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Mayor “employs” four goats as gardeners

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There is not enough money in the Council’s coffers to pay gardeners. At least, not the number of gardeners necessary to look after the grass in the 14,000 m² park. So, **Luciano Grandi, the Mayor of Castronno**, has rediscovered the contribution that animals can make in keeping lawns and flowerbeds clear. Last week, **he “took on” four Tibetan goats to take care of the park** of Villa Puricelli, which was donated to the council by an inhabitant twenty years ago. “We all had a collection (total: €150), and we bought them; now it’s up to them.”

The goats will have their own little place in the old stables, and, in the future, an enclosure, where they can spend their free time ... when the work is over. At the moment, **there is a lot to do, as the grass in the large park has to be “cut”**. “Experts say that the ideal number of goats is seven,” the Mayor went on to explain. It is hoped that the females (there are three females and one male) reproduce in the next few months.

This initiative by the Mayor of Castronno is not one of its kind: **there are goat-gardeners in, for example, Bergamo High Town, and Pizzighettone**, to mention only those in Lombardy. There, the goats keep the 16th-century city walls clean, preventing weeds from growing between the ancient stones. Here, the setting is more normal, but the area is very large. “The costs are high; for the moment, we aim to tidy up the **park; it’ll be a lovely space for people, maybe even for weddings**.” The Mayor concluded, “Our decision to opt for goats is also a provocation, to **attract attention to the difficulties that town councils have in managing their properties**.”

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