

## Restoration of the Rose Garden Cafe

The Friends are very disappointed that, a year after the café was forced to close and after we finally managed to get our independent survey done in January, we are not really any further forward. The café is still open as a takeaway only, but is still full of scaffolding. We will continue to press for renovation and as soon as the option to renovate is confirmed, we will continue applying for funding.

In the meantime, we now have over **£8387** in our campaign fund. Another £20,000 has been pledged in Council Community Infrastructure Levy Funding, which uses money given by developers to the council as part of planning permission. To pay for community improvements. Our intrepid walker, David and his fellow walkers raised over £800 with his sponsored round walks in May. He is doing more walks in Sheffield on 19<sup>th</sup> August and 3<sup>rd</sup> September. Anyone wishing to join in or donate can find further details on our website, or visit our Just Giving fundraising page.

Our surveyor is still giving advice and attending meetings with us. We also have



a chartered architect helping us with proposed plans for renovation.

Our surveys show that the roof is not falling in, although it requires attention, as does the front wall, but it is not as bad as the council's surveys suggested. Until and unless the council is prepared to check for movement in the front wall, we will find it difficult to move forward. This is hard to understand, as the council supports action which would be very expensive.

**Join us! Become a member of Friends of Graves Park and help us to protect and improve J. G. Graves's generous gift.** By becoming a member, for only £3 Per annum, you help us to have a louder voice.

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# Friends of Graves Park

Newsletter

Charity no: 1080407

Summer 2023

## Introduction from the Chairman

Welcome to the Friends of Graves Park's summer newsletter. I am pleased to invite all members to our AGM for this year, which will be held at Mount View Methodist Church, Derbyshire Lane, on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September, 7-9 p.m.

## Finding Lost Norton Park: Digging Deeper for All

Our project is now well underway and workshops and events have been taking place over the summer. Updated programmes of events are on our website. The archaeologists have been surveying all



over the park and have found some interesting features, which we will be investigating further. There are activities continuing throughout the autumn and winter, through to next July, so please do come along and get involved!

The Friends and the Project are also running walks as part of the Heritage Open Days in September – check out our website or the HODs website for details.

**Archaeology & Heritage Walks:** (Heritage Open Days: No Booking Required)  
Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> Sept, 10am-12pm, meet at Derbyshire Lane Entrance;  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> Sept., 10am-12pm, meet at Charles Ashmore Rd Car Park entrance;  
Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> Sept, 10am-12pm meet at Derbyshire Lane Entrance.



**Bat Walk:** Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> Sept., 7.30pm to 9pm, meet outside churchyard by Chantrey monument on Norton Lane.

**Introduction to place-names and landscape interpretation:** Monday 25<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2 pm – 4 pm, Mount View Church Hall\*\*

## Disposal of the Tennis Courts

Just as the summer holidays started, yet again, FOGP were informed by the Parks Department that they intended to “dispose” of the tennis courts in Graves Park, on a 25 year lease. Once again, SCC is trying to sell, dispose of or privatise bits of Graves Park, this time along with 8 other parks, 4 of which are charitable. This is a further erosion of the charitable covenants of designated land and the Friends are concerned that if this goes through, further disposals will follow. So far, appeals to the Charity Commission about the sale of the freehold of Bole Hill Farm and the misuse of the old Nurseries site, which has effectively been disposed of to SCC’s depots, have fallen on deaf ears, as the Charity Commission appears to agree with the council’s actions. We will



continue to oppose these disposals and we are in the process of making a complaint about the Charity Commission.

**If you agree with our concerns**, please write to the council or your local councillor, to object to the privatisation of Sheffield Charitable parkland. You can also complain to and about the Charity Commission. Details are on our website.

## Chantreyland Meadow and Arboretum

**After two diseased trees were felled** and left an area of improved light intensity, within the wooded serpentine border, the trunks were employed to create a woodland dell, a path was installed to access the area, which has now been extended towards the fernery, with a lily of the valley bed, constructed alongside where it joins the meadow pathway.

**A dangerous partially fallen tree** has meant the public being restricted from the fernery until its removal by SCC. The Dell has been planted with daffodils, acanthus, hydrangeas, dwarf growing comfrey ribbon grass, purple loosestrife and hellebores.

**The meadow has been relatively successful** this year, with a wealth of yellow cowslips, blue geraniums, meadowsweet, blue betony and black knapweed. Remarkably it has withstood all nature could throw at it during the spring and summer, i.e. wet, windy, cold, hot, and torrential rain! It’s still flowering and bees, butterflies and insects are still very active.

**44 different species of bee** have been recorded within the area generally. Trees in the arboretum continue to grow, flower and bear fruit, also expand due mainly to the excessively wet conditions throughout the seasons.

**Keeping up with maintenance** has been very difficult within the area.

## Freedom of Information Responses

**FOGP have made a significant number** of Freedom of Information requests over the past year, to try to find out exactly what is happening with the finances of the Graves Park Charity. This has taken a long time, because responses have been unclear and have taken far too long. Sometimes we have had to wait for months for a response, have had to remind the FOI people that we are still waiting, then have had to ask further questions, because the responses seemed to deliberately misunderstand what we were asking. The results, however, make interesting reading and suggest that, for example, the Norton Nurseries area of Graves Park is being used as a depot, not just for Graves Park, as



originally claimed by SCC, but for 37 parks and open spaces! Income from things like planting trees is not accounted separately from all the other parks and the accounting in the Sheffield Parks department appears to be vague, to say the least.

**The Friends will be putting the results** of our Freedom of Information requests on our website. We are also in the process of complaining about the council’s FOI responses, which are inaccurate and avoid answering questions about the enquiry to build something on the Norton Nurseries site. In the meantime, the restoration of the next section is still being blocked by the council.

## The Pack Horse Bridge

**After the Parks department “restored”** the old packhorse bridge by breaking up the stones and using copious amounts of cement, complaints from FOGP resulted in Janet Ridler, SCC’s Heritage Champion councillor, insisting that the bridge be restored properly. The Parks department is now in the process of organising a proper restoration.