

Friends of Marple Memorial Park (AGM)
Monday 10th December 2012
Marple Library

Present: Terry Wood, Bob Wilson, Micaela Wood, Joyce Reed, Patrick O'Herlihy, Anne Frazer, Adrian Ellis, Lorraine Thompson, Mick Thompson, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: None.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising.

3.1 Park Benches

Refurbishment of benches sponsored by Senior Citizens

The second refurbished Bowling Green bench sponsored by Marple Senior Citizens was re-installed during the last task day on 24 November and it looks great.

Terry provided a David Lewis Centre invoice for £560; this includes £500 for materials and services for the two Bowling Green benches plus £60 for the Costa Coffee bench materials. A cheque was written during the meeting to cover these costs.

The second bench still needs the chains to be properly attached. Mark will arrange.

A small section of cast iron has broken off on the first bench causing one end of the lowest slat to become detached. Terry will arrange for a bracket to repair this.

Replacement of bench opposite Senior Citizens Hall

An invoice for £604 has been received from the council and this has been paid.

Refurbishment of bench near entrance sponsored by All Things Nice

A donation of £180 has been received from All Things Nice to cover this.

A plaque has been ordered at a cost of £36.80 and the proof has been approved. It is due to be despatched from The Signmaker on 12 December 2012.

Terry has ordered the timber for this bench at a cost of £100. The plan is to carry out the installation during the 29 December task day, weather permitting.

Refurbishment of other benches

Jim Heald's bench, the Boules Court benches and the Ian Rice bench (near the towpath entrance at lock 12) will all be tackled next year.

A family have been in touch about a new bench but the council are now offering only one option for heritage parks such as ours and they have negotiated a special price including delivery and installation. The design is a cast iron frame with brown metal slats and is expected to be virtually maintenance free. It has therefore been agreed that the family will deal directly with Anthony Crook at the council. The new bench

should be installed along the main path in the near future. This will give us an example to show anyone who makes enquiries about new benches in the future.

Picnic Benches on the Recreation Ground

The issue of the two picnic benches on the Recreation Ground that are badly in need of refurbishment was discussed again due to a misunderstanding of what was agreed at the last meeting. It was confirmed that Terry could make two new picnic benches at the David Lewis Centre like the one installed in the Infants Play Area.

Patrick will apply to Graeme Vout, the Town & District Centre Manager for a small grant of around £200 to cover the cost of these before the work is started.

It was agreed to target completion of the two benches by around May next year, so as not to put any undue pressure on Terry and the David Lewis Centre.

It was discussed and agreed that the group are not proposing to bring the recreation ground into our normal remit and this is a one-off mini-project only.

Maintenance Materials and Tools

The offer by Jonathan Long last month that the council should be able to help the group with the supply of paint, preservative and other maintenance materials was discussed further. Mark asked Patrick and Terry for any further suggestions of materials that would be useful for the bench refurbishment and other activities.

3.2 Diamond Jubilee Project

Planning Permission

Councillor Martin Candler has written to say that he has been unable to arrange for any of the planning fees to be returned. He has said that he will speak to his colleagues about an alternative way of helping the group. Mark has explained to Cllr Candler about the project to refurbish and extend the skate park and asked if local councillors could please consider how they can help us with that.

Mark has also advised Cllr. Candler that the group will not take on another project where we have to deal directly with the council's planning department, as we have been extremely disappointed in our dealings with them on this one.

Display Panel

Mark has received logos from the college but not from the Macnair Trust. He is hoping to make progress on the design over the Christmas holidays and have something for the group to review at the next meeting.

Future Planting

The college Horticultural Department have confirmed that they would like to be involved in future planting and had been invited to this meeting to discuss how the budget of £650 could be spent on planting over the next 12 months.

As they have not attended this can be discussed further in the New Year.

3.3 Infants Play Area Fence

Painting of the Infants Play Area has gone well but there are some areas, mainly the inner fence and the entrances that will have to be completed next year when the weather is again suitable for painting.

3.4 Treatment of Sculptures

No further work needs to be done until next year.

3.5 Wildflowers & Bulbs

Bulbs obtained by Joyce from Lyme Park were planted at the 24 November Task Day.

Bob has stored some of the seed heads behind the sculpture in the woodland and Joyce will collect these for scattering next year.

3.6 Skate Park

Further meetings have been held on 23 November and 7 December. A couple of less formal meetings have been held with Lewis and Ben to make arrangements for the Christmas Cracker stall. The next meeting is 18 January 2013.

At the Christmas Cracker on Saturday 8 December we raised £229 towards the skate park. We also raised £92 for Marple Local History Society selling their books and £15 for Mellor Archaeological Trust selling their walking map and guide. £31 was also shared 50/50 with the David Lewis Centre for the sale of their bird boxes and feeders.

Lewis obtained raffle prizes from NOTE Skate Shop in Manchester and also sold some of his local photographs. The 'guess the sweets' competition was quite successful, accounting for £142 of the money raised. It was agreed that this was not a good substitute for the tombola, which is more work but also more profitable, but would sit well alongside future tombolas as an additional fund-raising activity.

Total funds raised and allocated to the skate park are now £2,365.

Several young skate park users helped on the stall and with the survey questionnaire. They did very well talking to people about the plans and created a good impression.

It is planned to put the survey on-line and to try to get it into local schools.

Richard Booker has obtained some initial suggestions from a group called Rising Stars about organising an event. These were attached to the agenda. It is proposed to develop these ideas further in the New Year and possibly apply to the Co-Op for community funding to pay for an event in May next year.

The library has been asked about having a collection bottle or similar for people to make donations but they have declined due to concerns about security issues – charity collection boxes have been stolen from the library in the past.

It has been established that planning permission will probably be required for the skate park improvements. Richard will prepare this when the design is firmed up.

The notice board has been installed near to the skate park.

Local Giving scheme

Richard has passed on details about localgiving.com. This is a scheme that allows groups like ours to obtain match funding and Gift Aid against donated funds. Mark outlined the basics of the scheme and explained the costs – which would amount to £72 for 15 months, plus 5% of the money donated. It was agreed that it could be worth the risk of the set-up fees to see if the scheme will work for us and Mark will apply for an account with localgiving.com.

3.7 Teen Shelter

PCSO Bernie Kenyon attended the skate park meeting on 23 November. From the police perspective they do not believe that the teen shelter is a big issue but Bernie has agreed to provide a poster with contact details for the notice board and also to keep an eye on what is going on in the park.

Bernie also suggested that in the spring when activity starts to pick up again the PCSOs could possibly visit local schools during assembly to encourage pupils to report incidents to teachers or to the police. Bernie also stressed the importance of problems being reported so that they are aware and that this can be done in confidence. The group felt that the school assemblies idea would be a good thing to do.

Anne spoke to some of the users during the Christmas Cracker and the feedback from them was that problems were an everyday issue, so the key is obviously to get them to report the problems whenever they happen.

A special contact email address skatepark@marplememorialpark.org.uk has been set up so that if they wish skate park users can report incidents to Friends of the Park. Mark will place a poster in the notice board about this.

It was agreed to ask Jonathan Long to report back on progress from the Policing Team and the Anti-Social Behaviour Team at our next meeting on 11 February 2013.

3.8 Park Cottage

No new information this month. The Bands plan to start using the cottage early in the New Year and will then focus on fundraising activities for the extension.

3.9 Task Days

Previous Task Days since last meeting

Saturday 24 November

The second Senior Citizens' bench was installed and more work done on the flowerbeds, including planting of bulbs obtained by Joyce from Lyme Park.

During the task day it became clear that more plants have been stolen from the park. Several new small shrubs planted by the group in the War Memorial beds recently have been taken including a Black Alder, a Sambuca and two Broom bushes.

The problem has been mentioned to the PCSOs and they have said that they will keep a lookout. Mark has publicised it on The Marple Website and it is hoped that if the culprits are made aware that we know about it they will stop.

It was agreed that it might help to put some "Stop Thief!" posters in the park notice boards to further raise awareness of the thefts, so Mark will do this.

Saturday 29 December

An opportunity to work off some mince pies! Patrick, Terry and Mick hope to install / refurbish the All Things Nice bench. Other activities will depend on weather and number of volunteers.

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

Task Day Dates for 2013

26 January; 23 February; 30 March; 13 & 27 April; 11 & 25 May; 15 & 29 June; 13 & 27 July; 17 & 31 August; 14 & 28 September; 26 October; 30 November; 28 December 2013.

4.0 Funding - Status of Funds

Current bank balance is £5,628. Income since the last meeting includes £5 from Mr Senior's regular donations, £180 from All Things Nice, £136.50 from Ring o' Bells Quiz Nights and £229 from the Christmas Cracker. The last two items have been allocated to the skate park fund.

Expenditure in the same period was £604 for the Bluhm family bench.

Committed funds are now £4,635, including £2,365 allocated to the skate park, £1,529 to the Jubilee Project, £500 on the Senior Citizens' bench refurbishment, £180 on the All Things Nice bench and £60 for timber on the Costa Coffee bench refurbishment. This leaves an uncommitted working balance of £993.

Cheques for £36.80 (All Things Nice Plaque) and £560 (David Lewis Centre for bench materials) were signed at the meeting.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Options for new trees

Anthony Crook seems amenable to the suggestion of having a couple of *Amelanchier lamarckii* specimens to replace the trees recently removed from the park but has asked for the exact locations proposed so that the council can properly review this request. Bob will advise the locations so that Mark can make a formal request.

Obviously there is concern about the recent thefts and this needs to be considered.

5.2 Pure Radio Podcast

Anne's interview with the group was broadcast on Pure Radio on 27 November and is now available on-line. There is now a link from the home page of our web site to it.

5.3 Green Space Forum / AGM

Joyce attended the AGM representing FoRHS but left early. She gave some feedback to the group on the meeting, which included presentations on local giving and grading of parks. Local Hero Awards were also distributed while Joyce was there.

Mark still needs to write to the council emphasising the importance of our group's partnership with the parks team.

5.4 Tidy up of Lock-Up

It was agreed that a good tidy-up of the lock-up storage space at the end of the Bowling Green club building was needed early in the New Year.

There is a large amount of the council's bagged fertiliser and grass seed stored in there at the moment and this is restricting access. Mark asked if it could be removed and stored elsewhere. Adrian asked Bob to review current stocks of fertiliser, dispose of any that is out of date and move the rest to the council's shed.

Bob advised that asbestos has been identified around the exterior of the building and this is due to be removed early in the New Year. Adrian will find out when this is due to take place so the group can decide if we need to remove any of our equipment to ensure we still have access to it while the work is going on.

5.5 Bowling Green Steps

The Bowling Green steps are in very poor condition and now deteriorating rapidly. Adrian advised that Jonathan has had quotes from contractors for repairs.

5.6 Co-Op Steps

The Co-Op steps are still in need of yellow paint to highlight the steps. This issue has been raised a number of times in the past without success and the group are concerned that the steps are unsafe in the dark, especially for the elderly and / or partially sighted. Patrick will write to the Co-Op to try and get some action.

5.6 Ted Kenworthy

Terry advised that Ted Kenworthy, who helped the group with the Senior Citizens' sponsored bench, has recently passed away. Terry said that he would like to commemorate Ted in the park in some way and the group were agreeable to this.

5.7 Christmas Lunch

The Hare and Hounds is booked for 19th January 2013 at 1pm. It was agreed, weather permitting, that it would be good to walk down together using the new pathways round Marple Hall School. Those not wishing to walk could obviously meet at the pub.

6.0 Date of next Meeting

Monday 11 February 2012 at 6pm in Marple Library.

Meeting dates scheduled for 2013 (library booked):

11 February, 11 March, 8 April, 13 May, 10 June, 8 July, 12 August, 9 September, 14 October, 11 November, 9 December 2013.