

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 10th November 2014
Marple Library**

Present: Terry Wood, Micaela Wood, Joyce Reed, Bob Wilson, Mick Thompson, Adrian Ellis, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Patrick O’Herlihy.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 Anti-Social Behaviour / Additional CCTV Cameras

ABS Logs submitted since the last meeting covering 7 reported incidents were distributed with the agenda. Recent incidents include:

- Ongoing collection of drugs packets and paraphernalia.
- Graffiti on temporary panel for WWI silhouette.
- Graffiti on War Memorial display panel.
- Graffiti on walls between Scout Hut and Senior Citizens Hall (culprits caught).
- Needle found by park user.
- Youths playing football on the Bowling Green.

There has been a great deal of correspondence on this topic since the last meeting and copies were distributed with the agenda. A report has been issued to Area Committee asking them to consider the options for CCTV but it is our view that the options are still not properly identified. We’ve raised this again and with the help and intervention of Cllr Ingham it has been agreed that a Working Group will be formed with councillors and stakeholders to try and make some progress on the issues.

The report to AC suggests the FoG consider erecting fencing around the Bowling Green and refers to a Crime Prevention Survey that recommends this. After requesting a copy of this report it turns out that there isn’t one, but there is an email from the Crime Prevention Officer saying that the area is so vast that fencing it off would be very costly. The group are open to discussion about this but are currently of the opinion that a fence around the green is probably not a feasible or desirable option and would cost much more than CCTV.

In order that the Working Group has fully costed technical options to consider, a pre-meeting has been arranged for 13 November 2014 with CSU and SSK to try and get them to produce a proper options study. The first Working Group meeting will follow.

Covenants and Bylaws

Last month we talked about the long-term possibility of installing a better football provision in the park. Apart from obvious financial constraints, there are also historic issues that have been interpreted to mean that we can’t have such a facility in the park due to covenants and bylaws.

A summary of the covenants produced by the council’s legal team and a copy of the bylaws was distributed with the agenda. The key items seems to be 6c on the letter:

"Not to permit or suffer any game athletic sport or recreation to be carried out upon the premises hereby conveyed or any part thereof by any club or association or body

of persons to the exclusion of the general public or the user thereof in any manner causing or likely to cause a nuisance or annoyance to the owners or occupiers of premises adjoining or in the immediate neighbourhood."

Having discussed this with Jane Bardsley we are of the view that as long as the introduction of new facilities have open access and are inclusive then it should be OK. Jane has asked legal to review this and clarify.

It's clear that there was some objection to football and cricket at the time the land was taken over by the council as this is recorded in the minutes of the War Memorial committee meetings of 1919-1923. However, these state that the council refused consent for football and cricket, not the donors of the land.

3.2 Park Benches

General Bench Maintenance

Three of the new park benches have damage to paint on the front edges. Patrick raised this with Cllr Alexander during the October task day and she forwarded photos and asked council officers to respond. They have done so, saying that the damage has been caused by skateboarders grinding on the benches. A meeting was held with skateboarder Lewis Abbott and Jane Bardsley to look at the benches. Lewis was of the opinion that it wasn't possible for a skateboarder to do this damage, as due to the cast iron arms there wasn't space to get on and off the benches quickly enough. This has been fed back to Cllr Alexander and further response is awaited.

(Post meeting note: Council officers have responded insisting that skateboarders have cause the damage and that the benches are not faulty. However, they have also said that they will purchase some brown Hammerite paint and cover the exposed areas to prevent moisture seeping under the damaged coating and causing it to lift off.)

Town Centre Benches

A risk assessment has been submitted to cover the removal of a bench without using power tools and to refurbish the benches on private property.

Patrick will check that he has the correct tools to remove the ground fixing bolts.

It was noted that it is possible that the proposed training to enable us to use power tools may overtake events, depending on how soon we manage to get this done.

3.3 Treatment of Sculptures & Wooden Features

There is little to do until next year now.

3.4 Commemorative Plaques

The Greenspace Team have advised that they will submit a report regarding our scheme to install plaques to Area Committee for comment / approval.

No further plaques will be installed until the outcome of this is known.

3.5 Park Buildings

Repairs

Roof repairs to the Bowling Green buildings have at last been completed. The window repair has also been done but not painted. The metal grid to protect against break-in can now be installed over the windows.

3.6 Skatepark Development Project

Latest Skatepark Project News

Things have moved on a little since last month and a revised parent company guarantee has been drafted by the council's legal services. This now has to be reviewed by procurement services and the officer dealing with it was due to discuss it with her senior manager last Thursday. Hopefully we will have more feedback soon.

The guarantee still has to be put to and accepted by the chosen tenderer and then agreed by Stockport Legal, who are presumably different to the people who drafted it, so we are not out of the woods on this yet. Audit feedback also has to be reviewed.

It is unbelievable how long this is all taking the council and we still have no idea or commitment from them as to how much longer it will take. Incredibly frustrating!

(Post Meeting Note: As of 10 December the Parent Company Guarantee is awaiting final sign-off by the chosen tenderer.)

Fund Raising Status

Fund-raising wise we are in very good shape to make a grant application to a landfill trust if we can overcome the delays described above and get work with the selected tenderer underway and then obtain planning permission for the chosen design.

There is no change to the funding status since last month but Marple and District WI will be raising funds for the project at the Christmas Cracker, we have 3 quiz nights at the Ringers and the collections with Marple and Goyt Valley Rotary coming up so, so hopefully can reach our new target of £22,000 of community funds by the year end.

(PMN: Local author K.C. Dowling has also agreed to donate a portion of the profits from his book "A Man of Insignificance" to Friends of the Park. This will initially go towards the skatepark fund and possibly later towards other projects in the park).

Money needed:	£107,000 (including landfill taxes)
Community Funding:	£20,787
Commuted Sums:	£22,000
Total funds available:	£42,787
Funding to find:	£64,213 (proposed landfill trust grant application).

3.7 World War I Centenary Commemorations

Possible Silhouette Art Project

We received and reviewed production drawings for the silhouette artwork last Friday and made some amendments to locations of holes.

Delivery in time for installation by Remembrance weekend was not achieved and we now expect it to be another couple of weeks at least.

We are in the hands of the suppliers and will look further at the installation once the artwork is delivered. The good news is they are going to supply two sets of artwork, so we can install them on both the goalposts at the main and rear entrances.

Timeline Commemoration

The timeline is now underway with the card for the first man, Fred Atkinson, being displayed on the railings. The timeline has also been published and promoted on the web site, Face Book and Twitter. The next man, Fred Riley, is due to be added to the display on 20 December 2014. Unfortunately there is no photo of him available so we will use an image relating to Christmas 1914.

The display has had a very positive response from the public and was very well received by the Stockport 2014 Group. They have not yet reviewed our grant application but will hopefully support it.

The council have agreed to us stripping the handrails to improve their appearance and have ordered 4L of paint-stripper and some wire wool for this purpose.
(PMN: materials have been delivered to the park 10 December 2014).

3.9 Task Days

Last Task Days – 25 October and 8 November 2014

A variety of tasks including maintenance of flowerbeds, clearing of leaves, planting of crocus bulbs where trees were removed and further work in the canal woodland area.

The special task day on 8 November ensured that the park was looking its best for the Remembrance Sunday Service on the 9 November.

£28 and £5 respectively were collected in the donations bucket on the task days.

Next Task Days – 29 November 2014

We've been given a large number of bulbs by the council including more crocus, tulips and alliums. These need planting and it was proposed to put the majority of them at the top end of the park, where a splash of colour will look great in the spring.

We also need to determine if there is enough interest in a task day on 27 December.

Saturday Task Days scheduled for 2014 / 15

Registered: 29 November, 27 December 2014, 31 January, 28 February, 28 March, 11 and 25 April 2015.

To register: remainder of 2015.

Ad-hoc Daily Task Days

Daily Task Days are registered on the council's system until 31 December 2014 for gardening tasks, painting and treatment of benches and sculptures.

(PMN: Ad-hoc task day registration for first half of 2015 has been submitted.)

Tree Work Guidance

Patrick has asked for us to be given some guidance on tree work maintenance that we can do ourselves. We envisage this as a walk around the park with a council expert to advise and guide us on the sort of things we can do and what we should look out for.

This request has been passed onto the council and a response is awaited.

Risk Assessments / Training

Risk assessments and training are currently up to date with 11 volunteers having attended the RA training. It is hoped for further training to cover power tools in the future (see below).

SSK Support for Task Days / Competent Person Training

The Greenspace team/SSK are now looking to form a Core Team of users to receive training as persons competent to use light power tools. Mark, Patrick, Mick, Terry and Bernard have currently put their names forward for this training.

We wait to learn when the training will take place.

As ex-council employees having received full training in the past Bob and Adrian are curious as to whether they would also need to be trained in order to use small power tools. (*Post meeting note: The council has confirmed that everyone that will be required to use power tools in the role of volunteer will need to attend the training.*)

4.0 Funding - Status of Funds

Balance on last statement for 22 October 2014 is £18,985.78

Income since last meeting includes:

£33.48 Collected in park.
£1.84 Interest.

Expenditure since last meeting includes:

£6.00 Small trial tin of paint stripper.

Committed funds in account are: Skate Park Fund £18,288 and Flowerbeds £155 leaving a working balance of £560.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 New Waste Bins

Jane's meeting with the District Standards Officer has had to be rescheduled so we are still waiting to find out what the new waste bin provision will be.

5.2 Emptying of Green Waste Area

One trailer load has been taken away and a further one will be taken ASAP.

5.3 Zip Wire in Junior Play Area

A new zip wire has now been fitted.

5.4 Cargo Net in Junior Play Area

The cargo net on the climbing frame was recently removed because of wear and tear. The council is still waiting for a quote for replacement from SSK and Jane will chase this up. It will have to be sent to Ian Walmsley for approval due to tight budgets.

We still await the outcome of this process.

5.5 Remembrance Service

Preparations went well and it was a good service that was well attended, although nothing special was done to commemorate a 100 years since the start of WWI.

Terry laid a wreath on behalf of the group.

Mark had to chase the council to ensure that someone from SSK was provided to put out the railings leading to the small memorial where people place their Remembrance crosses and to raise and lower the Union Flag during the service.

It is rather unsatisfactory that this was necessary and Mark will write to the organisers of the service to seek assurances that this will be covered properly in future years.

5.6 St Martins Christmas Tree Festival

Gill, Micaela and Lorraine have arranged to meet up for a preparation session on the Christmas tree on Monday 17 November. The theme will be WWI and it needs to be assembled in the church on 4 December between 10am and 11.30am.

5.7 Rotary Christmas Collection

Sessions for collecting at the Co-Op have been submitted to M&GV Rotary and a roster distributed. There are a few spaces still to be filled if anyone is interested.

5.8 Volunteer Christmas Lunch

The Christmas lunch at the Ring o' Bells is all arranged for Saturday 6 December at 4pm. Deposits have been paid and most people have provided their menu choices. There will be 12 of our regular volunteers attending in all.

5.9 Oldknow Project Launch

We have been invited to this on the afternoon of Tuesday 18 November at Marple Library. Micaela and Mark will attend on behalf of the group.

5.10 WWI Art Exhibition at Stockport Art Gallery

Lorraine advised that there is a WWI art exhibition at Stockport Art Gallery "Traces of Memory" by Henry Quick, which is on until 13 December 2014.

Date of next Meeting

Monday 12 January 2015 at 6pm in Marple Library.

(PMN: Meeting scheduled for Monday 8 December was cancelled.)

Meeting dates scheduled for 2015 (library booked):

12 January, 9 February, 9 March, 13 April*, 11 May*, 8 June, 13 July, 10 August, 14 September, 12 October, 9 November and 14 December 2015.

* Meeting room is booked by Reading Group so will have to use other space.