

Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 13th November 2017
Marple Library

Present: Joyce Reed, Mick Thompson, Micaela Wood, Terry Wood, Adrian Ellis, Cllr. Annette Finnie, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Cllr. Malcolm Allan, Lorraine Thompson, Patrick O'Herlihy, Bob Wilson.

2.0 Minutes of last meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 Teen Area / Skatepark Phase II / MUGA

We have developed plans for improving the small top section of the skatepark and converting the basketball court to a MUGA (Multi-User GAMES) Facility. Budget costs are £35k for the skatepark phase II and £35k for the MUGA = £70k+ in total.

Richard Booker has opened a planning account for the application but has not made as much progress as we would hope. He has advised that there will be extra information needed from Canvas. He has been asked to identify what this is to them so that we can turn our attention to expediting of the information from Canvas.

(Post meeting note: Richard has contacted Canvas and Mark has followed this up on 20 November 2017. We now await their response.)

3.2 Fencing of Bowling Green

Kerb for new flowerbed

Instead of installing a concrete kerb the contractor has managed to secure the loose kerb-stones. This means that there will be nothing to retain the soil at the second fence panel. We will therefore revert to the original plan of adding a new bed in front of the first fence panel only.

Greenspace has agreed that SSK can provide us with around a tonne of soil from their winter ground maintenance order for this location plus the Jubilee Bed.

Fixing down of relocated benches

SSK will fabricate and install a metal bracket over the central leg of each bench. This is scheduled to be done within the next 4 weeks.

Extra notice board

No change. This can be discussed with Bowlers and installed before next season.

3.3 Play Areas and Play Equipment

New safe surface around roundabout

This work has been completed.

3.4 Park Attendant

We await the opportunity to discuss the latest on this in more detail with Cllr. Allan.

A discussion ensued in response to questions from Cllr Finnie and our position was explained. It was also highlighted that we understand from discussions with Cllr. Allan that Torkington Park did still keep their full time park attendant.

Also prompted by questions from Cllr Finnie, further discussion took place on the subjects of Children's Scrutiny Reviews, litter, graffiti and anti-social behaviour.

3.5 Park Benches

Kay bench

We have tried cleaning a section of the Kay bench with neat ECO Chem and wire-wool. This has been pretty successful at getting the green algae off on a small section and we will try extending this treatment to the rest of the bench.

Mick highlighted that he and Larry were impressed with the finish on benches at Fletcher Moss Gardens in Disley. These have been painted a grey colour and look very uniform and consistent. It would be good to learn more about what they have used.

(PMN: An email has been sent to Friends of Fletcher Moss requesting information.)

Hard-standing for 4 benches

A number of benches would benefit from hard-standings in front to prevent wear by foot traffic. Patrick has taken photos and these have been discussed with Wayne Bardsley. Wayne has been asked to investigate if there are still surplus paving slabs available at Etherow Park, or perhaps at the ECO Centre that we could use.

3.6 Town Centre Benches

Although Cllr Finnie has raised the matter of the grass under the benches with the Public Realm Officer, and he undertook to resolve this, nothing has happened. There is now a new Public Realm Officer taken over this area and Cllr. Finnie raised this with her at Marple Area Committee and has also followed up by passing on the information to her. So hopefully something will be done about this soon.

3.7 Park Buildings and Infrastructure

Replacement of Midnight

Condition is deteriorating quickly now – we hope that Myers Tree Care will be able to source a large piece of timber suitable for creating a replacement for Midnight.

Painting of Pavilion Buildings

We have 2 part full tins of black gloss and 1 part full tin of white. This should be enough to make a start next year but we will ask Greenspace to order more next FY.

Bowling Hut / Pavilion Building roofs

We still await the outcome of Property Services' assessment of the condition of the roofs, however we have indication from Wayne Bardsley that they apparently consider it to be OK. We have therefore advised the Bowling Club that they should do no more temporary repairs themselves, nor should our volunteers.

Breathing Places reading circle

Renewal of the hard-standing surface has been discussed with Wayne Bardsley and will be parked until next FY, when funding may be available to help.

York stone stolen from park entrance

No further news or progress. It's frustrating how long this is taking and the matter has been raised again with Cllr. Allan with a request for him to chase it up.

Tarmac to main entrance

The tarmac to the main entrance has been redone and is a significant improvement.

Graffiti around the back of the library

This is still to be reported to Greenspace.

Painting of Infants Play area fence

We have 2 full 5L tins and 1 part tin of cream paint, 1 full 5L tin and 1 part tin of red and the same for blue. So we will be able to start next year but will need more. We will ask Greenspace to jet-wash the fence next spring in preparation for painting.

Jubilee Flowerbed

Repairs to the full coping have been completed by the contractor. We have an invoice for the agreed sum of £360 and a cheque was signed for this at the meeting.

Boules Court

Sourcing of materials to top-up the Boules Court has been discussed with Greenspace and we will raise the matter again in the new FY, when funding may be available.

Circular Coronation Bench

The rubber-bonded mulch has been installed at the skatepark. It looks really good at the Poppy triangle but there is some lifting already on one of the bunds at the rear of the skatepark where it butts up to the grass. This suggests it may not be suitable for a foot-way around the Coronation bench. It was agreed to wait and see how well the bund is repaired and survives in use. So this idea is currently on the back-burner.

Information board near to Lock 10

It was agreed that the first step is to determine if the existing metal frame and posts are suitable for being painted and re-used, or if the whole unit will need replacing.

With regard to new artwork, Mark will contact Steve Abbott to see if he can put us in touch with someone at Marple College to discuss if it would be a good project for art students to get involved in redesigning the panel.

3.8 Skatepark Development Project

Outstanding Skatepark Project tasks

Landscaping works

As mentioned above, the rubber-bonded mulch has been installed and the "Dirt Triangle" near to the poppy feature is excellent. The bunds behind the skatepark also look good but one of them is starting to lift from the grass already. Photos have been sent to the Greenspace Team and they will ask the contractor to conduct a repair.

Screening trees and shrubs

Plans are still awaited from Greenspace for screening trees and shrubs that will allow the scheme to be discussed with residents. They have sent photographs but we have asked for a plan to be included too. *(PMN: Plan is now received and Mark has forwarded to Cllr. Allan to see if consultation with residents can be arranged.)*

Switching off lights

Mark met with Cllr. Allan and the Lighting Engineers on the evening of Thursday 19 October. We seemed to be successful in conveying our requirement for the lights to be switched off at a fixed time. The Engineers raised the issue of the lights going off mid-stunt and causing an accident. They suggested that a warning sign would be required. We feel this reinforces the need for the lights to go off at a fixed time, rather than the other proposal, which is more arbitrary. We are now waiting for them to come back with new proposals and costs, which seems to be taking a long time so we have asked Cllr. Allan if he can please chase this up again.

3.9 World War I Centenary Commemorations

Timeline Commemoration

William Austin, Joe Braddock and Ernest Greenhalgh were added on 22nd October, Sam Thelwall on 25th, John Edward Jack on 26th and Colin Barton on 6th November.

Ben Phillips is due on 20th November, Joe Duddy on 4th December and Frank Allen on 12th December will bring the 1917 casualties to an end. Things start again on 25th January 2018 and then become horrendous during the March "Spring Offensive".

No further work has been done on the permanent timeline feature at this stage.

3.10 Task Days

Last Task Days – 14 and 28 October and 11 November 2017

Over the last 3 task days we have cleaned out the store room, begun spreading leaf mould, lots of work on the flowerbeds and shrub beds and planted almost 15,000 bulbs in the park since September. These include 1,000 Daffodil and Narcissi mix, 1,000 Tête-à-tête, 1,000 Snowdrops, 1,000 Bluebells, 500 Naturalising Daffodils, 200 Hyacinths, 5,000 Crocuses from Stockport Rotary and 5,000 from New Mills Marple and District Rotary. Earlier this year we also planted 1,500 Snowdrops as part of the Bee Friendly Project, so the total in the year is over 16,200 bulbs planted.

Ad-hoc Task Days

We also held an ad-hoc task day on Friday 3 November when we planted bulbs in the band room garden and Snowdrops in the Infants Play Area.

Next Task Days – 25 November and 30 December 2017

Parking is arranged for the first and will be done for the latter in case people wish to come out over the Christmas break. Emails will be sent out when due.

Task Day Registration / Risk Assessments

We are covered until 31 December 2017, so will need to submit new applications to cover task days in the first half of 2018 soon.

Saturday Task Days scheduled for 2017: 25 November and 30 December.

First Task Days of 2018: 27 January, 24 February and 31 March.

Training

We await news of any further dates for training.

Dates are also still awaited for Mick and Bob to do the power-tools training.

Power Tools

Nothing new.

4.0 Funding - Status of Funds

Last statement on 20 October shows a balance of £3,803.48.

Income since last meeting:

£55.38 Local Giving.
£61.20 Ring o' Bells Pub (5p on a pint of Dizzy Blonde).
£61.66 Collection box at Marple Co-Op.
£21.02 Collected in Park.

Expenditure since last meeting:

£360.00 Repairs to Jubilee bed coping.

Currently committed funds are: WWI Display £122 and Plants £72, leaving a current working balance of £3,307.30.

The Bandroom Treasurer has advised that the bank account they use to pay our monthly standing order for maintenance of their garden has been closed. He says they will set up a new SO and catch-up with any overdue payments as quickly as they can.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Naming of driveway into the park

Cllr. Abell has followed this up for us and we have been contacted by Greenspace about it. Mark has provided them with the correspondence history that shows this was all sorted out officially in 2010 but the signs were never installed. Hopefully this will enable them to put together a report to go to Marple AC and finish the job.

Mark has also met with Wayne Bardsley to agree suitable locations for the signs.

5.2 Manure for allotment beds

Now that the Remembrance weekend is behind us we can talk to the Allotment Association about the details for getting some manure to the park.

5.3 Open Gardens in Marple (7th and 8th July 2018)

16 gardens plus the Park, Oldknow Gardens and New Horizons are signed up for the event, so it is looking very promising. There was recently publicity in "Inside Marple" magazine and it is due to appear in the Review Newspaper soon too.

5.4 Tea Dances at Roman Lakes

All set – 20 attendees have been notified of the details.

5.5 Remembrance Service

The Parks team did a lot of work clearing leaves, which left us to focus on the flowerbeds, so the park was looking its best for the service yesterday. Tom from SSK did the Sunday preparations and controlled the flag and everything went smoothly.

Mark has emailed supervisor Steve McGlynn to thank SSK for their support.

5.6 Christmas Tree Festival

It was confirmed that we will not take part this year. The organisers have been told.

5.7 Encouraging new and younger volunteers

Before the meeting had fully started there was a short discussion about encouraging new and younger volunteers to get involved in the park. Some initial ideas included contacting Marple College, talking to schools about adopting a flowerbed and a "Little Growers" day. These ideas can be discussed and developed further at future meetings.

6.0 Next Meeting

Monday 11 December 2017 at 6.15pm in Marple Library.

Future meeting dates scheduled for 2017/18 (library booked):

11 December 2017.

8 January 2018, 12 February, 12 March, 9 April, 14 May, 11 June 2018.