

Friends of Marple Memorial Park (AGM)
Monday 8th October 2012
Marple Library

Present: Terry Wood, Bob Wilson, Micaela Wood, Joyce Reed, Patrick O'Herlihy, Anne Frazer, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Lorraine & Mick Thompson, Adrian Ellis.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting (AGM): Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising.

3.1 Park Benches

Refurbishment of bowling green benches sponsored by Senior Citizens

The first refurbished bench sponsored by the Senior Citizens was returned to the park on Sunday 15 July. The Senior Citizens are very pleased with it.

The second bench was taken away at the same time as the first was installed and the cast iron has now been sandblasted and is ready for painting.

Terry and Patrick will organise the painting and installation of new hardwood slats, hopefully for either Saturday 20 or Saturday 27 October 2012.

£500 is set aside for payment of materials and the David Lewis Centre's services.

Replacement of bench opposite Senior Citizens Hall

The Bluhm family have donated £650 to the group for a new bench at this location. It was ordered through the council on 29 August and is due for delivery next week.

The council are paying for the delivery and installation and also the removal of the old bench. The cost to us is £604 and the family have donated the additional £46 as a general contribution towards maintenance in the park.

(Post meeting note: The bench was delivered on 18 October and Mark has met with Adrian on 19 October to discuss the installation. Weather permitting, removal of the old bench should begin week commencing 22 October.)

Refurbishment of bench near entrance sponsored by Costa Coffee

Patrick has successfully negotiated a donation of £180 from Costa Coffee to refurbish the second of the two benches near to the park entrance and the Co-op steps.

Terry has ordered new hardwood slats at a cost of £60. Mark has ordered a plaque at a cost of £36.80 and this is due to be despatched by 12 October 2012.

Terry and Patrick will organise the installation once the plaque and slats arrive.

The other bench in this location has been refurbished using materials from similar style benches in the park that have been replaced by new ones.

Refurbishment of other benches

The two concrete framed benches near the front of the library have been refurbished using materials from similar benches in the park that have been replaced.

All refurbished benches have had a second coat of preservative.

Patrick has inspected the Jim Heald bench. It is held together with stainless steel bolts and he feels it will be best to remove them for sanding and treatment and then replace them. This will be tackled at the next suitable task day.

The Ian Rice bench, near to the towpath entrance at lock 12, needs to be treated with green-away and then coated with preservative. Patrick will take the lead on this too.

Mark has been approached about another commemorative bench in the park and is waiting for formal contact from the family.

3.2 Diamond Jubilee Project

Planning Permission

Planning Permission has cost us £255. The fee for material approval was £85 yet the fee for a domestic extension is only £25. We also had to proceed "at risk" because the planners hadn't got around to looking at it within their own specified notice period (the materials are approved now).

Mark has written to local councillors asking if it will be possible for some or all of the planning fees to be refunded for use in the park. A response is awaited from them.

Progress

Bramhall Paving completed the hard landscaping works on 28 July 2012. They did an excellent job for the agreed cost of £2,500. Contingency was not spent.

Box-outs were installed for the sculpture foundations and planting was carried out with the help of college students on 14 August 2012. The total cost of plants was £616, giving a saving of £584 against the original budget of £1,200.

Wayne Chaisty installed the sculpture on Sunday 30 September with help from Terry, Patrick and Mark. Wayne established that the original idea of using bottle bottoms for the orb would not work, as they were too easily broken. He developed an alternative design using marbles that looks fantastic. The original quote for the sculpture was £1,250 but due to the extra work involved in the change of design it was agreed that the 10% contingency should be paid to Wayne, taking the final cost to £1,375.

The outcome of the grant application to the Vernon Building Society is still awaited. This will determine if we can afford to include the optional bespoke bench. It was agreed that if the application fails we should close the project out without the bench.

The display panel, with a budgeted cost of £880, can go ahead once the situation with the bench is decided.

(Post meeting note: The Vernon has written advising that we were not successful.)

Funding

Raised	£6,275	
Spent	£616	Plants
	£2,500	Landscaping
	£1,375	Sculpture
	£255	Planning Permission
Total spent	£4,746	
Current balance	£1,529	
Forecast cost of display	£880	Will take spend to £5,626
Forecast balance	£649	

In the event that we do not proceed with the bespoke bench it was agreed to allocate any surplus funds raised for the Jubilee Project towards future planting of the bed.

3.3 Infants Play Area Fence

Despite the weather his project has gone pretty well. We still have the inner fence to paint plus both entrance gates. It is likely that this will have to wait until next year but if a suitable weather window is available we may possibly finish this year.

The council have repaired the inner fence and Terry has capped it with new timber.

The best news is that the council have now agreed to cover the cost of paint materials, which frees up approximately £250 that can go towards other projects.

We need to do something along the front fence near to the main entrance. Here rain is splashing soil up the fence and making it look very dirty. Patrick has some ideas for this and has been talking to Tomlinson Parbans about providing free materials.

3.4 Treatment of Sculptures

There is more fungus on the owl tree sculpture that needs chipping off and some extra preservative applying but otherwise everything is in good shape for winter.

The Breathing Spaces sculpture would benefit from some extra sanding and treating but it was agreed that this could wait until next year.

3.5 Wildflowers for Breathing Places Area

The wildflowers have put on a good display in the Breathing Places area, in front of the toilets and in the small square bed next to the library.

Joyce and Gill have been collecting and scattering seeds and will do more of this. The bi-annual seeds planted this year should flower next year, so hopefully we will get another good show of colour.

Bob has levelled the undergrowth in the woodland behind the library and also at the bottom end of the park. He would like to remove some of the nettles and other dominant species from the woodland and this can be done on future task days.

3.6 Skate Park

The skate park has been on the backburner due to the extra effort needed to complete the Jubilee Project but we can now start thinking seriously about it again.

The big challenge remains to find a way to obtain around £75,000 of funding to enable the project to move forward. Currently £3,397 is available in commuted sums.

Terry, Micaela and Mark attended a Vision Partnership meeting recently and Mark has asked the partnership if they can help with fundraising ideas, finding suitable grant schemes and making applications to them. As yet no response has been received.

At the meeting we were also given contact details by Rachel from Friends of Our Valley for a skate park group in Macclesfield who have been successful and seem prepared to offer advice and support. Mark will try to arrange a meeting with them. He also had a brief discussion with Richard Booker that needs to be followed up.

Mark would like advice on how to deal with the situation if substantial funds are raised but not enough to achieve the objective. Should a special trust fund be set up?

(Post meeting note: a meeting has been arranged for Friday 26 October with Richard, Lewis Abbott and Graham Clarke of Marple Civic Society & MVP).

Teen Shelter

Anne advised that she has spoken to young users of the skate park as part of a recording she is hoping to do for Pure Radio and was alarmed to learn about the problems associated with the Teen Shelter and its users. These include bullying and intimidation, drugs abuse and encouragement of the younger kids to try drugs.

The options appear to be to do nothing, or to relocate, modify, or remove the shelter. A survey on the skate park Facebook page has voted strongly in favour of removing it.

Mark had hoped that Jonathan Long would be able to attend the meeting to discuss this problem but as he had not come Mark will write to him about the shelter.

3.7 Park Cottage

Nothing new to report. *(Post meeting note: work has now started on the new drains, after which the building can begin to be used. The land registry / access issues with the plot of land near to the cinema are ongoing.)*

3.8 Task Days

Previous Task Days since last meeting

Saturday 14, 15 & 28 July, 11 & 25 August, 8 & 29 September

Since the last meeting the group have held seven task days, plus the planting of the Jubilee Bed on 14 August and installation of the sculpture on 30 September.

Tasks have included weeding and planting of the ornamental beds, War Memorial beds, cinema bed and council offices beds; continuing to paint the Infants Play Area fence; management of the Woodland Breathing Places Area; sanding, refurbishment and treatment of park benches; treatment of sculptures; maintenance of the flower

bed in front of the toilets; and removal of saplings, ivy and brambles from the wall bordering the canal tow path.

Having two task days per month from April to September has been very successful and it was agreed that we should plan to do this again next year.

Remaining Task Days 2012 – 27 October, 24 November & 29 December

Work will continue on refurbishment of benches, painting of the Infants Play Area fence if the weather allows, planting of bulbs obtained from Lyme Park by Joyce and other suitable tasks as required.

Mark will send out the parking request for specified vehicles and the task day emails.

Future Task Day Dates for 2013

26 January; 23 February; 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 £5,766. Income since the last meeting includes £15 from Mr Senior's regular donation of £5 per month, £50 for use of photographs on the "Virtual Tour", £650 from the Bluhm family for a bench, £126.50 from Ring o' Bells Quiz nights, £180 from Costa Coffee and £272 from the Tombola at the Food & Drink Day.

Expenditure in the same period is £2,500 to Bramhall Paving, £57 for Public Liability Insurance, £1,375 to Wayne Chaisty, £85 Material Approval fees, £26 on buckets, scrapers and gloves etc., and £288 on Jubilee Bed plants from the council.

Committed funds are £2,813, including £1,529 allocated to the Jubilee Project, £500 on the Senior Citizens' bench refurbishment, £604 on the Bluhm family bench and £180 on the Costa Coffee bench refurbishment. This leaves an uncommitted working balance of £2,953.

Patrick has a number of expenses to submit receipts for not taken into account in the committed funds above and will pass these to Mark for processing as soon as possible.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Puddle at main entrance

The council have installed a new drainage soak-away at the main entrance to the park and as far as it goes this is working well. Unfortunately part of the path does not fall to the drain and an unsightly puddle is still forming when it rains.

Jonathan has advised that he was with a contractor the other day looking at this and is waiting to get a price back as a lot of surface around the entrance gully is in a bad way. The resurfacing work may help in directing the pooling water to the gully.

5.2 Notice Board

The manufacturer has provided new seals and Mark has fitted them. This seems to have resolved the problem and we now also have plenty of spare seal too.

5.3 Scout Hut

The Scouts have made some progress on improving the appearance of their hut.

5.4 Foods and Drink Day

The Tombola at the Food and Drink Day on Saturday 22 September raised £272 towards projects in the park. Thank you letters are being distributed to the businesses that contributed and the group thanked Micaela for her considerable effort in organising the event and encouraging the businesses to donate such great prizes.

5.5 Tree Work Required in Park

The dead Conker tree near to the ornamental beds and the cracked Hawthorn between the ornamental beds and the Bowling Green have now been removed. The visual impact of the latter is not as bad as expected and the views still look good. The stumps need to be ground out and this will be done in April 2013.

An Oak near the cinema is also in the process of being felled. The trunk is to be left at around 5 to 6 metres tall so that it can be assessed for a potential sculpture.

(Post meeting note: Mark has met with Anthony Crook, who has asked for feedback from the group on what they would like to be planted to replace the Hawthorn and Conker trees that have been removed – this needs to be discussed.)

5.6 Christmas Lunch

The Christmas lunch was discussed and Mark agreed to email volunteers to ask their preferences for an event before or after Christmas.

5.7 Carnival Presentation Evening

It was agreed that Gill, Micaela, Anne and Lorraine will attend the presentation evening. Joyce will also be there with Friends of Cromwell Avenue Park.

5.8 Remembrance Day

It was agreed that Terry would lay the wreath on behalf of the group again this year.

Terry would like to ensure that the group are on the formal list of wreath layers as every year we have to seek out the organisers on the day and ask to be included. It is not clear who to ask about this so Terry will investigate further.

The wreath has been ordered from Ron Townley and is due to be collected between 11am and 12 noon on 27 October from the Scout Hut.

5.9 Wash for painting on galvanised material

Mark will try to get the name of the "wash" for galvanised material from Wayne.

5.10 Pride in Marple Awards

Mark advised that he has nominated Bob and Patrick for "Pride in Marple" Awards on behalf of the group. The closing date for nominations is 19 October and the presentation evening is on 7 November. Hopefully we will learn if these nominations have been successful within the next few weeks.

6.0 Date of next Meeting

Monday 12 November 2012 at 6pm in Marple Library.

Future meeting dates booked in 2012:
12 November, 10 December.