

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 14 October 2019
Marple Library**

Present: Joyce Reed, Micaela Wood, Terry Wood, Diane Jackson, Mark Whittaker, Cllr. Malcolm Allan (part-time).

1.0 Apologies: Bob Wilson, Patrick O'Herlihy, Lorraine Thompson, Mick Thompson.

1.1 Minutes of last meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising

3.1 Teen Area / Skatepark Phase II / MUGA

The minor amendment to the phase II skatepark planning application was approved by the planners on 2nd October 2019. We now need to finalise details with the skatepark contractor and agree a programme of work. We are aware that the contractor is busy and has been unresponsive in the past, so this may take a while.

Relocation of CCTV Camera: The relocation and funding was agreed at the Marple Area Committee Meeting on Wednesday evening, 25 September 2019.

It is likely that more work will need to be done on the trees, as we pointed out at the time it was first done. This can be properly assessed after camera relocation.

The group's disappointment at how long it has taken to get the camera relocation agreed was put on record. We consider that if the camera had been relocated a reasonable time after we requested it in December 2017, then its presence would by now be well established and it should be helping to deter ASB at the skatepark.

Complaint about Skatepark: As discussed last month, a resident felt it necessary to contact the Council, Friends of the Park and MP William Wragg about anti-social behaviour at the skatepark over the summer. The resident's concerns included mess, vandalism and noise at the skatepark and the matter was also raised as a public question at Marple Area Committee on Wednesday 25 September 2019.

A meeting was convened between Local Councillors, Council Officers and Friends of the Park on 30 September, when a number of actions were discussed and agreed. A reply was then issued to the resident by Marple AC that was supplemented with further correspondence on behalf of Friends of the Park.

A record of all related correspondence was shared with attendees prior to the meeting and was discussed at length. The group is satisfied with responses and actions agreed and believe time now needs to be allowed for them to have an impact.

Cllr Allan has offered to meet with the resident but this has not yet taken place.

A draft announcement regarding the phase II approval was discussed and it was agreed this would include a statement referring to the ASB issues. Mark will look at incorporating suggestions from Cllr Allan and other attendees before publishing.

Incorporation of a sign at the skatepark was suggested but needs further discussion.

Complaints Policy: It was agreed that a draft a complaints policy would be prepared with the aim of providing guidelines for anyone choosing to complain to the group about the park and its management in the future. The objective of this policy will be to make it clear that we are volunteers and management / policing of the park is the responsibility of the council and other authorities. It will direct any concerns to the council and / or local councillors and explain that we will work with them (should they ask) to help resolve any issues but we will not respond to complaints directly.

3.2 Bowling Green and Buildings

Pavilion Art Project: Tracy has apologised for delays and explained that she has been very busy over the last few weeks. However, good progress has been made over the last few days and a draft grant application is now taking shape.

Tracy proposes to apply to the Community Lottery Fund, so there shouldn't be a clash with the tree sculpture project, which is also coming together quickly now.

Painting of Pavilion Building: Hopefully to be done as a winter project to clean-up and paint under the canopy so it is ready for the art project to proceed.

Fitting out of Mess Room: Mark met with Wayne and Stuart from Stockport Homes on 26 September to revisit the quote for the new kitchen layout as it had expired. Wayne chased this up recently and we are still waiting for Stockport Homes to submit the new quote. (*PMN: it has been received and it is unchanged at £1,600+VAT*).

Replacement of the electric wall heater with an over-door heater on safety grounds was discussed and Stockport Homes will provide Greenspace with a quote for this too.

Wayne also suggested that he could provide emulsion and floor paint if the group would be prepared to decorate the room after the above works are completed.

3.3 New Sculpture Project

We were recently contacted by lady called Anne-Louise Black, who has set-up as a freelance fund-raiser after working for a number of different charities. Anne-Louise is seeking to build up her portfolio of work by helping some local groups and recently met with Mark to discuss opportunities with us and also with other groups.

Initially, Anne-Louise has agreed to help with the Tree Sculpture Project and provided two options: to give free support to the group but for us to manage the project, or to project manage it on our behalf and include her fees in a grant application.

Mark asked Anne-Louise to put together a proposal for the second option and this was shared with attendees in advance of the meeting. The proposal outlines a project that would involve each of our local primary schools in the creation of a series of six sculptures (one per school) to be located throughout the park and to form a trail. Initial ideas include the sculptures being carved in the park and pupils being able to come and watch theirs take shape. A trail leaflet is also proposed.

Anne-Louise has made a great start by contacting several tree sculptors and obtaining provisional prices. The project would probably involve a grant application of around £10,000 with a match-funding of approximately £1,500 from other sources.

The group felt that the proposal is very exciting and has the potential to create a wonderful replacement after the loss of "Midnight". It was agreed to proceed.

3.4 Wild-flower Meadow / Lock 11 Compound

The day after confirming with the council and CRT that we would take the seed already ordered plus a contribution of £1,000 to continue this as a local community project, the landscaper our new volunteer was expecting to do the work pulled out. Sadly this left the volunteer feeling there was little option but to withdraw too.

Discussions have taken place with Wayne Bardsley and we have agreed to continue the project with his support. Wayne has obtained a quote of £750 from a council approved contractor to do the preparatory works but the contractor was proposing to spray a "foliar application of glyphosate herbicide" (Roundup) to the regrown grass.

After research online Mark asked Wayne to put on this hold until it could be discussed with the group. The chemical proposed is currently legal in the UK and EU but there is a lot of concern about its use and in the longer term a ban looks likely. There is a

potential risk to children and pets coming into contact with it before it is dry, which we think is a high risk in our park, especially on such a large area where dogs are walked.

After discussion it was agreed that we do not want the area to be sprayed. The consensus was that that is a non-environmentally friendly way to go about creating a wild-flower meadow and not in keeping with the group's ideals and aspirations.

Mark will ask Wayne to discuss other methods with the contractor.

Better news is that the trees for the woodland area have been ordered (for delivery in November with the extra trees for the skatepark area). These include 3 Silver Birch, 3 Rowan and 3 Apple of 2.5m to 3m in height, plus whips of hazel, alder and elder etc.

3.5 Possible Play Area Improvements

Our aspiration is to merge the existing Infants and Junior Play areas into a single larger facility and to create a new and exciting play area for the future.

Richard Booker has said that he has a number of big projects being delivered over the next 8 weeks but will then be able to put in some time to develop ideas with us.

In the meantime, in response to discussions about water-play, Richard has suggested taking a look at Heaton Park in Manchester. Apparently this has an innovative landscape feature that channels and temporarily holds rainwater for children's play.

3.6 Benches

Park benches general: Bernard and Mark relaid the slabs in front of one of the benches along the main path during the task day on 14 September.

A while ago we asked Wayne to look at replacing the base under the bench on the main path near to the Boules Court, which has cracked badly even though it is not that old. Mark will chase it up as we haven't heard any news on this yet.

Danny Winter bench: The new setts in front of Danny's bench have been completed and we're very pleased with the result. We await an invoice from the council for the agreed sum of £741. Danny's family made a contribution of £400 via Local Giving.

Town Centre benches: All Town Centre benches have now been retreated. We have also set-up a "Happy to Chat Bench" on Derby Way.

Policy for replacement of existing commemorative benches:

Notices have been on the benches for 12 months, so we have now satisfied the council's policy to spend 12 months seeking the original donors.

During this time we have been contacted by one original donor family and 2 or 3 other people who are interested in funding future opportunities to replace them.

Mark will write to the council to confirm the situation and make it clear that we plan to replace the benches when appropriate without further notices. We will also make it clear that we do not plan to replace them until it is no longer practical to maintain and repair them, so it may be several years before replacement is necessary.

3.7 Park Buildings and General Infrastructure

Info board near to Lock 10: Mark will look at creating replacement artwork as soon as time allows. Mick and Lorraine tried cleaning the display panels during a recent task day but with limited success as the protective surface on several of them is starting to lift, allowing water and dirt to ingress.

Breathing Places Reading Circle: We have been advised that the resurfacing work will be started mid-this week. We are very disappointed at how long it has taken to reach this point as it is now 13 weeks late compared to the original commitment. *(PMN: The work has not been done that well and Wayne is now talking to TLC.)*

Painting of Infants Play area fence: Further work postponed until 2010.

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, as described in the Marple Neighbourhood Plan and announced at Marple AC.

Possible Water Fountain / Bottle Station:

Unfortunately there has been no time to pursue this further yet. We have supply and fit costs to install on the outside wall of the gents' toilets in the park as follows:

Option 1: £789+VAT for the combined drinking fountain / bottle filler unit.

Option 2: £1,015+VAT for the separate drinking fountain and bottle filler units.

These prices are within our budget and we would like to go ahead. However, as explained in some detail at previous meetings, the council has raised lots of issues and concerns and they are not supportive at the moment.

Cllr. Allan has been trying to get information from Bury Council on how they managed to overcome such issues but so far has only received generic links to news articles that we have already seen and are not of much help.

Mark has managed to obtain some information from the Regional Rep of Refill.org that maybe more helpful, although it doesn't cover everything. He would now like to talk with Cllr. Allan to consider the best way forward to make progress on this project.

3.8 World War I Centenary Commemorations

Announcements: Arthur Gordon Cresswell was announced online and via social media this morning, as today is the 100th anniversary of his death. The final man, John Hampson, is due to be announced on 23 November 2019.

At this point the project will be fully completed, apart from any future maintenance work that the timeline may require from time-to-time.

Remembrance: Mark has written to the council asking if they will be providing their normal support to the Remembrance Service in the park on Sunday 10 November and requesting the cooperation of the TLC Team to ensure the park looks its best.

Laying of wreath: The group's wreath was collected on Saturday 12th October. The cost of £25 was paid from public donations made during our task days.

It was agreed that Terry would lay the wreath on behalf of the group unless another volunteer wished to take a turn doing this.

Street Poppies: we will fix to lampposts for the Poppy Appeal again this year.

3.7 Task Days

Last Task Day – 14, 28 September & 12 October 2019:

Three task days held since the last meeting: a mixed bag of weather, we watched the ToB in brilliant sunshine on 14 September and were nearly rained-off on 28th.

Ad-hoc Task Days: Town Centre benches were treated on 10th & 13th September.

Next Task Days – 26 October & 9 November 2019:

Parking has been approved for October. Email reminders will be sent out when due.

Focus will be getting ready for Remembrance.

Task Day Registration / Risk Assessments:

Task Day registration is covered until 31 December 2019.

Scheduled Task Days in 2019: 26 October, 9, 30 November & 28 December.

Training: Awaiting new dates from Wayne Bardsley.

Tools / Power Tools: Our Pullerbear was demonstrated to Friends of Oldknow's Lime Kilns on Saturday 5th October and it looks like they will be buying their own.

4.0 Funding - Status of Funds

Current balances Barclays: £9,759.06 + Santander: £1,135.00 = £10,894.06.

Committed funds are £1,000 for the Reading Circle, £741 for Setts in front of Danny Winter's bench, £2,500 ring-fenced for the Skatepark, plus £720 advance payments / reserves in the 50-50 Club account. Leaving a working balance of £5,934.

Income to Barclays A/C since the last meeting:

£958.80 Local Giving – this includes (less fees) £250 from Marple Beer Run, £400 Danny Winter family, £200 donated by Mr A. Whitfield and a £60 anonymous donation on top of normal regular payments and Gift-Aid.

£30.00 Brass Bands of Marple (Garden Maintenance).

£125.00 48 Kitchen & Bar: 2nd instalment of annual sponsorship.

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

£225.00 50-50 Club payments during September.

£60.00 50-50 Club payments during October.

£405.00 50-50 Club advanced annual payments.

Expenditure from Barclays A/C since the last meeting:

£60.25 Paint, brushes, tape and materials purchased by Patrick.

Expenditure from Santander A/C since the last meeting:

£45.00 HB printing – 50-50 club promotional flyers.

50-50 Club Draw for September 2019

By end of September number 1 – 57 were registered but 6 of these (27, 35, 37, 45, 47 & 51) were unpaid and were therefore omitted from the draw. The draw was made using a random no. generator App at the meeting. The button was pressed by Secretary Micaela. The first draw winners were:

1st Prize: £64 - No. 016 Mrs Elaine Knight.

2nd Prize: £38 - No. 005 Mick Thompson.

3rd Prize: £25 - No. 048 Kevin Murray.

Total income was £255 with £127 in prizes and £128 allocated to Park Funds.

Prize cheques will be written and signed tomorrow by Mark and Micaela.

The Lottery Return was signed at the meeting and will be submitted to SMBC. It shows expenses of £45 (Flyers) and £40 (Licence fee) covered by existing funds.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Pirate Ship

It was realised during the last task day that the drum-sticks have been missing from the Pirate Ship for some time. This has been taken up with Greenspace and they have ordered replacement parts that will be fitted once available.

5.2 St Martin's Christmas Tree Festival

Gill, Larry and Micaela to discuss if we will enter a tree this year.

5.3 Possible Marple College adoption of flowerbed

Mark has met with a tutor from Marple College who is interested in her class of young people with learning difficulties getting involved in growing plants for the park. It was suggested that the college could adopt the bed that is currently allocated to the Allotment Association. Joe from the Allotment team was on site and agreed to this.

This bed is currently "on hold" as it is in the path of the access required for the skatepark phase II works. It was explained to the tutor that planting could only take place after the skatepark works are finished but growing of plants could start earlier.

Another meeting is awaited to advise the tutor on the best plants to grow.

6.0 Next Meeting

Monday 11 November 2019 at 6.15pm in Marple Library.

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

11 November, 9 December, 13 January 2020, 10 February, 9 March, 13 April, 11 May, 8 June 2020.