

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Tuesday 20th May 2008
Marple Social & Forces Club**

Present: Dave Burrows, Micaela Wood, Jay Havoleana, Patrick O'Herlihy, Chris Armitt, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Bob Wilson, Peter Bardsley.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising.

3.1 BBC Breathing Places Reading Area

Sculpture

Copies of Andrew Frost's new design and photographs of the tree he proposed to use for the sculpture in the Breathing Places area were distributed with the agenda. Mark has given him the go ahead to proceed with this design.

Dave advised that Adrian has also spoken to him and Andrew has said that the work will be complete by the end of May and the replacement apple sculpture will be delivered at the same time.

Under-storey Planting & Wildflowers

Jacky Budd has met with Bob in the park to discuss planting and it is hoped that her proposals will be available for discussion at the next meeting on 9th June.

Hedgehog Boxes

Terry has completed the construction of two additional hedgehog boxes using the one purchased as a template. All three can now be installed during the next task day on 31st May.

Micaela will ask Terry to provide an invoice from the David Lewis Centre for the agreed sum of £30.

Wildlife Habitats

The insect study centre was installed on one of the more remote nature posts during the last task day. It has survived so far and it is hoped it will remain intact. We will keep a check on it and will consider installing another if sufficient funds are available.

Breathing Places Plaque

The plaque was fitted on the side of the library during the last task day and looks great. It works well by forming a link between the library and the Breathing Places area.

Interpretation

Ideas for the interpretation were discussed. It will be the same size as the existing boards for the war memorial and the canal.

The design will need to incorporate the Breathing Places logos and the Friends of the Park logo and explain the inspiration and purpose of the reading and woodland area. It should also feature the Scouting Fleur-de-lis and explain the Beavers involvement in planting the hedgerows, perhaps with a photograph of them doing this, and an acknowledgement of the centenary of Marple Scouting in 2008.

Other ideas were to depict the flora and fauna that it is hoped will be encouraged into the woodland, including birds, bats, insects and plants that one might hope to see.

Jay will develop some proposals based on these suggestions.

Proposals for spending surplus funds

It is hoped that proposals for spending the surplus of approximately £630 can be firmed up and agreed with the BLF after Jacky Budd provides her ideas for planting schemes at the next meeting.

3.2 Basketball Court Fence

This remains on hold until the scheme that received planning permission can be redeveloped to include 3m high fencing on both sides and to incorporate a chicane opening with steps down to the lower level. An amendment to the planning permission then needs to be sought and a new price obtained.

There are currently funds of £3,752 available in commuted sums that could pay for the fence, subject to Area Committee approval.

Mark has made further enquiries with Rebecca recently and she is still unable to advise when this project can be dealt with by the Landscape Dept. Mark asked Dave if he could follow this up with Rebecca to determine how it can be moved forward to a reasonable timescale.

3.3 Beech Tree Sculpture

The sculpture was successfully jet-washed clean during the last task day, thanks to equipment provided by Steve Condliffe. The group has also purchased the decking oil recommended by Andrew Frost.

Bob had hoped to apply the decking oil himself after the sculpture had dried out but unfortunately he has had a difficult time recently and has not yet been able to do this. It was agreed that this could be done during the next task day if Bob had still not been able to do it.

Dave asked if the group wanted to install the ground sculptures during a task day or if the Parks Team should do it. It was agreed that this should

be done however Adrian thinks is best. The group will be happy to be involved if Adrian feels it is a suitable task for them but if it is better suited to the Park Team doing it on their own that will be fine.

It was suggested that the installation could be done in two parts – the ones around the tree sculpture are currently available and could be done immediately. The pear and the apple will be installed in the infants play area and could be done separately once the replacement apple is available (at the end of May).

3.4 Infants Play Area

Replacement of the graphics and the blue outline to the former boating pond perimeter remain outstanding. Dave will follow this up with Rebecca as Bob was told that it would be “within a few weeks” before the last meeting.

It was thought that the fence has now been repainted but Dave will check to confirm it has been done satisfactorily.

Micaela pointed out that the playground sign above the entrance was in desperate need of re-painting or replacement. It was agreed that the group would investigate if it could be removed for re-painting off site during the next task day.

Gareth of Playground Maintenance has investigated the sticking roundabout with the company rep and reports that its performance is now improved, however, there is gravel in the runners that is still causing problems. As the installation is under warranty Gareth has advised that Rebecca needs to take it up with the contractor. Dave will therefore follow this up with her.

3.5 Boules Court.

Mark was expecting to receive the petition raised by the Senior Citizens before the meeting but it has not arrived yet. He will pass a copy on to Dave once available. *(Post meeting note: Petition with 278 signatures now received.)*

Mark reported that he has made an application to the O2 Community Scheme on 15th May for match funding of £1,000. A 28-day turnaround is advised in the application details so we should learn if it has been successful around the 12th June. *(Post meeting note: Mark has since received a call from an administrator of the O2 scheme who advised that our application has been short-listed and we will learn the outcome during the first week in June.)*

It was agreed that if this was successful the Friends were in a position to fund the balance of approximately £1,500. However, once we know the outcome Mark will also ask Patrick to discuss funding of this project with the Marple Business Forum.

3.6 Task Days

Last Day – 26 April

Another good turnout saw the Breathing Places plaque and Insect Study Centre fitted, the sculpture jet-washed, willows planted, paths edged and flower beds weeded.

The Youth Offending Team were also in attendance and several youngsters carried out pruning to the ivy around the public toilet block.

Next Task Day – 31 May

Proposed tasks include:

Oiling of tree sculpture, installation of hedgehog boxes and removal of playground sign for re-painting. Possibly installation of ground sculpture if Adrian thinks it is a suitable task. Other tasks will be needed if there is a good turnout or if the YOT are in attendance.

Jay asked Dave if he could provide dead tree branches and logs for the Breathing Places area. These can be used to cover the hedgehog boxes as well as to encourage insects that will live in the decaying wood.

Jet washing of the War Memorial was discussed but Dave was reluctant for the group to undertake this as he has a budget for maintenance of memorials. Mark asked if Dave could arrange for cleaning through this budget but advised that the group would be happy to undertake this task if that was not possible.

Mark will submit the list of registrations for free parking.

3.7 Fundraising Activities

The special showing of the Railway Children at the Regent Cinema on Sunday 27th April proved to be a success, raising a total of £442 to be spent in the park. The group thanked Micaela for her efforts in organising this and acknowledged that it had been a rather stressful time for her due to the uncertainty of sales and difficulties dealing with the cinema.

Mark summarised the finances as follows:

Ticket and raffle sales	+£660
Hire of film	-£120
Cost of ushers	-£60
Cost of raffle prizes	-£38
Profit	+£442

Micaela advised that the winners of the raffle had donated two of the prizes back to the group. These are a print signed by Jenny Agutter and a copy of the illustrated Railway Children book, which can be used to raise further funds.

The next fund raising opportunity is the Carnival. Micaela will consider if she wants to organise a tombola again, however, it was stressed that she should not feel obliged to do so. The Marple Website will have a stall for the Iron Bridge as usual and there will be space for the Friends Group if it is required.

3.8 Park Cottage

Dave advised that the council's estates team are still considering the bands' proposals. Mark asked how this can be speeded up and Dave advised that if he received an email enquiry from Sue Emery he would be able to use this to request an update from estates.

3.9 Pets' Memorial

Photos of the Pets' Memorial in Gatley Carrs Park were passed round. It is basically a wooden post to which people can fit small brass plates to commemorate the passing of their pets. The brass plates are purchased from the Timpson's shop nearby and in some cases indicate that the pet's ashes have been scattered in the park.

It was agreed that this was quite a nice idea but that it would be more suited to Brabyns Park, perhaps near to the pets' graveyard area. Mark will pass on the details to the Friends of Brabyns Park and they can pursue it further if they wish.

3.10 Lock 17

As there appears to have been no progress yet with Cllr Craig Wright's efforts to obtain suitable stone kerbs from the ECO Centre it was agreed that summer planting of the display should not be delayed. Dave will therefore go ahead as scheduled and the raising of the stonework can hopefully be tackled in September.

Mark advised that he and Peter now hoped to move forward on the dedication plaque to Gordon Mills.

3.11 Park Leaflet

Dave advised that on further investigation it had been learnt that there is only one box of park leaflets left and it would be possible to make amendments to the leaflet details before it is reprinted.

As there are a large number of changes and new features in the park since the leaflet was produced the group would like to do this. However, it was agreed to await the outcome of the efforts to fund the Boules Court and the situation will be reviewed in a month or two's time.

3.12 Status of Funds

Income paid into the bank since the last meeting includes £562 from the Railway Children (£442 profit + £120 covering film hire that was paid by cheque) and football competition prizes totaling £219.

Expenditure has been £52 on the decking oil, buckets and brushes for the tree sculpture, plus security screws for the Insect Study Center.

Current bank balance:	£6,619	
Committed Funds:	£3,913	
Breathing Places		£3,860
Sundial & Shuttle panels		£53
Working balance:	£2,335	

4.0 Monthly Park Report

In Bob's absence, Dave advised the following:

The log seat near the entrance has been jet-washed and looks much better. It was agreed that the addition of drainage holes to prevent water collecting on the seat would be beneficial and Dave will look into providing this.

The Green Flag Award judging had taken place at very short notice yesterday (Monday 19th May). Dave felt it went well and is hopeful that Green Flag status will be retained.

Work has begun on the wheelchair access pathway to the bowling green.

Five drainage grids in the park have been reconstructed.

5.0 Any Other Business

5.1 Garth Road Entrance

Patrick raised the issue of the fence that has been broken through near to Garth Road. This opening is well used and Patrick suggested that rather than repair the fence completely a properly formed opening be incorporated that would allow people through but prevent vehicular access. It was agreed to take a look at this during the next task day, as many present were not familiar with the area in question.

5.2 Paul Howard 30th Anniversary

Suggestions have been made for improvements in the park to Paul Howard, including the Boules Court and fitness equipment. Also suggested is a memorial to Oldknow but not necessarily in the park. Suggestions from other groups include a community notice board and signs at Middlewood Way. The consultation process is still underway.

5.3 Etherow Owl

Micaela raised the matter of the poor condition of the Etherow Owl and wondered if the park had a Friends Group that could be encouraged to maintain it in the way we had with ours. It was agreed it would be quite a difficult task, as scaffolding would probably be needed.

Patrick advised that he was involved with the development of Compstall Mill buildings and was hoping to get the developer to contribute toward maintenance of the sculpture in the future.

6.0 Date of next Meeting

Monday 9 June 2008 at 6pm in Marple Library.

Using the Social & Forces Club as a venue for today's meeting had been quite successful, with a later start being more suitable for some members and without the pressure to finish by a certain time because the library is closing. The group will consider at the next meeting already booked at the library whether to make better use of the SFC facilities.

List of reminders:

Write to Wyevale Garden Centre regarding sponsorship
Outdoor Fitness Equipment