

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park (AGM)
Monday 13th June 2011
Marple Library**

Present: Micaela Wood, Bob Wilson, Adrian Ellis, Terry Wood, Joyce Reed, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Patrick O'Herlihy.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting: Date was incorrect, otherwise agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising.

3.1 Improvements to the Park Entrance

Carver Commemoration

The supplier fitted a new seal to the art panel while it was at Brabyns Depot and Mark and the Parks & Recreation Team installed the full display in the park on 27 May. Comments and feedback have been very positive.

There is some paintwork touch-up needed to the fixing brackets and some black Hammerite paint has been purchased for this purpose.

Delivery charge was £100, taking the total cost to £2,240. SMBC have been authorised to pay Shelley Signs, the supplier. An invoice for £2,240 has been received from SMBC, who placed the order on our behalf to avoid us needing to pay the VAT, and a cheque was signed at the meeting.

The group would like to record thanks to the District Centre Partnership and Paul Howard Meanswear for their contributions of £1,000 and £500 respectively. The balance of £740 was paid from the FOMMP funds raised through a variety of activities.

Drainage Improvements

Feedback from Jonathan regarding the updated price for the drainage works near to the entrance is still awaited. The impact of the vandalism to the driveway in Brabyns Park on the availability of funds to do this are also awaited. There is a risk that the Brabyns repairs will absorb the entire FY budget for this kind of infrastructure repair.

3.2 Ornamental Flowerbeds

Delivery of plants and shrubs

Planting at the May task day went very well and the wet weather has helped them to become established. There have been some further deliveries since the task day and Bob has planted these. We have now received approximately 80% of the full order.

Outstanding items are 22 Herbaceous Geraniums, 14 Scabiosa and 60 Tulbaghia violacea. The latter item is not available and will be replaced by something else. Currently a delivery date for these outstanding items is not available.

Funding Progress

The Beavers and Rainbows' grant applications to Marple Area Committee were reviewed at the May Committee meeting. The Rainbows have advised that they were awarded £150 but the outcome of the Beavers application is not known.
(Post meeting note: Beavers were awarded £50).

Stockport Homes have advised that their panel will review the group's application on Thursday 16 June. If successful it will be presented at Area Forums for approval by Stockport Homes customers on Friday 8 July at the Senior Citizens' Hall and Monday 11 July at Brinnington. We should learn the outcome soon after 11 July.

3.3 Park Benches

Preservatives and Sanding Materials

Adrian confirmed that he was in the process of ordering wood preserver and rolls of 60 and 80 grade sanding materials for the group to use when refurbishing benches.

Daytime Visits by David Lewis Centre Task Group

Terry advised that he is hoping to bring his team to the park to tackle the bench near to the Co-Op within the next couple of weeks.

The group agreed to cover the cost of replacement materials needed to restore this first bench. Terry will assess costs in advance as he comes to the others so that the council and the group can decide how to fund each one on an individual basis.

Replacement of bench near Junior Play Area (No. 17 on survey)

The lady who has been speaking to Mark about replacing the bench near to the Junior Play area has had family problems that have distracted her from making as much progress as she had hoped. The family still wish to go ahead and it was agreed that the right thing to do was to wait until they are ready to move forward again.

The family have said that they are considering wood and cast iron, all wood and recycled plastic benches and have asked for any input from the group on these options. Adrian advised that the council would prefer to stay in keeping with what is already in the park, which would preclude plastic. Mark will feed this back to them.

Refurbishment of another bench (No. 16 on survey)

Adrian has also been in discussion with a family who may wish to refurbish another of the benches near to the Junior Play area and turn it into a commemorative bench. The bench was inspected after the meeting and Terry will price up the cost of replacing the back and seating slats with new hardwood and Mark will investigate the cost of a commemorative plaque so that Adrian can discuss this further with the family.

Benches near to Possett Bridge

Mark has confirmed with Marple Civic Society that they are planning to refurbish the Possett Bridge benches as part of their National Civic Day celebrations task day on 25 June, so we do not need to consider doing these.

3.4 Picnic Benches

As suggested by Terry last month, Mark has asked Jonathan and Gareth (Playground Maintenance) if it will be acceptable to cut through some of the formalities that seem to be required in order to agree that we can supply picnic benches through the David Lewis Centre for £80 each by making one and having it inspected.

Gareth has confirmed that this would be ok and suggested that a bench is left in the park shed for him to inspect. He has also advised that he would still require the "company's" paperwork, financial information, references and bank details.

After discussing further with Terry, Mark has responded again to clarify that the David Lewis Centre is not a business touting for work from the council but a registered charity providing education, therapy, support and life skill development to individuals with epilepsy and complex learning disabilities. The benches that are made at the centre are simply a by-product of this process and not the objective. They are not made for profit and are available for little more than the cost of materials.

Mark has also advised that we will not leave a bench in the shed for inspection but we wish to meet with Jonathan and Gareth and discuss it face-to-face in order to ensure that any technical or quality issues with the benches are clearly understood. If this is not acceptable we will write to local councillors to explain what we are trying to achieve and what appears to be going on from our perspective. A response is awaited.

(Post meeting note 17 June 2011:

Gareth has now responded to say that he will be happy to meet to discuss the bench but has reiterated the need for a significant amount of paperwork. Mark has requested that he bring a full and detailed list of paperwork requirements to the meeting along with examples of these from existing companies to ensure we understand what is wanted. The meeting will be arranged once a bench is ready for inspection.)

3.5 Treatment of Sculptures and Wooden Features

Adrian advised that concrete was now available and he would arrange for reinstallation of the missing ground sculpture soon. The work is slightly complicated, as the sculpture needs to be re-drilled for the reinforcing bar to be re-fitted.

Mark has asked SMBC about their painting plan for the Infants Play Area fence and when it is next due to be done. A response is awaited.

3.6 Painting of Bowling Green Buildings

Due to delivery of plants for the flowerbeds and concerns over getting them all planted it was decided to divert all hands to this activity during the last task day. As a result the planned second coat of paint to the Bowling Green buildings was not carried out. This will hopefully now be done during the June task day if there are sufficient volunteers and suitable weather.

Adrian will check that the windowsill opposite Bob's office, which is very badly rotted, has been reported for repair.

3.7 Task Days

Previous Task Day – 28 May 2011

A good turnout of volunteers saw several truck-loads of perennials planted in the adopted ornamental beds. As already mentioned, other planned tasks were put off in favour of concentrating on the planting activity as the parks team were concerned about getting them in all.

Next Task Day – 25 June 2011

The next task day will be a special one coordinated with National Civic Day and Marple Civic Society's 50th Anniversary. A copy of MCS's flyer with full details of the day's participants and the picnic in the park afterwards is appended to these minutes.

As the tasks need to finish at 12.30pm ready for the picnic it is proposed to start our own activities in the park from 9.00am onwards. As always people can attend for however long they like and start whenever they wish.

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

3.8 Vision of Marple

Skate Park

A meeting was held on Friday 20 May 2011 attended by Adrian, Jonathan, Tim Boylan and Richard Booker from Parks and Recreation, Andy Bleaden, SMBC Funding Manager, Graham Clarke from Marple Civic Society, Kirsty Pierce from Marple Hall School, Lewis Abbott, a skater who was instrumental in creating the existing skate park in 2000, and Mark, representing Friends of the Park.

The first step agreed was a consultation process with pupils from Marple Hall School. This will take place as part of the school's Enrichment Week from 4 to 8 July in an activity entitled "Love Marple" with the following brief:

- Draw plans to extend / upgrade skate park
- Design an assault course for older children
- Ideas to improve the basketball court

Lewis and Richard will be joining in with these activities to help Kirsty and the children participating to achieve their objectives. Lewis has also agreed to set up a Facebook page about the project and start raising awareness.

The next meeting will be arranged after Enrichment Week and is likely to discuss bringing in some skate park companies to give presentations about how they might turn suggestions from the "Love Marple" consultation into real designs so that the children can select a company to move forward with to develop a detailed design. The big challenge of course will be to fund the project!

3.9 Toilets in the Park

Since the last meeting local councillor Shan Alexander has taken over from Stuart Bodsworth as Executive member for the Environment, and her responsibilities now include the Community Toilet Scheme and potential closure of the toilets in the park.

The paper petition has reached 1280 signatures and the on-line version 209 signatures with extensive comments from members of the local community. These were formally presented to Cllr Alexander with a covering letter at a meeting called by her in Marple Library on Friday 10 June 2011.

The meeting was also attended by two Environmental Officers, Adrian Taylor from Marple Community Council, John Wright from Marple Carnival Committee, Ken Else from Marple Veteran Bowling Club, Alan Postill from Marple Civic Society and Mark from Friends of Memorial Park.

The council tabled a draft lease and asked if the Friends of the Park would be interested in taking on responsibility for the toilets. Mark rejected this on behalf of the group based on discussions previously held. Marple Community Council asked for time to consider but have subsequently identified that their committee would be recommended to reject it.

The closure of all Marple's toilets was discussed in detail and it was confirmed that everyone present considered it a priority that those in the park be kept open. It was also made clear to the council the level of support against their potential closure from the community groups represented and the wider local community as a whole.

Various options and suggestions were discussed and the council will now investigate these for further discussion at a second meeting scheduled for 15 July 2011. In the meantime the toilets will remain open as normal and will be available for use during Marple Carnival and Marple Locks Festival.

The cost of running the toilets in the park was advised as £12,000 to £15,000 a year. A breakdown of this has been requested from SMBC, as it seems excessive.

3.10 Park Cottage

The Bands' "Let it Shine" campaign was launched on Bank Holiday Monday 30 May with a short concert and a release of balloons by the Mayor. It was well attended despite the wet weather. The most recent working party was held on 11 June.

3.11 Marple Festival

Food and Drink Day

The group will have a stall at the Food and Drink Day on 17 September. Mark will prepare a letter for Micaela to take around the local shops and businesses requesting donation of prizes for the tombola.

Fund Raising Opportunity

Patrick is making arrangements for a meeting with the Cricket Club to find out more about the fund raising opportunity that may exist if we can help with cleaning up after their events. This is expected to be next Monday, 20 June.

3.12 French Boules Tournament

Mark has been gauging interest informally and the groups involved last year seem keen to do it again. The date will be 28 August, the Sunday of the Bank Holiday Weekend. Kay Dee Hair and Beauty will sponsor the trophy again.

Mark will make more formal contact with other groups and organise the gazebos. Terry will arrange for three tables for food and drinks, as last year.

Adrian will double-check what permission is required for the group to use the park for this event, which will be relatively small.

4.0 Funding

Status of Funds

Current bank balance is £5,171 with a cheque just signed for £2,240 to cover the Carver display panel and £1,537 committed for plants and shrubs for the flowerbeds. This leaves a working balance of £1,394.

Income since the last meeting is £111 from Ring o' Bells Quiz Nights. Expenditure is £40 on preservatives plus £14.43 on paint for the Coronation bench and touch-up of the Carver display. The latter is not yet included in the balance figure above.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Locks Festival

The Biannual Locks Festival is to be held on Sunday 3 July. It was agreed to have a gazebo / display at the French Boules Court and encourage people to try a few games. It will also be good practice for the tournament! The intent is to keep it low key and enjoy the event itself too. Mark will confirm with the festival organisers.

5.2 Summer Social Event

Micaela advised that she was considering organising a summer social event to the Hare & Hounds at Mill Brow. This was debated and it was agreed it would be good to walk from the park to Mill Brow if the weather was nice, although people would not have to do the walk to attend. The Sunday after a task day was felt to be a good time and 31 July was agreed as the best date for this to give time for it to be organised.

6.0 Date of next Meeting

Monday 11 July 2011 at 6pm in Marple Library.

Future meeting dates in 2011:

11 July
08 August
12 September
10 October
14 November
12 December

Details of the events organised by Marple Civic Society to celebrate the Society's 50th Anniversary and National Civic Day 25 June 2011.

- A community 'Task Day' in the morning 9.30am – 12.30pm – 25 June 2011
- 'Picnic in the Park' in the afternoon 1.00pm – 3.00pm – 25 June 2011
- Refurbishment and repointing of the 200 year old 'Well of All Saints' by a heritage builder organised by Marple Civic Society and funded by Marple Civic Society and Marple Area Committee – this is a 4 day project to be completed on Civic Day 25 June during the task morning
- 'Love Local, Love Marple' photo competition for Marple Hall High School. The entries will be exhibited at the 'Picnic in the Park' and entered in the Civic Voice photo competition for young people

Planned Events for the 'Picnic in the Park'

Exhibition to be displayed at the 'Picnic in the Park' to include:

- A photographic display from 1992 (recently unearthed after 18 years)
- A display of all participants and their projects and total number of hours spent on projects
- Display of the Vision for Marple/Marple Vision Partnership showing the projects involved and progress to date.
- The aims of the Society and the work/projects it is involved with.
- Possett Bridge – 50 years on
- The photographic competition entries from Marple Hall School

Picnic buffet for all and a big birthday cake

Members of the public, local groups and society members invited to take part in the task day and picnic

Presentation of Civic Voice certificates to all participants

Marple Brass Band will entertain the gathering in the park.

Andrew Stunell MP has confirmed his attendance and will join our working party at Possett Bridge in the morning and present certificates to participating groups in the afternoon at the Picnic in the Park

The following groups will take part in the task day/morning:

Each group has chosen their own project to carry out in their area of interest. A 'travelling' video operator and photographer will capture and record the work of each group during the morning. The total voluntary man hours will be used as evidence of joint working in the community and will be used as evidence to help with funding applications for the Vision for Marple Projects via the Marple Vision Partnership Steering Group.

High Lane Residents Association - Their task will be a little pick in High Lane Park

Compstall Community Council - Work in local Etherow Country Park

Marple Bridge Association - Task to be confirmed

Hawk Green Residents Association - They plan is to clear a local footpath. The work start in the week leading up to Civic Day

Friends of Marple Memorial Park - General park maintenance, weeding, planting and painting

Friends of Rose Hill Station - Weeding and general maintenance of flower beds/borders

Marple Locks Heritage Society - They will be weeding the flower borders and between flagstones on the corner of the Peak Forest Canal at Possett Bridge.

Marple History Society - identify the first 5 buildings to be locally listed in Marple

All Saints Church - Volunteers from the church will refurbish the public bench situated next to All Saints Well

Marple Fireman - the local firemen will carry out work with Marple Civic Society - to be confirmed

Carver Theatre - local theatre - adult volunteers will help with Marple Civic Society projects

Marple Civic Society Task Projects:

The plan is to repaint the canal staircase, weed the steps and repair and paint the public bench at Possett Bridge. More work will be done depending on the amount of help offered by other groups, society members and members of the public

We have also commissioned the repointing of a 200 year old heritage structure, The Well of All Saints, by a heritage builder from Nottingham. The work will take four days and will be completed on Civic Day with a plaque erected to mark the occasion.

Young people involvement:

Marple Hall High School Photo competition - Love Local/Love Marple photo competition. To be judged by a local photographer and photos to be entered into Civic Voice photo competition

Carver Theatre - Junior members plan to weed the flower beds in the car park adjacent to the Carver Theatre