

Cliff-hanger Event and Concerts 2013

The weather conditions were very good at the time of this event, but as far as FOGP were able to ascertain, it did not make a profit, just disrupted the general use of the park, children's playground, café and the animal farm, again!

The concerts however appear to have been very successful with all tickets sold and the events considered to have been very enjoyable. In fact there was much enthusiasm for the musical concert concept.

Our Freedom of Information search so far confirms that: "The total cost to stage Cliff-hanger was £62,939, income was £72,085 which leaves a £9,146 surplus for the event. This amount includes the £12,000 income for the Richard Hawley concert." So that means the Cliff-hanger made a loss then... When full details of expenditure are available, we will have a better idea of how much was lost.

Car Parking Charges

Charges for parking cars at the Bunting Nook/Animal Farm car park appear to have made a considerable profit for the park, some of which is being spent on resurfacing certain footpaths which are in need of reinstatement (£5000). FOGP used the Freedom of Information service to find out how much money is being made or lost in Graves Park. We feel this is important as we have been told by the Council that any profits will go back into the park. It is also our understanding that

any events are not allowed to make a loss. Our first search was to try and find out the profits being made by charging for car parking. The results were interesting, if not necessarily accurate. This is the reply: "The purchase and installation of parking ticket machines and signage board cost £10,850. £46,541 has been generated from the pay and display machines Graves Park in the 12 months since the charges were implemented (income figure shown is net after removal of VAT and internal collection charges from the council's Parking Services)."

Our mathematical advisers have told us that the above profits are not physically possible, taking into account the current charges. We intend to ask further questions.



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Charity no: 1080407

Introduction from the Chairman

Welcome to the WINTER 2014 edition of FOGP newsletter and an update of our progress over the past few months.

The wildlife sub-committee have further developed the wildlife area and arboretum; see our update inside.

Much of our time in the past few months has been spent on Cobnar Cottage, negotiating with Sheffield Councillors, looking into surveys and possible funding and helping to clear the site. It is hard work, however we think we are making progress.

Cobnar Cottage

SCC have allowed the cottage to fall into a state of disrepair and proposed to sell it c/w its surroundings, all part of Graves Park charitable trust. At a meeting with Councillor Isobel Bowler, councillors and council officers, FOGP objected to the sale and were given 12 months to look at alternatives. We are exploring refurbishment of the cottage, have asked a quantity surveyor to assess the requirements and costs and will then look to secure funding for the project.



Friends of Graves Park

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Currently FOGP have paid for the clearing up of the overgrown garden and SCC have secured the cottage against vandalism.

FOGP are looking into the History of the cottage and so far have found from the sale of Norton Hall estate 1850 that the cottage is recorded as a workshop and yard tenanted by one Robert Lindley. It would have formed part of a hamlet of local industry, associated with Bole Hill Farm and Bole Hill Quarry and of course would have been positioned by the main stage coach road to London, which passed through Norton Hall estate at that time.

Chantreyland Meadow and Arboretum



The clearance of a large amount of debris accumulated over the past 20 years has been removed revealing the continuity of the dwarf brick retaining wall and an embankment supporting the remnants of the historic path to Norton Hall walled garden.

Work was undertaken by Whittakers Groundcare, paid for by FOGP supervised



by Gavin Baxter, aided by his children Amy and James, who then continued to rebuild the brick retaining wall. A real family exercise and certainly a good learning curve for both children – a job well done!

Frog Ponding Development (SCC Ecology Section)

Frog-Life Trust, headed by Nathan Goughlan, has excavated 3 linking frog ponds connected to the existing drainage system from the old glasshouse nursery. The ponds will be lined with sand and PVC pond liner installed, the embankments, sown with wetland wildflowers in spring.



Currently the site is too wet to complete works. Other ponds are being constructed at Beauchief, Ecclesall Woods and Woodhouse Washlands.

Meadow Maintenance

FOGP started removing the general annual herbage from the tree cluster planting areas and SCC will mow down the meadow in January. Self-set willows which readily grow on site will be dug out and some branch pruning will be undertaken, once ground conditions dry out.

Dog Mess in the Meadow

Unfortunately for both FOGP and the users of this area, irresponsible dog

owners are allowing their dogs to foul the surrounding footpath and margins. Notices have been installed and attempts have been made to catch these individuals, as yet to no avail, so FOGP have to clear the mess made.

Other dog owners have been trampling down the early cowslips whilst playing ball games with dogs and have become aggressive when challenged.

Arboretum

It is proposed to plant 5 Acer Palmatum, 3 Scots Pine, another 2 beech trees and 10 cotoneaster shrubs. Other areas have been planted with English bluebells, cammasere, grape hyacinths, fritillaria, anemone blancha and irises.

Additional beds of oregano, campion, woad, foxglove and aquilegia have been planted. Special Flanders field poppy seed will be sown to celebrate the centenary of WW1. The red and orange montbretia bed with golden girl annuals over-sown was very successful with some still flowering in January. During the spring and summer the maturing trees and shrubs produced huge quantities of flowers and fruit which encouraged swarms of wild and hive bees, followed by increasing numbers of birds in the autumn.

The green walk, after a slow start, is becoming established. FOGP purchased a

small mower and a strimmer to aid with maintenance.

Composting and recycling Operation

Green fingers Group has undertaken to fill weigh and stack 20kg bags of compost, using a converted cow shed as a dry base. The compost is then transferred to be sold at the farm shop located in the animal park – the proceeds will go to help finance the farm. Remaining compost is for the paddocks. The next cycle of composting is currently in progress with the highland cattle enjoying their winter quarters on the prepared paddock once again.

Ash Tree Die back disease (Chalara Fraxinea)

Just a reminder to observe the condition of any ash trees for new leaves and stems browning, wilting and dying during spring and summer and report your findings “only” to Jerry Gunton Tree Manager SCC Parks & Countryside Tel: 0114 2500500. DO NOT HANDLE THE INFECTED TREES.

