

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park (AGM)**  
**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011**  
**Marple Library**

**Present:** Micaela Wood, Bob Wilson, Adrian Ellis, Terry Wood, Patrick O'Herlihy, Gavin Eyquem, Liz Eckles, Joyce Reed, Mark Whittaker.

**1.0 Apologies:** None.

**2.0 Minutes of the last meeting:** Agreed.

**3.0 Matters Arising.**

**3.1 Improvements to the Park Entrance**

**Carver Commemoration**

The new display panel was delivered to Brabyns Depot on 15 April but unfortunately on inspection it was found that the rubber seal holding the panel into the frame was loose. Mark reported this to the supplier, Shelley Signs, and they have now advised that they will contact Adrian to arrange to come and fit a thicker seal. Adrian is on holiday shortly and will provide alternative contact details to Shelley. Mark has placed payment on hold until this is satisfactorily resolved.

Installation of the display will be arranged after the new seal is fitted. Hopefully it can be done before Carnival Day so that a large audience can see it.

The old notice board has been removed for refurbishment and future re-use.

**Drainage Improvements**

Jonathan is awaiting an updated price for the drainage works near to the entrance before endeavouring to have it added to the work list. However, Adrian warned that there had been vandalism to the driveway in Brabyns Park and this would have to take a priority on allocation of funds because of obligations to maintain access to the house in the woodland. There is a risk that these repairs will absorb this year's entire budget for this kind of infrastructure repair.

**3.2 Ornamental Flowerbeds**

**Delivery of plants and shrubs**

Plants are at last starting to be received and Bob has partially planted some of the beds but unfortunately deliveries are arriving in dribs and drabs. The group expressed their disappointment with the way this has gone because not knowing when the plants would be available is preventing us from being able to plan ahead and organise task days to do the work. It is also frustrating because we believed placing an order through the council was going to be the quickest way to obtain the plants we needed.

Mark will pass on the group's frustrations to Jonathan and advise that under the circumstances the group would not be prepared to pay for the plants until the full order is delivered.

The Beavers have now begun work on their adopted bed and a crop of lettuce has been planted recently.

Unfortunately heavy rainfall over the last few days has reinvigorated the weeds in the beds that the group tackled during the last task day and they are back with a vengeance. Now that the park is no longer constrained by Green Flag rules for using weed-killer Adrian advised that it would be possible to spray them. This was discussed at some length and it was agreed to be guided by Adrian and Bob on doing this.

### **Funding Progress**

There is no news yet on the Beavers and Rainbows applications to Marple Area Committee or the group's application to Stockport Homes.

### **3.3 Park Benches**

#### **Preservatives and Sanding Materials**

Terry has confirmed that the preferred preservative is called "Premier Golden Brown Wood Preserver" and Adrian will order some of this from Chelford Farm Suppliers, plus the requested rolls of 60 and 80 grade sanding materials.

It was agreed to sand and paint the Coronation bench during the next task day, as it is two years since it was last done. Mark will bring the generator to aid with sanding.

Removal of slats from one of the Woodville Hall style of commemorative benches using the special security key may also be tried out to see if it is viable to turn the slats over and refit them the other way up.

#### **Refurbishment of bench near to main entrance**

Jonathan has been unable to identify who within the council would need to give permission for the group to repair the damaged bench near to the park entrance on the Co-Op side. It was therefore agreed to take the initiative and go ahead with this.

#### **Daytime Visits by David Lewis Centre Task Group**

Terry has discussed risk assessments and erection of barriers to isolate the work area with Bob and now hopes to bring his David Lewis Centre lads to the park in the near future to begin work on restoration of the benches. The first one to be tackled will be the badly damaged one near to the park entrance (mentioned above).

#### **Replacement of bench near Junior Play Area**

Mark has had more discussions with the family wishing to replace the bench near to the Junior Play area and a choice of bench and firm commitment is awaited.

#### **Benches near to Possett Bridge**

Patrick enquired if it was possible to extend our refurbishment of benches to include those at Possett Bridge. Mark advised that he understood Marple Civic Society were planning to do these as part of their National Civic Day celebrations task day on 25 June but agreed to confirm this with them.

### **3.4 Picnic Benches**

Terry advised that he is continuing to work on the paperwork requirements for picnic benches specified by Gareth but asked if it would be possible to cut through some of this by building a bench and bringing it to the park for inspection by SMBC. Terry would be happy to do this and then take on board any adjustments or design faults identified during inspection.

Mark will enquire if this is acceptable to SMBC.

### **3.5 Treatment of Sculptures and Wooden Features**

The stocks and tree sculpture were re-treated during the April task day, which only leaves the Breathing Places bird-box plaque to do and then the Breathing Places sculpture itself, which can be re-done in the autumn. The bird box will need to be checked to ensure it is not being used for nesting and if it is work will have to be postponed until the occupants are finished with it.

Adrian advised that his team would reinstall the missing ground sculpture as soon as his order for concrete has arrived.

Patrick enquired about the possibility of painting the Infants Play Area fence. Mark will ask SMBC about their painting plan for this and when it will next be done.

### **3.6 Painting of Bowling Green Buildings**

Good progress was made on painting of the Bowling Green buildings during the April task day. The main entrance door was also repaired with a sheet of plywood over a damaged area near to the handles and locks. The building looks much better but there was some reaction to the paint on several of the doors so it will be necessary to apply at least one further coat of black to these. This will hopefully be done during the May task day if there are sufficient volunteers and suitable weather.

It was identified during this work that the windowsill opposite Bob's office was very badly rotted and the group asked Adrian to report this for repair.

### **3.7 Task Days**

#### **Previous Task Day – 30 April 2011**

Another good turnout with several more new volunteers. Main tasks completed were weeding of the ornamental beds, painting of the Bowling Green Buildings and treatment of wooden features including the stocks and tree sculpture.

#### **Next Task Day – 28 May 2011**

Plans include a second a coat of paint on the Bowling Green building, planting of the ornamental flowerbeds (if plants are available), refurbishment of the Coronation Bench and possibly removing bird droppings from the war memorial.

Mark will send out the parking request for the specified vehicles and the task day email notification. Once again it falls on a bank holiday so it is possible that attendance will be lower due to volunteers being away.

### **3.8 Vision of Marple**

#### **Skate Park**

Marple Civic Society met with Cllr. Sue Ingham and Stockport Funding manager Andy Bleaden on 19 April to begin talks about the possibility of a project to extent the skate park. They have requested a further meeting with the group and asked if we could engage representatives of Parks and Recreation.

This has now been arranged for Friday 20 May at 3.30pm in the park / Marple Library. Mark will attend with Jonathan and Tim Boylan, a Landscape Officer from Parks and Recreation who worked with him on the Iron Bridge Restoration Project. Other members of the group are welcome to attend if they can make the meeting.

### **3.9 Toilets in the Park**

As agreed at the last meeting, Mark has written to Cllr. Candler to make clear the group's objections to the potential closure of the toilets in the park and also asked other local groups to write in support against this too.

Subsequently, Marple Civic Society, Marple Park Veteran Bowlers Club, Marple Community Council, Marple Afternoon Townswomen's Guild and Cheadle & Gatley Bowling League have written in support and a petition has been started. Marple Business Forum and Marple Carnival Committee are also believed to be writing.

The petition currently totals 920 signatures and an on-line version has also been set up since Saturday 7 May. The latter is growing quickly and is particularly interesting for the comments that people are making about the potential toilet closure. Marple Community Council has also started their own petition against the toilet closure plans.

Cllr. Stuart Bodsworth, Executive Member for the Environment, is understood to be the person with responsibility for the borough-wide Community Toilet scheme, so the petition and letters have been sent to him by email progressively since 28 April.

As Cllr. Bodsworth hasn't acknowledged receipt of the information sent to him by email it has all been sent as hard copy by recorded delivery today. This includes the petition and copies of letters from other groups, all emails sent, plus a new letter from FOMMP urging him to take the strong public opinion about possible closure of the toilets into account and seeking assurances that they will remain open indefinitely. *(Post meeting note: the package was delivered and signed for on 11 May 2011).*

All information has been published on the FOMMP web site and copied to Cllr. Martin Candler and to David Brayshay, Head of Parks and Recreation, who have both acknowledged receipt of the emails used to send it to them.

The group look forward to hearing from Cllr. Bodsworth and hope that practical solutions will be sought by the council to keep the toilets in the park open.

### **3.10 Park Cottage**

Outline planning permission has been granted for two residential apartments on the Bands' plot of land behind the Edge restaurant. Hopefully this will mean that they will be able to sell it to fund much of the refurbishment and the extension required to turn the cottage into their band practice room.

The Bands' working parties have fitted a new entrance door and security windows.

Plans are in preparation for an event in the park on Bank Holiday Monday 30 May.

## **4.0 Funding**

### **Status of Funds**

Current bank balance is £5,095 with committed funds of £2,140 + delivery on the Carver display panel and £1,537 for plants and shrubs for the flowerbeds, leaving a working balance of £1,418 (less the unknown delivery charge for the display).

Income since the last meeting includes £10 from Mr. L Senior, who has generously arranged a standing order payment of £5 per month, plus £76 from Ring o' Bells Quiz Nights and 42 pence interest. There has been no expenditure yet this year.

## **5.0 Any Other Business**

### **5.1 Cleaning of War Memorial**

Jonathan and David Burrows have responded to the group's enquiry about the algae on the War Memorial to say that they do not feel it needs cleaning again at the present time. However, Jonathan has said he will arrange for the bird droppings to be removed from the statue. After discussion it was agreed that the group would undertake removal of the droppings during a task day.

### **5.2 Marple Festival Opportunity**

Patrick has been in discussion with Marple Festival Committee about a potential opportunity to raise funds for the park by helping out as volunteers during the festival. The task suggested was cleaning up at Marple Cricket Club after the beer festival and the festival ball. Apparently the Cricket Club had to pay quite a lot of money for a contractor to do this last year. Details need to be discussed further with the Festival Committee to ascertain the level of funding that may be available for the park and establish if this would be worthwhile before trying to obtain commitment from volunteers. Patrick and Mark will endeavour to find out more.

### **5.3 French Boules Tournament**

There have been several enquiries asking if another French Boules Tournament would be organised this year and Kay of Kay Dee Hair and Beauty has offered to sponsor the trophy again. Following feedback from Marple Business Forum last time that many of their members run locals shops that are open on Saturday, Mark proposed to hold it on 28 August, the Sunday of the Bank Holiday weekend. This was agreed and the next step will be to gauge interest from local groups.

## **6.0 Date of next Meeting**

Monday 13 June 2011 at 6pm in Marple Library.

Future meeting dates in 2011:

13 June  
11 July  
08 August  
12 September  
10 October  
14 November  
12 December