

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 11th September 2017
Marple Library**

Present: Joyce Reed, Lorraine Thompson, Micaela Wood, Mick Thompson, Bill Heslop (part time), Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Adrian Ellis, Bob Wilson, Terry Wood, Cllr. Allan.

2.0 Minutes of last meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 Teen Area / Skatepark long-term improvements

Currently we have plans for improving the top section of the skatepark and converting the basketball court to a MUGA (Multi-User GAMES) Facility. Budget costs are £35k for the skatepark phase II and £35k for the MUGA = £70k+ in total.

We approached Greenspace about funding from commuted sums, hoping that we could arrive at a 50%-50% agreement as we did with the skatepark project.

In June we were advised by Greenspace that the process for commuted sums was being changed and we could not be guaranteed funds for the project at that time. It was understood that the process would take a couple of months to resolve but council discussions are still ongoing and the situation remains unclear.

We had proposed to seek the support of local councillors and Life Leisure for the project but without a clear position on commuted sums it is difficult to formulate the best approach, so this has not yet pursued any further.

The position on Planning Permission also remains unclear and we do not currently know what type of approval (if any) our proposals would need.

Mark has had further discussions about this with Richard Booker recently. Richard expects full planning approval to be required and it has therefore been agreed that he will confirm with the planners what level of permission is needed and then work with us to submit an appropriate planning application as soon as possible.

Assuming full planning approval is required, it is hoped that during the period of around 3 to 4 months this will take the commuted sums process can be finalised and we will then be in a good position to move forward with a clear strategy.

3.2 Fencing of Bowling Green

The fence is now fully completed. Access for bowling is via a padlock with pin number. The first padlock was awkward to reach but things seem to be working satisfactorily since it was replaced with one that has a longer hasp.

We have reviewed screenshots from the security camera and it has been agreed that it should not cause a problem to add a bed with some climbing plants growing up the fence panels immediately to the right of the main gate. Greenspace has agreed to look at installing a concrete curb along one of the fence panels to retain the soil that we will need to add to create the new flowerbed.

It was noted that there has been at least one occasion when youths have climbed over the fence to access the green, however, it is in significantly better condition than it was before the fencing was erected and not as intrusive as feared.

Relocation of benches

The benches have been relocated and they look great in the new position but they have not been secured properly. Greenspace has said that they will ask SSK to fix the benches securely.

Patrick has re-treated the three benches in their new location.

Micaela has spoken to members of the Bowling Club about having a noticeboard outside the fencing telling people when their matches are being played so that spectators are aware. Mark advised that we have some boards donated by the library that would be suitable for this and he will let them know.

3.3 Play Areas and Play Equipment

Infants Play Area Gates

The new gates are now installed. There was a small hiccup with the main gate jamming open but this has been fixed after we highlighted the issue to Greenspace.

Accident on mini-roundabout

An accident involving the new mini-roundabout was reported to us by Brabyns Preparatory School via the web site contact form in August. A young girl trapped her leg under the roundabout. Although traumatic, thankfully she was not seriously injured. A reply was sent explaining that this is the council's responsibility and the matter was passed onto the Greenspace team. They have responded to the school and organised some remedial works. The roundabout has been raised up slightly already and the area around it will be re-levelled and a new ring of safe surface will be fitted. They consider the situation to be low risk, so the roundabout remains in use.

3.4 Park Attendant

Cllr Allan has advised that he continues to chase Greenspace for a full response to the issues we have raised. Unfortunately though, Greenspace continue to suggest discussing work that is not getting done by the current regime, or work that is not being completed to an acceptable standard.

Mark has reiterated to Cllr Allan that the issue is not about the quality of grounds maintenance in the park now and whether this is satisfactory or not. It is about being promised that we would have a full time attendant and then not being provided with one. It is about leaving money in the budget for a specific purpose, expressly stated to retain a full time attendant, and then (presumably) spending it in some other way. We have minuted several times now that we would like to know how much was left in the budget for the full-time attendant and to know how this has been spent. We believe that the intent when the saving was proposed was to provide the same service as we are getting now with a roving team, so where has the money left in the budget for a full-time attendant gone?

3.5 Park Benches

The 3 ex-Woodville benches have been refurbished with new oak slats and new plaques. The cost was £1,253, which was funded by donations of £1,423 from 3 families. The small surplus of £170 has been added to our unallocated funds.

Patrick has been very busy catching up with treatment of benches in the park and there are now just the 3 alongside the boules court outstanding. Mick and Mark agreed to help Patrick compete these on Friday.

3.6 Town Centre Benches

The McInnes Partnership sponsored bench on the Hollins and the last one on Market Street sponsored by 54 Degrees North have been completed. This leave 3 benches on the Hollins outstanding. We have held off pursuing these due to ASB in this area recently and will now save them for 2018 if we can find sponsors.

All Market Street benches refurbished last year have also been re-treated.

Mark has asked Cllr. Annette Finnie at Councillor Surgery if underneath the benches can be sprayed by the council as the weeds are growing back very quickly.

Funding-wise, there is a surplus of almost £200 from the two recent benches and we have plenty of materials, so this has been added to our unallocated funds.

A donation of £15+Gift Aid has been made by the Gould-Martin family as a thank you for re-treating their bench on Market Street sponsored last year.

3.7 Park Buildings and Infrastructure

Replacement of Midnight

Mark has reminded David Myers about the need to find a large piece of timber to replace Midnight and he is on the lookout for something suitable.

Painting of Pavilion Buildings

It looks likely that it will be too late to paint the bowling pavilion woodwork this year now, although it would be good to get the store doors done if weather permits. Mark will check that we have enough paint to do this if the opportunity arises.

Bowling Hut / Pavilion Building roofs

The Bowlers have raised concerns with Greenspace about the state of the tiles and ridge tiles on the Bowling Hut roof. The Pavilion roof is in a similar condition and we have written in support of the Bowlers and asked for both to be looked at.

The Greenspace team have reported the issues to Property Services and asked them to assess the condition of the roofs.

Breathing Places reading circle

It was noted that the reading circle hard standing is becoming worn and losing its integrity. Mark will ask Greenspace about repair / replacement.

York stone stolen from park entrance

Apparently the person(s) who stole the York stone from near the benches at the park entrance has been caught. Highways are waiting to see if the stone can be recovered.

Tarmac to main entrance

The re-tarmac to the main path did not go as far as shown on drawings for the work. Greenspace are arranging for SSK to finish this work off.

Pathways between Hollins House and War Memorial

We have asked Greenspace to look at longer-term replacement / remedial works to the tarmac around the front of Hollins House and leading down to and around the War Memorial. They have advised that it is on a list of tarmac work that needs doing.

Graffiti on skatepark

A large tag was sprayed on the skatepark quarter pipe. We asked Greenspace if they could remove this and it was jet-washed off very quickly. They also cleaned up the similar tag on the back of the Hollins precinct buildings. *(PMN: The tag has been resprayed recently and another request has been submitted for its removal).*

Graffiti around the back of the library

It was also noted that there is an area of graffiti around the back of the library. This will also be reported to Greenspace.

Painting of Infants Play area fence

It's been a couple of years since we painted the fence and ideally it need to be done again next year. Mark has spoken to Greenspace about this and they are willing to jet-wash it for us, which is very helpful as it is a big part of the preparation.

We will ask for this to be done next spring and also check stocks of paint.

Jubilee Flowerbed

Several of the coping stones have come loose and these have been moved to under the Pavilion canopy for safe keeping. Greenspace have agreed to measure up and obtain a price for re-fixing the coping stones.

Boules Court

It was agreed that next year we should seek to top-up the Boules Court surface.

3.8 Skatepark Development Project

Marple Carnival / Team Extreme event

The event was a great success and enjoyed by many people attending the carnival.

The cost was £2,175 and this was funded by a donation of £800 from Marple Area Committee plus money raised by sponsored banners and plant and card sales and donations on the day. The balance was covered by a small surplus from skatepark funds. The sponsored banners raised £795 in total and this was shared 50-50 with Marple Carnival with £397.50 being donated to the Carnival Committee.

Completed tasks:

Steel benches: Installed by GT Landscapes and Construction Ltd free of charge.

Blockwork, screed to old quarter-pipe: All works completed by council / FoMMP.

Paint old ramps to match new: All works completed by FoMMP.

New double bin: Installed by council.

Outstanding tasks:

Landscaping / topsoil and seeding:

Seeding has been completed and it is taking very well but Richard Booker is to request over-seeding and may also arrange some banking to the Jump box.

Screening trees and shrubs:

Greenspace are drawing up plans that will include some fairly mature Yew trees that are surplus / available, plus under-planting. The plan will allow consultation with residents nearby to ensure that the best screening is achieved.

Dirt triangle near Poppy feature:

The council has limited funds to cover this but have measured up to obtain prices for astroturf and rubber mulch solutions so that the amount needed is clearer.

Switching off lights:

Some time ago we asked Greenspace to obtain a cost and viability for switching off the two lights near the skatepark at a fixed time to ease the disturbance on residents from the skatepark being used at all hours. Cllr. Allan has been helping with this too.

Unfortunately the lighting people are pushing a solution that uses sensors to turn the lights off at a mid-point between dusk and dawn. This has not been discussed with us and we don't believe it will achieve what is desired.

Cllr Allan took this to the last Marple AC and the committee has asked for a report on the options and costs, so we hope that this will cut through the current lack of communication. We would also hope to be consulted before the report is published.

(PMN: There has been no consultation with us and the report for Marple AC has been published with only one option – switching the lights off at a mid-point between dusk and dawn. We have therefore written to Greenspace and Marple Councillors advising that we do not support the proposal included in the report and that we would like to see an option to switch the lights off at a fixed and agreed time being considered too.)

3.9 World War I Centenary Commemorations

Timeline Commemoration

It's been a busy summer for the timeline with the centenary of Passchendaele pushing us well past the halfway mark and onto the second set of railings. Six Marple men were killed on 31st July 1917 with five more in August.

The next two men are due on 21 September.

Several companies have been contacted regarding the possibility of providing costs and solutions to turn the timeline into a more permanent display but so far none has responded. Mark will chase them up to ascertain why the lack of response.

War Memorial Registration

The application for listing of the War Memorial was submitted in July, when it was discovered that English Heritage has already recently done it themselves. This was rather a waste of effort but the most important thing is that it has been submitted!

3.10 Bee Friendly Plants and Shrubs

Completion reports have been accepted by Stockport Hydro and Anchorpoint.

3.11 Task Days

Last Task Days – 24 June, 15 and 29 July, 12 and 26 August 2017

Five task day since the last meeting have included lots of work on the main flowerbeds, war memorial beds, shrub beds and borders. Great progress has been made on bench maintenance and refurbishments too.

In July we visited the Samuel Oldknow bar for a little post-task day social.

Next Task Days – 16 and 30 September 2017

Parking is arranged and emails will be sent out nearer the time.

On the 16 September it's the Food and Drink Day, so it was agreed to start and finish early without the normal tea break and attend the festival for refreshments instead.

Task Day Registration / Risk Assessments

Everything is up-to-date and we are covered until 31 December 2017.

Saturday Task Days scheduled for 2017

16 & 30 September, 14 & 28 October, 11 & 25 November, 30 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 August shows a balance of £3,347.89.

Income since last meeting includes:

£565.00	Carnival banner scheme, taking total to £795.00.
£436.03	Local Giving (Incl £231 during small charity week match-funding).
£200.89	Raised during Marple Carnival.
£64.00	Donation from trident Electronics.
£160.00	Bench sponsorship from McInnes Partnership.
£160.00	Bench sponsorship from 54 Degrees North.
£50.00	Britvic Scheme via the Ring o' Bells pub *1
£45.00	Charles Ingham Bandroom (3 x £15 standing orders).
£110.50	Collected in Park.
£10.00	Donated by Mr A Nesbit (for use of a photo on the Virtual Tour).
£3.39	Interest.

*1 : The Britvic scheme sent a £50 CAF voucher that was only payable to a registered charity. Marple Civic Society kindly processed the voucher on our behalf.

Expenditure since last meeting:

£25.00	Donated to David Lewis (bench repair).
£3.00	Plastic tube for repairs to petrol hedge trimmer.
£25.00	Marple Area Committee thank you banner.
£4.20	Cable ties.
£42.71	McInnes SS plaque.
£1,253.00	3 x Streetmaster bench refurbishments.
£25.20	Dust masks.
£8.78	SS nuts and bolts.
£54.50	2 x 5l tins of Barretine wood preserver.
£8.28	6 x secateurs, 6 x trowels and 6 x handforks.
£42.71	54 Degrees North SS plaque.
£2,175.00	Team Extreme event at Marple Carnival.
£397.50	Donation to Marple Carnival (50% of banner income).

Currently committed funds are: WWI Display £122 and Plants £93, leaving a current working balance of £3,051.68.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Naming of driveway into the park

A further request for an update has been sent to Cllr Abell.

5.2 Gravel for Sensory Garden

Greenspace is ordering some gravel for us to re-do the Sensory Garden path.

5.3 Manure for allotment beds

The Allotment Association have advised that the allotment beds really need feeding back up, ideally with manure. They advise that there is plenty available free of charge locally but they do not have the means to transport significant quantities.

We have asked Greenspace about this and they have agreed to supply bags and SSK may be able to help with transport. Mark will speak further with the allotment folk.

5.4 Open Gardens in Marple

It has been agreed that FoMMP will take part in the Open Gardens in Marple event planned for next July. The park will hopefully form a central hub providing maps, tickets, toilets etc. This is in the early stages of planning at the moment.

5.5 Tea Dances at Roman Lakes

A small number of volunteers will be attending the 30 September event.

(PMN: It has also been agreed to attend the 25 November Tea Dance as a group).

6.0 Next Meeting

Monday 9 October 2017 at 6.15pm in Marple Library.

Future meeting dates scheduled for 2017/18 (library booked):

9 October, 13 November, 11 December 2017.

8 January 2018, 12 February, 12 March, 9 April, 14 May, 11 June 2018.