

Friends of Marple Memorial Park (AGM)
Monday 10th October 2011
Marple Library

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

1.0 Apologies: Micaela Wood, Patrick O'Herlihy.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising.

3.1 Improvements to the Park Entrance

Drainage Improvements

Repairs to the entrance pathway drainage and also the entrance road have been put on the council's list of jobs but Jonathan has advised that he thinks it unlikely that they will be completed this financial year.

3.2 Ornamental Flowerbeds

Funding Progress

A notification of BACS transfer of £1,000 to the group's account has been received from Stockport Homes. Mark will make arrangements to pay the £50 contributions to Beavers and Rainbows once a bank statement is received confirming that the funds have cleared. This payment plus the grant of £600 from Marple Area Committee earlier this year have covered the cost of the plants and shrubs ordered through the Council and Mark asked Adrian to arrange for the invoice to be issued.
(Post meeting note: invoice for £1,537 received and paid).

3.3 Park Benches

Preservatives and Sanding Materials

Adrian advised that rolls of 60 and 80 grade sanding materials for use when refurbishing benches has been order by the Council and an order for the preservative would be placed this week.

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

The new bench ordered on behalf of the Yarwood family has now been delivered.

After initially preferring for the Area team to remove the old concrete bench Adrian recently agreed that Mark could arrange for it to be cut out. This was done over the weekend with help from Patrick and Mark's son Paul, plus the loan of a large generator and a Stihl Saw from members of the local community.

Adrian will now arrange for the tarmac to be repaired using dry-fill Bitmac and for the Area Team to install the new bench. *(Post meeting note: Adrian has advised this will be done on Tuesday 25 October 2011.)*

Refurbishment of second bench near Junior Play Area (No. 16 on survey)

Terry completed the refurbishment of this bench after fitting the new timbers during the last Task Day. It has since been treated and looks great. The Tait family have confirmed that they are very pleased with it and have sent their thanks to everyone involved. Terry will now submit an invoice for £250 to cover the materials.

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

This is progressing well and the Kay family have chosen a very substantial Broxap Kensington heavy-duty hardwood timber bench that will cost £813.

Mr Kay is currently in direct contact with Broxap to agree the inscription to go on the plaque. Once this is resolved he will send a cheque and the council will order on our behalf. (*Post meeting note: cheque received and order placed 19 October 2011*)

The concrete bench in this position will need removing once the order has been placed and before the new bench can be installed. Mark will organise this using the same resources as the previous bench detailed above.

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

Patrick thinks it may be possible to obtain the support of a local group to pay for the refurbishment of this bench, so Terry will obtain prices for the new hardwood timber and other materials needed so that Patrick can pursue this further.

3.4 Picnic Benches

Adrian and Mark have agreed the location of the picnic bench in the Infants Play Area and the bench has gone to have ground fixings attached by Playground Maintenance.

Adrian will now arrange for it to be installed by the Area Team.

3.5 Infants Play Area Fence

It was agreed to continue jet washing and cleaning the fence as and when we can through the winter with a view to starting to re-paint it in the spring.

Ordering of the paint by the council can be arranged nearer the time.

There will be issues about getting access to paint certain sections of the fence due to shrubs and a strategy for dealing with this will have to be developed.

3.6 Bowling Green Boards

The Veterans Bowling Club have said that they would be prepared to hold their own task day(s) to replace the worst of the boards around the green using those in Bob's store. Bob will speak to the bowlers to establish how best to arrange access to the spare boards for them. It is possible they could be moved to the bowling green hut once the bowling season is over.

3.7 Task Days

Previous Task Days

Invasive ornamental grass was removed from the War Memorial beds and surplus plants from Marple Garden Centre were added during the main Task Day on Saturday 24 September. The refurbishment of the Tait family bench was also completed.

A second Task Day was held on Tuesday 27 September to get on top of the weeding of the ornamental flowerbeds and they are looking great again.

A concrete bench was removed over the weekend of 8 and 9 October 2011.

Next Task Day – 29 October 2011

At this time of year tasks are weather dependent and subject to this and the number of volunteers we could tackle a variety of jobs – there is always plenty to do!

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

Joyce gave her apologies in advance, as she will be on holiday.

2012 Task Days

It was proposed that during the months of April or May until September next year we should hold two task days per month and reduce the meetings to bi-monthly unless there were any pressing issues that could not be dealt with during a task day.

This was agreed as a practical idea and details can be arranged early in the New Year.

3.8 Skate Park

There is little change since the last meeting and the project is waiting for Richard Booker and Lewis Abbott to develop a brief that can be issued to contractors. The target for this was around now but it has been delayed due to communications problems and holidays. Mark will push for some progress.

Feedback is also awaited from Parks Development Manager Kath Hughes about possible funding opportunities via Sport England. The council is investigating the possibility of leasing parts of their parks to community groups like ours to allow us to tap into funding that is only available to landowners or leaseholders. It remains to be seen if the conditions are suitable for a small volunteer organisation such as FOMMP.

3.9 Toilets in the Park

On 14 September the council confirmed that the Memorial Park toilets will be retained and will transfer to parks and recreation, who will open them Monday to Friday. They also advised that they are still considering the opening of the facility at weekends and cancelled the meeting scheduled for 16 September to discuss the matter with them.

FOMMP, Marple Civic Society and Marple Carnival Committee decided to continue with the meeting on the 16th to discuss outstanding issues. The council were advised that they would still be welcome to attend but Cllr. Alexander declined this, so the meeting went ahead without any participation from the council. The attendees conveyed the conclusions of discussions to Cllr. Alexander and her Environmental Officers in writing after the meeting, stressing the importance of finding a way to open at weekends.

The council was asked to continue opening the toilets at weekends (which so far has been done) until a permanent solution is found and to meet with us again in 4 to 6 weeks to update us on progress. It is hoped to hear from them by the end of October.

3.10 Park Cottage

Work to the first phase of the band room conversion is nearing completion and work on the drains has been ongoing over the weekend. There are some good photos on the bands web site showing work in progress.

(Post meeting note: Mark Singleton has advised that an offer has been received for the bands' land behind the cinema, which is good news for them.)

3.11 Marple Festival

Food and Drink Day

The Tombola at the Food and Drink Festival raised a record-breaking £564. Thank you to everyone who helped to make this a success and very well done to Micaela for all her hard work in engaging the local shops and businesses to contribute prizes.

The council and the festival organisers have not charged for the pitch or the provision of gazebos, so outgoing costs have been limited to £54 for public liability insurance (which covers the group for 12 months and up to 6 events).

3.12 Wildflowers for Breathing Places Area

Joyce discussed the provision of wildflower seeds for growing-on with the supplier and was advised to wait until the spring. However, she did order 112 Bluebell bulbs for only £19.50. These have been received and planted already and Mark will organise a cheque to reimburse Joyce, who will follow this project up in the spring as suggested.

3.13 Diamond Jubilee Project

Mark has contacted the college and they have responded enthusiastically to the suggestion that they could get involved in revamping of the flowerbed outside of the library in celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee next year.

Adrian has agreed that the frost-damaged brickwork around the bed can be removed or replaced and agreed in principle that the college can have a free hand in their design – some kind of raised bed and/or raised feature is envisaged to give height.

The next step is to meet with the college and this has been arranged for next Friday morning. *(Post meeting note: Joyce, Bob and Mark had a very positive meeting with Hilary Fidler and Rebecca Knowles from CAMSFC on Friday 14 October.)*

4.0 Funding

Status of Funds

Current bank balance will be £5,462 when the £1,000 grant from Stockport Homes is cleared. Other income in the period is £564 from the tombola and £5 from Mr Senior.

Total committed funds are £2,648, including £1,537 for plants and shrubs, £660 for the Yarwood family bench, £250 for the Tait family bench, £100 for Beavers and Rainbows, £54 for public liability insurance and £47 in expenses to be reimbursed to various members. This gives a current working balance of £2,814.

Expenses to reimburse include £14.05 to Patrick for White Spirit and sanding materials, £19.50 to Joyce for Bluebell bulbs, £3.33 to Gill for 9 pairs of Ladies Gardening Gloves (bargain!) and £10.30 to Terry for threaded bar and drill bit.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 National Gardening Week

Reminder: National Gardening Week starts on 13 March next year.

5.2 Dog Poo Bins

The council are proposing to do away with Dog Poo bins in all parks to save money. The intention is apparently to encourage Dog Waste to be placed in ordinary bins and to dispose of it with the ordinary waste.

This raises the concern that Dog Waste is normally treated differently and may make the ordinary waste unacceptable to the tip, which will then refuse it or charge more to process it. There is also concern that during the weekends the ordinary bins are often overflowing, which could mean Dog Waste being scattered all around the bins instead of confined within the closed Dog Poo Bins.

It was agreed that Mark would write to Megan Black with these concerns.

5.3 Town Hall Meeting

An invite to a meeting at the Town Hall on Tuesday 18 October has been issued to all Friends and Allotment groups. The letter says it is to discuss the council's plans to transfer parks staff to SK Solutions and to give assurances to groups such as ours that the impact on us will be minimal and that we will still be welcomed and supported.

Mark will attend and anyone else that wishes to go will be welcome.

5.4 Remembrance Service

The Remembrance Service this year will be on Sunday 13 November. Unless anyone else is eager to have a turn Terry will be pleased to lay the wreath on behalf of the group again as it is a task he likes to do. Mark will organise the wreath.

5.5 Christmas Dinner

As most members now know, and without publishing details, Micaela has had a bad accident and will be incapacitated for several months. Individuals have sent get well cards and we have sent flowers as a group, and of course we all wish her a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing her back in the park as soon as possible.

Gill will talk to Micaela about taking the legwork from her in organising the annual Christmas Dinner. It was provisionally agreed that it would be good to arrange this for early January, as last year, and this will also give Micaela longer to recover and better chance of being able to attend.

6.0 Date of next Meeting

Monday 14 November at 6pm in Marple Library.

Future meeting dates in 2011:

12 December