

## Roses in the Rose Garden



Last summer saw the newly replanted roses in the Rose Garden, funded by FOGP, in full bloom for the first time. It was a treat to see the Rose Garden given a much needed facelift. Once our legal action is concluded, FOGP intend to raise funds to restore other areas of the park, for example the gates at the Norton Park View entrance and Cobnar Road Playground.

## Celebrating the “Chantreyland Viola”



Seeds of viola “Chantreyland” bought and grown by the FOGP are now thriving. This variety was originally cultivated at the original Norton Nurseries. FOGP have planted these to commemorate their origins on this site. We think it is a fitting emblem for our Charity and we will be displaying it on our publications in the future.

### Fundraising

The FOGP now has its own donations account with **JustGiving**. Visit the website and donate to the Friends online, with the ability to register all donations for Gift Aid.

### Please spread the word!

**Donate to campaigns via mobile phone, choose the code for your campaign and text code + £2 (OR £1, £5, £10) to 70070**

**Protect Graves Park:** Text FOGP42 £5  
**Cobnar Road Playground:** Text FOGP22 £2

**Animal Farm:** Text FOGP02 £1

### FRIENDS OF GRAVES PARK

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# Friends of Graves Park

Newsletter

Charity no: 1080407

Winter 2017

## Introduction from the Chairman

The past few months have been overshadowed by continuing to work with our legal team, to seek a declaration regarding the legal documents which are supposed to protect Graves Park from sale or disposal. This legal action is taking a long time; we are very frustrated by the time involved, however, we are hopeful that the results will be positive. Much of the delay has been caused by the lack of response by the Charity Commission. They have now acknowledged our application and we are hopeful that we can achieve a positive response in the near future.

While our legal action continues, the trustees of Graves Park, Sheffield City Council, are blocking our extension of the arboretum, which is the third section of the restoration back to parkland of the Nurseries site. This restoration was agreed seven years ago; the Friends of Graves Park intend to push for the promises made by SCC as trustee to be kept. We have already raised this issue with the Charity Commission via our solicitors. As soon as we know the outcome, we will let you know.

### Surveyors in Graves Park?

Several of our supporters have let us know that surveyors were active in the park, below the café at the Hemsworth Road side of the park. We asked SCC councillors and officers about this surveying and were told that it was not happening and that there was nothing to worry about. Local Councillor Steve Ayris made further enquiries on our behalf, resulting in a confirmation that surveying **had** taken place on behalf of private contractors, looking at draining water from the new development off Hemsworth Road. The private company confirmed that their preferred drainage route is via Hemsworth Road and that this will not now affect Graves Park. We would like to thank all the park users who contacted us about this, enabling us to check that there would be no impact on Graves Park (which could have been catastrophic).



The Old London Road

## Spending the proceeds of the sale of Cobnar Cottage

Members of the public also contacted us about works being undertaken in the park using the money from the sale of Cobnar Cottage last year. We followed up these comments and contacted the trustees (Sheffield City Council cabinet and supporting council officers) regarding their plans. As we understand it, the covenants on the land state that this money can only be spent on capital projects in the park, not on maintenance. We pointed this out to SCC in our response to their report, including suggestions as to how the money could be spent, including better security in the Animal Farm, one of the tennis courts to be converted into a basketball court, another to be a dog training court (both of these courts have since been dug up and "landscaped" by the council) and better toilets to be installed in the Animal Farm. We also suggested resurfacing of the **Cobnar Road Playground**, as this is, in our opinion, a priority.

The trustees' response was to contradict our suggestions and to express surprise at our input, considering that we were opposed to the sale of Cobnar Cottage.



Graves Park Arboretum

From what we have seen and been told, it is likely that in a few years it will be difficult to see where the money went. The path from the Hemsworth Road entrance into the park has been resurfaced; it is difficult to see the difference, as it was in good repair before it was dug up. The Friends will continue to pass on the views of members of the public and we hope to have more influence on the welfare of Graves Park once our legal action is concluded.

## Arboretum Grand Opening



Officially Opening the Arboretum

Graves Park's Arboretum was officially opened on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2016. Professor Ian Rotherham cut the ceremonial ribbon at the end of an historic walk through the park. In perfect weather, over 50 budding historians listened during the walk and talk, as Professor Rotherham took us back through time into Graves Park's history and prehistory. The talk was extremely interesting and enjoyed by all. As a result, FOGP hope to put on similar events in the future. Once again we would like to thank Professor Rotherham for generously conducting the tour.

## The Arboretum

Tree planting has reached site capacity and is now being overplanted with more species still to plant!! We are now concentrating on under-planting the tree scape with flowering and berry bearing shrubs and herbaceous plants.

The FOGP recently successfully applied for a grant from the Local Councillor Fund for Graves Park Ward, which allowed for the purchase of £638.50 worth of daffodils, azalea mollis, acer palmatum, rhus cotinus atropurpuria, hamamelis mollis, ericaceous compost and a bird dipping fountain. This is installed adjacent to the earlier installation of a bird table, maintained with seeds and nuts by a local dedicated bird lover.

Over the past 3 years FOGP have grown 25 mountain ash trees, 25 orange berrying cotoneaster franchetii and 3 cotoneaster hybridus pendulus, which are all in the process of being planted.

Gifts of trees came from local people and one tree specialist who travels from Hillsborough to view the area, including 2 eight year old quercus robur (acorns from the Major Oak of Sherwood Forest), a red oak, eucalyptus, mulberry, field maple and numerous small trees and shrubs.

There has been a wealth of berries produced during 2016, most of which have been devoured by the birds. The flowering stems of lavender have been left on the plants this year for the gold finches.



The area has been left alone to grow and develop apart from the pathway which has been mowed by SCC Parks and Countryside during 2016. However, some overgrowth over the pathway and large willow branches will be pruned back. Both the meadow and arboretum areas are being used regularly by members of the public.

## Chantreyland Meadow

During 2016 the meadow has produced a wealth of flowers over a long period of time and is now producing seed heads for the birds to eat over the difficult period from December to March. Once the seed heads have been eaten FOGP, in conjunction with SCC Parks and Countryside, will mow the whole area down to ground level cut down the willow stems to prepare for the cowslips to grow in the spring.

The tree clusters have now started to mature and have been well used by the birds during 2016 and even now in the winter period.

All four ponds have remained full of water and there was a definite increase in numbers of frogs and toads onsite during 2016.