboard with parcel tape. We have received an apology but it did not get the relationship off to a good start. Ian advised that ours is not the only Friends group upset by this.

5.3 Date for AGM

A poll of availability for the next two meeting dates of 14 May and 11 June was taken and it was agreed to hold this year's AGM on Monday 11 June 2018.

5.4 Council consultation on dogs in parks

The council is currently consulting on proposals to promote responsible dog ownership. We regularly have problems in the park with dog mess and will share the consultation with our volunteers and supporters to comment.

5.5 Queen's Park, Bamford, Rochdale

During general discussions on parks Bob identified Queen's Park in Rochdale as an excellent park and we could possibly get some good ideas and inspiration from it.

5.6 Ian Walmsley attendance of meeting

The group thanked Greenspace Manager Ian Walmsley for attending this meeting.

6.0 Next Meeting

Monday 14 May 2018 at 6.15pm in Marple Library.

Future meeting dates scheduled for 2018 (library booked):

14 May, 11 June 2018.