

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 17th December 2007
Marple Library**

Present: Adrian Ellis (Acting Chair), Robert Wilson, Micaela Wood, Rebecca Nedeljkovic, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Jay Havoleana, Dave Burrows.

2.0 Minutes of the Last Meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising.

3.1 BBC Breathing Places Reading Area

Landscape Work

Rebecca advised that the landscape contractor was very busy at the moment but had undertaken to let us know when the work would be started before the end of this week.

Sculpture

A provisional timeslot in December had been agreed but Rebecca has not heard from Andrew Frost and will chase him up to fix a date.

Interpretation Board

The artwork and ordering of the board will be done later in the project.

Bird & Bat Boxes

Mark has spoken to Mr Griffiths of the RSPB High Peak Group, who has advised that there is not a lot of scope for more than 2 or 3 bird boxes based on the size of the area.

Wayne Bardsley attended the task day on 24th November to give advice on design and siting of bat boxes. Wayne provided a book with a good design and a copy was circulated at the meeting. Micaela will ask Terry to look at how much these would cost to make at the David Lewis Centre. Based on the book it would be possible to site up to 12 boxes, replacing the existing ones that Wayne advised were not suitable.

Hedgehog boxes were another opportunity that could be considered to help attract more wildlife occupation of the area.

Wayne had lots of other ideas about paths and wildlife habitats and has loaned a couple of books – “The Urban Handbook” and “Habitat Management for Invertebrates”. The former is available for under £10 on Amazon and another, “Coppiced Woodlands and their management for wildlife”, is £3.50. It was agreed to purchase copies of these for the group’s own use so that Wayne’s could be returned.

Hedgerows

The Beavers completed their hedgerow-planting task on Saturday 24th November. It was well attended despite the poor weather and the Beavers took part in a Tree Party in the library afterwards.

Wayne Bardsley's guidance was to plant more of these kinds of shrubs in clumps within the woodland area itself. This could be a good way to spend some of the surplus funds from the tree work but Mark will check if there are any more opportunities to get them free from the Woodland Trust first. *(Post meeting note: There do not appear to be any schemes that we can take advantage of at present.)*

Wildlife Habitats

As the arb team disposed of all the limbs from the tree work we now need to bring them in from outside the park to construct wildlife habitats. Adrian will seek a source from other council sites and arrange to have them delivered. It was agreed that habitats should be constructed with a natural appearance.

3.2 Basketball Court Fence

Rebecca will try to provide updated costs for the basketball fence and associated works before Christmas.

3.3 Beech Tree Sculpture

Adrian advised the bad news that one of the ground sculptures, the apple, has been stolen from the Brabyns Depot. The remaining sculptures are now stored securely to prevent further thefts and Adrian will speak to Andrew Frost about replacing the stolen apple. *(Post meeting note: Adrian has spoken to Andrew and the good news is that he has agreed to replace the apple free of charge. Adrian has supplied him with a section of one of the limbs to use for this.)*

Locations for the sculptures to be installed were agreed at the last task day and they are now stained and ready. The (new) apple and pear will be installed in the Infants Play Area and the acorns and beechnuts scattered around the tree sculpture. Adrian will now speak to Gareth about getting this done. It was suggested that installing with two steel rods set into concrete might be more secure than using just one as it could prevent them from being twisted off.

Andrew has now invoiced for the outstanding £1,000 and it has been paid. Mark still needs to complete a report for the Voluntary Arts Grant.

3.4 Infants Play Area

Rebecca advised that the Playdale equipment was now ready for delivery and Groundwork Landscapes would begin installation early in January 2008 and be complete by the end of the month or early in February.

A further £618 was raised on the tombola stalls at the Christmas Cracker and Winter Wonderland events, making a combined total of £1,619 raised at local events and the Ring o' Bells quiz nights, plus the Carnival Committee donation.

Mark advised that the Marple Website would be writing a cheque for £1,000 towards the play area equipment from their 2008 calendar sales before Christmas. (*Post meeting note: cheque has now been paid in.*)

Mark also advised that Brabyns Preparatory School has raised the fantastic sum of £743 towards the Play Area from their sponsored "bounce". The school would like to present a cheque to the Friends at an assembly in the New Year. Micaela and Bob agreed to attend this to receive the donation on behalf of the group. Bob will also take the opportunity to discuss involving the children in activities in the park.

In addition to the council's contribution from the Borough-wide play equipment fund the Friends have now raised a total of £3,362 through the local community to be spent on the Infants Play Area. It was agreed to use this for replacement benches, play-table and seating plus small mushroom type seats in the grassed area if the money would stretch to that. Rebecca will price up some proposals to be discussed at a site meeting on 2nd January 2008 (see 3.5 below).

3.5 Boules Court.

The design work for the Boules Court proposal has found its way back to Rebecca. It was therefore agreed to hold a site meeting in the park on 2nd January at 2pm to discuss the location of the court and associated details. The group will also look at the play area seating proposals and considered if the old seating could be reused in the Skate Park area.

It is proposed to fund the Boules Court from commuted sums.

3.6 Task Days

Last Task Day – 24 November

As already mentioned, the Beavers planted hedgerows in the Breathing Places area. The Friends and the YOT also planted bulbs, the locations of the ground sculptures were agreed and Wayne Bardsley gave advice on bat boxes and wildlife habitats.

Next Task Day – 26 January

Activities to be agreed at the next meeting.

Youth Offending Team

Brian Pendlebury has sent his apologies that the YOT have been booked elsewhere for the last Saturday in January and February 2008, so we will not see them now until the March task day.

War Memorial Flowerbeds

Adrian still needs to speak to Dave Burrows to discuss the proposed scheme before preparing a layout drawing.

Tree Planting Event

The invoice for £100 worth of trees has been paid and the report on the event has been submitted to the Woodland Trust.

Car parking during task days

Micaela and Mark recently attended the Green Space Forum AGM at the Town Hall and both Cllr. Alexander and David Brayshay mentioned that they were still trying to make arrangements for the Friends to have free parking on task days, and that they were hopeful for success.

3.7 Fundraising Activities

Christmas Cracker & Winter Wonderland

As already mentioned, £618 was raised at these events. Special thanks were given to Micaela and Terry for all their hard work organising the tombola stall this year.

Next year it looks like the two events will clash, on 6th December.

The next opportunity for a tombola is probably the Carnival in June.

Marple Cinema Film Showing

Micaela has spoken further to Mr. Lillis about a fund-raising film show at Marple Cinema and will speak to him again after Christmas. The group would receive proceeds from all ticket sales but would have to pay for the hire of the film and for the ushers.

It was agreed that a film suitable for adults and children should be chosen but Micaela will seek further advice from Mr. Lillis before the group try to make a decision.

3.8 Status of Funds

Current bank balance:	£9,985	
Committed Funds:	£8,975	
Breathing Places		£6,945
Tree Sculpture		£358
Sundial & Shuttle panels		£53
Raised for Play Area		£1619
Working balance:	£1,009	

Income since the last meeting is £618 from the tombolas. Outgoings were £1,000 to Andrew Frost for the tree sculpture balance and £100 to the council (for supply of trees for Treeforall event).

Mark will ask if the McInnes Partnership will be prepared to produce the group's statement of income and expenditure again, for the year 2007.

3.9 Park Cottage

Mark has received a provisional enquiry from Vanessa Brook via Adrian asking if the group would support a lottery application to help pay for the cottage restoration. Adrian and Rebecca did not have any more details of what was proposed to pass on at the meeting.

Mark has already replied to agree in principle but has stated that the specific details would need to be discussed and that he would like to see more progress on the other projects we have ongoing before taking on something new at this stage. Further details are awaited.

(Post meeting note: On 18th December a request for the group to make a pre-application to the Playful Ideas scheme in time for a deadline of 31st December was received from Vanessa. After careful consideration Mark declined to undertake this due to the lack of time available before the Christmas holidays. It is hoped that there will be new opportunities to work with the council to find funding for the restoration of the cottage to more realistic timescales in the New Year.)

4.0 Monthly Park Report

The Stockport Volunteers will be helping in the park on 15th January for the first time. They will help with mulching of the shrub beds and Bob will start weeding and edging in advance of their visit.

Bob also advised that he now has a new apprentice working with him.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Outdoor Fitness Equipment

Rebecca asked if the group would wish to support the installation of outdoor fitness equipment in the Skate Park area. It was agreed that this was a good idea that could be followed up in the New Year.

5.2 Friends' Christmas Dinner

The Friends Christmas dinner at the Ring o' Bells was enjoyed by all, the only downfall being that the group was split up on two different tables. It was agreed that next year we would try to book the Copper Room early so that everyone could sit together.

5.3 Possible Pets Memorial

When Micaela and Mark attended the Green Space Forum awards it was mentioned that one of the recipients had set up a scheme where users could place memorial plaques in the park to their pets that had passed away. It was felt that this might be a good idea for our park or possibly Brabyns Park. Adrian will try to find out details of the park that this has been done in already so that we can investigate if it would be a suitable project to pursue.

5.4 Park Leaflet

Micaela suggested that the park leaflet produced earlier this year would need to be updated once the new play equipment is installed and the Breathing Places project is completed. Ideally the Boules court would also be completed. It is hoped that the tree sculpture could feature on the cover and on the map too and the Friends group could appear in their new t-shirts. This will need to be addressed later in the New Year.

6.0 Date of next Meeting

Monday 14 January 2008 at **6pm** in Marple Library.

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
Painting of Infants Play Area fencing due in April 2008
Park leaflet update