

the ground is very poor some soil improver is being brought in to prepare a seed bed; these areas will be sown and planted with perennial mixtures including more cowslips.

A fresh sowing of Golden Girl flower mixture has taken place in the area used last year, but increased wet conditions are slowing down progress, the site generally is too wet to work.

Bees

Sheffield Bee Keeping Society now has 10 hives in the park and report on a very good year for sustaining quality hives, with bees consistently healthy in 2013 even though it was a very wet year.



Amounts of honey produced were down; however, enough was produced to enable the bees to survive over winter.

Increasingly large numbers of wild and hive bees are using the wide variety of wildflowers in the meadow, which are flowering over a long period of time from early spring to early winter.

Organic Soil Improver (100% Organic Matter)

The Animal Farm is now selling this material in 20kg bagged form and 3 tonne loads delivered to allotment societies. It has also been spread and cultivated into the animal paddocks.

The organic product is very rich and is **too strong** to use by itself as it will burn or distort plants if they are planted directly into the material.

The best results are obtained when a 20kg bag is spread over every 2 square metres of cultivated soil on a vegetable plot. The soil improver should then be forked into the top 150mm of the topsoil. Vegetable planting may then take place; a trial proved during 2013-2014 that January King cabbage achieved a diameter of 200mm, and winter and spring cauliflower produced curds up 300mm. The worm population had increased considerably in the topsoil.

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Friends of Graves Park

Spring 2014

Introduction from the Chairman

Welcome to the SPRING 2014 edition of FOGP newsletter and an update of our (quite traumatic) progress this year. Almost all our time and effort is now taken up with planning and working to protect a small part of the park, Cobnar Cottage. Having been given only 12 months to come up with a viable alternative to its disposal, time is of the essence. Please see our fundraising leaflet for details.

Our AGM will take place at 7 p.m. for a 7.15 p.m. start on Wednesday 2nd July in the Rose Garden Café. As usual all members are most welcome and will receive a free cuppa. Once again the proprietors are providing the facility free of charge. FOGP thanks Craig the manager for his support. We do hope you will be able to join us.

Our committee was somewhat concerned to find the Ginkgo Biloba tree we planted behind Chantrey Cottage in the Nurseries had been dug up and moved earlier this year. You'll be pleased to hear we have since insisted that it was replanted in its original site.

Norton Nursery becomes a Dumpit Site!



The recent installation of the timber framed bays to contain bagged rubbish, general waste, white goods and supermarket trolleys, collected from in and around Sheffield parks are full to overflowing.

Daily, vehicles arrive with yet more items.

Parks staff spend a longer period collecting and depositing dumped rubbish than undertaking horticultural work; many are now very disillusioned people!

As may be seen from the photographs the influx of rubbish exceeds the removal and as the black bags also contain dog waste the stench is considerable.

The worst fears of FOGP are being realised that the historic nursery site is being misused by SCC. Recent contact with Parks and Countryside has failed to achieve clearance of this accumulation.



FOGP will shortly approach the City Council in an attempt to resolve this issue. Have you a view about this and how to resolve it? Send us an e-mail or drop us a line.

Chantreyland Meadow and Arboretum

Bird Species Identified

The number of birds seen in the meadow has increased considerably since the area has begun to mature.

In Dec 2013 Gavin Baxter identified 31 species, including: sparrow-hawk, kestrel,

great spotted woodpecker, waxwing, mistle thrush, goldfinch and robin.

Overhead flying: included lesser black-backed gull, redwing and pied wagtail.

Butterflies Moths Ladybirds

These include: at least 20 species of butterfly, 4 species of moth and 5 species of ladybird, azure and common blue damselflies and common darter dragonflies. Increasingly thousands of tree, bumble, wild and hive bees frequent the early willow flowers, cotoneaster and pyracantha and progress on to the wealth of wildflowers.

Dog mess and damage in the meadow

Whilst most dog walkers responsibly keep dogs under control, we identified four who are determined to let dogs run loose in and amongst the wildflower area, foul the path and are aggressive when challenged.

FOGP have now sprayed a "PICK-IT-UP" direction on the approaching footpath into the meadow.

The arboretum

The area is beginning to grow into shape, however, all the plants are very young and tender and some parts have to be regularly cleared of rubbish and weeds.

Remembrance Poppy Areas

"Flanders Field Poppy" and "Lest We Forget" seed mixture which combines golden coreopsis and Flanders poppy were purchased from Pictorial Meadows of Manor Lane Sheffield.



Two areas have been sown; both contain rescued Gingko Biloba trees and although much damaged, are now beginning to grow again.

FOGP decided to make a small heart shaped area to be part of the WW1 Centenary, planted with red acer palmatum, purple perennial wallflowers, sown with poppy and surrounded by cotoneaster horizontalis.

The centre of the area features one of the rescued ginkgos planted with a summer flowering honeysuckle beneath. (Currently no poppy seed has germinated.)

Gingko Biloba (Maidenhair Tree) is a family of trees which flourished 200 million years ago! Well known as a fossil tree, it also

survived the Hiroshima atom bomb destruction, sprouted and grew again from the base; certainly a tree of remembrance!

Mower Strimmer

The purchase of a rotary mower and strimmer has made a great deal of difference to controlling unwanted herbage within the arboretum and though gradually the arboretum is beginning to take shape, there is, however, still much to do!

Flowering trees and Shrubs

All the trees and shrubs have produced masses of flowers this year and many have set fruit currently, though, some rowans and pyracanthas have been damaged by winter storms, even holly has suffered, almost defoliated.



New Wildflowers

Two new areas are being cleared ready to be sown with wild flower mixtures and as