

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting  
Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2015  
Marple Library**

**Present:** Joyce Reed, Terry Wood, Lorraine Thompson, Mick Thompson, Bob Wilson, Adrian Ellis, Sheila Whittle, Cllr Geoff Abell, Mark Whittaker.

**1.0 Apologies:** Patrick O'Herlihy.

**1.5 Introductions:** Sheila Whittle, Community Development Worker from SMBC's Public Health Department, attended the meeting. After everyone introduced themselves, Sheila explained that she is working on a project to develop contacts and collect data about local groups for the council web site. The aim of this is to enable web visitors to find out all the things that are going on in the borough and how to get involved. There is also a small amount of funding available linked to the project.

**2.0 Minutes of the last meeting:** Agreed.

### **3.0 Matters Arising**

#### **3.1 Anti-Social Behaviour**

##### **Anti-Social Behaviour Logs**

ASB logs submitted since the last meeting and distributed with the agenda include:

- An assault on a 6-year-old Beaver cub. Party string was sprayed in his face.
- Arson in the Infants Play Area. A coat was set alight in the Wendy House.
- Ongoing collection of drug packets and paraphernalia.

In addition to the logged reports, GMP has advised that a large crowd of around 150 youths had to be dispersed from the park and around Asda on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> November after the Brabyns Park Bonfire.

Despite these incidents activity in the park and especially around the bowling green and buildings appears to have been greatly reduced as a result of the new camera, the security signs and the new gates and railings around the bowling pavilion.

#### **SAVY Consultation**

A report on the SAVY consultation with young people in the park conducted over a period of 6 weeks was distributed with the agenda. This makes alarming reading and confirms that large volumes of young people are smoking cannabis in the park. It also highlights that there is a large group of people in their 20s to 30s hanging around the teen shelter smoking cannabis and potentially dealing it too. It identifies that there are vulnerable young people in Marple that are smoking cannabis regularly and who could potentially be exploited to sell this drug and others.

The report was discussed at a Working Group meeting with local councillors, Police and the Community Safety team on Friday 30 October. The Police made it clear that this is not a problem unique to Marple, it is a national problem and there are many places in the Stockport borough that are much worse than here.

The conclusion from SAVY was that setting up a youth group would be of benefit to the younger people to give them somewhere to meet and socialise and to give them some guidance on the pitfalls of using drugs and encourage them to talk about their issues. The young people themselves would steer the group's activities.

Key enablers for this are to identify a suitable location and find funding.

Venues are being investigated and the Senior Citizens' Hall is looking to be the most suitable option. A meeting has been arranged with Adrian Taylor and a youth worker to investigate this option further on Thursday (*PMN: postponed until 19 November*).

CSU are investigating funding options for this financial year. Probably starting in the New Year and running for 10 weeks until the end of March. The situation beyond this FY is unknown and it's possible that there will be no more funding available.

### **Teen Shelter Removal**

The Teen Shelter is due to be removed as part of the Skatepark extension and refurbishment once we've raised the funds needed for the project to proceed. Due to the negative feedback we've had during consultations with skatepark users we did ask the council to remove the shelter early a couple of years ago. At that time we were reluctantly persuaded to leave it in place until the skatepark construction.

The activity around the Teen Shelter revealed by the SAVY report has brought this matter back to the fore and Mark has asked the council to look again at removing it now. The youth worker has suggested consultation with the users but he is not aware of the consultation that has already been done. Mark asked other members of the group for their views.

The general consensus was that the shelter should be removed as soon as possible, although there are concerns about where the activity may migrate to and it was wondered if it was practical to relocate it. The overriding issue identified by the report is that vulnerable younger people have the potential to be exploited by the current situation and this needs to be addressed as a priority. It was agreed that the youth group work proposed was a good thing to help with this too.

### **Fencing / gating of the WWI Bowling Pavilion**

Installation is generally complete but concerns have been expressed to the council about the misalignment of levels between railings and gates, numerous sharp edges left exposed and damage done to some areas of the railings during grinding. The council has been asked not to authorise payment until these issues are resolved.

We can now start looking into the artwork opportunity. It was thought that Steve Abbott may be a good person to start talking to as he may have some good contacts.

### **Covenants and By-laws**

As mentioned in the post meeting note from last time, Legal did eventually provide a partial response saying that they needed to do further work as there does appear to be potential issues with providing a football / multi-sports facility in the park.

Mark has chased this up again with Cllr Alexander and it is understood that a report will now go to Area Committee seeking agreement that a provision could be made in the future (subject to funding and maintenance constraints, of course).

## **3.2 Roundabout in Infants Play Area / Play Area Improvements**

The roundabout installation plus new safe surface in the Infants Play Area has been completed. Repairs to the Junior Play Area safe surface are also complete.

There was an issue with a load of Heras fencing being left outside the play area for two weeks and despite repeated complaints that it was unsafe it was not removed until we complained to Cllr Alexander. It was then shifted within a few hours.

The Rocking Horse in the Jnr Play Area is to be removed for new bearings to be fitted.

### **3.3 proposal to remove full time staffing**

As we all know, Rob has already had his time in the park reduced to 3 days per week and there are now proposals to remove the "full time" attendant role completely. This is currently out for consultation with the public.

We've been campaigning against this and asking people to fill in the consultation.

We have the support of William Wragg MP and local councillors. Hopefully if there is a good public response the council will listen and at least keep the 3 days per week that we currently have. The consultation is ongoing until 16 November.

There are also proposals to mow without a box on the mower, which will make the flowerbeds look very untidy.

It was wondered if our group is actually being penalised for our success in the park!

*(Post Meeting Note: On 13 November Rob had his last day in the park, having been reassigned to Bruntwood Park at short notice by SSK. We wouldn't have known about this until after he had gone if he hadn't told us himself. We've subsequently been advised that a new attendant will start on Monday 23 November and we will do our best to support him. It is very disappointing that the group was not informed about these changes in advance. A complaint has been made to Greenspace and local councillors, who keep telling us that we are key stakeholders in the park but do not always treat us as such. Our tools have been removed from the shared storage until a relationship can be built with the new attendant.)*

### **3.4 Park Benches**

#### **General Bench Maintenance**

Treatment of park benches is pretty much up-to-date and ready for winter.

#### **Town Centre Benches**

Patrick has received interest from a number of local businesses who wish to sponsor the refurbishment of town centre benches. These include the Chiropractor on Derby Way, Kay Dee Hair & Beauty, Helen Winterson, Marple Business Forum and Wilsons.

Marple Civic Society may wish to sponsor refurbishment of the bench originally provided by them and with their plaque on. Mark will contact them to find out.

We've obtained approval of a daily task day running from 26 October to 30 April next year. This gives us the provision to tackle the benches any time when the weather is suitable and we have the volunteers available (it is unlikely that we will be many done over the winter as the benches need to be dry.)

Harmony Decor has agreed to sponsor the the pilot bench refurbished near to their shop and the plaque is now available. Mark will purchase screws and fit.

### **3.5 Commemorative Plaques**

No change: We've been waiting since September 2014 for the Greenspace Team to draft a report on the commemorative plaques for submission to Area Committee. They have advised, "This will be done when they have capacity within the team".

We have had several enquiries that would be suitable for this scheme recently and as it is over 12 months since we were promised a report Mark has followed this up with Ian Walmsley and Jane Bardsley. As yet we've had no further response.

## **3.6 Park Buildings**

### **Bowling Pavilion**

The 2 windows boarded up following forced entry to the Mess Room several months ago have still not had a permanent repair. We obviously need to chase this up again.

### **Bowlers Hut**

The metal security screen still needs to be properly re-fixed.

Friends of the Park have fitted new supports on the gutters.

## **3.7 Skatepark Development Project**

### **Latest Skatepark Project News**

Life Leisure has rejected our recent grant application.

Morrisons has rejected the grant application made via Marple Civic Society.

We did not get enough votes in the Mars Milk scheme.

### **Nationwide Community Count**

We are featured in the Nationwide Building Society Community Count scheme. There are boxes in local branches for customers to vote with blue tokens. £100 is received by all three featured groups and an extra £500 to the winner. Voting runs until January and we need as many as we can get via the Marple branch!

### **Asda Chosen by You, Given by Us**

We are also now featured in the Marple Asda store's scheme, where Asda customers can vote for us with green tokens. The winning group will receive £200 and the two runners up £50 each. We can also be nominated to take part again, so members need to nominate us via the forms on the Community Life notice board in the store.

### **Art Exhibition at Marple Library**

The Art Exhibition raised £55, which was lower than we'd hoped. Thanks were given to Joyce, Steve Abbott and the Society of Marple Artists for their efforts.

### **St Mary's RC Primary School, Marple Bridge**

Pupils in Year 3 have raised £42.50 towards the skatepark project. Mark will write to thank them for this great support and ask what they did to raise the money.

### **Food and Drink Day**

£660 in total was raised at the event. A big thanks to everyone who helped, especially to Micaela and Terry for organising the tombola.

### **Grow Your Tenner**

This has been quite successful:

£395 of one-off donations have been made during the month of October with £190 of match-funding and approximately £80 of Gift Aid. After fees this will be around £636.

Also 13 Direct Debits have been set-up for £10 each x 3 months. All of these will be matched and 12 of them with Gift Aid. This adds up to approximately £834 in total, which will be received over the next 3 months or so.

The combined total is around £1,470, none of which is in accounts yet.

## **Marple SkateFest Music Night – Saturday 14 November 2015**

All arranged for next Saturday at Hawk Green Cricket Club.

Tickets are still available but now selling quickly.

The full line up is Charlie Ingham, Jenny Clark, Lazlo Baby, Mama Goose and DJ BFresh. Tickets are £8 adults and £5 U18. Food will be provided by All Things Nice and charged at £5 a head with all proceeds going to the skatepark project.

There will be some relatively small expenses: £60 travel expenses for Mama Goose and £23 for a crate of beer for the bands, charged at cost by HGCC. Performers will also be given free food vouchers.

There will be a display about the skatepark and a raffle too. Prizes include a huge Polar Bear donated by Gill, a bike helmet, lights and mug donated by Recon Cycles and Asda has been asked if they would supply a Christmas Hamper.

*(Post Meeting Note: Asda did donate a hamper and the night was a great success. A total of £983 was raised after expenses. The food raised £140, the raffle £153 and ticket sales plus Steve Abbott's silhouettes and sales of Mama Goose CDs £773.)*

## **Marple Locks Heritage Society**

Marple Locks Heritage Society has recently folded. They had £500 worth of funds remaining and have donated £250 each to Friends of the Park and New Horizons.

## **Rotary Christmas Collection at Asda**

Dates are 10, 11, 12 and 15 December. Terry, Mick, Lorraine, Gill, Jason, Millie and Mark are on the rota at present. Micaela will check her shifts and confirm.

Di Jackson has been unable to commit for personal reasons this year. Anne would like to help but doesn't know her work schedule for December yet.

Mark will feed back to Rotary this week. *(PMN: Rota is now agreed and distributed).*

## **Ring o' Bells Quiz Nights**

The new landlord at the Ring o' Bells is doing the next 3 Quiz Nights for us. It would be good to have some extra teams attend if possible.

## **Marple Christmas Cracker**

All set for Saturday 5 December. The stall will cost £25 and we will need to stay within the stall area. Proposed activities are Guess the Sweets, a Christmas Hamper raffle, vintage canvas prints and Christmas cards.

The Wheel of Fortune idea was discussed and we may also trial this if Terry manages to get it ready in time. The suggested approach was to have 10 divisions and 10 tokens to sell with a good prize every time.

## **Skatepark Funding Update:**

Target:	£100,000	
Community Funding:	£25,880	(excluding £2,500 FM CDL Fund).
With match funding:	£51,760	
Balance needed:	£48,240	
We need to raise:	£24,120	(50% of balance).

### **3.8 World War I Centenary Commemorations**

#### **Timeline Commemoration**

Jack Hardy, Walter Fletcher, Walter Flint and Sidney Brocklehurst have been added since the last meeting. Frank Bradwell, due on 14 November, will be the last of this year followed by George Brocklehurst, Sidney's brother, in February.

#### **3.9 Task Days**

##### **Last Task Days – 26 September, 17 October, 6 & 7 November 2015**

Four task days have been completed since the last meeting, including a special one to clear leaves with Brabyns Preparatory School pupils on 6<sup>th</sup> November. The main focus has been to ensure that the park looked its best for the Remembrance Service on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November. This was achieved with many positive comments.

##### **Next Task Days – 28 November 2015**

Probably the last task day of 2015.

Free parking has been requested.

Mark will send out the task day emails when due.

Lorraine asked if we could trim the rose bushes in the Bandroom garden, which are quite desperate to be done. Mark will check with the bands if this is OK.

##### **Saturday Task Days scheduled for 2015**

**Approved:** 26 September & 31 October 2015.

28 November to be covered as an Ad-hoc Task Day.

**To register:** 2016 Task Days.

##### **Ad-hoc Daily Task Days**

Daily Task Days are approved on the council's system until 31 December 2015 for gardening tasks, painting and treatment of benches and sculptures.

Town Centre Benches are covered until 30 April 2016.

##### **Risk Assessments / Training**

11 volunteers have attended the previous risk assessment training and 6 have done the new Team Leader training.

There are new opportunities for Task Leader training on Wednesday 18 and Saturday 21 November 2015. Unfortunately this does not suit Micaela and Lorraine's diaries but Chris should be able to attend on 18<sup>th</sup>.

Mick and Bob are waiting for power-tools training dates.

##### **Power Tools**

Nothing new.

### **4.0 Funding - Status of Funds**

The balance on latest bank statement dated 22 October is £28,158.76.

#### **Income since last meeting includes:**

£260.00 Lewis's Beard-off.

£660.00 Food and Drink Day.

£2.59 Interest.  
£60.00 Harmony Decor (for plaque).  
£50.00 Selma Fielding (plants & seeds).  
£25.00 Recon Cycles.  
£9.16 Local Giving.  
£30.00 The Marple Website (Canvas print sale).  
£25.00 Arthur Procter (Canvas print sale).  
£65.00 Collected in the park.

#### **Expenditure since last meeting includes:**

£25.00 Wreath for Remembrance Service.  
£10.00 St Martin's Christmas Tree donation.  
£13.70 Wood preserver and sand disks.  
£29.40 Flags.  
£25.81 Plants and compost.  
£9.99 Line for strimmer.

Committed funds in account are: Skate Park Fund £24,410, Pavilion Fencing £3,150, Flowerbeds £43 and WWI Display £128, leaving a working balance of £606.

#### **Any Other Business**

##### **5.1 Equity Housing Grant**

We have been awarded a grant of £500 for tools and materials by Equity Housing.

We were helped in this by Mrs Selma Fielding, who lives at Macnair Court, an Equity Housing property, and it was a joint application. The money has not been received yet and we can look further at the tools needed once the money is available.

##### **5.2 Promotional video**

Anne advises that she has nearly finished the promotional video.

##### **5.3 Christmas Meal**

Mark and Gill will look at options for a Christmas meal prior to Christmas, probably at the Ring o' Bells. *(Post meeting note: it has not been possible to find a suitable date when everyone is available, so it is now proposed to wait until the New Year when peoples' diaries are quieter.)*

##### **6.0 Next Meeting**

Monday 14 December 2015 at 6pm in Marple Library.

#### **Meeting dates scheduled for 2015 (library booked):**

14 December 2015.