



May 2012
5th EDITION

MARPLE *in* ACTION UPDATE



LOCAL ELECTIONS



Marple in Action wanted to know where candidates stood on the threat to damage Marple by building a giant superstore on Hibbert Lane.

We were pleased to see that that strong support came from Shan Alexander and Martin Candler, for the Liberal Democrats, Annette Finnie and Carl Rydings, for the Conservatives, David Rowbottom and Clifford Stanway, for the Labour Party, Ray Jones for UKIP and Maggie Green for the Green Party.

In other words ALL the recognised political parties in Marple are in opposition to the plan for Marple College to sell its Hibbert Lane site to ASDA and we thank them for that.

Shan Alexander said "I am against a supermarket being built on the Hibbert Lane College site" and Martin Candler stated "I have always opposed the development of the College site in Hibbert Lane".

We intend to see that they stick to their promises!

MARPLE IN ACTION HAS NO POLITICAL ALIGNMENT BUT IT IS REASSURING THAT MARPLE'S POLITICAL LEADERS ALL RECOGNISE THE THREAT TO MARPLE'S FUTURE THAT SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD POSE!

GOVERNANCE OF COLLEGE

Did you know that the College has a set of rules that it has to follow? And that if students, parents or any member of the community think the College is not acting correctly you can complain. You can even download the internal complaints form from the College website – but don't try complaining about the Principal! Yes, as we write there is no mechanism for handling complaints about the Principal. Moreover, the supervisory body for the college (the Education Funding Agency) has no teeth to handle complaints about the College Principal.

Marple in Action are trying to put this right. For around nine months now we have had an unresolved formal complaint against the Principal for her lack of local consultation and secretive development of the sale of Hibbert Lane to ASDA. At each stage the College has deflected us – but AT LAST and under pressure from above - they are gradually moving forward. To quote the College representative:



On the 29th March 2012 it was agreed that ... a discrete and clear Complaints Procedure to address complaints against the Principal, Corporation and the Chair and other members of the Corporation and the Clerk be put in place... As soon as the separate procedure is available it will be published on the College website....

So if you have a complaint about these people and the way they act – watch the College website.

MARPLE IN ACTION is a community group formed in response to the threat of a proposed supermarket opening on Hibbert Lane.

Many strands of the community are represented and supportive of the campaign.

- Residents of all ages
- Business - retail and non-retail
- Marple Civic Society
- Marple Business Forum
- Marple Community Council
- Churches Together in Marple
- Additionally the local Conservative, Green Party, Labour and Lib Dems have all pledged support



to see if a planning application is submitted, but in the meantime we are trying to make sure we keep pressure on the College, on councillors, and even Government ministers, so everyone knows the people of Marple don't want a supermarket on Hibbert Lane.

We need to commit ourselves to what could be a very long fight, so come and join us!

CONSULTATION! WHAT CONSULTATION?

As you may know, the College have claimed consistently to their supervising body that they have consulted over the sale of Hibbert Lane to ASDA. Now in their latest response (May 2012) the College is telling the Department of Education Agency that they are not yet ready to consult!

So have they consulted or have they not consulted – and by what right do they act in such a condescending manner. The College's responsibility is to provide sixth form education to the young people of Marple and its surroundings – how can they do this when they act behind closed doors to sell land entrusted to them and refuse to tell anyone in the community, or parents and student body what they are doing.

Marple residents, parents and students deserve better – we urge the College to drop its veil of secrecy and meet us in an open forum.

We have requested the Chair of Marple Area Committee to invite the Principal to attend the next Area Committee meeting and are waiting to hear what the response will be.

Could be a long haul...

Many people are probably wondering what all the fuss has been about, since there doesn't seem to be anything happening and no planning application has been lodged for the development of Hibbert Lane.

Well, we've talked to professionals who know about supermarkets and their developments, and they have told us that it can take a long time just for the details of the land deal to be sorted, even if it has been agreed in principle. Finalising the deal could take months, and that is before we get to planning.

So if you think it is safe to forget all about this issue, then please be assured it isn't. Marple in Action are watching

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Sign the petition (but only once) – paper or on-line and encourage friends and family to do the same. Complete the on-line shopper survey. Check Marple in Action webpages for up-to-date information - www.marple-in-action.org.uk.



A HELPING HAND

Marple in Action has much to do, it's likely to be a long campaign, so the more helping hands we have the better. We already have a number of technical and professional people working behind the scenes, but we could use more help, so if you have related skills, expertise or knowledge and would like to help please get in touch using our hotline number or email your contact details to:

technical@marple-in-action.org.uk

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND DONATIONS

Running an on-going campaign like this takes funding, and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have generously donated towards the campaign so far.



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www.marple-in-action.org.uk
Action Helpline: 07790 419494