



The Castlethorpe Duck Race and Fun Dog Show

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Julian Presant-Collins

Cllr Phil Ayles
Castlethorpe Parish Council

31 August 2016

Dear Phil

Ref: Gobbey's Field

I was concerned to hear that the current owners of Gobbey's field wish to use the site for housing development. At the moment it is used for grazing cattle, but it is also used daily by villagers to walk dogs and other recreational use.

The Castlethorpe Duck Race and Fun Dog Show as you know is a bi-annual event. In 2016 we attracted well over 3,000 visitors and while many of these drove to the event, the majority of Castlethorpe villagers walked from the village centre down through Gobbey's field to attend – as they have done now for over 2 decades. Indeed the 'middle gate' was actually modified this year to provide easier access for walkers with pushchairs.

While we are still awaiting the results of match funding, it is anticipated that this year's event will have raised around £12,000. These funds are earmarked for the work planned in the village church to create a much needed toilet and kitchen. The total sum required for the church to complete the works is around £50,000 and we hope that with other events and another successful Duck Race in 2018 we can achieve that target.

Our concern is that cutting off or restricting access through Gobbey's field will impact on attendance and our income; but more damaging is the detrimental effect on the 'dynamics' of the event, where villagers currently stroll through Gobbey's in their hundreds to attend, in future may be forced to find alternative ways – it will be a break in a fond tradition by hundreds of villagers.

I sincerely hope that Gobbey's fields can be protected in some way to preserve the use as an open space for villagers of Castlethorpe.

Kind regards

Julian Presant-Collins
Chair - The Castlethorpe Duck Race and Fun Dog Show