

Community Garden Gazebo
Supporting Statement
July 2021



Background Information

The new community garden in Whitworth Park aims to be a space that builds social cohesion and a deep community relationship with the park and nature. It will function as a productive, educational and intercultural garden featuring areas dedicated to plants used to create dyes for textiles, and medicinal plants as well as produce for eating and ornamental plants. The community garden will create a hub for those communities that reside in close proximity to the park and gallery. Working in partnership with the Friends of Whitworth Park, the community garden will provide greater volunteering opportunities, increased chances for community engagement and participation, sharing knowledge, stories and experiences around food growing and production. It will not only create more opportunities for the gallery to engage with the local community but will also create new opportunities for the residents and the local community to actively engage with their local park on a regular basis. Taster sessions and celebration days will become part of the seasonal programme and will create opportunities for local residents to share food and communal experiences.

The Park sits alongside Rusholme, Ardwick and Moss Side, three of the most deprived wards, not only in Manchester but across the entire UK. In one the latest Index of Multiple Deprivation, Moss Side was ranked in the bottom 4%, Rusholme in the bottom 7%, with both having particular problems in relation to health, income and employment. In this corner of the park, we will create a community garden that offers local people, many of whom have little or no access to a garden of their own, the opportunity to come together, learn new skills and improve their health and well-being. Access to suitable green spaces is vital in our community as many of the households surrounding the gallery have little or no access to a garden of their own and this as we know, can lead to the increase in health inequalities.

The project will provide significant improvement to an underused and potentially hazardous part of Whitworth Park, the only area of the park still to undergo major redevelopment. It will therefore complete the improvements to much of the park, carried out over the past few years. This process has been led by the Friends of Whitworth Park, in collaboration with Manchester City Council and the Whitworth. The design concept has been developed with the FOWP which includes local residents and also the current members of the horticultural wellbeing GROW from The Whitworth. From 2018 – 19, the partners also held various consultation events where local residents were invited to come and share their feedback on the plans.

The community garden will be a core project for a cohort of new volunteers, offering a chance for them to gain transferable skills and create new relationships within their local community. This volunteer programme will also offer cost savings in maintenance of a key area of the park, reducing the need for other specialist services.

The Gazebo



(picture for info only not actual)

The proposed Oak Framed Gazebo will provide a valuable space to host events and activities and provide much needed shelter from Manchester rain for all our volunteers and groups. Oak frame has been chosen for its many positive characteristics including Environmentally Friendly, Speed and Ease of Construction, Lifespan, low maintenance and Aesthetic Value. The 'Outdoor Classroom' will be a simple Gazebo structure with a four hipped rough and cedar shingle roof. The Oak will sit well in the park landscape and overtime will silver and blend in with the environment. The frame will be inherently low maintenance as it is not in direct contact with the ground as such it will not get constantly wet and will be able to air dry. The cedar shingles have a 30-year life expectancy. Due to the pitch of the roof, it is unlikely that materials will gather in any significant amount and will either be removed from ground level with extendable brush or access equipment will be used if necessary. Access will be open with no restrictions. The existing surface will be used which is a self-binding gravel. There are no solid walls in the construction although hazel hurdles may be used on the dwarf walls to eliminate the potential trip hazard and to provide some screening while inside the structure. The structure will sit on an existing prepared site of 10x10m, and the gazebo will take up a footprint of 8x8m allowing a 1m wide path around the structure and as such not limiting access along the newly constructed path.

The site is highly visible from surrounding areas and from the gallery, key to the involvement of local people. Further to this, there will be easy levels of physical and emotional entry – people will be welcome to wander in to chat about what's going on, take part in a workshop or sign up to become a volunteer.

Location

The exact location is shown on attached plan 031AA-8188-A001-Site Location Plan
The Gazebo is located in the centre of the Community garden and will be the focal point of the garden and main meeting point.

Management

The Land will be maintained by the Whitworth and all services will be paid for by the Whitworth. The overall ownership of the land lies with Manchester City Council

Supported by

The Friends of Whitworth Park the Cultural Park Keeper and the Landscape & Sustainability Technician from the Whitworth.