

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 9th June 2008
Marple Library**

Present: Dave Burrows, Jay Havoleana, Bill Ardern, Peter Bardsley, Bob Wilson, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Micaela Wood, Chris Armitt.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting:

Item 3.12 Status of Funds: Mark advised that he had incorrectly reported the balance of funds as £6,619. This was actually the expenditure year to date and the correct balance was £6,248. All other figures were correct.

3.0 Matters Arising.

3.1 BBC Breathing Places Reading Area

Sculpture

Andrew Frost has had problems with his back and wrist and is therefore behind schedule. Mark has told him that delivery by the end of June will be acceptable to the group and asked him not to sacrifice quality by rushing to complete the work. Andrew has confirmed that the replacement apple should be delivered at the same time.

Under-storey Planting & Wildflowers

Jacky Budd has made recommendations regarding the planting of wildflowers and provided costed proposals amounting to £480+VAT plus £16 delivery – Total £580. The group were happy to accept these recommendations and Mark will seek the BLF Project Officer's approval.

Bob and Dave advised that the best time to plant the wildflowers would be in October, so Mark will also ask the BLF for an extension of time to allow for this.

(Post meeting note: The Project Officer has approved the expenditure on wildflowers and granted a project extension to allow them to be planted in October.)

Hedgehog Boxes

One hedgehog box was installed in the library area during the 31st May task day and the other two were installed in the Canal side nature area on Tuesday 3rd June. An invoice is awaited from the David Lewis Centre.

Interpretation

Jay is still working on this but needs more time due to her commitments for the carnival in a couple of weeks time.

Proposals for spending surplus funds

Mark will submit proposals to the Big Lottery Fund based on the purchases already made on whips, wildflowers, books and the insect study centre, plus Jacky Budd's recommendations for further planting of wildflowers and another three books on wildlife gardening.

(Post meeting note: The BLF project Officer has approved the group's proposals as follows:

£130 on tree whips planted during February and March this year.

£50 on wildflowers planted by volunteers in March this year.

£17 for 3 books purchased on urban woodland / wildlife gardening.

£44 on the solar powered Insect Study Centre.

£580 on wildflowers as recommended by Jacky Budd.

£29 on 3 additional books on wildlife gardening and woodland wildflowers.)

Use as Reading Area by Library

Jay observed that the library has not yet used the area for reading with children as originally proposed. It was felt that they would be more likely to use it once the sculpture has been installed but Mark will get in touch with Linda Paton to see if they now have the removable seating and if they have any issues with using the reading circle.

BBC "Do One Thing" Event

Jay has obtained information on the BCC Breathing Places "Do One Thing" campaign for review and consideration how we might incorporate our own event in the park.

3.2 Basketball Court Fence

Dave has spoken to Rebecca about moving this forward and she has proposed the submission of a planning amendment to cover the increased height of the basketball fence only, leaving the chicane / steps arrangement (no impact planning permission) to be sorted out later.

Mark has confirmed this is acceptable and asked Rebecca to go ahead, however, the Planning Dept have now told her that a full new planning application will be required. Mark Jordan, who dealt with the original application, is on paternity leave until 23rd June so it has been agreed to wait until his return so that Rebecca can discuss it further with him.

The group need to develop their proposals for the chicane / steps.

There are currently funds of £3,752 available in commuted sums that could pay for the fence, subject to Area Committee approval.

3.3 Beech Tree Sculpture

The sculpture was re-oiled during the last task day and looks great. It was agreed to apply a second coat during the next task day, as there are some exposed areas with large cracks that could absorb more oil.

Mark asked Dave to discuss further the installation of the ground sculptures with Adrian. The group are keen for the acorns and beechnuts around the Tree Sculpture to be installed as soon as possible and do not feel it necessary to wait for the replacement apple sculpture, which is to be installed with the pear in the children's play area.

Mark reiterated that the group would be happy to be involved on a task day if Adrian feels it is suitable activity for them but it is more important to get them installed as soon as possible.

3.4 Infants Play Area

Replacement of the graphics and the blue outline to the former boating pond perimeter remain outstanding. Rebecca still has to finalise arrangements with a new contractor as to when they will do the work.

The playground sign is not in good enough condition to be re-painted and will need to be replaced. The group would like to do this and took measurements during the last task day. Dave advised that Gareth of Playground Maintenance had been considering removing the upright posts but he will speak to him to ensure this is not done.

Gareth has told Dave that the mini-roundabout is now performing "to specification" as it is not designed to spin freely for safety reasons. The group are disappointed with this and would have chosen a different piece of equipment if they had realised that it would be so hard for small children to turn without a parent to help.

Dave advised that the cableway in the junior play area would be repaired before the summer holidays. There have also been some repairs to the safe surface carried out recently.

3.5 Boules Court.

Mark advised that the group has been award an O2 Community Grant of £1,000 towards the Boules Court and a cheque and publicity pack were expected to arrive soon. The group will need to publicise the award as much as possible with press releases etc.

Patrick has asked the Marple Business Forum and District Partnership if they would be prepared to provide funding towards benches to improve the facility for elderly or infirm participants and spectators.

Mark has already asked Rebecca to revalidate the price of £2,240 that was received last year so that an order can be placed as soon as possible. Dave will speak to Rebecca to check that she will be doing this as the funding needs to be spent within a fairly short timescale.

3.6 Task Days

Last Day – 31 May

The Tree Sculpture was re-oiled and will receive another coat next time.

The large ornamental flowerbed was cleared ready for summer bedding and the old plants sold for £1 a bag, which raised £44 for the park.

One hedgehog box was fitted during the task day and the other two the following Tuesday.

The YOT were expected but did not turn up. An apology has been received from Brian Pendlebury.

Next Task Day – 28 June

The Tree Sculpture will be given another coat of oil. Other tasks will depend on how far Bob gets with summer bedding over the next couple of weeks but there should be plenty to do.

Mark will submit the list of registrations for free parking.

3.7 Fundraising Activities

Nothing to report.

3.8 Park Cottage

No new information.

3.9 Fence near Garth Road

Mark and Jay took a look at the fence during the last task day and agreed that a permanent opening should be formed. All that is needed is a new fence post for one side of the opening and the fence refitting. Dave asked Bob to see if he could lay his hands on a post to use for this.

4.0 Status of Funds

Income since last month was £44 from selling plants in the park.

Current bank balance:	£6,292	
Committed Funds:	£3,913	
Breathing Places		£3,860
Sundial & Shuttle panels		£53
Working balance:	£2,379	

5.0 Monthly Park Report

Bob advised that the main task at present is clearing of beds and weeding in preparation for summer bedding.

Bob also explained that he has been developing plans for the War Memorial beds with Horticultural Officer Jacky Budd. They are proposing to turn them into a high quality feature and will be undertaking a field trip to Didsbury and Reddish Vale in the near future to investigate suitable plant subjects and to develop these plans.

The group were pleased to learn this and very supportive as the War Memorial is a key feature in the park and it is important that it looks the best it can. We look forward to being involved in the planting and possibly helping to find funding if this proves to be necessary.

6.0 Any Other Business

6.1 Coronation Bench

Mark reported that unfortunately someone has forcibly removed several of the metal leaves on the Coronation Bench. It's very disappointing that they would put so much effort into pointless vandalism. Mark will ask Wayne Chaisty to advise us how much it would cost to repair.

6.2 Access from Stockport Road

Bill Ardern raised the issue of vehicular access from Stockport Road via the roadway into the park next to the cottage. Although there is a removable chain the opening between the posts is not wide enough for the large horseboxes that will be used during the carnival. Ideally a removable post is needed instead of the chain but it was acknowledged that this could not be resolved before this year's carnival.

6.3 Review of Reminders

A review of the reminders listed at the end of the minutes resulted in the following actions:

Mark will provide Jay with some headed letter paper so that she can write to Wyevale Garden Centre regarding the possibility of them providing some kind of sponsorship to the group.

Dave will investigate with Paul Hartley if the War Memorial is listed. If it is he should be able to organise cleaning. If not the group may possibly undertake this during a task day. Dave will confirm for the next meeting.

7.0 Date of next Meeting

Monday 14th July 2008 at 6pm in Marple Library.

The option of using the Social Force Club for meetings on Tuesday evenings instead of the library was discussed. Although it would suit several members it would be difficult for others, so it was agreed to continue using the library for the time being.

List of reminders:

Outdoor Fitness Equipment (sources of funding).
Send pets' memorial details to Friends of Brabyns.
Spring planting of Lock 17.
Park leaflet update.