

Highland Fling



Thousands of Sheffield people basked in the sunshine of the Highland Fling event this year with Peter Fletcher and his team in the midst of it all. Families picnicked and enjoyed themselves across the open grass area of the Deer Park.

Two large tractors (the latest in technology) on display were enthused over by large numbers of young and older children, who were allowed to climb into the cab and sit in the driving seat – a very rewarding innovation well thought out.

Graves Park café was doing a good trade and was packed with people inside and out, with long queues to the counter.

The scale steam engine was popular, very busy and with two runs for 50p certainly thrilled small children and parents.

The children's playground heaved with activity and the sand put within its new sandpit proved very attractive, every piece of equipment was in use, all seats taken not one to spare even in the rose garden.

The fairground certainly captivated a mass of activity and enjoyment with many exciting pieces of apparatus; some though did seem expensive and would have had more custom had the price been right.

Large queues of people lined up to obtain food at bargain prices and those entrepreneurs wise enough to give good value did a roaring trade from cash strapped families.

Friends of Graves Park helped to sponsor the open event. No fences, no restrictions, no harsh loud music, all for Sheffield people to enjoy in the freedom of Graves Park. J. G. Graves would have been content with this use of his park. Well done organisers!

SCC Parks and Countryside surpassed themselves this time. The Deer Park had been well aerated prior to the event and the scar of the haul route to the playground was repaired and over sown after wards.

FRIENDS OF GRAVES PARK
c/o
139 Mount View Road
Sheffield
S8 8PJ
Tel: 0114 2550615
www.gravespark.org
friends@gravespark.org
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Friends of Graves Park

Newsletter

Spring 2013

Introduction from the Chairman

Welcome to the SPRING 2013 edition of FOGP newsletter and an update of our progress this year.

The wildlife sub-committee is still working hard in the wildlife area and arboretum; see our update inside.

Our AGM will take place at 7 p.m. for a 7.15 p.m. start on Wednesday 3rd 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 do hope you will be able to join us.

Rubbish!

This is a week's mountain of rubbish collected by SCC staff from parks, woodland and open spaces in South Sheffield. Not enough room in the skip! In addition we counted three lorries loaded with bagged rubbish and a fourth 16 tonne lorry grab, all removing debris discarded by Sheffield people. The depleted mobile

staff do their best to keep green spaces looking tidy and work hard to achieve what is an almost impossible task. They can't compete with the massive increase in items dumped which includes: bicycles, prams, TV sets, tables, chairs, mattresses, and tyres to name just a few.

Litter placed responsibly in the bins provided is dealt with by staff as expected, but trying to get top side of the dumping is proving a massive burden.

At the recent Highland Fling event– yes everyone had a good time and an enjoyable day was had. However, the outcome was huge quantities of litter spread over the whole site. We spotted one lone parks supervisor trying to collect the debris.



Financial cuts

SCC Parks and Countryside have been hit hard by the cuts; staff levels are depleted and may be decreased again. Some Sheffield people need to get a grip of the financial situation, note its effects upon parks and take their litter home.

Chantreyland Meadow and Arboretum

Historic pathway uncovered

Whilst clearing yet more undergrowth from the site we found a pathway, which ran from Norton Park meadows towards the original walled garden to Norton Hall, amongst rhododendrons, nettles and



Historic pathway found by the sub-committee

daffodils. The original stone gate post was uncovered some time ago at the left hand side of the entrance to Chantreyland Meadow.

Willows

During the winter period when it was impossible to work on the land, we pruned willow branches and thinned, to open up

the margin between the meadow and arboretum.

Cowslips (2013)



A recent count of naturalising cowslips in the meadow shows 1540 flowering plants. 440 plants planted out in a specially prepared area, heavily limed, in the arboretum, were in full flower and almost twice the size of the naturalised plants.

Tree planting

We planted additional gifted trees in the arboretum, including pink berried rowan, beech, elm, oak and two ginkgo bilobas.

Wild flowers

The areas sown with annual wild flowers in 2012 flowered and seeded down and a new crop has now germinated. A special Olympic "Golden Girl" mixture combined with perennials was over sown in the same areas.

We have increased the oregano herb, which attracted bees in vast numbers in 2012; new plants are now ready for planting which will enlarge the area to three times the original size.

The woad plants have increased in size and are now in full sulphur yellow flower. (Woad is a prehistoric introduction to Britain, flowering from June-September and attracts bees.)

Bees

Wild and honey bees were massively attracted to the meadow and arboretum during the poor summer of 2012.

Hopefully, with more flowering plants, shrubs and trees available 2013 will be an even greater attraction.

Last year the bee keepers reported a good yield of honey, indicating healthy bees.

Graves Park Animal Farm

Waste compound

A new waste compound has been constructed by SCC parks and countryside this year which will enable all the used bedding and manure from animals in the farmyard area to be kept better contained and more easily collected and removed.

New lambs – born spring 2013

Head stockman Chris Dyson stated in his 12th year at the farm, it is the most successful lambing period ever recorded, despite the horrendous weather conditions.

Chris puts his success down to a concentrated feeding pattern from November 2012 and a new hay/silage feeding system, which minimised waste

and with sheep all feeding at one time reduced stress they normally experience. All 49 ewes gave birth within a 3 week period in April, to 85 lambs, an extremely good result! Congratulations!

Highland Cattle

Some very contented cattle took great comfort outside all winter, on the thick mattress of bark mulch/leaves and straw bedding, in the paddock set aside for composting, even in snow benefiting from the thick insulation. A good calving period was recorded for 2013 with only one loss.



Composting process

The composting compound to be located next to the cow shed by Norton Nursery, currently cannot be afforded due to cuts in SCC Parks budget. However, farm manager Peter Fletcher is still working towards getting production underway with help from the Green Fingers Group. The Analysis of the compost from Scientific Analysis Laboratories (SAL) gives good readings; certainly the material is full of very active worms.