



## GREEN FLAG AWARD FOR 2004/5

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### Useful Park Contacts:

- **Friends of Marple Memorial Park :**  
0161 427 1861
- **Marple Bowling Club :**  
0161 429 0121
- **Marple Library :**  
0161 427 3236
- **Marple Clinic :**  
0161 427 1806
- **Marple Scouts :**  
0161 427 2598
- **Senior Citizen's Hall:**  
0161 427 3632
- **Police:**  
**Emergency :** 999  
**Non Emergency :**  
0161 872 5050
- **SMBC :** 0161 474 4415
- **The Marple Website:**  
www.marple-uk.com



**Green Flag hoisting ceremony in December 2004**

The Friends of Marple Memorial Park were delighted to join The Mayor and Mayoress of Stockport, the Leader of Stockport Council and members of the SMBC Parks and Recreation Team to celebrate the Green Flag Award at a flag hoisting ceremony on 2nd December 2004.

The Green Flag Award is the national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales. The award scheme began in 1996 as a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country. Awards are given on an annual basis and winners must apply each year to renew their Green Flag status. The Council first applied for Green Flag status for Memorial Park in June 2003 but the application nar-

rowly failed. The judges never give specific reasons why a park has passed or failed but the weaknesses identified during the inspection included:

- The lack of signage at major entrances
- The junior play area
- The poor quality of several paths
- The lack of a "Friends" of the park group
- No on-site recycling

The entrance from Stockport Road, which was undergoing major reconstruction at the time of the judges visit, was also highlighted as a weakness.

In the year that followed the staff from Parks and Recreation tackled

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## COMMUNITY PARKS OFFICER



**Bob Wilson**

Hello, my name is Bob Wilson and I've been appointed as your Community Parks Officer for Marple Memorial Park.

I'm responsible for the day to day management and maintenance of the park and my duties include working with groups to improve the park's horticultural features, to carry out the planning and day to day grounds maintenance operations within the area team and to improve the cleanliness, safety and security of the park and its facilities.

I also provide support at task days and events, to local education establishments, to the Friends of Marple Memorial Park and I respond to enquiries from users of the park.

I'm in and around the park most days on Monday to Friday and I'd be delighted if you would approach me to discuss any issues about the park that concern you.

*"May the Friends of the Marple Memorial Park long continue to thrive and prosper!"*

**Councillor  
Mark Hunter  
May 2005**

## GREEN FLAG AWARD FOR MARPLE MEMORIAL PARK.....CONTINUED

this list with enthusiasm and determination.

The new entrance at Stockport Road was completed in November 2003 and shortly after, in December, the Friends group was formed. By the time of the judging for the 2004/5 Green Flag Awards the Parks and Recreation staff, in conjunction with the Friends, had erected new signage at the entrances to the park, installed new bowling green boards, planted hundreds of wild flowers and bulbs and commenced on-site recycling by composting leaves and waste from the park.

It was a long wait from the judging in June 2004 until the awards were announced in November but everyone was pleased to learn that their efforts had been worthwhile and this time the application had been successful.

Obviously everyone involved is now keen to retain the park's

Green Flag status for a further year and the improvements have continued unabated with new lighting, new paths and resurfacing, speed ramps on the entrance road and renewed lines on the road and car park. In addition, a five-a-side goal has been installed, soon to be followed by new bins and two new picnic tables. The inspection for 2005 took place on 27th May and the award ceremony will be held much sooner this year —on 28th July. For the future, substantial funding has been jointly secured by the Friends and the Council for a new children's play area and they are looking forward to working together to tackle this, the last of the weaknesses identified in the 2003 inspection, before moving on to new improvements in the park and hopefully securing Green Flag status for many more years to come.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FRIENDS FROM THE LEADER OF STOCKPORT COUNCIL

I am delighted to have the opportunity of congratulating all involved in the work that led to this tremendous achievement. The Green Flag award for Marple Memorial Park is a well-earned honour and a very public acknowledgement of all the hard work that has gone in to this beautiful park over many years. Local councillors have been consistent supporters of "Friends of Parks" groups, believing they have an important role to play in ensuring that parks remain attractive amenities for all to enjoy. That's why we were particularly pleased to hear that the Memorial Park now has its own thriving "Friends of the Park" group. Since its formation eighteen months ago, the group has gone from strength to

strength and - under Peter Clarke's chairmanship - has made a real difference by working with the council to look after and enhance the park. The Friends of Marple Memorial Park group deserve our thanks for being prepared to get involved and do their bit, and I was particularly pleased that so many were able to join us for the Green Flag award ceremony. May the Friends of the Marple Memorial Park long continue to thrive and prosper!

**Cllr. Mark Hunter**  
Leader of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council  
Town Hall, Stockport SK1 3XE

*To learn more about the Green Flag Award*

*Scheme visit:*

[www.greenflagaward.org.uk](http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk)



# GRANT SCHEME IMPROVES 'LIVING SPACE'

The Friends of Marple Memorial Park is one of the lucky community groups to benefit from a £30 million Government grant scheme to help local people improve their local environment. Funded by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister **Living Spaces** provides funds and support to help people make the most of open spaces in their neighbourhood. The scheme is enabling community groups across England to improve and create a whole range of spaces from play areas, community gardens, local parks and city farms to ponds, kick-about areas, squares and village greens.

The Friends of Marple Memorial Park are pleased to announce that they have been awarded a grant to help replace the existing junior play area in the park, which has been past its best for many years and was cited by the judges as one of the weaknesses when the park failed to win a Green Flag Award at the first attempt in 2003.

In January 2004, the newly formed Friends Group was advised that there was £25,000 in commuted sums available from within the Council's own budget to improve the junior play equipment. It was also identified that **Living Spaces** was a potential source of match funding for this



type of project and an application was submitted by the Friends in March 2004. In the summer of 2004 members of the Friends and the Council met with a Living Spaces enabler to review their application and were advised that the scheme was to be recommended for approval. By the autumn of the same year it was confirmed that the application was indeed successful and a grant of £25,000 was

awarded, matching the funds provided by the Council and taking the total available to improve the play area to £50,000.

In January 2005 a public consultation day was held in Marple Library, Consultation packs were sent out to local schools and an on-line survey set up on the Marple Website. The purpose of all these was to determine the sort of play equipment that was preferred by the local people who would be using the facilities the most.

An excellent response was received from within the community and during February and March a landscape architect was engaged to develop a series of schemes based on the results of the consultation process. Several playground equipment manufacturers then submitted designs based on these schemes and a further consultation was held with local children in April to narrow the options down from four to the single preferred scheme that has now been given the go-ahead.

Work is expected to start in the very near future and we should certainly see the new equipment in use this summer, even if the target of it being complete by the start of the school holidays proves to be a little too ambitious!



New equipment like this was considered during the consultations.

## JIM HEALD BENCH FUND

Most people in Marple will recognise Jim Heald's photo and even though they may not have known his name, it's likely that they will have seen him many times. This is because Jim gave over 45 years of service to Marple's Memorial Park, through various jobs, spending almost half a century tending the park he loved.



Jim Heald

Following his sudden death last year many members of the public suggested that a bench be installed as a permanent memorial to his memory. The Friends took up this suggestion and a fund was set up to accept donations towards the cost of a bench. The appeal has raised over £600, enough for a substantial bench, and the Friends are in the process of choosing a design that will be installed in the park in conjunction with the improvements to the children's play area. This will form a fitting tribute and give permanent recognition of Jim's dedication and commitment to Marple Memorial Park.

## THE COMMUNITY BUS

The Community Bus is a fantastic project organised by local charity CHARIS – Marple Churches Community Projects. CHARIS was set up by four Churches in Marple: The Methodist Church, the United Reform Church, The Marple Independent Evangelical Church and All Saints' Church, the Anglican Church.

The Community Bus was purchased in June of last year and a great deal of work was then done to prepare it for the task of going out in the evening as a 'mobile hangout' for young people on the streets of Marple and district. In December of that year the bus was finally ready and began to go out into Memorial Park on Thursday evenings to engage with the young people. The organisers were unsure quite what to expect but it has proved to be enormously effective and they have received great encouragement in the response to the bus, not least from the young people of Marple themselves. CHARIS have the Local Network Fund to thank for having provided much of the money needed to equip the bus with PS2 and TV as well as multi me-



dia equipment. With the addition of a very enthusiastic team of twelve also now in place the bus has become a regular visitor to the park on Thursday and Friday evenings each week. The Friends of Marple Memorial Park are keen to support the activities of the Community Bus in the park and, after learning that the bus has recently suffered gearbox problems, have offered to make a contribution towards the repairs from its funds. Marple Business Forum and The Marple Website have also offered to contribute and it is hoped that other local groups and businesses will be able to do so too, so that the bus can be back on the road, and in the park, as soon as possible.

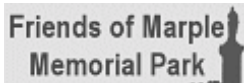
Friends of Marple Memorial Park  
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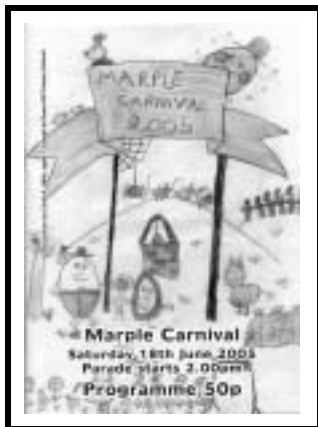
*"The land for Marple's War Memorial Park was given by the Carver and Barlow Families of this Parish in Memory of the men of Marple who fell in the Great War 1914 - 1918 and the laying-out was done by Public Subscription."*

**Dedication of War Memorial Park  
22nd July 1922**

## EVENTS IN MEMORIAL PARK

*"Marple Memorial Park is a great asset for the community and an ideal location for local celebrations and festivities. This year is no exception with two great events for the local community to enjoy!"*

### CARNIVAL – SATURDAY 18 JUNE



The Carnival is an annual event that entails year-round preparations and holds a special importance within the community, never failing to captivate and intrigue young and old alike.

This year Marple Carnival will be held on Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup> of June and will again be offering a selection of entertainments and attractions to

be enjoyed amidst the green and pleasant surroundings of Marple Memorial Park.

Carnival Princess Elect 'Rachel Davis' invites everyone to attend her Grand Crowning Ceremony in the main arena at 4.00 pm, after the Carnival Parade which leaves the Recreation Ground at 2.00 pm.

The 'Billerettes' will be treating us to their usual high jinks on the day, along with musical involvement provided by 'Mossley Band' and the 'Greater Manchester Fire Service Pipe Band'. Entertainment created by 'Punch & Judy' and the 'Tumble Tots' will give the opportunity for fun and laughter for the whole family.

'Pure Radio' will be with us for the day and for the first time you can try your skills on the 'Rope Race' climbing

wall, for which you'll need a head for heights. The Children's Fun Fair will be in the park again and the Carnival Boot Sale will also be held there between 8.00 am and 4.00 pm.

This year's Carnival theme is Nursery Rhymes and Fairy Tales and we are hopeful that this topic will encourage local inspiration and involvement in the event. We are also running a 'Best Dressed Shop Window' competition; so keep a lookout for some colourful windows. Carnival programmes are now on sale and will be available from local shops and businesses.

Don't forget the Carnival Boot Sales held at Rose Hill Station Car Park every last Sunday in the month from March to October. Who knows, you may find a great bargain!

## MARPLE CANAL



### CANAL FESTIVAL – SUNDAY 10 JULY

Last year's celebration of the Marple Locks Bicentenary was a huge success and despite the appalling weather in the morning, which made it difficult for everyone setting up, the crowds still turned out with their brollies and coats in great numbers to see Samuel Oldknow descend from Top Lock to Memorial Park in the horse-drawn canal boat, Maria.

Marple Locks Heritage Society was originally set up just to organise this one-off event but the success of the celebrations and the interest shown by the local community in the preservation of the locks persuaded the committee to carry on. The society now has around 50 members and has worked hard to become a link between British Waterways and the local community to help preserve and enhance Marple's unique flight of 16 locks.

This year's Canal Festival will be held on Sunday 10th July and, as last year, will centre on Memorial Park with activities up and down the full flight of locks.

The theme for this year's festival is 'music' and

will include the Ged Hone Jazz Band, who will perform on a canal boat, a seven piece covers band called Monkey Harris and other local bands too.

There will be guided walks explaining the history of the locks and aqueduct, canoeing at Top Lock, a Pro-LoCo art event with artists painting at various locations along the canal and even a mini-bus service to take people up and down the locks. There will be numerous stalls and displays in Memorial Park, featuring groups like Marple Naturalists, Otterspool Animal Sanctuary and Mellor Archaeological Trust to name just a few. There will be a burger bar in the park and refreshments will also be available at the Lockkeeper's cottage on Station Road and from New Horizons at their berth on Marple Wharf.

Marple Local History Society will be putting on an exhibition in the library between 25th June and 7th July, so all-in-all there's going to be far too much going on in Marple to be going on holiday this summer!