

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 13th February 2017
Marple Library**

Present: Mick Thompson, Micaela Wood, Terry Wood, Bob Wilson, Joyce Reed, Mark Whittaker, Part-time: Cllr. Malcolm Allan, Patrick O'Herlihy.

1.0 Apologies: Adrian Ellis, Lorraine Thompson.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 Consultation on better Football Provision

The Greenspace consultation was sent to 37 homes bordering the park. There were 8 responses, 7 positive (for) and 1 negative (against). We do not have the detail of any comments but Cllr. Allan has asked for this to be provided.

Following this Greenspace issued a report to Marple Area Committee on the consultation outcome, which recommended that AC support the proposal to improve the football provision in the park. The committee did so on Wednesday 1st February.

We raised a concern in advance of the meeting that the report did not accurately quote the minutes of 18 December 1919 concerning the playing of football and cricket but Greenspace didn't consider it necessary to revise the report. Cllr. Allan also raised the same issue during the AC meeting but no concern was expressed or recorded.

The key thing for us is that legal obstacles to improving the football provision in the park have now been overcome without the need to change the existing by-laws, because these will not be contravened.

It has taken the council since November 2014 to bring this matter to a satisfactory conclusion and we are very pleased that our persistence had been rewarded at last.

The next steps are to consider locations and request the addition of a new pair of goalposts in the park. Earlier discussions suggest that a pair of posts are available.

In addition, we would like to develop a plan for the improvement of the basketball court, turning it into a Multi-Games Facility (MUGA) with new safe surface and possible improvements to the top section of the existing skatepark adjoining it.

We do not anticipate undertaking the same long-term piecemeal approach to fund-raising as we did for the new skatepark but we will pursue any grant funding schemes that may be suitable.

3.2 Fencing of Bowling Green

Richard has advised that tenders will be issued this week and by early March the council should be in a position to appoint a contractor. We will then have a better idea of timescales but it looks very unlikely that the work would be finished by the start of the new bowling season. This information has been shared with the Bowling Club.

3.3 Play Areas and Play Equipment

Infants Play Area Improvements

Play equipment installation was completed by 27 January but the area was not reopened until 8 February due to delays in inspection. This has been very frustrating with lots of enquiries about what is happening coming directly to the group.

We also had quite a few complaints that there was no notice of the closure, so people were turning up to use the park and finding that they couldn't. We did ask the council to put up signs telling people what was happening but they chose not to do so.

There are a couple of outstanding issues with the new Musical Pirate Ship – the drumstick on the rope does not reach all the drums. It looks like it has been installed the wrong way through the vertical post (although the contractor claims they have followed the manufacturer's instructions). Also the caps on the drums have cracked already. They do not look fit-for-purpose and Richard has written to the manufacturer.

In view of the fiasco with the new roundabout some years ago, when the council failed to deal with the sub-standard equipment provided by Playdale when it was first installed, and ended up paying for a replacement out of commuted sums, we will be keeping the pressure on to try and ensure that doesn't happen again.

(Post meeting note: the drum module was removed by the council on Friday 17 February because the broken caps had exposed sharp screws that could cause injury. This has been followed up with Richard, who is still waiting for a proposal from the manufacturer about how they are going to deal with the problem.)

Infants Play Area Gates

The temporary latches we requested have now been fitted.

The installation of new gates is due to start in March. We have asked for it to be done one gate at a time so that the play area does not have to be closed again.

To reiterate our expectations discussed with Richard, the new gates should be matched to the red colour used on the existing fencing and gates (RAL 3001) and the existing carved wooden sign above the main gate will be reinstalled on new posts. The old sign above the rear gate will not be reinstalled as it is no longer sound.

3.4 Park Attendant

Cllr Allan advised that he has now made significant progress on this matter. He has identified the details of what was agreed in the actual budget papers at the time and amendments to them. He has located advice given to councillors in response to the public consultation and specific agreements relating to keeping the full-time park keeper role in meeting minutes. In addition, he has obtained written confirmation from both Local Councillors involved at the time that there was an agreement to keeping full-time park keepers in two parks, including Marple Memorial Park.

In view of the irrefutable evidence that it was specifically agreed to keep the full-time park keeper Cllr Allan has written to Ian O'Donnell asking for the role to be reinstated.

The group thanked Cllr Allan for his efforts and support on this matter.

3.5 Park Benches

The repaired picnic bench is still in storage. Provisional plan is to install end of March.

The plaque for the Ashley / Parry bench has been received. The existing slat was removed so Terry could fit the new plaque and the slat has now been reinstated.

There is quite a lot of green on the benches so Patrick will purchase some ECO Chem.

Patrick also suggested that many of the benches will need the metalwork painting this year. This will be done later in the year when weather is more suitable.

Patrick will pass on details of a gentleman who has offered to sponsor new slats on one of the existing benches. Mark will look into costs.

3.6 Town Centre Benches

To be followed up in the spring.

3.7 Park Buildings and Infrastructure

Myers Tree Care is still on the lookout for replacement logs and a suitable trunk for the longer-term replacement of Midnight.

Weather wasn't suitable on the last task day so the new halyard has still to be fitted.

3.9 Skatepark Development Project

Latest Skatepark Project News

We've received a further £405 via the Grow Your Tenner scheme. The match-funded phase is nearing completion and some people have finished making their matched payments. A few will make their final payments at the end of February and 1 or 2 in March. Currently we have 10 live direct debits and a few people may continue their support beyond the matched payments, as a small number did last time.

Local Giving has written about the extra £50 paid as part of the #GiveMe5 scheme. They say it was a banking error but are letting us keep it as a late Christmas present.

We've had a donation of £140 from the Inner Wheel Club of Marple & Goyt Valley.

Mark has spoken to Simon the manager at ASDA. He has had no feedback on the Asda Foundation application made last year and said that he would follow it up. If we don't hear anything further we will assume that it has been unsuccessful.

Our current total is £50,951 community funds plus £50,000 council match-funding.

A meeting has been held at the skatepark with the council and Life Leisure representatives to discuss the possibility of their organisation becoming involved in the project. Feedback has been very positive but details have still to be confirmed.

Skatepark Construction

Work started on site early to plan on 1st February 2017 and is progressing a little ahead of schedule. Completion by Easter remains the target but is very tight. Progress photos are being uploaded to the Skatepark Facebook page and The Marple Website.

There has been an issue with some sections of the tarmac path into the park breaking up due to the weight of the heavy lorries bringing in stone for the skatepark foundations. This has been discussed with Canvas and the council and unfortunately is unavoidable. The matter will be addressed when the construction is completed.

3.10 World War I Centenary Commemorations

Timeline Commemoration

Joseph Holland was added on 25 January and Samuel Platt on 29 January. Next men are George Taylor on 1st March and then Clarence Byrom on the 2nd.

Mark has met with the new Senior Citizen's Chair Ian Hilton to discuss projects in the park that they may be interested in supporting. One of the projects suggested was turning the timeline display into a permanent feature. The group are very keen to find a way to fund this as it will be a great shame to remove the display from public view.

WW2 Plaque

Anne is still working on her idea for a film and we look forward to the result.

War Memorial Registration and Survey Workshop

We have still to apply for statutory listing of the war memorial.

3.11 Task Days

Last Task Day – 28 January 2017

A very wet first task day of the year saw 8 Red Robin shrubs donated by Mick and Lorraine transferred to the park. These seem to have taken very well and there are another 7 to do next time. There was also work done in the reading circle and the wreaths were removed from the war memorial and some of them stored for use on the timeline display throughout the year.

Next Task Days – 25 February 2017

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

A meeting is arranged with a member of the bandroom committee to discuss trimming of their ivy hedge, which is causing visibility issues when driving vehicles off the park.

Task Day Registration / Risk Assessments

Everything is up-to-date and we are covered until 30 June 2017.

Mark would still like to prepare a refresher document for Team Leaders.

Saturday Task Days scheduled for 2017

25 February, 25 March, 15 & 29 April, 13 & 27 May, 10 & 24 June, 15 & 29 July, 12 & 26 August, 16 & 30 September, 14 & 28 October, 11 & 25 November, 30 December.

Training

No change: we are still waiting for suitable dates for Lorraine and Micaela to do the Team Leader training and for Mick and Bob to do the power-tools training.

Power Tools

No change.

4.0 Funding - Status of Funds

Current bank balance is £51,432.11.

Income since last meeting includes:

£404.92 Local Giving.

£140.00 Inner Wheel Club of Marple and Goyt Valley.

Expenditure since last meeting = Nil

Income to the 2016 year end is confirmed as £24,133.67.

Income in 2017 so far is £819.35.

Spent to end of 2016 was £5,090 and spent this year to date is £143.22.

Our income total is now £99,571.26 as we head for that significant milestone.

Committed funds in account are: Skatepark £50,951, WWI Display £128 and Town Centre Benches £28. This leaves a working balance of £324.52, which doesn't include

just over £25 cash still to be paid into the bank, or Malcolm's expenses for a new wheel for one of the wheelbarrows.

The 2016 year end accounts have recently been submitted for audit to the McInnes Partnership, who will provide this service free of charge for the 12th year.

Grant Applications and Funding Opportunities

Mick looked into the Equity grant scheme but determined that it wasn't suitable.

We've been offered and accepted a grant of £200 for Bee Friendly plants and shrubs from Stockport Hydro. The award will be presented in March and we will need someone to represent us when we know the date. (*Post meeting note: Joyce, Ian and Anne will attend the presentation on 10 March at the Hydro*).

We have submitted a grant application to Anchorpoint Stockport for a further £300 towards Bee Friendly plants and shrubs and also expressed an interest in the projector and display panels on their list of equipment for disposal. Applications will be decided during week commencing 20th February.

On the Bee Friendly project, it is planned to buy plants and shrubs from Chelford Market Auctions to maximise value for money. These take place on Wednesdays and we will need several volunteers to attend and collect from the auctions on our behalf.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Future Projects

As mentioned earlier, at Patrick's suggestion Mark recently met with Senior Citizen's Chair Ian Hilton with a view to them possibly supporting some of our projects in the park. We await the response from the Senior Citizens' committee on the following:

- Better football provision.
- Exercise equipment.
- Replacement of Midnight Tree Sculpture.
- Turn WWI Timeline into a permanent display.
- Make park more bee friendly and colourful (initial funding now established).
- Ongoing playground improvements (usually funded by commuted sums).
- Upgrade of Park Toilets.
- Overhaul of Sensory Garden.

5.5 Wheelbarrow repair

Malcolm purchased and fitted a new wheel to the wheelbarrow with the damaged tyre during the last task day and will provide a receipt to be reimbursed in due course.

5.5 Lights not working in the car park

It was noted that the lights in the car park are not working properly and need to be reported to the council.

6.0 Next Meeting

Monday 13 March 2017 at 6.15pm in Marple Library.

Future meeting dates scheduled for 2017 (library booked):

13 March, 10 April, 8 May and 12 June 2017.