

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Annual General Meeting
Monday 11 June 2018
Marple Library**

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

1.0 Apologies: Adrian Ellis, Terry Wood.

1.1 Minutes of last meeting: Agreed.

2.0 Annual General Meeting

2.1 Chairman's Report

Successes and achievements since the last AGM in April 2017

We launched the new skatepark with a celebration event during Marple Carnival, when we had Team Extreme back to put on displays and competitions. Marple Area Committee helped with funding for this and we raised more by selling banner space.

With the council we've worked on ongoing skatepark enhancements including; completion of landscaping, painting old features to match new, rubber mulch inserts, blocking off the back of the old quarter-pipe, refurbished and installed new seating, planted screening trees and whips and arranged for lights to switch-off at 9.30pm.

We've developed plans for Phase II improvements, including upgrading the top section of the skatepark and replacing the basketball court with a MUGA facility. A planning application was submitted for this in December. A couple of issues need to be addressed but we are now closer to resolving those after a meeting with Canvas and Greenspace a couple of weeks ago. Funding for Phase II has been approved by the council from Formal Sports Commuted Sums.

The WWI timeline has continued to grow, with 114 men on the display now. We have secured funding from Marple Area Committee to turn the display into a permanent feature and 5 out of 6 permanent panels printed by HB Printing are installed. Men will continue to be added on 100th anniversaries until the last permanent panel is installed in November, so that all 141 men are on the timeline ready for Remembrance 2018.

We won two grant awards for bee-friendly plants from Stockport Hydro and Anchor Point Stockport. £500 worth of new plants were purchased thanks to these awards.

The 4th Annual Treasure Hunt organised with Julian Wadden was a huge success and over £2,154 was raised toward new equipment in the Infants Play Area. A very big thank you is due to Di Jackson, who did a great job coordinating the fund-raising. There is £1,702 available from Commuted Sums and we have submitted a £1,000 grant application to the Autotrader Community Fund. If successful we will have approximately £5,000 and have begun talking to Greenspace about ordering a new piece of equipment called an Ocean See-Saw for the play area.

We at last coaxed the council into finishing the project to name the driveway into the park. This has only taken 8 years of nagging and cajoling (and it was their idea to begin with!) Marple AC were supportive and paid the small cost to do this.

We installed new 5-a-side goalposts donated by Greenspace in the top field after a prolonged 2 year campaign to gain approval for the playing of informal football and cricket in the park. This was needed for us to be able to pursue with confidence the proposal to turn the basketball court into a MUGA.

The War Memorial was statutorily listed Grade II.

Fencing around the Bowling Green was completed this year. It has not been as visually intrusive as feared and it had made a significant improvement to the condition of the green. Seats from the Bowling Green have been relocated outside the fence to ensure they remain publicly accessible. The Bowlers have purchased replacements. We have created a new flowerbed near to the entrance and recently planted it up.

New gates were installed on the Infants Play Area.

A picnic bench was refurbished for us by Terry at the David Lewis Centre and sponsors for the refurbishment of 3 old park benches were found and the work completed. All other park benches were maintained, two Town Centre benches were refurbished and the others done the previous year were maintained and retreated.

We paid for repairs to the coping stones on the Jubilee Flowerbed.

We have continued to maintain the bandroom garden for the Brass Bands of Marple.

We have run a new scheme called "Little Growers" to encourage children and their parents to get involved in the park. This seemed very popular and we hope that we will get a good number of plants coming back to the park during the summer.

Greenspace has provided us with reclaimed paving slabs and sand and we have started to create hard-standings in front of benches suffering from soil erosion.

We had a productive meeting with Greenspace Manager Ian Walmsley to discuss how the Greenspace Team can help us with projects in the park.

We have initiated new projects to:

- Paint the Bowling Green buildings and have some repairs done.
- To paint the Infants Play Area fence again.
- To top-up the French Boules Court.
- To resurface the Reading Circle.
- To replace the information board artwork near Lock 10.
- To create a large mural on the WWI bowling pavilion.
- To commemorate 100 Years of Votes for Women.
- To investigate the options and costs to upgrade the park toilets.
- To seek ways to re-tarmac the paths near the war memorial and offices.
- We are also involved in the Open Gardens in Marple event in July this year.

A total of 20 regular and ad-hoc Task Days were held in the park during 2017.

- As always, the main focus has been maintenance of the flowerbeds, shrub beds and woodland areas throughout the park.
- Our programme of bench maintenance has also continued to ensure that all benches in the park are in the best possible condition.

Social events have been held at the Roman Lakes and Samuel Oldknow's.

In conclusion, Mark noted the great support we've received from Marple Area Committee over the last year on so many of our activities and thanked everyone for their contributions and support of the park throughout the last year. Mick reciprocated on behalf of the group to thank Mark and Gill for all their hard work too.

2.2 Treasurer's Report 2017

The McInnes Partnership has audited our accounts for 1st January to 31st December 2017 and a certified income and expenditure sheet was published with the agenda.

The McInnes Partnership has provided this service free of charge for 14 years.

Income during 2017 was £8,483, taking the total money raised since the group began to £107,235 at the year end. As always pointed out - this doesn't include funding from Stockport Council or Living Spaces for the two play areas or the basketball fence from commuted sums or the £50,000 for the skatepark or £11,750 from Life Leisure. It is just the money raised directly by the group and passed through our own account.

The main income highlights in the year were:

£1,961 Local Giving donations, £1,450 Treasure Hunt, £1,423 Park Bench refurbishment donations, £800 from Marple Area Committee (towards the skatepark launch event), £795 Skatepark event sponsorship, £359 collected in the park, £320 Town Centre bench sponsorship, £300 Anchor Point and £200 Stockport Hydro for Bee Friendly plants, £257 raised at local events, £150 in monthly payments from Marple Bands, £140 Inner Wheel Club donation.

We also received £89 from the collection box in Marple Co-Op, £18 from Easy Fund-raising, £11 bank interest and £210 in small donations.

Contributions coming in via Local Giving have again been significant with a net total of £1,961. This is broken down as £1,325 donations, £400 match-funding, £335 Gift-Aid, less £100 transaction fees. So the £36 discounted annual fee was very good value. This year the annual fee increased to £96 PA but still worthwhile.

In the year we spent £55,553, taking our total spending on the park to £103,549.

The biggest outgoings were:

- £50,060 on the skatepark
- £2,175 on the skatepark launch event
- £1,253 on park bench refurbishments
- £428 on Bee Friendly Plants
- £419 on tools and materials
- £398 donation to Marple Carnival (from carnival sponsorship)
- £360 on repairs to the Jubilee bed coping
- £195 Public Liability insurance
- £149 on Town Centre bench refurbishments

At the end of the year we had a bank balance of £3,686 with just £194 of that committed to various projects, giving us a working balance of £3,492.

Report on 2018 to date

Since the turn of the year our income has been £3,805 and expenditure £573. This takes our total income to £111,041 and our "spends" to £104,122.

Income highlights this year are:

- £2,104 Treasure Hunt
- £1,000 Marple Area Committee for the permanent timeline
- £340 Local Giving
- £131 Co-Op collection box
- £105 Marple Bands

Expenditure highlights this year are:

- £195 on Public Liability insurance
- £114 on the time-line
- £96 Local Giving fee
- £93 on plants
- £76 on tools and materials

Our bank balance on the last statement for 22 May 2018 was £7,320 and is calculated to now be £6,919.

Committed funds are £2,104 on Infants Play Area equipment and £1,000 on the permanent time-line, leaving a working balance of £3,815.

2.3 Election of Officials

2.3.1 Chairman

As Adrian warned us last year, he and Sandra have now relocated to Cornwall.

A big thank you was recorded to Adrian for his support as Chairman for the last 10 years and the group wished the pair of them the very best in their new life.

With the chairman position now vacant, Mick Thompson was nominated to step into this role. There were no other candidates and this was agreed by all present.

It was also agreed to add Mick to the list of signatories on the group's bank account.

2.3.2 Treasurer / Minutes Secretary

Mark advised that he was happy to continue as Treasurer. There were no other candidates and this was agreed by all present. Mark will also continue to write minutes and letters on behalf of the group and act as the key contact.

2.3.3 Secretary / Social Secretary

Micaela advised that she was happy to continue as Secretary and Social Secretary. There were no other candidates and this was agreed by all present.

2.3.5 Committee

In accordance with the requirements of the constitution, the following members were confirmed as committee members: Mick Thompson, Patrick O'Herlihy, Bob Wilson, Micaela Wood, Terry Wood, Gill Whittaker and Mark Whittaker.

With the election of officials completed the AGM was declared closed.

Mick took over the Chairmanship and the meeting continued with normal business.

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 Teen Area / Skatepark Phase II / MUGA

We are still waiting for a decision on the planning application. Mark met with Richard and Darcy from Canvas Spaces on Tuesday 22 May. Darcy has submitted two design options that address the issues that are currently holding things up. New information about the project will not be promoted until planning matters are concluded.

3.2 Bowling Green

Possible artwork to pavilion: A meeting was held with two students and their tutor at the pavilion on Thursday 17 May. It seems like the students are keen and they are hoping to come back to us with some design ideas in late June or early July.

It just happened that Andy Cook was in the park too, so he had a chat with them as well. Since meeting with them Andy has asked for his "Fellowship of the Pavilion" presentation to be passed onto the students, which has been done.

We would need 6 sheets of 1m x 4' plywood to cover the 24' wide space. Prices for this from Tomlinson Parbans are £192 for 12mm thick ply and £286 for 18mm thick.

We would also need to cover the cost of paint, which is currently unknown.

Realignment of gates: The gates at both ends of the bowling green have become misaligned and keep coming loose. We have asked Greenspace to resolve this.

3.3 Play Areas and Play Equipment

New equipment: Richard is working up a detailed scheme for the Ocean See-Saw option that we liked and is firming up the price. (*PMN: now confirmed at £5,570*).

Forever Manchester have asked some questions on our grant application for £1,000 towards this and these have been answered. We should learn the outcome of the application by around mid-July. (*PMN: The application was successful.*)

3.4 Encouraging new volunteers

Little Growers: We are now waiting for more little growers to return with plants.

Planting for 100th Anniversary of Votes for Women: Artwork has been received from Equality Matters and the display fitted in time for the launch of their exhibition about "Marple's Wonder Women" on Saturday 30 June in the library.

Planting is progressing and lime green Nicotiana is in. Cosmos still to be planted.

3.5 Park Benches

Kay bench: No change. (*PMN: bench now cleaned ready for treatment*).

Park benches general: Ongoing.

There are a couple of benches that Patrick would like to look at replacing the slats.

Grey painted benches at Fletcher Moss Park: Visit to be organised.

Hard-standings for benches: All Boules Court benches have now had paving installed and it's made a big improvement. Three now to do at the skatepark.

Scheme for replacement of existing commemorative benches:

Still no news on this so it has been chased up again.

3.6 Park Buildings and Infrastructure

Replacement of Midnight: No change.

Info board near to Lock 10: HB printing has been asked to quote for printing.

Painting of Pavilion Buildings: We have asked when our lock-up door will be replaced, when the council will brick-up the redundant window that is in a bad state at the end of the Bowler's Hut and when the guttering on the pavilion building will be repaired. These were all discussed with Carillion several weeks ago.

(PMN: We have recently been advised that the engineer this was discussed with has left and the workload passed onto someone else.)

We now have paint materials for the pavilion.

Breathing Places reading circle: This has been discussed again with Greenspace and we are waiting for them to obtain a price for a contractor to do the work.

Painting of Infants Play area fence: We now have paint materials.

The fence has been jet-washed but not thoroughly enough for painting so we have asked for it to be done again. We have the opportunity to work with students from Marple College but they can only do Mondays 12:50 to 16:00 on 18th and 25th June.

(PMN: The contractor declined to jet-wash the fence again so Greenspace got the Playground Maintenance contractor to do some rubbing down. This improved the situation but there was still dirt and algae on the slat edges. Therefore arrangements were made to do an alternative task with the students and a risk assessment and task day application was submitted for us to re-clean the fence ourselves. Greenspace reviewed this with their insurers and it has now been approved.)

Boules Court: Greenspace has ordered 6 x 1 tonne bags of 5mm to dust aggregate and we hope to have it delivered at the same time as the topsoil on 19 June.

(PMN: aggregate and topsoil was delivered and the material was spread on the boules court with Marple College students and their tutor on Monday 25th June. The following day a whacker-plate was hired from Wright Hire and the material was compacted.)

Tarmac to paths near War Memorial and Offices: We are still awaiting for Greenspace to obtain prices for full resurfacing and also an option for patching the worst areas. This will allow us to approach councillors regarding possible funding from their Highways delegated budget.

Possible refurbishment of Park Toilets: We are still waiting for options and costs for a major refurbishment of the toilets and for making them disabled. Once armed with this information we can look at funding opportunities. *(PMN: this work has also been passed onto a different engineer after the one we discussed it with has left.)*

Internal door on gents toilets: It was reported to us by a member of the public that the door was not closing. The details were passed to Greenspace to action and it is currently outstanding. We have asked for it to be done before the Picnic in the Park with Marple's Brass Bands and the Carnival the following weekend.

(PMN: This was achieved and the door was fine for these busy events. Subsequently the door has swollen again and will not close. It has been reported to Greenspace again, who have raised an order for further repairs.)

3.7 Skatepark Development Project

Possible relocation of CCTV camera: This has been discussed again with Richard Booker and we are now awaiting advice from the council's tree officer with regard to the feasibility of crown lifting the two trees that would obstruct the view of the camera if it was moved. *(PMN: Tree Officer has confirmed by email that he would have no objection to pruning for CCTV as long as it is not excessive – we don't think it is.)*

3.8 World War I Centenary Commemorations

Timeline Commemoration: Norman Sharples and Oswald Neale were added in May and Jack Arthur, who is due on 8 July, has also been added as he is the last man on the 5th permanent panel that was installed on Thursday 7 June.

Permanent display: 5 out of 6 panels are now installed and it was agreed with HB Printing that they should invoice for the 5 installed as it would be a while before the last one is ready. A cheque for £807 was signed at the meeting.

We now need to press on with the last 27 men. 19 of these men will be added individually, until 1st November, when the final panel will be added. This will include the last 8 men who died after Armistice and bring the total to 141.

Poppy Appeal: This year Poppy Appeal organisers are going to install 141+ Street Poppies with names. We hope that we can have one on each lamppost in the park. This is to be funded by Marple Area Committee. They are also planning a scheme with cards about each man that ask questions that can be answered by looking at the time-line and the book "Remembered" in the library.

3.9 Task Days

Last Task Days – 26 May 2018

Lots of work on flowerbeds, benches and the bandroom garden.

Ad-hoc Task Days:

A number of task day for weeding and watering of vulnerable plants have been held.

Next Task Days – 23 June, 14 & 28 July 2018

Parking is requested. Emails will be sent out when due.

Task Day Registration / Risk Assessments

Risk Assessments were updated in December and Task Day applications covering 1 January to 30 June 2018 and 1 July to 31 December 2018 are approved.

Saturday Task Days in 2018: 23 June, 14, 28 July, 11, 25 August, 15, 29 September, 13, 27 October, 10, 24 November & 29 December.

Training / Power Tools: No change.

4.0 Funding - Status of Funds

Covered under item 2.2 during AGM except for recent spends of:

£25.00 New first aid supplies.
£2.25 Cable ties.
£7.98 2 x ratchet pruners.
£42.40 Hayloft plants.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Marple Carnival – 16 June 2018

A rota is agreed – we will be selling plants, flags and tickets for Open Gardens.

5.2 Open Gardens in Marple (7th and 8th July 2018)

Our application to use the park as an information point and for tickets sales has been approved. Emails seeking volunteers to held will be sent out shortly.

5.3 Possible outing on New Horizons

Micaela suggested the group could have an outing on New Horizons. The canal boat trust normally requires at least one person to be disabled so details will have to be discussed with them. It was agreed that Micaela would speak to NH organisers.

6.0 Next Meeting

Monday 13 August 2018 at 6.15pm in Marple Library.

Future meeting dates scheduled for 2018/19 (library booked):

13 August, 10 September, 8 October, 12 November, 10 December, 14 January 2019,
11 February, 11 March, 8 April, 13 May, 10 June 2019.