

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park AGM
Monday 10 June 2019
Marple Library**

Present: Bob Wilson, Mick Thompson, Joyce Reed, Micaela Wood, Lorraine Thompson, Diane Jackson, Cllr. Malcolm Allan (PT), Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Patrick O'Herlihy, Terry Wood.

1.1 Minutes of last meeting: Agreed.

2.0 Annual General Meeting

2.1 Chairman's Report (presented by Mick Thompson)

Successes and achievements since the last AGM in June 2018

We've continued to work with the council to overcome objections to the plans for further improvements to the Skatepark and conversion of the Basketball Court to a MUGA (Marple Skatepark Phase II). Planning permission was eventually gained in October 2018 and work is expected to begin after the school summer holidays.

We successfully instigated the installation of a new Ocean See-Saw in the Infants Play Area costing £5,570. It was funded by the 2018 Treasure Hunt, an Auto-trader Community Fund grant, council Commuted Sums and several smaller contributions.

We completed the WWI Timeline project to commemorate the lives lost by the 141 men on the park memorial in time for the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI in November 2018. We are delighted that the timeline has become a permanent feature in the park thanks to the financial support of Marple AC and the help of HB Printing.

We instigated the resurfacing of the tarmac paths around the war memorial and council offices in time for the Remembrance service. This was funded by Marple Area Committee and we thank them for their excellent support of our activities in the park.

We also instigated the removal of the remains of York stone paving from the park entrance after a second incident of theft and had the area tarmacked over.

We joined the area-wide commemoration of the end of WWI by erecting Street Poppies with names of men linked to the Carvers and Hollins Mill on park lampposts.

We displayed 141 knitted poppies on the war memorial over the Remembrance period.

We took part in the St Martin's Church Christmas Tree Festival and our WWI Remembrance theme won us the best overall tree chosen by the Mayor of Stockport.

We installed paving in front of the 3 Boules Court benches and also the 3 skatepark benches using slabs reclaimed by the council's Greenspace Team.

We worked with students from Marple College to spread 6 tonnes of new material supplied by Greenspace on the French Boules Court and later used a wacker-plate to compact it and improve the playing surface of the court.

We helped organise Open Gardens in Marple and had a gazebo and displays in the park for 2 days over the weekend of the event in July, which raised £13,000 for Cancer Research. We also sold plants at Marple Carnival and raised £518 for CR UK.

We planted the main circular bed in the park to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Votes for Women and installed a 3-sided display to explain the background to this.

We re-treated Town Centre benches previously refurbished in 2016 and 2017.

We have initiated the council's policy to spend 12 months seeking the original donors of 3 old commemorative benches so that they can be replaced when necessary.

We have met with the council and CRT to discuss and influence the approach to the repairs of Lock 11 – our primary input being the desire to retain specific mature trees.

We instigated the replacement of our tool-store door and the bricking up of a rotten window in the Bowlers' Hut. We are still waiting for pointing of cracks to be finished.

We worked with the council to develop a scheme for refurbishment of the park toilets to make them suitable for disabled access. This is now on hold pending other factors.

We instigated the issue of warning letters from the council to owners of properties neighbouring the park who had been fly-tipping rubbish into the park.

We progressed on painting the Infants Play Area fence but have more to do this year.

Sadly we had to organise the removal of Midnight, the Owl Tree Sculpture due to decay but hope that we will be able to replace this with something new in the future.

We ran our "Little Growers" scheme for the second year running, it has proved a great way to engage with families with young children and something we hope to continue.

We have continued to maintain the bandroom garden for the Brass Bands of Marple.

We have installed storage racking in the former Bowling Pavilion tool store and have begun looking into improvements to the Mess Room shared with TLC operatives.

We continue to seek opportunities for a collaborative Art Project to improve the appearance of the former Bowling Pavilion building and seem to be making some progress now with Tracy McGuinness-Kelly from Art Stop in the Goyt Mill.

We worked with Greenspace to replace broken fencing at the park's canal entrance.

We recently organised the 5th Annual Treasure Hunt with main sponsor Julian Wadden and raised £2,697 for projects in the park. A very big thank you is due to Di Jackson, who did a brilliant job coordinating the fund-raising once again.

A total of 24 regular and ad-hoc Task Days were held in the park during 2018.

As always, the main focus has been maintenance of the flowerbeds, shrub beds and woodland areas throughout the park. We've planted 100s of bulbs, pulled 1,000s of weeds and filled numerous bags with litter. Our task day logs show that over 1,000 volunteer hours have been worked in the year, which based on a nominal value of £10/hour equates to a saving for the council of more than £10,000 in the year.

Our programme of bench maintenance has also continued to ensure that all benches in the park remain in the best possible condition.

We've enjoyed social events on New Horizons and after task days at Oldknow's.

Mick ended the report by saying that there are two additional 'thank you's' that he would like to make. Firstly, to all our many volunteers. Secondly to Mark and Gill, our driving forces who do so much work, some of which is evident but much of which is behind the scenes. Their combined efforts help us to make Marple Memorial Park a better place for all!

2.2 Treasurer's Report for 2018 (presented by Mark Whittaker)

The McInnes Partnership has audited our accounts for the year 1st January to 31st December 2018 and a certified income and expenditure sheet was distributed with the agenda. McInnes has now provided this service free of charge for 15 years.

Our income during 2018 was £6,451, taking the total money raised since the group began to £113,686 at the end of the year. This is just the money raised directly by the group and passed through our own accounts and does not include other grants, income and match-funding we have helped to bring into the council's coffers for the park, which amounts to a further £200,000+.

The main highlights in the year were:

£2,104 Treasurer Hunt 2018, £1,103 Local Giving donations, £1,000 from Marple Area Committee (towards the WWI Timeline), £1,000 Auto-Trader Community Fund (towards the Ocean See-Saw), £545 collected in the park, £210 in monthly payments from Marple Bands, a £200 donation from Marple Beer Run, £131 from the collection box in Marple Co-Op, a £100 donation from the Marple Website, £55 in small donations and interest of nearly £3.

Contributions coming in via Local Giving have again been significant with a net total of £1,103. This is broken down as £945 donations, £229 Gift-Aid, less £71 transaction fees. So the £96 annual fee remains worthwhile.

In the year we spent £5,443, taking our total spending on the park to £108,992.

Our outgoings were:

- £3,554 on the Ocean See-Saw (total cost being £5,750).
- £1,090 on the permanent WWI timeline display.
- £344 on tools and materials.
- £195 on Public Liability insurance.
- £139 on plants and seeds.
- £96 on Local Giving fee.
- £25 on our Poppy Wreath.

At the end of the year we had a bank balance of £4,694 with none of that committed to any specific projects at that time.

Banking and minor constitutional changes were agreed:

Right at the end of 2018 we opened a new bank account with Barclays because the RBS was due to close in January 2019. Before we reached a point where we were ready to close the RBS account this year we were invited to switch to another bank and receive a switching fee of £750. A switch to Santander was completed in April and we now have two accounts: the regular account at Barclays plus the new one at Santander, which we propose to use exclusively for the 50-50 Club.

Due to the closure of the RBS bank and the opening of alternative accounts we need to make some small changes to the group's constitution under Finances:

Change agreed: (b) A bank account will be opened in the name of the 'Friends' at the Royal Bank of Scotland, Marple. To... (b) Bank account(s) will be opened in the name of the 'Friends' as required to support the group's activities.

Change agreed: (c) The group shall decide the signatories to any account set up in the name of the group (2 out of 3 signatories to sign any cheque). To... (c) The committee shall decide the signatories to any account set up in the name of the group.

It was also agreed to add that to further the aims and objectives of the group the committee may organise and operate a small society lottery.

Signatory arrangements for current bank accounts were confirmed/agreed:

Barclays: To be used as the group's primary account for normal expenditure. Two out of three signatories to sign any cheque or approve any outgoing transaction.

Santander: To be used for the purpose of the 50-50 Club. The formal arrangement with Santander for this account is any one signatory from three as this is the only arrangement they allow on their free Treasurer's accounts. This will be acceptable for transfer of funds from Santander to Barclays and day-to-day costs associated with the 50-50 Club. However, it is agreed that all cheques paid from this account for 50-50 Club prizes or other approved expenditure from time-to-time will be counter-signed by a second signatory as an informal in-house arrangement.

Report on 2019 to date...

Since the turn of the year our income has been £4,709 and expenditure £801. This takes our total income to £118,395 and our "spends" to £109,793.

Income highlights this year are:

- £2,807 2019 Treasure Hunt (£2,697 after Face Painting expense).
- £750 Bank Switch Payment.
- £384 Local Giving.
- £200 Malcolm Shaw & Son sponsorship of bench.
- £125 Annual sponsor No 48 Kitchen and Bar.
- £100 Donation from Trident Electronics.
- £90 Marple Bands.

Expenditure highlights this year are:

- £275 Tools and Materials.
- £110 on Face Painting.
- £96 Local Giving fee.
- £95 on plants and seeds.
- £76 on tools and materials.
- £54 on a SS plaque.

£1,748.65 was transferred from Santander to Barclays last week and our balances are currently £500 at Santander and £8,101.69 at Barclays, giving us a total balance of £8,562 at the 7 June 2019. It is intended to leave the £500 as an operating buffer for the 50-50 Club.

Committed funds are £1,000 on resurfacing of the Reading Circle and £200 Public Liability Insurance, leaving a working balance of £7,362. A cheque for £40 has been sent to SMBC to register our small society lottery.

2.3 Election of Officials

2.3.1 Chairman

Mick advised that he was happy to continue as Chairman. There were no other candidates and this was agreed by all present.

2.3.2 Treasurer / Minutes Secretary

Mark advised that he was happy to continue as Treasurer. There were no other candidates and this was agreed by all present. Mark will also continue to write minutes and letters on behalf of the group and act as the key contact.

2.3.3 Secretary / Social Secretary

Micaela advised that she was happy to continue as Secretary and Social Secretary. There were no other candidates and this was agreed by all present.

2.3.5 Committee

In accordance with the requirements of the constitution, the following members were confirmed as committee members:

- Mick Thompson
- Patrick O'Herlihy
- Bob Wilson
- Micaela Wood
- Terry Wood
- Gill Whittaker
- Mark Whittaker

In addition to the main committee members, Diane Jackson was co-opted to assist with the group's Public Relations and the 50-50 Club. This was agreed by all present.

A revised constitution was signed by the main committee members present. Signatures from Terry, Patrick and Gill will be obtained as soon as practical.

An updated H&S Policy was signed by the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

With the election of officials and other constitutional matters completed the AGM was declared closed and the meeting continued with normal business.

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 Teen Area / Skatepark Phase II / MUGA

Now expected to start in early September after the school holidays.

A Pre-Construction meeting will be arranged by the council for August.

Some comments have been received on the design from users via the Facebook page. Mark is meeting with Richard, Lewis and Jason to discuss these on Thursday.

3.2 Bowling Green and Buildings

Cracks in Bowling Hut gable end: Last month we asked Cllr. Allan if he could follow this up for us as we were getting no response to our requests to get this overdue work completed before its first anniversary. Cllr. Allan advised that he has spoken with the engineer Jo Smith and she has agreed to chase the contractor to complete this work.

Pavilion Art Project: Greenspace has confirmed their support for our ideas for this project and the brief that we passed to artist Tracy McGuinness-Kelly from Art Stop.

Mark is currently working on a CV for the group that can be issued to Tracy to help her compile a grant application for the artwork project. (*PMN: issued 18 June 2019*).

Nothing has been received from Tracy as yet.

Reminder: fixing of the artwork was a technical challenge at Rose Hill and this needs to be covered early on with Tracy to avoid similar problems.

3.3 Park Benches

Park benches general: Patrick has made good progress on maintenance recently.

Town Centre benches: Our task day application has now been approved.

The plaque for Marshall Shaw's bench has been delivered and we hope to start soon.

Another family has expressed interest in one of the Hollins benches recently.

Policy for replacement of existing commemorative benches:

Notices are ongoing until October 2019. We have had contact from one donor family and two other interested families have been added to a waiting list.

3.4 Park Buildings and Infrastructure

Replacement of Midnight: Myers Tree Care has some sections of timber available. Mark is waiting to agree a date to visit. (*PMN: Visit took place 13 June 2019*).

The existing stump is still awaiting removal by the council. Anthony Crook has advised that it is a priority for this coming week.

Info board near to Lock 10: Mark will look at creating replacement artwork as soon as time allows. Patrick has been working on cleaning and painting of the lecterns including this one. We need to have a closer look at removing the existing finish as it has a tendency to come off in sheets after painting.

Painting of Pavilion Building: We need to make some progress on painting as soon as we can so that we are in good shape for the possible art project.

Fitting out of Mess Room: We are still waiting for the council to advise if they have any budget to cover the full refit of the kitchen at £1,600+VAT or new cupboards at £220+VAT. Mark has asked Wayne to follow this up and find out when we will know.

It was agreed to start seeking a surplus cupboard anyway as this could be fitted in the tool store if the full refit can be funded.

A new table and two chairs have been installed to replace the old desk in the room. These were acquired free of charge via Facebook.

Breathing Places Reading Circle: Wayne has placed an order on our behalf to resurface the Reading Circle and pathway. We have been given a lead time of around 4 to 5 weeks, so a start in approximately mid July is expected.

We have purchased 5 large syringes with blunt needles (cost £6.99) so that Terry can inject treatment direct into the wormholes in the sculpture. Terry has also purchased some bolts and a drill to re-fix the birdbath (cost £5.20) and we have had an extra key cut (£3.25) so that he can have his own set to the tool store. All these minor costs were paid from money donated in the park during task days.

Painting of Infants Play area fence: To be progressed later in year.

Possible refurbishment of Park Toilets: Scheme now on hold while the built area of the park is considered for the location of a new community centre / swimming pool, as described in the Marple Neighbourhood Plan and announced at Marple AC.

Steps near library: A 2.5L tin of yellow hazard paint has been purchased so that we can re-paint the edges of the steps near the library and anywhere else this is needed.

Brickwork walls between Asda and the park: These walls are in a very poor state and deteriorating with extensive frost damage to the brickwork. Last month Cllr. Allan was asked to investigate the ownership / responsibility for the area between Asda and the park. Cllr. Allan advised that Karen Barnes, the Public Realm Inspector, is now seeking to clarify and define responsibilities and will let him know once resolved.

Possible Water Fountain / Bottle Station: Wayne Bardsley has provided some information about Water Fountains and Bottle Filling Stations. Mark discussed these with Wayne this morning and will now compile a request for installation costs for a couple of options that could be installed on the outside wall of the gents' toilets.

3.5 Skatepark Development Project

Relocation of CCTV: Richard Booker asked TLC Security to quote for this back in February and also raised the request with the Public Protection Team. We have asked for updates on this repeatedly without response and at the last meeting we asked Cllr. Allan if he could please follow this up for us. Cllr. Allan advised that a privacy assessment statement for the relocation will be reviewed at the July Marple AC.

3.6 World War I Centenary Commemorations

Announcements: Penultimate man's 100th anniversary is in October 2019.

Repairs to War Memorial: The war memorial platform has now been re-grouted and looks satisfactory. There are still some areas of the walls that could be improved and we will leave this for a while and raise it again prior to this year's Remembrance.

3.7 Task Days

Last Task Days – 30 March, 25 May and 8 June 2019:

The 25 May was as sunny as 8 June was wet! However, lots of work was completed on

both task days. On Saturday we spend most of our time clearing plants alongside the pathway to the Reading Circle ready for it to be widened and resurfaced. We were joined by Tommy (aged 14) who is doing his Duke of Edinburgh Award and will be working with us over the next 3 months or so.

Ad-hoc Task Days: Gill has done a couple of ad-hoc task days and is hoping to do some work on the flowerbeds this Wednesday, weather permitting.

Next Task Day – 29 June 2019:

Parking has been approved. Email reminder will be sent out when due.

Task Day Registration / Risk Assessments:

Risk Assessments up-to-date. Task Days approved until 30 June 2019. Application for 1 July to 31 December 2019 has been submitted and is awaiting approval.

Scheduled Saturday Task Days in 2019: 29 June, 13 & 27 July, 17 & 31 August, 14 & 28 September, 12 & 26 October, 9 & 30 November & 28 December.

Training: Awaiting new dates from Wayne Bardsley.

Tools / Power Tools:

Pullerbear: Delivered 17 May and tried and tested during the 25 May task day. Worked very well up to a certain size of sapling and looks like a very good purchase.

Customs Duty of £38.45 had to be paid.

4.0 Funding - Status of Funds

General status of funds is covered under item 2.2 above this month.

50-50 Club: License application has been submitted with payment of £40.

Notices have been added in the park boards and need to start promoting further.

A couple of people have expressed an interest plus several volunteers.

Diane and Lorraine are planning to attend the carnival to promote.

Public Liability Insurance: Our PLI is due for renewal. This year's quote is £200 compared to £195 last year, so it was agreed to renew this week.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Lock 11 Visit

The visit on 20 May went well and the final visit today was good too. Everything is in shape for the carnival and reinstatement is due to continue from Monday 17th.

5.2 Treasure Hunt

Diane and Mark have been going round presenting certificates of appreciation to sponsors over the last week and sharing on social media. This has been well received.

6.0 Next Meeting

Monday 8 July 2019 at 6.15pm in Marple Library.

It was agreed that there would be no meeting in August.

Future meeting dates scheduled for 2019/20 (library booked):

8 July, 12 August (cancelled), 9 September, 14 October, 11 November, 9 December, 13 January 2020, 10 February, 9 March, 13 April, 11 May, 8 June 2020.