



Spring is coming!

And that means we have to get moving!. In the last Newsletter I wrote about our plans to make the Park more interesting to visitors and attractive to wildlife by developing "flower rich grassland" areas. These will be next to the boundaries and our first project is in the area behind the Academy that is slightly cut off from the rest of the Park by the path that leads from Denmark Road through the centre circle to the Rusholme Gate (top picture). It has a good variety of trees in the middle but the boundary with the Academy Car Park is a bit sparse. And there are very few berry or fruit bearing trees so we want to make a hedge next to the fence with trees that produce a wild harvest for the birds.

It happens that as part of the Wildlife Trust's celebration of the Queen's Jubilee they have made young trees available at no cost to community applicants so we applied and will be planting 105 trees in a hedge along the car park boundary on March 19. The trees will only be saplings but in five years should be as tall as us!

The varieties are hazel, blackthorn, crab apple, cherry plum, elder and dog rose. Pete Stringer, Special Projects Manager of **Red Rose Forest** will be advising us and volunteers from **Manchester University Leadership Programme** will be helping us to plant them. But first of all we needed to prepare the ground so that the trees get a good start so with financial help from **City South Housing Trust** we hired Graham Cash and his digger and cleared a stretch of ground ready for the work to be done, and whilst we were at it, made an area at the bottom of the slope into a wetland habitat by digging deeper and lining it.



The next stage of this job will be to sow wildflower seeds on the bank and by the new hedge to encourage more insects and other creatures, and through that provide interest and colour for us through the flowers and foliage and food for the birds and wildlife. The young volunteers from the **Manchester Museum Youth Board** who helped us plant 2000 English Bluebells last November (picture left) will be playing a big part in this. They raised money through a **Starbuck's Youth Action Fund** to buy plants and seeds and they will be sowing and planting these as well as using material which we have saved from cutting back last year's growth on

the centre circle plants to make bee habitats. They will be doing this on **April 14th** whilst we work on the wetland area and next to the paths sowing a different range of seeds. And from noon that day we will all get together with our friends in the **Community and Cultural Services** team (used to be the Park Wardens!) in our Spring Event in the Park - **The Wonderful Whitworth Wildlife Fun Day**. This will be a collaboration with the Museum people who will be bringing exhibits from the Bio Blitz survey in 2010. There will also be craft activities, object handling, face painting, bouncy castle, competitions and a mini



exhibition about bees – the historical symbol of Manchester's industry. We will also be selling books and cake and asking people for their memories of the Park as the next stage of the **Community Archaeology and History Project**. To stimulate this nostalgia we will have lots of old photos and maps as well as illustrations of our hopes and plans for the future! Do come along- it will be a fun day!

Speaking of which – does anyone know more about how this came about (see right);-. This clipping is from the **Manchester Guardian** for **April 3, 1954** but it dates the change from the formal original park with features to the lovely informal place we have today. And what happened to the bandstand itself? These are the kind of things we are looking into through our **Archive research**. Let us know if you want to take part – it, and the memories, will contribute to a people's history of our splendid Park.

Whitworth Park is maintained by the parks committee and when originally laid out in 1904 its 18½ acres were planted with trees and shrubs. The trees have now outgrown the shrubs, many of which have died because of lack of light and nourishment. It is proposed to clear the shrubberies and replace them with grass, lay out new flower beds in front of the art gallery, and fill in and seed over the disused lake and bandstand enclosure. The cost is estimated at £6,740.

Changes

We are still learning about the changes in the way what used to be called "Leisure Services" and before that "Parks Department" is meant to work with us. We know that everything is now being organised locally, so that in Moss Side and Hulme there are staff who will be working together with the specialist providers to meet the needs of local residents in a more efficient way, but we haven't yet sorted out where we fit into this with our pro-active stance on the regeneration of this unique park. It's unique because of where it is – at the place where a vibrant residential community and a student community come together with hospital workers, patients and visitors, university workers, and gallery staff and visitors all come together on one of the busiest commuter routes in the City. It's a special place with enormous potential as the Corridor gets its environment uplifted and we are at the start of it. It seems clear that we will have to "up our game" if we are to get the things we have asked for, which are now included in the Management Plan, into being. We will need to raise money through grant applications to help pay for seeding and planting next to the additional paths, and the furniture, and signs that we would like to see but we can make a start through relatively simple measures that will give us a financial base to build on. **I've started to raise money for FOWP whenever I shop on line – could you do the same?**

It's very simple – just visit <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/fowp> to register and shop with over 2000 well known retailers like Amazon, Argos, eBay, Waitrose and many more. Whenever I buy something, the retailer makes a donation to Friends of Whitworth Park. They've helped other causes raise over £2,000,000 so it really does work.

We'd be really grateful if you could use **easyfundraising** too. It won't cost you a penny extra to shop this way and you can even save money with special offers and voucher codes. And if you register before April 1st you will automatically receive one entry into a free prize draw to win a Virgin Experience Giftcard worth £125 and a Camcorder! So please make a difference to Friends of Whitworth Park and look at **easyfundraising** today.

City South Housing Trust have helped us by their funding of the digging and scraping we need to do to get ready for the hedge, associated wildflowers and the wetland area planting. Thank you, Níall Power!



Ken Shone put this Newsletter together – please let him know if you have any comments, corrections or even ideas for the next one – and he is still looking for help!

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