

# Jeskyns Update

January 2013



## Plans for a café and toilets submitted to local council

In early 2012 the Government asked the Forestry Commission to improve its efficiency. Therefore we held a public consultation asking our visitors how we could manage Jeskyns with less government funding. Almost 400 local people completed a questionnaire in response.

The most popular proposal was to build a café on site with the view to generating an annual income. This income we hope would be enough to cover the costs of providing toilets on site and to make a small contribution towards the running of Jeskyns as a whole.



*The consultation asked visitors to consider how we could manage Jeskyns into the future with less Government funding.*

Over the last 6 months we have therefore been working up plans for a small café with toilets and a planning application is about to be submitted to the local council.

The proposal is for a single storey, timber clad building, with two unisex all accessible WC's fitted to one end and a hard standing area for external seating. The building and surrounding landscaping have been designed by a team experienced in preparing schemes in sensitive landscapes to ensure that the proposals fit well within Jeskyns and its countryside setting.

The proposed scheme will make Jeskyns more accessible to many people including families with small children, the elderly and the disabled, many of whom currently do not visit because of its lack of facilities.

A response from planning is expected in early 2013. In the meantime you can view and comment upon the scheme at:

<http://plan.gravesham.gov.uk/online-applications/>

Further details including a FAQ sheet can be found at [www.forestry.gov.uk/jeskyns](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/jeskyns).



*Above: A similar type café building on another Forestry Commission site.*

## Other developments

Back in the spring we also consulted with you about a number of other potential income generating schemes such as parking charges and the rental of farm buildings.

Since then we are pleased that we have acquired an agricultural tenant who is now renting one of the farm buildings generating a small annual income.

With regard to parking charges we appreciate that there are many issues around their potential introduction. However, they could potentially raise enough income to secure the long term future of Jeskyns as a publicly funded site. We will therefore continue to examine all the issues and explore the option of charging for parking at Jeskyns. We will aim to update all our stakeholders and visitors in 2013.



*Many other Forestry Commission sites offer an annual Discovery Pass whereby visitors pay a one off annual subscription and can then visit as often as they wish without further charge.*

## Exciting new play space planned

Giant tree top nests, sky high sliding tunnels and dinosaur size eggs are going to be the main features of an innovative new natural play area planned for Jeskyns.

Taking it's inspiration from the thriving Jeskyns birdlife, the scheme will be created in the existing sand pit play area using a range of natural materials including timber, sand and stone.

Visitors will be able to get up high to climb, slide and swing or keep their feet on the ground to explore a giant hollow tree or build a wigwam den.

The works which are being delivered by award winning landscape architects Davies White, will start in the New Year and we hope to have the new play area open for spring 2013.



Watch this space!

## Hooves and Paws

We know that the horse and hound is an age old partnership, but even the most long standing relationships can feel the strain sometimes!

Recent incidents have triggered a number of complaints by horse riders about dogs running up to their horses, barking and even snapping at their hind quarters.

Dogs like horses can be unpredictable and a dog that is out of control around horses is very dangerous. It can be the cause of serious injury to rider, horse or even the dog itself.

Stay safe! Try to avoid using the horse trails where possible and if you see a horse in the distance clip your dog on its lead until it has clearly passed.

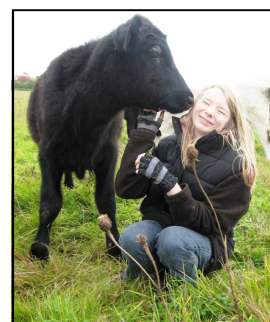


## Children's Animal Discovery Day

Following the success of our Nature Fun Day in October the Meopham School Young Farmers will be running a Farm Animal Fun Day here at Jeskyns on **Friday 4th Jan 2013.**

Drop in anytime between **11am & 3pm** for a range of farm animal based activities including the Animal Quiz Trail, the Big Bunny Carrot Hunt, Pet a Chicken and the Sheep Beauty Parlour!

- Meet at the main car park.
- £3 per child.
- Children must be accompanied by an adult.
- Prize for every child
- Suitable for up to 10 years
- Warm outdoor clothing advised!



Please note, this event is weather dependent. Check website for further details.

Lets keep Jeskyns a safe and friendly place for everyone.

If you are not already a member why not join our free Dog Club and help us to responsible dog ownership messages such as this one?

Further details can be found on our website.



**Contact us:** ☎ 01474 825118

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🌐 [www.forestry.gov.uk/jeskyns](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/jeskyns)