

Friends of Marple Memorial Park AGM
Monday 18th May 2009
Marple Library

Present: Micaela Wood, Bob Wilson, Adrian Ellis, Patrick O'Herlihy, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Sandra Ellis, Jonathan Long.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting (AGM): Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising.

3.1 Basketball Court

A corrected invoice for the group's contribution of £191.32 towards the basketball court fence has been received and paid.

Rebecca has provided an indicative price of £3,500 for resurfacing the court if only the top layer is replaced and £250 for marking out. It would be significantly more expensive to fully replace the existing tarmac, although in the longer term this would be the best option.

Jonathan has looked into the possibility of the council funding the resurfacing of the court and Adrian advised that an evaluation is currently underway for borough-wide refurbishment of tennis / basketball courts. There should be some feedback from this soon.

Patrick advised that feedback from the users of the court has been very positive and it is being used much more extensively now.

3.2 Infants Play Area
Replacement Graphics

The replacement graphics have now been completed. Unfortunately the damage to the surface caused by removing the original ones is rather unsightly but is something we will have to live with for the time being.

Roundabout

Adrian explained the latest situation regarding the roundabout reported to him by Gareth of Playground Maintenance:

Playdale claim to have done all they can and the roundabout is performing to tolerances that were in place at the time of installation. Recommendations have since changed and it does not meet the latest guidelines but Playdale say they are unable to do anything about this.

Gareth has investigated replacing the Playdale running mechanism with a spindle and bearing system but although this could be done the contractor is not happy doing it to equipment that is not their own.

The alternative option proposed is to commission a complete new platform and bearing assembly that utilises the existing foundations.

Gareth will advise when an order has been placed for this but warned that the contractor's workload is such that it would probably be autumn before the new equipment is ready for installation.

He also advised that as a result of this issue and problems at a couple of other sites the council is no longer actively using Playdale as a playground equipment supplier.

The group are disappointed at Playdale's failure to resolve the roundabout's performance issues in a satisfactory manner but are grateful for Gareth's determination to find a solution and look forward to it being resolved by the autumn.

3.3 Apple & Pear Sculptures

A location for the Apple and Pear sculptures has been agreed near to the Breathing Places area at the rear of the library and Adrian hopes to have them installed by early June.

3.4 Boules Court.

Commemorative Seating

The three commemorative seats have now been installed. They look excellent and feedback from Mr. Louth, Gladys Romm and Marple Civic Society has been very positive.

It had been expected that the Park's Team would have to charge for the installation of the seats but following his attendance at the last meeting Jonathan decided to waive this in acknowledgement of the efforts that the group has made on this and other projects in the park.

The group expressed their appreciation of Jonathan's gesture and also thanked Adrian and his colleagues for getting the seats installed to the timescales requested.

Marple Business Forum used the court for a social event on Monday 27 April. This was well attended and enjoyed by the participants. Some photographs taken at this event have been added to the Friends' web site and to the O2 "It's your Community" site.

Interpretation

Unfortunately Mark has not had time to develop proposals for the interpretation but hopes to do so by the next meeting in July. He will also investigate if it will be possible to seek a second grant from O2 to cover the cost of this.

Compaction

Nothing discussed.

3.5 War Memorial Memorial Rockery Scheme

Bob reported that some of the ornamental grasses and several of the smaller specimens planted recently have not survived.

A site visit took place during the meeting and it was agreed that the plants should be replaced. The group asked Bob to speak to Jacky Budd and come up with a list of recommended plants and associated costs.

Micaela reiterated the earlier suggestion that it would be fitting to include poppies in the planting scheme and Bob will discuss this with Jacky when he speaks to her about replacement plants.

During the site visit the idea of installing a low chain link fence around the memorial beds was reviewed. It was agreed that a suitable fence installed along the hard-edged tarmac borders, rather than the grassed borders, would be a good enhancement. This will be looked at further.

Addition of Danny Winter's name to Memorial

Mark passed round a copy of the council notice advising that the name of Corporal Danny Winter, the Royal Marine from Marple killed in Afghanistan earlier this year, was to be added to the War Memorial. The group felt that it is the right thing to do and agreed to formally record their support for this in the minutes of the meeting.

Adrian advised that the family were also proposing to install a granite bench in the park near to the memorial in memory of Cpl Winter. The group also recorded their support for this.

It was noted during the site visit that the last name to be added to the Memorial in 1995, Charles Ingham, was in need of being re-in-filled with paint and it was hoped that this could be done at the same time as Cpl Winter's name was added. Adrian will mention this to Dave Burrows.

3.6 Improvements to the Park Entrance

Adrian confirmed that Jonathan was looking at this and wanted to get an idea of what is growing already before developing plans for planting up in the autumn.

Mark confirmed that B&Q are still running a scheme called "One Planet Living Grant" that could possibly be helpful for this project but more likely for something else in the park. The scheme provides between £50 & £250 worth of B&Q materials (at retail prices) for projects that are sustainable and meet the criteria of saving energy, conserving nature, supporting local culture and heritage or "growing your own".

Applications can be made between February and September 2009 and We would need to develop a list of B&Q materials up to the value of £250 and then write to our local B&Q with the details of our project.

Patrick suggested that the local primary schools could be involved in the development of a project like this and it was agreed that he should approach them through his contacts to see if they would be interested.

3.6 Task Days

Last Task Day – 28 April

The tree sculpture was jet washed and lots of weeding and hoeing of flower and shrub beds completed.

Terry feels that now the tree sculpture has been cleaned again it should be left to breath for the summer before having further coats of preservative applied. It was agreed to follow this advice and keep an eye on what happens to the fungal growth with a view to applying new preservative during the September task day.

Next Task Day – 30 May

It is proposed to rub down and re-paint the Coronation Bench during the next task day. Mark agreed to purchase paint, brushes, sandpaper and groundsheets using the group's funds.

Bob and Adrian will provide metal posts and plastic fencing so that the bench can be cordoned off after it is painted.

Mark passed over some posters to Micaela for the local shops and has submitted the request for free parking and issued the email notification.

3.7 Bird Survey

Nothing new from Ian Hilton, who has been away in Australia.

3.8 Park Cottage/ Band Room Proposals

The bands now have agreement in principle to their proposals and have reached the stage where they need to obtain planning permission and funding, which is dependent on their architect completing the plans.

Patrick advised that there was a potential buyer for the land near the cinema owned by the bands, the sale of which would help to fund the project, and generally things were looking quite positive.

4.0 Fundraising Activities

There has not been much progress in engaging the Parks Development Team yet due to their heavy involvement with the Playbuilder project but Adrian has asked Richard Booker for support on identifying sources of funding and help for Bob to identify the sort of improvements to the Skate Park area that users would like to see.

It is hoped that this can be progressed further before the next meeting in July.

4.1 Status of Funds

Current bank balance: £1,917

Committed Funds: £53 (Interpretation)

Working balance: £1,864

Expenditure since the last meeting in March is £915 on the Breathing Places Interpretation Panel, £2,051 on the three commemorative benches and £191 on the contribution towards the basketball fence.

Income in the same period is £52 from football competition donations.

5.0 Monthly Park Report

Bob advised that his main area of work has been mulching of shrub beds, making room for new subjects and general maintenance. He would like to relocate as many of the Polyanthas as possible before the summer bedding is planted and it was agreed that some of this could be tackled during the next task day if there were enough people.

There have been structural problems with one of the lampposts near to the ladies toilets when the lamp head came off. This has been rectified and the other lampposts checked for the same issue.

The lamppost next to the water hydrant near the tree sculpture was found to be loose in its foundation during the last task day and this has been reported and should be rectified soon.

Bob has been asked to give a presentation about the park to the Romiley Horticultural Society on 15 September and Mark agreed to help with photographs of the park and laptop and projector.

6.0 Any Other Business

6.1 Letter to Wyevale Garden Centre

There has been no response from Wyevale to our letter requesting support and in view of the current financial climate it was not felt worth pursuing this any further at the present time.

6.2 Picnic Benches

Mark advised that there had been a suggestion via the Marple Website Forum that the park needs more picnic benches. This was debated and there were mixed opinions but during the walk around the park after the meeting it was agreed that there was a suitable spot for one under the large chestnut tree near to the Skate Park. Another possible site was identified on the grassed area inside the infants play area, which could do with more seating generally as it is often very busy.

Funding will have to be identified before any further progress can be made on this.

6.3 Painting of Bowling Green Building

The suggestion that the group could re-paint the bowling green buildings was revisited. When it was last discussed it was reported that a re-paint was not due for a couple of years but it may be possible for the council to provide the paint if the Friends Group were to provide the labour. This was when Dave Burrows was in charge and Adrian agreed to discuss it with Jonathan to see what his views were on providing the paint for this to be done in September.

6.4 Senior Citizens Bench Proposal

Towards the end of last year Patrick established that the Senior Citizens were interested in funding a bench that could be sited in the shade from where the bowls could be watched but they would not be able to pay for it until this year. Patrick agreed to follow this up to establish if they were now in a position to move this forward.

6.5 Science / Children's Features

Patrick described some interesting features for children installed in Lyme Park and agreed to obtain photographs and more details for the next meeting so that their suitability for Memorial Park can be considered.

7.0 Date of next Meeting

Monday 13th July 2009 at 6pm in Marple Library.

List of reminders:

Outdoor Fitness Equipment.