

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 8th February 2016
Marple Library**

Present: Mick Thompson, Lorraine Thompson, Bob Wilson, Adrian Ellis, Patrick O'Herlihy, Malcolm Allan, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Micaela Wood, Terry Wood, Joyce Reed.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 Anti-Social Behaviour

SAVY Youth Group

The SAVY youth group is now underway, running on Tuesday evenings from 6pm to 8pm at the Senior Citizens' Hall until the end of March. Mark has spoken to Adrian T, Chair of the Senior Citizens, and he is very happy with the way they going. There has been one incident of damage to a light fitting but he is satisfied that it was accidental.

There is a Working Group Meeting with CSU, Police, SAVY and councillors on Thursday to review the impact of the camera and other measures on ASB in the park.

Teen Shelter Removal

The Teen Shelter has been removed. There was severe corrosion in the footings so it would not have been possible to relocate and it has been disposed of.

Fencing / gating of the WWI Bowling Pavilion

No change: installation is generally complete but concerns have been expressed to the council about the misalignment of levels between railings and gates, sharp edges left exposed and damage done to some areas of the railings during grinding.

The council has agreed not to authorise payment until these issues are resolved.

A site visit is to be arranged by Greenspace.

Adrian E warned that this could become an issue for the council if it is not resolved before the end of the financial year, as they do not like to carry payments over.

The proposed artwork project has still to get underway.

Bowling Club Notice Board

Ken Else from the Bowling Club has been in touch about the new notice board to go on their hut now that the old one can no longer be easily accessed due to the railings.

Mark has provided some links to suitable boards costing approx £70 to £100 and forwarded a copy of the Area Flexibility Fund application form with a recommendation that the Club apply before the last AC Meeting of this FY on 16 March. Help filling out the form has also been offered if needed.

Covenants and By-laws (permitting an improved Football Facility)

This matter has been ongoing between us, Greenspace and Legal for over 14 months (since November 2014) and it still doesn't look any closer to resolution.

From our perspective it remains unclear what needs to be changed or why, so it is a very confusing situation. Our interpretation is that providing such a facility is open to all then it would comply with the covenants and by-laws on the park.

Marple Area Committee has requested consultation with park users / stakeholders.

Greenspace has advised that they are now awaiting further responses from Legal.

3.2 Play Areas and Play Equipment

Reinstallation of the Rocking Horse is underway and may be finished.

(Post Meeting Note: Checks showed that the Rocking Horse was extremely stiff after reinstallation and there appeared to be grinding on the frame. Mark showed this to Jane and Wayne from Greenspace on 11 February and it will be addressed soon.)

The Spinner is still missing but Greenspace are not aware of why it had been removed. They will investigate and advise what is happening.

3.3 Proposal to remove full time staffing

As reported at the last meeting, the proposal to remove fulltime staff from our park has been withdrawn. We asked Greenspace what we could now expect with regard to staffing in the park in the coming year. This was the reply:

Staffing in the park: an update from Ian O'Donnell after a Management Meeting with Cllr. Candler on Tuesday: "Marple Memorial Park will retain a presence but this will not necessarily be fulltime as it wasn't previously. Given the coverage by mobile crews and the needs of other parks without permanent SSK staff it may be that the person based in Marple Memorial Park needs to be moved elsewhere on occasion for operational reasons."

The group are concerned that this statement doesn't make any commitment. Our expectation is that a fulltime attendant would spend a minimum of 3 days per week in the park, which is what it was for the latter part of last year. Mark will seek further clarification from Cllr Candler at Marple Area Committee on Wednesday.

(Post Meeting Note: Discussion with Cllr Candler was much more positive. He advised that the funding cuts have not been made and the specific purpose of not making them is to retain the existing fulltime staff in parks. It can't be spent on other things. His expectation is that there will be a fulltime attendant in the park most of the time.)

3.4 Park Benches

General Bench Maintenance

No change: Treatment of park benches will recommence in the spring.

Town Centre Benches

No change: Waiting for drier weather. Mark will firm up details with those who've expressed an interest. Patrick is still having a dialogue with Mr Haq.

The Harmony Decor plaque still needs to be fitted once the weather improves.

Patrick asked about tidying up the trees on the Hollins. The consensus was that this isn't a task for Friends of the Park and Patrick will email Cllr Alexander instead.

3.5 Commemorative Plaques

We've been waiting since September 2014 for the Greenspace Team to draft a report on the commemorative plaques for submission to Area Committee.

We recently asked for an update on when they would submit the report and were told that there is still "no timescale for a report to committee".

It was concluded that the council is stonewalling and we will not pursue this idea any further because we're clearly wasting our time. Enquiries from the public concerning commemorative benches and trees etc will be referred to the council in future.

3.6 Park Buildings

The 2 windows boarded up on the Bowling Pavilion following forced entry to the Mess Room several months ago have still not had a permanent repair. We asked for an update from Greenspace and have been advised that this is currently with Carillion but is not a health and safety issue and therefore not a high priority.

On the Bowlers Hut the metal security screen still needs to be properly re-fixed. Greenspace have said they will chase this up (because it is more of a safety issue).

3.7 Skatepark Development Project

Latest Skatepark Project News

The £2,500 awarded by Forever Manchester CDL Fund has been received.

Marple Tuesday Bridge Club has donated £105. A letter of thanks has been sent.

Marple Civic Society has submitted a grant application to the Postcode Community Trust on behalf of the project. The outcome will be known around the end of March.

The project will be featured in the next edition of the Marple Review.

A cheque for £901 from the Christmas Rotary collections has been received.

A cheque for £200 from the Asda Foundation has been received for winning the "Chosen by You, Given by Us" vote. We are also in the current round of voting.

A further £298 has been received via the Local Giving Grow Your Tenner scheme.

The Nationwide Community Count was held over several branches and we were not the overall winners but should receive a runner up prize of £100.

Bag Packing in January was cancelled due to a poor response from Marple Hall School. We don't know if this was down to a lack of effort by the school or lack of interest from students. Since then one student has been in touch about raising funds at the school and he has been asked to speak to the head of year and his peers.

Julian Wadden Estate Agents will be doing another Treasure Hunt to raise funds on Saturday 28 May, which is also a task day like last time.

Skatepark Funding Update:

Target:	£100,000	
Community Funding:	£31,845	(growth of £705 since the last meeting).
With match funding:	£63,689	
Balance needed:	£36,311	(reduced by £1,409 since last meeting).
We need to raise:	£18,155	(50% of balance).

3.8 World War I Centenary Commemorations

Timeline Commemoration

George Brocklehurst is due to be added on 14 February. The timeline is also to be featured in the next edition of the Marple Review.

3.9 Task Days

Last Task Day – 30 January 2016

Work mainly focused on the long shrub bed between the library and the Band Room.

Four new volunteers joined in, which was a great start to the New Year.

Mick mentioned that he had seen the council conducting a tree survey recently.

Next Task Days – 27 February & 19 March 2016

We will probably remain focused on shrub beds for the February Task Day. Terry has also agreed to install storage brackets for our new power tools.

Patrick also proposed another tidy-up of the lock up.

The March task day has been scheduled for 19th March to avoid Easter.

Free parking has been requested for these dates. (*PMN: now granted*).

Mark will send out the task day emails around a week in advance.

Use of £50 donated to volunteers for task day refreshments

As mentioned last month, a lady has donated £50 to the group but insisted that it is spent on volunteers as a thank you, not directly on the park itself. Spending it at a social event was discussed but some of us felt uncomfortable about this.

Mark has discussed it further with Gill, who spoke to the lady about her wishes when she made the donation, and we feel it would be more appropriate to use the money as a task day refreshment fund to cover tea, coffee, milk and cakes etc. at break time. Volunteers would then benefit directly during task days and the money would not be spent on the park itself, keeping everyone happy. This was agreed by all present.

Saturday Task Days scheduled for 2016

Approved: 30 January, 27 February, 19 March, 16 & 30 April, 14 May.

To register: 28 May, 11 & 25 June, 11 & 25 June, 16 & 30 July, 13 & 27 August, 10 & 24 September, 29 October and 26 November.

Ad-hoc Daily Task Days

Daily Task Days are approved on the council's system until 30 June 2016.

Town Centre Benches are covered until 30 April 2016.

Risk Assessments / Training

No change: 7 volunteers have done the Team Leader training. 11 volunteers had attended the previous risk assessment training too, so we are in good shape.

We are still waiting for suitable dates for Lorraine and Micaela to do the Team Leader training and for Mick and Bob to do the power-tools training.

Power Tools

Nothing new.

3.10 Equity Housing Grant for Tools

Spending so far is £30 on trolley buckets and £12 on Universal Storage Hooks.

Mark has looked at Felco products but they don't do shears, so we still need to find a supplier of good quality ones. Adrian said he would do some investigation.

We have asked Greenspace for recommended suppliers and it may be possible to save money by ordering through the council too.

On the subject of small secutars, it was agreed that the biggest problem is loosing them so it is not worth spending a huge amount on these but it may be worth getting holsters or belt clips to go with them.

4.0 Funding - Status of Funds

Current bank balance is £36,135.24.

Income since last meeting includes:

£420.00 Hatters / All Things Nice.
£102.00 Ring o' Bells Quiz Nights.
£298.00 Local Giving.
£105.00 Marple Tuesday Bridge Club.
£129.00 Ring o' Bells Quiz Nights.
£901.00 Rotary Collections.
£200.00 Asda Foundation.

Expenditure since last meeting includes:

£17.10 Patrick's expenses for bench and gutter repairs.
£44.00 Harmony Décor plaque.
£30.00 Garden Trollies.
£11.97 Storage Hooks.

Committed funds in account are: Skate Park £31,845, Pavilion Fencing £3,150, Tools £458, Flowerbeds £43 and WWI Display £128, leaving a working balance of £512.

Any Other Business

5.1 Tesco Community Grant Scheme (Fitness Equipment)

We didn't make the final selection.

5.2 Angkor Soul Meal

A great success, 21 attended and everyone seemed to enjoy it very much.

Lorraine and Mick agreed to look at something suitable for a spring event.

5.3 World War Two Plaque

Marple Local History Society has recently come into possession of a WWII plaque commemorating the raising of funds by the citizens of Marple towards the fitting out of a warship, HMS Maple, during "Warship Week" in 1941.

The plaque is a fantastic piece of local history and the society has approached us about putting it on permanent display in the park. Details have been sent to Greenspace and Mark will meet with them to seek their agreement that we can do this. *(Post meeting note: positive meeting held with Greenspace on 11 February).*

5.4 Promotional Video

Anne has put a together a brilliant video promoting what Friends of the Park do that seeks the help of more volunteers. Everyone is very pleased with this and the group thanked Anne for her hard work on our behalf.

Malcolm suggested that the video could possibly be shown at Marple's Regent Cinema before a feature film and also shown at local schools and colleges.

5.5 Neighbourhood Plan for Marple

Marple Civic Society is promoting the need for a neighbourhood plan to guide future planning changes in the town. They are running an action and information week from 14 to 19 March and have offered to attend our meeting to give more information.

It was agreed to invite them to attend our next meeting on 14 March to provide us with more information, particularly with regard to how this may impact the park.

5.6 AGM

It is proposed that this year's AGM will be on Monday 11 April 2015.

6.0 Next Meeting

Monday 14 March 2016 at 6pm in Marple Library.

AGM Monday 11 April 2016 at 6pm in Marple Library.

Future meeting dates scheduled for 2016 (library booked):

14 March, 11 April, 9 May, 13 June, 11 July, 8 August, 12 September, 10 October, 14 November & 12 December 2016.