Metal Detecting Playing Field Survey

The York & District MDC were recently asked to undertake a survey of the playing field at Melrosegate in York.

Football is played on the field and someone had been cut after falling on a sharp metal sherd. We were to try to find the extent of the problem. Seven members of the Club volunteered to take part in locating, mapping and removing near surface metal that might injure footballers should they fall on the ground.

Digging was to be done with a trowel only to minimise damage to the pitch. When an object was recovered it was to be placed in a grip top bag and a flag pushed through the bag and into the ground to stop the bag blowing away in the wind.

At the end of the day all the flags were to be GPS'd so a record could be displayed using Google Earth.

The methodology;

The plan was to turn discrimination off and sensitivity down, then when you got a signal, check it's depth with a pin pointer and only dig out metal that was within the pin pointers reach i.e. Don't dig whacking great deep holes all over the pitch and only dig out objects that might hurt people should they fall.

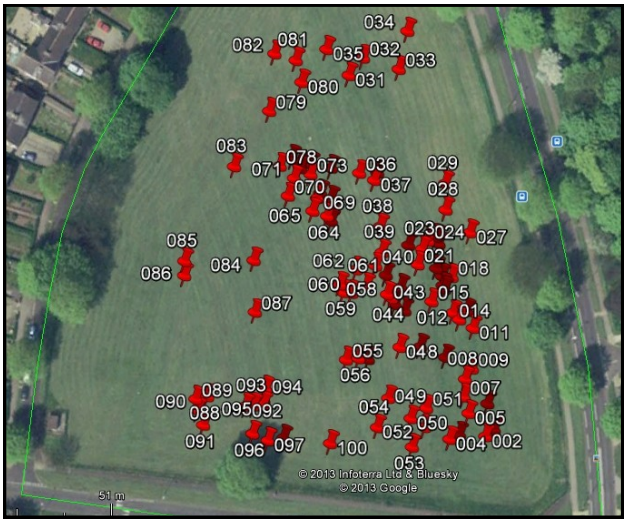
So what could possibly go wrong?

Within a few minutes of 'the team' setting off it was clear that there were multiple signals of all types with every sweep all at different depths. It was obvious that if we were to dig all these we would be lucky to dig five square metres.!

Then our members started reporting sherds of jagged shredded tin on the surface, these could seriously injure people, so the decision was made to abandon the use of the detectors and do an eyes only field walk. There were minced up bits of tin can spread all over the field.

To determine if the tin was below as well as above the surface several test holes were dug where detectors flagged up underground metal and sure enough sherds of tin were found two to three inches deep.

After about two hours we had covered the field, the location of the one hundred flags were then GPS'd.



The flags were removed and the sherds were given to the Council along with some sharp plastic objects found, images shown here and the Google Earth .kml File mapping the finds.

A good job done by all.