

Friends of Marple Memorial Park Committee Meeting

Monday 21st February 2005

Minutes

Present: Peter Clarke, Mark Whittaker, Adrian Ellis, Bob Wilson, Nigel Hyde, Bill Arden, Chris Armit, P. Bardsley, Cllr Andrew Bispman.

Apologies: Brian Nash, Dave Burrows, Richard Booker

1. Matters Arising

• **Picnic Benches**

Dave Burrows has contacted Peter Clarke by e-mail to tell him that the picnic benches have been ordered. The cost of the benches is £100-£120 each, which is to be paid for by the friends group.

• **Jim's Bench Fund-update and Account**

The Jim Heald bench fund has received another £25 and (75p found at the Library) this brings the total to £512.64.

Unfortunately Richard Booker was unable to attend the meeting so the group could not choose the design of the bench, as the brochures were not available.

Action Richard Booker to provide bench brochures for the next meeting.

• **Football posts and Bins**

The position over the football posts and the bins are unchanged from the last meeting. These will be installed in the spring when the weather has improved. The site for the football posts has been chosen. The siting of the two new bins still needs to be decided. Peter and Adrian need to discuss siting arrangements.

• **Junior play area consultation**

Adrian reported to the group that the consultation had gone well! All the schools that had been sent questionnaires had replied. The consultation in the library produced good results and there have been over thirty replies via the Internet.

At present there are two pieces of equipment that are the most popular these are the tyre swing and the rope run. Richard will be meeting with the landscape architect this week to discuss the outcome of the consultation.

From this the Landscape architect will draw up two to three schemes or designs that should be available for the next meeting.

Action Richard to attend next meeting and bring outline designs of the play area.

- **SEMMMS Project**

Peter reported that the resurfacing in the park for the new cycle way/footpath seemed to be complete with work still taking place on the canal to-path.

- **Graffiti Project**

Peter informed the group that he had been in contact with the local youth co-ordinator Andrea Nyland who is still progressing with the scheme but has tendered her resignation and will leave the youth service in a months time. Andrea hopes that the project will be seen through by one of her colleagues.

Action Peter to contact Andrea before she leaves to gain contact names and update on the project.

- **Newsletter**

There is a problem with people coming forward with articles for the newsletter it is hoped that the newsletter would be ready for the spring so that the local events for the park could be included. Bill said that both Chris and himself had produced an article about the carnival, which was given to Peter. Peter said that he would produce a piece on the local locks and the locks societies annual event in the park. Bob Wilson the community Parks officer was asked whether he would like to contribute a piece on the day in the life. The newsletter would be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

Action Peter and Bob to produce articles for the next meeting.

2. Park Action Plan

Dave burrows has reviewed the action plan for the park and is now combining the friends action plan with the park's so that they are one document. This will help build on the community's aspirations and not just the council's needs.

The actions to be included are extra signage in the park. The interpretation boards for the park and features in or around the park. The new ramp into the library. To make the parks toilets more assessable and eventually create a better facility. To identify if there is a need to increase the number of litterbins within the park. To produce a newsletter on a regular basis and identify how many times a year it is to be produced and who will be the contributors. To include the friends' web site and the close working with the youth service and the young people of Marple and surrounding area.

To out line project time scale to repair the base of the sundial from Marple Hall.

Action check updated action plan to check that all items have been included and to keep plan regularly updated and added to when new issues arise.

3. Park House

Peter raised this issue, as a concern that he thinks the group should pursue. The cottage has been vandalised on two occasions and parks and recreation have now boarded the entire property to protect it from further miss use due to recent spates of vandalism and arson to other vacant properties in Marple.

Peter sent an email to Norman Hudson the head of Parks and Recreation (copy of which is attached to the minutes)

There was a strong feeling at the meeting that the community could use the property if resources could be found to renovate the property to a good standard.

The group decided to keep this as an agenda item until a decision on the property future has been decided.

Action keep cottage as a agenda item until further notice

4. District Ranger

Introduced at the meeting was the new district ranger for Marple town centre a Mr. Nigel Hyde who is based in the library. Nigel started working as a town centre warden in Stockport town centre so has plenty of experience working with people.

Nigel is based in Marple full time and his main duties include helping the public with directions and assistant if required. He is also responsible for litter clearance and enforcement when he has completed his training.

His works five days a week including Saturday and alternates his days off between Mondays and Wednesdays.

5. Any Other Business

- **Carnival Toilets**

Bill Arden asked if the council could give the carnival committee any support to the cost of toilets at this year's carnival as the cost has escalated this year and it would mean that most of the charity monies collected would be spent on toilets. Peter suggested applying to the local area committee for support. Adrian said that he would raise the matter with Dave Burrows who would be able to report back at the next meeting.

- **Treasurers Details**

Mark Whittaker the new treasurer reported that Jay had now handed over the accounts and that he should receive a Bank statement tomorrow 22nd February.

Mark also reported that he had reapplied for the development grant on the 27th January.

- **Bulbs**

Peter reported that the bulbs planted by the group last autumn were now appearing in the green corridor in the park and that a good display should be expected in the next few weeks.

- **Litter Collection by Local Residents**

Cllr Andrew Bispman reported that during a recent visit to the park on a Saturday Morning he observed Local residents collecting litter. He informed the group that he though this was very public spirited and if the area committee could help with the procurement of equipment it would.

Date of the next committee meeting was set for Monday 21st March 2005 at 6.30p.m at Marple Library.

Copy of email to Norman Hudson

Dear Norman,

I write to you both as Chairman of Friends of Marple Memorial Park and as a resident who has a love of the local history of the Marple area.

As I am sure you are aware, the cottage at the Station Road entrance to the Memorial Park has been empty since the death of Jim Heald last year. I realise that a certain amount of work had to be undertaken following Jim's demise and as a result things have dragged on a little.

Taking this into account my concern, and I know the concern of a great number of local residents, is the delay in any decision as to this building's future use. I know you will be aware that another cottage that has played an interesting part in Marple's history, the Iron Bridge cottage in Brabyns Park, was recently the subject of an arson attack. In an attempt to discourage a similar activity the Memorial Park cottage has since been boarded up. It would be tragic if these delays gave the arsonists a further opportunity to strike.

I have made clear to both Ged Lucas and Mark Hunter, and I speak for a substantial number of people on this subject, the preference for the building to be developed for future community use. Although small, the building has some potential in this area. There has been some talk of the building being sold as a private residence, this surely would only bring very short term financial benefits and one hopes that it is indeed only talk. If this is not the case, the legal right of the council to sell off what was in fact a gift by the Carver / Barlow families to the people of Marple is a subject that needs some clarification.

With this in mind I would appreciate it if you could advise me on the correct procedure to be taken to either gain a copy of, or be allowed to view, the original deeds to the park that were drawn up at that time.

Marple, unfortunately, has a history of selling its heritage short, one need only look as far as Marple Hall or Brabyns Hall. Although the Park cottage, (or Iron Bridge cottage come to that), are not on so grand a scale they are without doubt still important pieces of our heritage and for that reason need preserving for future generations.

I would be grateful if you could shed some light on S.M.B.C.'s proposals for the Memorial Park cottage.

Thanking you for your assistance in this matter

Peter Clarke