



Recent arrivals in the animal farm

## Cliff-hanger proposals:

### From Millhouses to Graves Park

SCC Parks and Countryside are proposing to relocate and considerably extend the event by using Graves Park (Sat 7<sup>th</sup> and Sun 8<sup>th</sup> July 2012).

The event offers 10k and 5k cross country runs, kite flying, angling coaching, cycling, family camping and music, rock climbing, skateboarding, adventure racing and demonstrations by talented sports people etc.

Whilst in principle FOGP would support such an event, consideration has to be given to the practicability and how it affects public use of the park. The whole deer park including the car park, café and playground would be fenced off and closed to all except those paying a fee of £6 for adults and £1 for children (A further period of closure is required to prepare and take down).

Car parking within the park both at Charles Ashmore Road and Hemsworth Road would be chargeable.

Events would encompass the whole of the park although these would not cause restriction to public use in the

unfenced areas. On-site camping and car-parking areas would be fenced off; the proposed music element is also a concern. Reinstatement of the grassland after the event is not indicated by SCC. The onset of the new playground at the rose garden and the increasing popularity of the animal farm has massively increased the use of Graves Park especially the deer park area, including car parking. There comes a practical limit to what the park is able to support. Based upon the will of J. G. Graves, the park is available for all to correctly use free of charge, therefore, FOGP committee have written to SCC parks and Countryside to advise accordingly.

The Cliffhanger event has merit, but we cannot agree to fenced-off closure and certainly not in July at the most used part of the park.

It becomes a different matter in part if the event is reduced, not fenced off and free of charge, with the exception of car parking and providing ground reinstatement is achieved. A clash with the Weston Park Charity Fun Run is another problem to overcome.

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### Grassland Management:

#### Set aside Areas

An initiative from SCC Parks and Countryside to better manage 7 neglected areas of grassland within the park is being implemented.

It was proposed 2 areas would be fenced to allow animals from the farm to graze, however, as FOGP said no to fencing, an alternative mowing regimen has been determined. Two of the areas have been cultivated and wild flower seed mixtures sown this autumn (the previous spring and



Hemsworth Road Wildflower Patches

summer drought meant sowings were unsuccessful). It is anticipated both areas, one adjacent to the lake and the

# Friends of *Newsletter* Graves Park

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other at Hemsworth Road, will give a colourful scene next summer.  
**Graves Park Animal Farm**  
**"Pigs in Paradise"**

An animal paddock in need of refurbishment has been taken over by twelve large pigs (Mangalitsas and Oxford Sandy and Blacks) to cultivate in preparation for re-grading and over-sowing with specialised farm grass seed. The pigs cannot believe their good luck and are tackling the job with great vigour.

Peter Fletcher says he has used this technique on all the smaller paddocks and it's a system of natural cultivation regularly used in the past where initial cultivation was achieved without the aid of machinery; it will take about 4 weeks to complete.



Pigs in Paradise

Not only do these pigs cultivate but also cleanse and fertilise the areas; some of the recycled compost will be incorporated into the cultivations to further enrich the paddock.

## Mini Soccer Provision

After discussing casual football provision with young footballers living around Norton Park View side of Graves Park, FOGP Committee is providing a set of mini soccer goals from its funds. Additional sockets will be installed to allow goals to be moved for maintenance purposes. SCC Parks and Countryside have agreed the site and will undertake aeration of the pitch.

## Composting: Recycling Operation

A full year of composting vegetable and animal waste has yielded 600 cubic metres of compost. However, due to drought conditions, insufficient water within the composting material has meant the bark chippings have not decomposed and whilst there was sufficient heat to destroy weed seed it will take another season before it's ready for use.

An analysis shows PH value 7.5, low nitrogen, medium levels of phosphate and potassium. Trials indicate the compost grows tomato plants readily when nitrogen is added.

When the bacteria have completed the breakdown of the bark, free nitrogen should return to the compost mixture.

FOGP have produced plans and costings for a Hard Standing compound where the compost will be finished, stored and made ready for use.

## Bee Keeping

(Sheffield Bee Keepers Association)

There are two projects for bee keeping at the animal farm: Sheffield Bee Keepers led by Dylan Butters which has been in operation with 4 hives for one season during 2011 taking advantage of the Chantreyland Meadow flowers; and Bee Buddies, part of Groundwork Sheffield, led by Peter Fletcher, which has been in operation for a few years. Hives are located within a paddock. It would appear to have been a successful year for both operations i.e. honey production and healthy bees, which are still relatively active even in November.

Both organizations educate people who are interested in keeping and maintaining healthy bees; they hold taster, hygiene and training days.

## Cross country races:

Weston Park Hospital Charity

### 10k and 5k fun runs

This event, held Sunday 10 July 2011, had an entry of 1000 runners, double the 2010 event.

The race, specifically for Cancer Research, was started by the ex-Olympian Joslyn Hoyte Smith and has currently raised £50,000.

Weston Park is looking to make this venue an annual event.

Graves Park was also in full use by the regular park users. No problems with the combination of use, ie at path crossing places, have been received by FOGP.



Playground

## Rose Garden Children's Playground

The playground development has proved far more popular than expected and has attracted masses of parents and children week upon week since it was opened last spring. Some considerable wear and tear has occurred to the play equipment and loss of sand from the sand pit has been noted. FOGP provided a list of defects which it passed to SCC Parks and Countryside.

Reinstatement of the access haul route from the car park to the playground has been undertaken by the contractor. Hopefully, if the weather stays mild, grass seed germination will take place shortly.

## Chantreyland Meadow

### Arboretum

FOGP continue to prepare the Arboretum, climate change initiative trees being planted this autumn. What appears to be an endless task of removing perennial weeds from the whole area is gradually being achieved. FOGP produced and planted a large number of flowering herbs e.g. thyme, sage, oregano, lavender, woad and shrubs such as cotoneaster, broom and dogwood with Monterey pines and even a walnut tree (donated). After some further cultivation, specialised wild flower seeds will be sown throughout; including true English bluebell, cowslip, betony, evening primrose, foxglove and poppies.



New area of Chantreyland Meadow: the Arboretum

Grass margins to the path were sown with bent and fescue mixtures over 50% of the area; the remainder has yet to be prepared. When the meadow extension is opened to the public they will be asked to keep dogs under control.