

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 11th March 2013
Marple Library**

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

1.0 Apologies: Anne Frazer.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising.

3.1 Diamond Jubilee Project

Display Panel

The display panel has been ordered and the proof approved. The delivery is forecast by weekending 22 March but is to be confirmed by Shelley Signs, the supplier.

It is hoped to install the display during the 30 March Task Day.

Adrian will check to see if the council have four bags of postcrete available.

The order has been place for us by the council, who will invoice the group for the order value of £760 once it has been delivered and paid for.

Future Planting

800 Polyanthus were planted during the February Task Day. These cost £288 from Luke Brothers of Knutsford, which was paid by the group from the planting budget.

Rebecca Knowles has advised that the college are making a start on the plans for summer planting and will be in touch during April. The Polyanthus will be moved to other areas of the park when the summer scheme is planted up.

The college have kindly made a contribution of £150 towards planting this year and with the £120 saving on the display panel we currently have £632 left for plants.

Patrick is continuing his efforts to talk to Dominoes Pizza about sponsorship.

3.2 Park Benches

Refurbishment of bench near entrance sponsored by All Things Nice

Terry presented an invoice for £100 from the David Lewis Centre covering the hardwood timber supplied for this for bench. This was paid by cheque at the meeting and this item is now fully closed out.

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 as soon as weather permits.

A programme of re-treating all other benches will also begin when weather allows.

Adrian advised that concerns over the location of the new bench provided by the council have been resolved and it will be installed soon. *(PMN – It is now installed).*

The Alan Proctor seat on the driveway to the park has been graffiti-ed again. It will be sanded down and retreated during the next task day.

Picnic Benches on the Recreation Ground

A grant application for the materials needed to refurbish the picnic benches on the recreation ground was made to the Town & District Centre Team. This stalled because the T&DC required us to complete the work before being given the money and they wanted it completed by mid-March so that it could come from this year's budget.

This was completely unrealistic, so the application requesting £335 was submitted at short notice to Marple Area Committee on 26 February 2013. It is understood that this has been approved, although we have not yet had formal confirmation.

(Post meeting note: A cheque for £325 has now been received from MAC.)

The project will include recycling of timber from the picnic benches that will be re-machined to make new slats for the standard concrete framed bench near to the Recreation Ground Play Area, so is extremely good value.

Terry has sourced the timber required for the first phase at a cost of £238.68.

3.3 Maintenance Materials and Tools

New materials and tools provided by the Council

The plastic storage boxes have been delivered and are stored in the lock-up.

Adrian has the new tools and will arrange transfer to the lock-up.

Jonathan is currently seeking an update on the paint, gloves and sanding materials.

Jet Wash

Mark advised that the jet wash used for the Infants Play Area fence and for cleaning the tree sculptures, is no longer working properly at full pressure and is now 9 years old. It was discussed and agreed to allocate up to £120 of the group's funding to purchase a new one for use on projects in the park.

3.4 Tidy Up of Lock-up

Anne has donated a shelf with brackets for the lock-up. An appeal on The Marple Website has resulted in the donation of two chests of drawers, so there is room for more wall-shelving but no more floor-standing storage.

There is a large steel safe in the corner of the lock-up. Adrian and Bob have no idea where the keys are and it has not been used for years. There is a phone number of a local locksmith on the safe so Mark will investigate if they would be able to open it.

3.5 Infants Play Area Fence

Painting of the Infants Play Area fence will be continued when the weather is suitable.

3.6 Treatment of Sculptures

Treatment of sculptures will also commence once the weather is suitable. Some of them will benefit from jet washing once a new one has been purchased.

3.7 Skate Park

There have been no sub-meetings since 18 January as we are waiting for Richard Booker to obtain information from Rising Stars and Sport4Life about developing events at the skate park to raise awareness of the project and help with its aims.

Mark advised that he would like to target the Carnival as the day for an event because of the number of people that would already be in the park. It was discussed whether to have a tombola at the Carnival but it was agreed that this was best saved for the Food and Drink Day, which has been more profitable in the past. However, it will be possible to do something similar to the "guess the sweets" competition that helped us to raise £229 at the Marple Christmas Cracker.

Mark advised that a grant application for the skate park has been submitted to Marple Area Committee for their consideration in the new Financial Year.

Marple Senior Citizens Association has been asked if they could help to support the project and a letter has been sent to New Mills, Marple and District Rotary requesting their support too. A letter has also been sent to Marple Carnival asking if the project can be considered for the 2013 Carnival "nominated charity" cause.

Marple Business Forum has also been approached about support for the project. They've responded with a proposal that may enable match funding for a series of Marple Improvement Projects to be sought from Rotary International. The group agreed that this was an interesting prospect that we would like to support.

Marple Business Forum also highlighted a further fund-raising opportunity relating to the Rotary Club Christmas Float. Apparently the float is not used to its full capacity due to a lack of manpower to operate it as frequently as it could be over the Christmas period. The proposal involves the sharing of funds raised by the float with other organisations in proportion to the man-hours put in to run the collection. The group agreed this is something that the Friends of the Park would be interested in getting involved in at Christmas time to raise funds for the park.

Local Giving scheme

Last week Forever Manchester announced that they would match up to £500 worth of donations made to groups on the localgiving.com site from 5 March until 5pm today, or until their available pot of £20,000 was all allocated.

This was too good an opportunity to miss and The Marple Website has donated £500 that will hopefully be match-funded by Forever Manchester. There should be an announcement on their web site tomorrow detailing the successful groups. Several other individuals have made donations too. *(Post meeting note: FOMMP are show as having been successful in gaining £500 match funding on the web site. Cheques are due to be sent out by Forever Manchester during week commencing 25 March).*

Including the above match funding, and after fees, £1,043 has been raised via local giving.com since joining in January, so it certainly appears to have been worthwhile. It was agreed to pay the annual fee of £72 for the next 12 months, after the 3 months free subscription expires in April and a cheque was signed for this at the meeting.

3.8 Park Cottage

No new information.

3.9 Task Days

Previous Task Days since last meeting

The Jubilee bed in front of the library was planted up with Polyanthus. The gravel was cleared out of the narrow strip alongside the car park and pruning was carried out around the Senior Citizens Hall. The Recreation Ground picnic benches were also measured up for materials needed to refurbish them.

We were joined by several of Marple's Firefighters, who have recently won a special award for their community involvement, and we are hopeful that they will come to more of our task days in the future.

Nest Task Days - Saturday 30 March and 13 April

It is hoped to install the Jubilee Bed display panel. We have also purchased 10 trays of spring bedding plants for £26.90 from Aldi and these will be planted.

From April it is planned to switch to two task days per month for the spring and summer, which was very successful last year. The first of the mid-month task days will be on Saturday 13 April 2013.

Mark will send out parking requests and task day emails.

Patrick will also be holding a low-key task day on Saturday 23 March and Mick, Lorraine and one or two others may attend too.

Task Day Dates for 2013

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 £5,069. Income since the last meeting includes £5 from Mr Senior's regular donations, £18.52 from localgiving.com and £150 from the college.

Expenditure since the last meeting is £288 on Polyanthus and £26.90 spring bedding.

Committed funds are now £4,045, including £2,553 allocated to the skate park, £1,391 to the Jubilee Project and £100 on the All Things Nice bench (for which a cheque was signed at the meeting). This left an uncommitted working balance of £1,046, from which we have agreed to allocate £120 to purchase a jet wash.

Mark advised that the 2012 year end accounts have been audited by the McInnes Partnership Accountants and are ready for presentation at the AGM.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Options for new trees

The two new Amelanchier Lamarckii specimens to replace the trees recently removed from the park have been planted near to the Infants Play Area in the locations specified by Anthony Crook and Ian Dunn of the council.

5.2 Bowling Green Steps

The Bowling Green steps remain a concern. The council have said that they will deal with these early in the new financial year. There are a number of costed proposals, including the complete removal of one set of steps.

5.3 Bird Bath

The birdbath in the circular flowerbed will be cleaned when a new jet wash has been purchased.

5.4 Centenary of start of WWI - 2014

2014 is the Centenary of the start of the First World War. Over the following four years there will be a series of related 100-year anniversaries that could also be commemorated, culminating in the Centenary of the end of the war in 2018.

These anniversaries are of particular relevance to the park due the history of its dedication as a War Memorial Park in 1922, after the end of WWI.

The group has been invited to a meeting of the Greenspace Forum to discuss plans for commemoration of these events across the borough at the Town Hall on Wednesday 17 April, 2pm. Mark will attend and invited others to come along too if they wished.

A preliminary discussion took place about possible ways of commemorating these anniversaries in the park. There was a preference to do something lasting rather than to hold events: such as improvements to the war memorial, its flowerbeds and infrastructure; repairs and improvements to the small stone memorial; commemorative artwork etc. It was also felt that there was an opportunity to educate people more about the soldiers from Marple who fell, as explained in the book "Remembered" by Jon Bintliff, Peter Clarke and Andy Cook, published in 1999.

5.5 Risk Assessment Training

The council are re-introducing risk assessment training for volunteers and we need a number of people to do the training in order to be covered by the council's insurance.

There are a series of sessions in April and it was agreed that Mark, Terry, Patrick and Mick would attend the course on Thursday 4 April at 7pm – 8.30pm in Endeavour House, Bredbury. *(Post meeting note: this is all booked up and confirmed.)*

5.6 Library Opening Hours

The library is probably going to start closing at 7pm on Mondays from April this year. We have the options of starting our meetings earlier, which will be difficult for some attendees, or locking up ourselves. It was agreed that Mark will speak to the library about the latter option.

6.0 Date of next Meeting (AGM)

Monday 8 April 2013 at 6pm in Marple Library.

Meeting dates scheduled for 2013 (library booked):

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