

# Cliffhanger Event

After an unsuccessful discussion between FOGP and Parks events team, SCC has decided the full event will take place as planned.

As a result the most used part of Graves Park (Deer park) will be closed off to general public use from Friday 6<sup>th</sup> July (pm) to Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2012 (12 noon). On Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July and Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July the Deer Park, Playground and Café will be part of the Cliffhanger event and chargeable, adults £7.50 each with children under 16 years free, the whole area being fenced off.

The compromise FOGP proposed was that the Animal Farm, Café and Playground should remain outside the event enclosure for public use as normal, free of charge. However, the new director of culture informed FOGP in no uncertain terms that he would not undertake any negotiations with FOGP on this issue.

There will be a separate chargeable music event and camping provision. The animal farm will remain open to the public free of charge but should you need to bring your car, then that would be chargeable.

An undertaking was given by SCC Parks and Countryside that any damage to the park as a result of the event would be reinstated.

Should the Cliffhanger event prove successful then it will take place, even expand in the years ahead.

## Car Parking Charges

The new director of culture, Councillor Leigh Bramall attended a FOGP meeting to inform the committee that due to financial constraints on SCC parks and countryside car parking at Graves Park Bunting Nook/Hemsworth Road would be chargeable to users at 40p per hour and £2 all day. There will be a period in the early morning and evening when parking will be free. Times these variations apply will be displayed. The system has yet to be installed. All money from charges will aid maintenance of Graves Park.

## Highland Fling

Sadly the Highland Fling was cancelled this year because of the wet condition of the ground. It never rains but it pours!

FRIENDS OF GRAVES PARK  
c/o  
139 Mount View Road  
Sheffield  
S8 8PJ  
Tel: 0114 2550615  
[www.gravespark.org](http://www.gravespark.org)  
[friends@gravespark.org](mailto:friends@gravespark.org)  
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Charity no: 1080407

# Friends of Graves Park *Newsletter*

Spring 2012

## Introduction from the Chairman

Hello again FOGP members! Welcome to the SPRING 2012 edition of FOGP newsletter and an update of our progress this year.

The wildlife area continues to thrive and members of the committee continue to care for this first part of the restoration. The second part, the arboretum, is planted up and also continues to thrive, thanks to the efforts of Ernest and his diligent watering through the dry periods last year. This will be opened up to the public as soon as the area is established.

Our AGM will take place at 7 p.m. for a 7.15 p.m. start on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July in the Rose Garden Café. As usual all members are most welcome and will receive a complimentary cup of tea or coffee. Once again the proprietors are providing the facility free of charge. FOGP thanks Craig the manager for his

support. We look forward to seeing you there. Members of the committee and others are working hard to improve the Park and its facilities. In these times of financial constraints, we are keen to work hard to save and also to raise money for the benefit of the park. The FOGP committee, however, feels that its attempts to work with members of SCC Parks Department are constrained by the attitude of Council officials. The Cliffhanger is a case in point. I know one member has been critical of our opinions of some of the Council's plans. We have never been against the event and are happy to



The New Area/Arboretum

support any activities in the park which are to the benefit of its users. In this particular case, however, we are very unhappy about the idea of camping in the park and we cannot understand why caravans and campervans were even considered. We are also unhappy about the idea of a music event in the park, going on into the early hours of the morning especially as, to date, we have no details of what is to be staged. In addition, we also had concerns about the Rose Garden Café and playground being fenced off within the event for such a long period of time, especially as we thought £7.50 per adult for entry, in these times of austerity, was a bit much. Even so, the Council is going ahead with its plans irrespective of what we say, so those in favour will be pleased. We do try to represent the views of the majority of our members and will continue to strive to do so.

### **We are always looking for members to join our committee.**

We need helpers to support raising money for schemes to improve the park. We also need volunteers to help the sub-group who maintain the Chantreyland Meadow and Arboretum. (Sunday mornings). If you have any skills to offer, please do let us know. Put your name forward for the AGM!

## **Chantreyland Meadow and Arboretum**

### **Arboretum**

Work has continued at a much slower pace due to difficult weather conditions over the winter and early spring period.

- ✓ Additional cotoneaster, pyracantha, buddleia, rosa rugosa and mahonia shrubs planted.
- ✓ Some wild flower areas sown.
- ✓ Special "bird larder" area of poppy, sunflower, wheat, oats and barley, sown by Amy Baxter and younger brother James, is now germinating.
- ✓ Remainder of the grass margin alongside the path sown and has now germinated; whole path will be sown with bent and fescue to create a firm green walk.
- ✓ After much care during last year's drought two prize liquidambar trees died, however, all other trees and shrubs survived.
- ✓ Additional tree planting has taken



Chantreyland Meadow May 2012

place along an embankment into Norton Nursery, a mass plant organized by SCC rangers and Arboriculturalists with over 60 volunteers.



Tree Planting March 2012

### **The Meadow**

- ✓ Cowslips bloomed well this year. Up to 1000 plants recorded this spring. (Last year's count was 640.)
- ✓ Tree shrub cluster planting of buckthorn, hawthorn, gorse, dog rose and rowan are all establishing and flowering successfully.
- ✓ We've recorded the first blackbird nest, built in the increasing thicket.
- ✓ One problem is a few irresponsible dog owners allowing dogs to damage and foul the wildlife meadow. A notice is displayed. Most owners in the area are responsible and control their pets.
- ✓ At the time of writing the whole area including the arboretum is

now totally waterlogged (the pond is full).

- ✓ Generally we are making gradual progress towards completion although there is still much to do.

### **Mini-soccer provision (Norton Park View)**

The local young footballers are making good use of the football pitch, though ground conditions are currently very wet.

SCC parks are unable to undertake aeration of the area, so FOGP may have to fund some contract works to keep the pitch in play.

### **Composting and Recycling Operation**

The compost production last year still has some decomposing to achieve but it looks extremely good material. A sample has been used by the Green Fingers group to grow vegetables and FOGP have used it for tree planting. Due to financial constraints SCC parks and countryside are unable to fund the construction of the hard standing base to complete the scheme. Over the autumn and winter another layer of compost forming green waste is being processed by the same method of using the highland cattle; once they are removed from the paddock the partially decomposed material will be placed into windows to enable bacterial activity to take place.