

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 13th February 2012
Marple Library**

Present: Terry Wood, Micaela Wood, Joyce Reed, Bob Wilson, Patrick O’Herlihy, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Adrian Ellis, Lorraine Thompson, Mick Thompson.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising.

3.1 Park Benches

Replacement of bench near to the Bowling Green (No. 2 on survey)

The new bench paid for by the Kay family was delivered to Brabyns in December.

Adrian has obtained paving slabs from Etherow Park. A layout for the base has been agreed and most of the slabs were cut during the last task day.

The Parks Team now need to install the base and bench as soon as possible as Jonathan is keen to obtain payment before the end of the financial year and the group do not want to pay for the bench until it is installed.

Refurbishment of bench SE of Bowling Green (No. 6 on survey)

Mark has written to Marple Business Forum to thank them for the donation of £300 for refurbishment of this bench and work is now underway.

Terry has removed the bench, taken it to the David Lewis Centre Workshop and stripped it down. The cast iron ends and centre support have been sandblasted and primed free of charge by Marple Blasting Ltd. at Wood Farm, Marple.

A stainless steel plaque costing £40.80 has been ordered to explain that the bench has been sponsored by MBF and restored by Friends of the Park.

(Post meeting note: The plaque has now arrived. The cast iron has been painted and Terry hopes to start reassembling the bench week commencing 20 February).

Refurbishment of seat and benches on driveway into the Park

David Myers of Myers Tree Care has provided a superb piece of Ash timber free of charge that will be used to make a new seat to go on the two concrete stumps.

Alan Proctor has made excellent progress creating the seat and Mark recently delivered a plaque and some wood preservative to him. The plaque, which cost £35.55, acknowledges Myers Tree Care and Alan’s contributions to the park.

Unfortunately Alan has hurt his shoulder so it may take him a little while to finish things off. Mark has suggested fitting it one Sunday morning, once Alan is ready.

After the seat is completed it is hoped that Alan will be able to start work on refurbishing the two “Co-Op” seats near to the park entrance.

General Refurbishment of Benches

Patrick proposed that we begin tackling sanding and treatment of park benches during the evenings once the weather improves and light nights allow. David Myers has offered the use of his belt sander and it is hoped that we could utilise this offer to make inroads into some of the work that needs to be done.

The Sensory Garden bench could be tackled this way, as it appeared to have stainless steel screws that should allow easy removal of the slats. There are a good number of benches held together with stainless steel security bolts that are also suitable.

3.2 Picnic Bench made by the David Lewis Centre

It has been agreed to postpone installation until the spring. The priority at the moment is installation of the new bench near the Bowling Green so that it can be paid for before the end of the financial year.

3.3 Diamond Jubilee Project

Costs

Mark presented a schedule of costs showing the work in several phases:

Phase 1 – work to complete by the Jubilee Bank Holiday in June: £5,775.
This includes Landscape works, sculpture, plants and notice board refurbishment.

Phase 2 – a display panel explaining the project by end of 2012: £880.

Additional Option – a bespoke metal bench depicting achievements and technological changes during 60 years of the Queen's reign: £1,650.

Costs include 10% contingency allowance.

Funding Status

Good progress has been made identifying sources of community funding for the project and we now have a total of £4,175 received or pledged:

Friends of the Park:	£1,000	Received
The Marple Website:	£1,000	Received
Macnair Trust:	£600	Received
Marple Civic Society:	£500	Pledged
Marple Local History Society:	£500	Received
Marple College:	£300	Pledged
Quiz night prize:	£250	Received
Marple Bridge & Mellor U3A:	£25	Received

Funding needed:

To secure Phase 1:	£1,600
Phase 2:	£880
Phase 1 and Phase 2:	£2,480
Including optional bench:	£4,130

Marple Business Forum have requested more details of costs and funding available to allow them to consider if they can make a contribution. Mark will provide them with the details now available.

A grant application to Marple Area Committee for flexibility funding was due to be considered on Wednesday 15 February but it was withdrawn due to the need to make some late changes. It will be resubmitted for consideration at the March meeting.

Mark is also due to meet with Adrian Taylor to discuss possible funding of projects in the park by the Marple Senior Citizens group after Patrick wrote to them recently.

Progress

Meetings have been held with the college's Adult Learning Co-ordinator Hilary Fidler, Horticultural Lecturer Rebecca Knowles, Wayne Chaisty of Ironwood Art, Rachel Broster, Senior Librarian Operations and Jonathan Long. Everyone is supportive of the project and it is viewed very positively.

Wayne Chaisty has provided prices and sketches for the sculpture and bench option.

A landscape contractor has provided costs for the ground works.

Rebecca and horticultural students have developed the planting scheme and produced a list of plants required. This has been passed to Jonathan who has obtained prices for the majority of them with a few others still to source.

Another meeting is planned for 24 February when it is hoped to give the go-ahead on purchase of plants and coordinate details between the sculpture and ground works.

Refurbishment of Notice Board

Terry has refurbished the locks on the notice board and replaced the Perspex in the doors. The Perspex was obtained on-line cut-to-size and cost £31.07.

All that is needed now before it can be used is a new backing board as the existing one has deteriorated and the blue colour is coming off it like a powder.

Associated Tasks

It is proposed to tidy up the general front of library area as much as possible during task days as part of this project. The planting of the shrub bed in front of the toilets will be rearranged and plants from the existing library bed will be transferred.

The square bed to the side of the library has been cleared with a view to planting wildflowers and it is hoped to clean the paving and do something about all the weeds in the cracks between the paving slabs.

The existing benches are also in poor condition and could be refurbished.

The gravel placed in the narrow border between the footpath and the car park has not been totally successful as the gravel is constantly being spread across the path and needs regular maintenance to keep it tidy. Solutions to this were discussed and it was agreed that planting things like Sedums and Sempervivums could bind the gravel together and may also stop people from kicking it about. Mark will ask Gill to speak to Les and Jean White, who regularly attend the Chelford plant auctions, if they can help.

Mural on library wall

Not discussed in meeting. *(Post meeting note: Mark has written to the library to ask if they would be interested / supportive of a mural being created on the library wall, subject to details. A reply is awaited before considering whether to pursue this idea.)*

3.4 Infants Play Area Fence

Jet washing and cleaning the fence will continue as and when possible with a view to re-paint it in the spring. The council can be asked to order paint nearer to the time.

3.5 Treatment of Sculptures

Treatment of wooden features in the park will start once the weather is suitable.

3.6 Wildflowers for Breathing Places Area

During the New Years Eve task day the bed surrounding the Breathing Circle was cleared of plants ready for planting of wildflowers in the spring. The square bricked bed to the side of the library was also cleared of brambles for this purpose.

Joyce provided receipts for £12 that she has spent on wildflower seeds that she plans to grow-on as plugs at home for planting in these areas later in the year.

Mark has measured the two beds, which total 16 square meters. The cost of the County Lane mix suggested by Bob as most suitable would be £16.50. Because these would not flower in the first year it was also agreed to purchase an annual selection to sow with the Country Lane mix to provide colour this year, at a cost of £8.50.

3.7 Skate Park

Three tenders have been received from skate park contractors with options ranging from £25k to £75k. At a meeting with Richard Booker, Tim Boylan, Lewis Abbott and Marple Civic Society one of the bids was discarded. It was agreed to consult further with Skate Park users on the remaining two before deciding which scheme was most suitable for developing but the big challenge now will be finding the money needed.

The Skate Park project was on the council's list of 18 candidates for submission by them to Sports England Inspired Facilities but they can only submit four projects in total. A priority scoring system with a variety of different criteria was used to select the final four and unfortunately we did not make this list. A copy of the score sheet was distributed with the agenda.

The council have put off a meeting scheduled with them for 17 February to discuss the possibility of leasing the land so that a community grant application could be made because of organisational changes taking place within the council. Instead Mark and Graham Clarke from Marple Civic Society will be meeting with Andy Bleaden, the Council's funding manager to see what suggestions he has for finding funds.

3.8 Park Cottage

The Bands advise that there has been a hiccup with the sale of the land behind the Edge to do with rights of way and discussions with the council are ongoing over this.

The refurbishment of the cottage itself is going well – the loft conversion is nearly finished and should soon be ready for storage. The ground floor needs finishing off and the drainage needs to be sorted out – the latter is going to cost £9,000.

A "Grand Trolley Dash" Raffle is being organised by the bands to help raise funds for the drainage works with a first prize of a Trolley Dash around the Co-Op in April.

3.9 Toilets in the Park

The draft Service Level Contract between SMBC and Solutions SK is now available on-line for review and comment but details of the toilet opening times are included in a series of appendices that have not been published for consultation.

Mark has written to Megan Black asking for a copy of the appendix to be issued and criticised the lack of transparency in the consultation process. The people who signed the on-line petition have also been asked to comment about the toilet opening times using the on-line consultation form at www.stockport.gov.uk/haveyoursay

(Post meeting note: The appendices have now been issued and they identify that the Memorial Park Toilets will be opened 7 Days a week, including Sundays. Marple Area Committee confirmed this on 15 February 2012. This is an excellent outcome of our campaign to save the toilets and is due to the fantastic level of support shown by other local community groups and the people of Marple who use the park.)

3.10 Task Days

Previous Task Days

Saturday 31 December 2011

Achievements included clearing a bed near to the library ready for sowing wildflower seeds, reducing the gravel in the strip near the library and transplanting it to the Sensory Garden, a big sweep-up of the area in front of the library and refurbishment of the locks on the broken notice board on the library wall.

The border around the Reading Circle behind the library was cleared ready for sowing wildflowers and the shrubs and plants from there were transplanted to a number of other places in the park. The refurbished slats were also refitted on Mac's Bench.

Saturday 28 January 2012

New Perspex was fitted to the notice board on the library wall. Paving slabs were cut ready for the base for the new seat near to the Bowling Green and extensive pruning was carried out to the shrub bed alongside the path approaching the park cottage.

Next Task Day – 25 February 2012

Subject to weather and attendance we hope to improve the flowerbed in front of the toilets and transplant the plants from the library bed to here in preparation for the start of the ground works on the Jubilee Project. Bob advised that there would be plenty of other tasks to tackle too.

Mark will send out the parking request for specified vehicles and the task day email.

Two Task Days per month

It was agreed to commence two task days per month in April until September. Mark will work out a schedule of intermediate dates generally in between our existing task days scheduled on the last Saturday of each month.

Future Task Day Dates for 2012

25 February; 31 March; 14 April; 28 April; 12 May; 26 May; 9 June; 30 June; 14 July; 28 July; 11 August; 25 August; 8 September; 29 September; 27 October; 24 November; 29 December.

4.0 Funding - Status of Funds

Current bank balance is £6,153. Income since the last meeting includes £1,000 from The Marple Website, £250 prize won at the Ring o' Bells Quiz Night and £124 from the Quiz Nights themselves, £300 from Marple Business Forum, £50 from Kingfisher Mews Residents Association, £10 from Mr Senior and 50p interest.

Expenditure in the same period includes £330 to the David Lewis Centre (£250 for Tait family bench and £80 for picnic bench), £23.80 for new sweeping brushes, £31.07 on Perspex for the library display cabinet and £35.55 on a plaque for the seat on the driveway donated by Myers Tree Care and being prepared by Alan Proctor.

Committed funds are £3,988, including £2,875 allocated to the Jubilee Project, £813 for the Kay family bench and £300 from MBF for refurbishment of a Bowling Green bench. This leaves an uncommitted working balance of £2,165.

Income for 2011 was £6,871; expenditure was £5,049. Accounts are ready for audit.

Income total to date is £33,071 and total expenditure to date £26,919.

These figures don't include £500 received from Marple Local History Society but not yet banked, £500 pledged by Marple Civic Society and £300 pledged by the college.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 National Gardening Week

Reminder: National Gardening Week starts on 13 March 2012.

5.2 Puddle at main entrance

Adrian has advised that remedial works to the drainage at the park's entrance has been ordered. The schedule for the work is not yet known but the group are very pleased that there has been progress on this as it is crucial to the entrance improvements that have been ongoing for some time.

5.3 Christmas Dinner

This took place on 14 January. The venue had to be changed at short notice to the Sportsman at Strines, as the Royal Oak could not accommodate the numbers.

The event was a success and thanks were given to Terry and Micaela for organising it.

5.4 Marple Spring Clean

Marple Business Forum are organising a "Marple Spring Clean" on a Sunday in May and have asked if the FOMMP will get involved. Until the date is known it is not clear if we could change our existing task day dates but hopefully we will also be able to support this initiative and Mark will respond to the MBF request.

5.5 Kneeling Pads

Micaela asked if some kneeling pads could be purchased and this was agreed.

6.0 Date of next Meeting

Monday 13 February 2012 at 6pm in Marple Library.

Future meeting dates booked in 2012: 12 March, 16 April, 21 May, 18 June, 9 July, 13 August, 10 September, 8 October, 12 November, 10 December.