

Design Brief for *Parklife: Pleasure, Play and Politics in Whitworth Park*,

a temporary exhibition taking place at Manchester Museum from May to October 2014

1. **Venue:** 3rd floor Temporary Exhibition Gallery (W.7.08 X L.15.42 m)
2. **Title theme/exhibition:** *Parklife: Pleasure, Play and Politics in Whitworth Park*
3. *Parklife: Pleasure, Play and Politics in Whitworth Park* will examine and explore the changing role of Whitworth Park through time. It was the gift of a civic benefactor, Sir Joseph Whitworth, working through his trustees in the late 19th century. Originally known as Potter's Field or Potter's Bank the park was part of the Whitworth Institute in 1889 and opened in 1890. The Institute's gallery was one of the first galleries to be created in a park. The park featured a bandstand, sailing lake/paddling pool, observatory and shelters. The operating costs proved prohibitive and in 1904 it came under the administration of the Manchester Corporation. It became rather a neglected local park in the 1970s but it is now undergoing regeneration thanks to campaigning by the Friends and the integral part it now plays in the Whitworth Art Gallery redevelopment. The *Parklife* exhibition at Manchester Museum is intended to celebrate the important community role that the park has played for local inhabitants over the years. This role is enhanced by the important community archaeology excavations carried out by archaeologists and students from the University of Manchester Archaeology Department, but also involving volunteers and other members of the public. The discovery during excavation of long-lost features of the park such as the boating lake and the bandstand is informed by contemporary sources of information such as postcards, OS maps, guide books and park minutes, complete with what would now be regarded as repressive rules and regulations setting out what behaviours were acceptable and unacceptable in the public park space. Short AV interviews with people who helped on the dig or visited the park whilst the excavation was in progress will feature in the exhibition in order to highlight the important community aspect of the project. The project is not simply about the park as a place of recreation attached to the Whitworth Institute and how that has changed over time but also differing conceptions of the park. For some it served as the venue for the inculcation of modes and standards of behaviour but some park visitors opposed or subverted them. The part that nature was believed to play in the Victorian/Edwardian era in encouraging more socially desirable modes of behavior is something that we'd like to explore in the new displays. The place of Whitworth Park in the

wider story of the creation of municipal parks in the Victorian and Edwardian period is another aspect of this approach.

Changing attitudes towards the park can be seen more clearly with the rethinking of public parks as refuges for wildlife and potential havens for wildlife and biodiversity over the last few decades. The wildlife – the fauna and flora - of Whitworth Park is another significant part in the exhibition. The community aspect is very important and we want to show this by including short AV interviews with the Friends, volunteers, archaeologists and visitors in the exhibition. We also want to highlight and celebrate the enhanced role the Whitworth Art Gallery will play in relation to the Park. One of the aims of the redevelopment of the Art Gallery is to integrate it more significantly within the park, to blur the boundaries between gallery and park.

4. Brief leader (Manchester Museum): Bryan Sitch

5. Date: 23/05/2014 (PV) opens 24/5/2014– closes 5/10/2014

6. Aims of the Exhibition

6.1 Knowledge and understanding

- Understanding the historical context of the founding of the park as an act of civic benefaction by Sir Joseph Whitworth and his trustees, especially Robert Dukinfield Darbshire;
- The socially beneficial role of the park in providing green spaces where people could breath fresh air and take exercise as a healthy alternative to drinking in public houses and in shaping behaviours regarded as desirable by the Victorian and Edwardian authorities
- Understanding how the park we see today contains within it the remnants of earlier features and attractions such as a boating lake and a bandstand which can be investigated archaeologically and how they changed over time and the socio-cultural pressures that led to such changes
- Highlighting the role of archaeology as a discipline in investigating the landscape of the park and of community archaeology in generating interest and mobilizing effort and energy to explore the park in more detail
- Understanding how the role of the park has changed in recent years. Instead of being neglected and treated as a no-go area, the park has become an engine for a wider community identity, (particularly for disadvantaged inhabitants of Rusholme as well as serving as a focus for concern about the environment and biodiversity.

- Awareness of the proposals to integrate the Whitworth Art Gallery more closely with the Park and the positive role it can play in the future

6.2 Attitudes and values

- Awareness of the role of evidence from a wide range of disciplines including archaeology in shaping our understanding of the park
- Promoting awareness of the different values and philosophies that have informed how the park was used in the past and today
- Stimulating interest in learning about the park and its new role more closely integrated with the Whitworth Art Gallery development

6.3 Creativity, inspiration and enjoyment

- Exploring the relationship between historical sources and archaeological evidence for the park and its features
- Celebrating the park as an important place in the community for leisure, well-being, creativity and learning
- Enjoying the exhibition experience and that of associated activities (public programmes)
- Opportunity for visitors and the community to contribute to understanding of the park and how it has changed over time through oral history

6.4 Activity, behaviour and progression

- Promote interest in the Park and Whitworth Art Gallery development
- Contribute to a sense of community identity
- Support behavioural changes to encourage recycling, sustainability and other green agendas
- Stimulate repeat visit perhaps with family and friends
- Generate excitement about further archaeological work such as post excavation work on finds

6.5 Target Audiences

- Community groups
- Families and children
- Adults
- University students
- Schools

7. Production team

Content Lead: Bryan Sitch

Display Lead: Bryan Sitch

ConservationLead: Sam Sportun

Construction Lead: John Miller



Learning Lead: Cat Lumb and Hannah-Lee Chalk

Public programmes Lead: Anna Bunney/Vicky Grant

Web presence Lead: Stephen Devine

8. Content

Story Content	Key objects/ images/ AV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction Work on community archaeology and history project by Friends further stimulated interest in the Park and the Whitworth Art Gallery redevelopment work. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background an introduction to and chronology of the park. There is material relating to Robert Dukinfield Darbshire who dealt with the legal transactions associated with the land acquisition in the Whitworth Art Gallery. Requires short account of Sir Joseph Whitworth and his philanthropic works too, through trustees like Robert Dukinfield Darbshire. 	Original park plans held by gallery OS maps? Portrait of Joseph Whitworth Portrait/photo of Robert Dukinfield Darbshire Aerial photo of park in Manchester City Library Material from introduced levelling layer: coins, fish head and pipes from under mound (reflects people living around the park)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding out about the park – how archaeology can help investigate what the park was like in the past, how the park changed over time and its role in stimulating community interest and 	AV interviews with volunteers? Images of people working on dig Drawings of the excavation taking place

action	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People in the Park (Social Relations & Community Politics in the Park) - this will include the work that Ruth Colton has been doing on rules and regulations in the park and the inevitable tensions this provoked, protests such as use of the park during the Civil Rights marches and public sculpture (obelisk?). 	<p>Exhibits: Postcard images of gentlemen sitting on park benches and families with young children and perambulators</p>  <p>Photos of prominent features in the park – the boating lake/paddling pool, bandstand, carriageway – shown on plans? Observatory/weather station with lake behind it</p> <p>Drinking fountains and seating</p> <p>A (lady's?) hand gun found during excavations, if real, may have dumped in the lake to dispose of it after use elsewhere</p> <p>Lots of bottles – pop?</p> <p>AV interview with woman who as a child had to wear her Sunday best in the park</p> <p>Whistle used by Parkie?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Park at Play 	<p>Exhibits: children's toys (toy soldier, toy (?) gun, jacks, etc) and other leisure-related finds from the excavations. Glass bottles and ceramics show consumption of refreshments</p> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Park at War Park used by the Manchesters for recruiting and parades; veterans who met in a building in the park 	<p>Barage balloon tethered in park (images?), WWI images?</p>

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9. Key Dates

1) Object list complete

- 11/01/2104

2) Image list complete

- 11/01/2104

3) Object labels complete

- 14/03/14

4) Text panels complete

- 14/03/14

5) Opening

- 24/05/2014

10. Designer Requirements

The appointed designer will be required to support and produce the following:

1) Concept development

- Work in collaboration with Museum staff to develop the exhibition concept and visual identity

2) Text, Images & Graphics

- Work in collaboration with Museum staff to develop templates for text panels and labels
- Design panels and labels and develop for production

3) 3D Design

- Work in collaboration with Museum staff to develop the overall design of the exhibition
- Deliver scale drawings for Museum technicians to produce exhibition elements

4) Management

- Provide regular progress reports
- Maintain budgetary information and provide as required
- Develop budget for production of materials
- Oversee installation

5) Possible design of the supplementary marketing material

- Work in collaboration with the Marketing team on developing and executing the marketing material, Including:

A2/A3 poster design
 A5 private view invite
 A5 events leaflet
 e-header
 Courtyard light box poster
 Railing banner for Oxford Road
 Possible half page adverts in print.

11. Budget

The total budget for the exhibition (including all research, design, conservation and production costs but excluding marketing) is £10,000. We would expect the design fee to be calculated as a percentage of this.

1) Tendering

- 1st January 2014

3) Designer selection

- Mid-January 2014

4) Designer contracted

- February 2014

5) Opening

- Private View – 23/5/14, opening to public 24/05/2014

Further Information :- Bryan Sitch
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