

**Friends of Marple Memorial Park Meeting
Monday 10th November 2008
Marple Library**

Present: Micaela Wood, Bob Wilson, Adrian Ellis, Peter Bardsley, Cllr. Andrew Bispham, Mark Whittaker.

1.0 Apologies: Dave Burrows, Sandra Ellis.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting: Agreed.

3.0 Matters Arising.

3.1 BBC Breathing Places Reading Area

Interpretation

Rebecca has placed an order on behalf of the group with Armourseal for the interpretation board. The cost is £915 and delivery was quoted as three weeks, so it should be available soon.

Providing it arrives in time it is proposed to install the board during the November task day. Adrian confirmed that the Parks Team should be able to do this. Mark will chase the delivery with Rebecca and ask for Adrian or Bob to be contacted regarding the delivery destination.

BBC "Do One Thing" Event (Planting of Wildflowers)

The event was a success with a good turnout from the Beavers and their parents. The weather held out early on for the planting in the Breathing Places woodland but everyone got a good soaking later when planting in the boggy area where the old canal arm used to be.

An invoice for £580 for the wildflowers has been received from the council and a cheque in payment was signed during the meeting.

Outstanding Expenditure

Remaining expenditure is now just £915 for the interpretation board.

Project Completion

A project completion report must be submitted to the BLF by the 15th December 2008. If the interpretation board is installed during the next task day, it will give a couple of weeks for the report to be done.

3.2 Basketball Court Fence

Marple Area Committee has approved spending of the commuted sum of £5,530.40 on the basketball fence and Rebecca has placed an order for the fence and for the sloped path down to the teen area.

The total cost is £5,963.45. The Friends Group will make up the shortfall of £433 not covered by the commuted sum.

The group thanked Cllr. Bispham for the Area Committee's support of their proposals for the basketball fence and look forward to it being installed and enhancing the court for the people who use it.

A new page needs to be added to the group's web site about the basketball court improvements.

3.3 Infants Play Area

Replacement Graphics

An order has been placed but there is no news of when the installation work will be done yet. Mark will ask Rebecca for an update.

Playground Sign and sculptures

Attempts to obtain a firm commitment from Andrew Frost are ongoing.

Roundabout

Following a number of complaints from users of the park about the performance of the new roundabout the group carried out an inspection during the last task day on 25th October 2008.

Our inspection concluded that the roundabout is so difficult to turn that it is currently not fit for purpose. Unless it can be significantly improved, so that the age group that the play area is targeted at can properly use it, then it should be replaced with something more suitable.

Mark emailed Paul Battye of Playdale and Gareth Davies of Playground Maintenance about the group's views on 26th October. Shortly after a reply was received from Paul Battye advising that he had been asked by Gareth to deal directly with him on this matter.

No communication has been received from Gareth, so Mark requested an update in time for this meeting but received an automated message saying he was out of the office until 13th November.

Adrian and Bob advised that they understood an inspection by Playdale and Playground Maintenance has taken place and that they thought the roundabout's performance had been confirmed to be unsatisfactory. They do not know at this stage what actions have been proposed but hopefully we will learn more after Gareth returns to work on Thursday.

3.4 Boules Court.

Compaction

The compaction of the court by 'Golf Construct' has not yet been carried out. Bob is expecting them in the park to do work on the Bowling Green soon but is not sure when, so Adrian will ask Dave to provide an update.

Commemorative Seating

Mark passed round the details of the traditional "Rotherham" style seat from Broxap, which was similar in design to the Jim Heald bench. The cost of each seat is £536, plus £85 for a brass plaque rebated into the back slat of the seat. Adrian confirmed that the installation cost of £110 per seat would be unchanged, giving a total cost of £731 excluding VAT and delivery.

Broxap have indicated a delivery cost of £188 for 3 seats and if the order is placed through the council we will not have to pay the VAT.

As everyone preferred the traditional design and Dave has already confirmed that it is acceptable to him, it was decided to proceed with the Broxap "Rotherham" seat instead of the Ogilvie design used in the infants play area and originally proposed. It was agreed that the colour of the cast iron sections of the seats should be black and the group also agreed to pay the delivery charges.

As there has been no news regarding further funding support for the seating proposals it was agreed to move forward with the three offers that have been received so far, one from Marple Civic Society and two from private individuals. Mark will now approach them for the money and explain the proposed change to the more traditional seat design.

Once the money is received it is planned to ask Rebecca to place an order on our behalf with Broxap. Mark will confirm the prices with Broxap and check that Rebecca will be able to do this.

Interpretation

The group wish to install an interpretation board of similar design to the existing ones that would explain the history of Pétanque, the rules of the game and how the court was funded. It would also advise that Boules sets are available from Bob. A private donation of £250 has provisionally been offered and this may be a suitable use for it (subject to agreement) but an additional £750 will be needed before it could proceed.

3.5 War Memorial

Remembrance Service

Terry Wood laid a wreath on behalf of the group during yesterday's Remembrance Service. Ours was one of 30 laid, which was thought to be a record number.

Cllr. Bispham advised that John Haddock is moving down south to be closer to his family in the near future and would no longer be involved in ordering wreaths or play any part in organising the service. John has already provided new contacts for ordering of the wreaths but it is not known if anyone will be taking on his other duties.

Polishing of Memorial

Adrian advised that Dave has been given a price of £432 for polishing the rough sections of the memorial to make algae removal easier. Adrian also understood that the spray-on "micro algaecide" option was cheaper but did not have any details. He will ask Dave to provide an update and confirm his intentions.

Memorial Rockery Scheme

Bob advised that Jacky Budd has now visited the park and measured up so that she can develop her proposals for the beds. He also advised that Jacky will be applying for money from a fund associated with Green Flag parks to help pay for the scheme.

The group confirmed that they were keen to see the designs and costs and to be involved, especially if there were difficulties in obtaining sufficient funding. The memorial beds are one of the key features in the park and the group do not wish to see the quality compromised due to a lack of funding. Bob agreed to convey this to Jacky.

3.6 Park Leaflet

The "changed" requirements for the new park leaflet are still not clear. Bob advised that Jacky Budd was also involved in this and she had said that we should wait until there were sufficient changes in the park to make it worthwhile. There were also funding issues meaning that it could not be done until next financial year. The group felt that more than sufficient changes and improvements had been made in the park since the last leaflet was published but were happy to wait until next financial year before pursuing its re-issue.

3.7 Task Days

Last Task Day – 25 October

Wildflower planting as reported earlier.

Next Task Day – 29 November

Installation of the Breathing Places interpretation, if it arrives. Bob advised that there would be plenty of other tasks to carry out too.

Mark will submit the request for free parking.

It was agreed that there would be no task day in December and members could take a well-deserved break! The next task day after November will therefore be the last Saturday in January 2009.

3.8 Bird Survey

Nothing to report.

3.9 Park Cottage/ Band Room Proposals

A "to let" sign went up at the cottage on 27 October 2008 and the council is seeking expressions of interest from individuals and organisations with a deadline for submissions of 12 December 2008.

Mark passed around a copy of the property details published by NPS - Property Consultants, which highlight that the building cannot be used for any trade, business or manufacture. It also states that residential use will not be permitted and Stockport MBC has specified that it should be leased for community use.

Sue Emery has confirmed that the bands will be submitting their expression of interest before the deadline and we will then have to wait and see what happens next.

The Friends Group are hopeful that the Band Room proposals will be successful and wish them good luck with their submission.

4.0 Fundraising Activities

Christmas Cracker – 6 December

The organisers have confirmed that we will have two stalls back-to-back near to White's Butchers on Market Street and they will also provide a generator for lighting. The stalls are the "market stall" type that we had last year; so extra tables should not be needed. The event is scheduled to run from 10am to 3pm.

Micaela confirmed that arrangements for the tombola were going ok but we will need as much help as possible on the stall. Adrian confirmed that he could attend but unfortunately Sandra will be working that weekend.

Ring o' Bells Quiz Nights

Dates are 17 December 2008 and 7 January 2009.

4.1 Status of Funds

Income since last month includes £20.58 interest, a donation of £50 from Marple Carnival Committee and £7.39 commission from Marple Wine Club. Received today and not yet included in the figures over page are £54 in Football Competition donations and £20 donated by Bob. The latter is 50% of the fee received by Bob and his colleague Malcolm Topping for giving a presentation recently. Malcolm has donated his share of the fee to Friends of Vernon & Woodbank Parks. The group thanked Bob for this unexpected but welcome contribution.

Expenditure this month is £2,868.88 for the Boules Court. Additional expenditure due imminently includes the cheque just written for £580 for the Breathing Place wildflowers and £45 for the Coronation Bench repairs carried out by Wayne Chaisty. An invoice is still awaited from Wayne for this work.

Current bank balance:	£3,150	
Committed Funds:	£2,511	
Breathing Places		£1,980
Basketball Fence		£433
Coronation Bench Repair		£45
Sundial & Shuttle panels		£53
Working balance:	£639	

5.0 Monthly Park Report

Bob has been preparing for the top dressing on the bowling green, and is now waiting for the contractor, who is also expected to compact the Boules Court while he is in the park.

Bob has also begun replanting some of the shrubs from the War Memorial beds and working on general maintenance, especially removal of leaves.

Bob has discussed the painting of the Bowling Green Buildings with Tony Donovan and reported that re-painting is done on a 5-year cycle. It was last done approximately two years ago, so we have a while to go before it is due again. Tony has advised that it may be possible to re-paint earlier if we want to do it ourselves. The group were interested in this option but it was agreed that it was not the right time of year to undertake painting work and it would be reconsidered next year.

Bob also advised that security of the Bowling Green buildings was due to be improved, including a grill to be fitted over the window to his office.

6.0 Any Other Business

6.1 Stockport Express Feature

The Stockport Express has made an approach about running a feature on the Friends of the Park. They have picked up from the web site details of the support we have received from local businesses for our tombola and the potential feature would be linked to advertising by some of those businesses. If this were to go ahead a portion of the proceeds from the advertising would be donated to the group. Mark is meeting with the paper's reporter next Monday to discuss this further.

6.2 Christmas Dinner

Micaela has paid the deposits for the Christmas dinner at the Sportsman on 13th December and menus have been distributed. Selections need to be made and balances paid by the next task day on 29 November.

There are 12 people attending in total and Terry is looking into arranging a mini-bus from 1991.

7.0 Date of next Meeting

Monday 8th December 2008 at 6pm in Marple Library.

List of reminders:

Outdoor Fitness Equipment.

Letter to Wyevale.

Re-painting of Coronation Bench.

Senior Citizens bench proposal.

Re-painting of Bowling Green buildings.