

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 9 March 2020
Marple Library**

Present: Joyce Reed, Mick Thompson, Micaela Wood, Patrick O'Herlihy,
Cllr Malcolm Allan, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Lorraine Thompson, Terry Wood, Bob Wilson, Diane Jackson.

1.1 Minutes of last meeting: Agreed.

2.0 50-50 Club Draw for February 2020:

At the end of February 78 subscriptions were registered with one (21) not paid-up. The draw was made using a random no. generator App at the meeting. Winners were:

- 1st Prize: £96 - No. 033 Diane Jackson.
- 2nd Prize: £58 - No. 043 Keith Buchanan.
- 3rd Prize: £38 - No. 034 S & V Oakden.

Total income was £385 with £192 in prizes and £193 allocated to Park Funds.

Prize cheques will be written and signed tomorrow.

The Lottery Return was signed at the meeting and will be submitted to SMBC.

A special meeting was agreed for the March Draw on Monday 6 April at Oldknow's. *(PMN: Cancelled due to Covid19, new special arrangements to be made for draw).*

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 Teen Area / Skatepark Phase II / MUGA

A pre-start meeting with Canvas is set for tomorrow, Tuesday 10 March 2020. We hope to agree firm details at that. *(PMN: A start date of Monday 6 April was agreed but has subsequently been put on hold due to the Covid19 constraints).*

Relocation of CCTV Camera: Mark and Cllr Allan will attend a demo of the camera at the Control Room on Tuesday 17 March. This has been put-off until after the Marple Pool Visioning Session on Thursday 12 March so that information revealed at this event can be taken into consideration. *(PMN: The meeting for 17 March was cancelled by the Security Operations Manager due to Covid19 guidance and video clips from each camera were sent instead. Action is now with Mark to respond on behalf of the group. This will be negative, asking for the original camera to be relocated as requested in December 2017 and followed up repeatedly since then).*

Graffiti removal requested: Still not all cleared from the skatepark and more is appearing on a regular basis. The poppy feature has been defaced and this is becoming very upsetting. The council response is limited unless the graffiti is offensive and they suggest it is part of skating culture. We had hoped to have a discussion about this with Jon Headlam at the meeting but he was unable to attend as expected.

Repainting of vertical surfaces: Some of the vertical surfaces were repainted during the last task day to remove graffiti from the side facing the canal. Further discussions will take place with Canvas during the pre-start meeting to seek their recommendations for graffiti removal and to discuss colours with Richard. *(PMN: Canvas recommended a supplier / contractor called Graffiti Removal Ltd but they are now closed for the usual reason. We will follow this up when possible to do so.)*

Painting over Library graffiti: We've reported graffiti on the library a number of times and have now offered to paint over it ourselves and keep on top of this in the future if the council can provide paint. Jon is pursuing this with Property Services.

3.2 Bowling Green and Buildings

Pavilion Art Project: The Awards for All grant application was unsuccessful. There is no scope for resubmission on this and they have suggested we try the Arts Council. This is not practical due to our Sculpture Trail bid that we may decide to resubmit.

Mark has spoken with Tracy and Pete at Art Stop CIC and asked them to look closely at splitting the project into two: Under-canopy Artwork and Roundel Artwork. This is so that we can identify a cost breakdown for each and consider going ahead in two phases. Provisionally, it is thought we could go ahead with the Roundel Art Project as Phase 1 and focus on that first while we seek funds for Phase 2.

We have several potential sources of support for this and we could also use Treasure Hunt Funds. The feeling is that we should be able to get enough funds together to get Phase 1 underway reasonably quickly if our sources come to fruition.

(Post Meeting Note: cost breakdowns have been received from Art Stop CIC and small grant applications / funding requests have been made to several organisations. It is not clear how the Covid19 situation is going to impact on these at present.)

We've asked Councillors if they would consider funding the hard-standing works we need to make the project fully accessible to all from their Marple Area Committee Delegated Highways budget. *(PMN: report from Neighbourhood Team needed.)*

Painting of Pavilion Building: Planning to start soon once the weather improves and we will need to clear the area out ready for the start of the bowling season too. *(PMN: Sadly this is no longer true and everything is on hold due to Covid19 issues.)*

Fitting out of Mess Room: The installation of the new heater is still outstanding. As this was raised as a health and safety issue and has been dragging on for months, the group asked Cllr Allan if he could please intervene to get the work done urgently.

3.3 New Sculpture Trail Project

Mark advised that current focus was on relocation of the logs to secure them for future use, as they are key to the project. A location for their storage at the Brabyns Depot has been agreed with the council and David at Myers Tree Care, who originally donated the logs, has agreed to move them there for us free of charge.

Mark had made initial contact with Anne-Louise regarding our ongoing strategy and once the logs are relocated will arrange a meeting to discuss the way forward.

(Post Meeting Note: the logs have been delivered to Brabyns by Myers Tree Care but no further progress has occurred yet following recent developments with Covid19).

3.4 Wild-flower Meadow / Lock 11 Compound

Preparation work is waiting for a suitable weather window and the park to dry out.

(Post Meeting Note: Much to our surprise the preparation works were completed week commencing 30 March, probably before lunch on 1st April! As non-essential work we were not expecting this to go ahead. We do not have the seed, nor are we in a position to organise volunteers to sow it due to the Covid19 spanner in the works. The Neighbourhood Team has been contacted and we have agreed that the most likely strategy will be to allow the grass to grow back over the summer and repeat the preparation works in the autumn if things are back to normal to permit sowing. It has been confirmed that we will not have to pay for the abortive preparation works.)

Trees were planted in a joint effort by the Neighbourhood Team and our volunteers on Tuesday 18 February. Planting of whips and sowing of wildflower seeds around the 9 large trees will be done with DofE students during the next task day. *(PMN: Achieved during the 14 March task day, just before everything started shutting down.)*

We have asked Jon Headlam to invoice us the £250 agreed for the supply of trees.

3.5 Possible Play Area Improvements

Richard has provided provisional designs for the merger of the two play areas showing three potential phases of redevelopment. They were shared in advance of the meeting for group members to review. Comments were discussed and it was agreed that Mark would pass these back to Richard tomorrow, after the skatepark meeting on site with Canvas Spaces. It was also agreed that Mark would ask Richard if he could attend a group meeting so that we could have broader discussions about the plans.

(Post Meeting Note: Comments were passed back to Richard and these were discussed in detail during a walk around the play areas on 10 March. Richard agreed to update the plans and then attend a meeting with the group. Unfortunately this was prior to the issue of Government guidance concerning Covid19 and at present it is not clear when it will be possible to pick this up again. Hopefully not too long!)

Consultation on Park Development: We have been invited to a "Marple Pool Visioning Session" with the council's architects who are working on proposals for the possible redevelopment of the built area in the park to create a new Community Hub. Marple Civic Society and the Neighbourhood Plan Team will also attend and we will be taking 6 volunteers to represent Friends of the Park: Mark, Gill, Mick, Patrick, Terry and Joyce. The event is 5pm on Thursday 12 March in Marple Library. Everyone needs to bring a tablet, laptop or smart phone with Wi-Fi capability.

(PMN: The event seemed to be productive but it wasn't what we were expecting. We thought we would be viewing planned options and giving our feedback and comments. This was not the case – no plans were available – the event was more about the architects gathering expectations and wishes from the community to guide their brief. So it appears that the project is not as advanced as we were expecting. It was the general consensus afterwards that this is a wonderful opportunity but if the police station, clinic and senior citizens hall are not replaced by the new facility, as well as the library and swimming pool, then this will be a missed opportunity for Marple.)

3.6 Benches in Park & Town Centre

Park benches general: Terry will tackle the Peters family bench as soon as the weather improves, by sanding existing slats or using spares from our store.

(PMN: This will probably not be possible to progress during Covid19 restrictions.)

Bench near Boules court: As Marple AC's spokesperson on Highways Cllr. Becky Senior has the authority to approve the level of funding needed (£309) from the committee's Delegated Highways Budget. So this work can go ahead.

3.7 Park Buildings and General Infrastructure

Info board near to Lock 10: Ongoing: awaiting replacement artwork.

Painting of Infants Play area fence: Pending Play Area developments.

Possible refurbishment of Park Toilets: Scheme on hold while the built area of the park is considered for the location of a new community centre / swimming pool.

Possible Water Fountain / Bottle Station: On hold as above.

Tarmac tripping hazards on main path: After our meeting in the park with Cllr. Allan and the Neighbourhood Team about this a price of £2,275 was submitted in a report by Wayne and Jon to Marple Area Committee seeking funding from their Delegated Highways Budget towards this essential maintenance work. *(PMN: Funding was approved at the committee meeting on Wednesday 11 March 2020.)*

3.8 Task Days

Last Task Days – 29 February / 7 March 2020:

The 29 February task day was cancelled on the morning of the event due to heavy rain. A replacement event was organised at short notice for 7 March with an excellent turnout by our hard core of volunteers.

Ad-hoc Task Days:

Tree planting was done on 18 February; Pullerbear work and bird / bat box erection with the Neighbourhood Team on 3 March and an additional litter-pick on 4 March.

Next Task Days – 14 & 28 March 2020:

Parking has been arranged. Email reminders will be sent out when due.

Little Growers: all set to start on the 14 March – library has agreed we can go in there if the weather is poor – and will also run on 28 March, 11 & 25 April.

Easter Task Day 11 April 2020: Bernard has agreed to lead this event with support from others trained leaders as Mark and Gill will be away.

(Post Meeting Note: The task day on 14 March went ahead and was very successful. Little Growers was very well received and 22 pots of seed were taken away by local children. Unfortunately since then all task days have been suspended until further notice and the rest of the scheduled Little Grower sessions are cancelled due to the Government's Guidelines for combatting the Covid19 virus.)

Task Day Registration / Risk Assessments:

Everything is updated and approved. Task Days in the park approved until 30 June 2020 and Town Centre activities approved until the end of 2020.

Scheduled Task Days in 2020: *(Dates for info only – now suspended UFN.)*

14 & 28 March, 11 & 25 April, 16 & 30 May 13 & 27 June, 11 & 25 July, 15 & 29 August, 12 & 26 September, 17 & 31 October, 14 & 28 November.

Training: Awaiting new dates from Wayne Bardsley.

Tools / Power Tools: 12 more hi-vis vests purchased at a cost of £79.20.

Two pairs of Bahco Shears have been ordered at a cost of £53.98.

We are short on hand forks and secateurs. Patrick is doing the annual clear-out of the tool store on Saturday and will keep an eye out for these. *(PMN: a good few found!)*

There is a rake that needs repair too. *(PMN: now completed. We have also received a donation of several garden tools from a local lady doing a garage clearance.)*

4.0 Funding - Status of Funds

The McInnes Partnership has completed audit of the group's accounts for 2019 and these are ready for the AGM later in the year.

Main Bank Account (Barclays): Balance = £10,915.89.

Committed funds are £2,500 ring-fenced for the Skatepark, £400 for Wild-flower Meadow preparation, £250 for new trees, less £275 due from Stockport Hydro for Bird / Bat Boxes, leaving a working balance of £8,040. *(PMN: £2,200 has now been committed to the Roundels Art Project, reducing the working balance to £5,840.)*

Income to Main Barclays A/C since the last meeting:

£195.00 January 50-50 Club Draw income.
£64.69 Local Giving.
£15.00 Brass Bands of Marple (Garden Maintenance).
£17.52 Easy Fund-raising.

Expenditure from Barclays A/C since the last meeting:

£281.64 Bird and Bat Boxes (covered by £275 grant from Stockport Hydro).
£22.94 5 x charity collection boxes.
£53.98 2 x Bahco shears.
£10.00 Pots and seeds for Little Growers.

50-50 Club A/C (Santander): Balance = £782.00.

Income to Santander 50-50 Club A/C since the last meeting:

£310.00 50-50 Club payments during February.
£20.00 50-50 Club payments during March.

Expenditure from Santander A/C since the last meeting:

£97.00 January 1st Prize (banked).
£59.00 January 2nd Prize (banked).
£39.00 January 3rd Prize (banked).
£195.00 January 50-50 Club income to Park Fund.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Marple College adoption of flowerbed

No change – we will talk further with college after the skatepark programme is firmed up but it is likely that we may need to create a new flowerbed due to timing.

(PMN: Obviously this is now all up in the air and we'll have to see what we can do when things get back to normal. A message has been sent to the college tutor.)

5.2 Library Bird Box

Micaela advised that Terry has nearly finished the refurbishment of the box.

(PMN: The box has now been refitted with the help of Wayne and Jon.)

5.3 Woodcrete Bird and Bat Boxes

The 6 bird boxes and 6 bat boxes to be funded by the Stockport Hydro Environmental Challenge grant of £275 have been purchased and installed in advance of receiving the award with the agreement of the Hydro Team. We will collect the cheque at their award ceremony at the Hydro on Friday 13 March between 2 & 3pm (all welcome).

We have managed to install a total of 18 new woodcrete bird boxes and 6 new woodcrete bat boxes in the park since last December. Marple Senior Citizens Association has also agreed to donate £50 towards this and that will mean we can purchase another two bat boxes in the near future.

(PMN: the £50 from MSCA was received and the bat boxes purchased and installed with further help from Wayne and Jon. The 18 bird boxes and 8 bat boxes have cost a total of £632.92. This has been funded by the grant of £275 from the 2020 Stockport Hydro Environmental Challenge, the donation of £50 from Marple Senior Citizen's Association, and a balance of £307.92 covered by our 50-50 Club income. Note: new web page: <https://www.marplememorialpark.org.uk/projects/new-bird-boxes.html>)

5.4 Hedgehog Boxes

Gill has suggested that we should purchase a couple of hedgehog boxes for installation in the brambles along the canal-side perimeter. The cost is approximately £54 each. This was approved. *(PMN: This has now been placed on hold.)*

5.5 Treasure Hunt

The Treasure Hunt date for this year has been fixed for Saturday 30 May.

Di and Mark met with Julian Wadden staff and new manager Daniel Brownhill last week. The JW Team were as enthusiastic as ever, so we plan to go ahead with the usual format and will be looking to increase sponsorship and add new attractions.

Daniel proposed to launch a video to start promoting the event on Friday 27 March.

(PMN: Sadly we had to agree with the Julian Wadden Team that we would put this on hold before the 27 March announcement was made. We will reconsider the situation when things get back to normal but it may well be too much to ask local businesses for their usual fantastic support before they've got back on their feet once the crisis is over. So it is likely that we will have to forgo the Treasure Hunt this year.)

5.6 Dog Mess

Diane has made contact with the Dog Warden and received a great response.

He doesn't work Saturdays, so cannot come to a normal task day. He may be able to attend if we give him a bit of notice for any weekday task days that we organise. He is aware of the Dogs' Trust and has worked with them before. He said that info / educational events were probably the best option and he is contacting them himself to see if they can attend. Di mentioned the Treasure Hunt and Carnival dates to him, when there will be lots of people in the park, and he was positive about that too.

(PMN: Obviously this is all scuppered too and we'll have to pick-up again later.)

5.7 Vernon Building Society support

The Vernon Building Society has recently been in touch and asked if we were happy to be the nominated charity of the year for the Marple branch. Of course we said yes!

We're now waiting for the Vernon Head Office to confirm to the branch that it's OK.

The first suggestion was to have a collection box, so we have purchased a box of 5 at a cost of £22 in the hope that we can get one or two in other outlets too. We've also suggested that they could consider selling Gill's handmade cards for us.

(PMN: We've had a confirmation letter from the Vernon and they have also expressed an interest in selling the cards but Covid19 is of course going to be a limiting factor, at least in the short term, as the sort of activities they do are coffee mornings etc.)

6.0 Next Meeting

As our April meeting falls on Monday 13th, which is a Bank Holiday, this will be cancelled and the next one will be Monday 11 May 2020 at 6.15pm in Marple Library.

(PMN: And of course that will now have to be cancelled too. Stand by your beds!!)

Future meeting dates scheduled for 2020 (library booked):

11 May, 8 June 2020 *(for reference only – all meetings currently on hold).*