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Introduction - Manchester: a tale of two cities

Manchester School of Architecture Projects (MSAp)

Manchester is only one of several cities that have aspired to be called the ‘Venice of the North’, but here such idyllic comparisons serve to belie the fact that many thousands of people died navigating these canals, the hand-dug trade conduits which gave birth to industrial capitalism. Manchester from the beginning was a city that told two dramatically polarised tales of riches and rags and ultimately brought both Capitalism and Communism to the world. Polar inequalities remain in both the social and physical fabric of the city, with receding industry leaving a discontinuous urbanism and recessional politics forcing the withdrawal of communal facilities and services.

We explore the role of urban design and architecture in improving conditions in socially and physically fragmented environments where there is little by way of the continuous historical fabric of the richer cities and towns to which we may aspire; and much less access to the opportunities which the occupants of affluent places tend to enjoy. In a city where we teach and learn how to make it beautiful and useful, we acknowledge the paradox that if architecture does nothing to serve wider society then we all, every day, suffer a poorer city.

In a 21st century experiencing increasingly urbanized and aged populations; climate change and sustainability; austerity and ‘big society’, the question of how architecture contributes to social progress must remain a central concern of contemporary practice. However, the traditional and prevalent accounts of the relationship between architecture and the ‘real’ of society are also polarized between arguments for formal production connected to the social through cultural consumption or the delusional functionality of social determinism.

We begin our exploration into this relationship between architecture and society through developing an alternative methodology for architectural research, which does not represent social relations as either a reductive formalism or a restrictive functionalism but instead explicitly constructs them in a living, creative enterprise.



We aim to engage directly with a wide range of people involved in the city's development - residents, policy makers and social agencies - and make ourselves open to be affected by these unusual meetings and encounters, using these engagements to develop ideas, inspirations and projects. Over the past seven years, in collaboration with Manchester City Council, third sector organizations, and Manchester residents, we have developed principles and practices for participatory urban design-research with the atelier methodology also being used alongside the studio in professional research contexts to produce 'ground-breaking'¹ and 'world-class'² participatory urban design-research contributing to Manchester City's status as a World Health Organisation 'Age-friendly City'.

This year we began working in the neighbourhood of Old Moat in South Manchester with Southway Housing Trust alongside local residents of all ages and a wide range of private and public stakeholders. Using film-making we explored picturesque town-planning through contrasting field-observations of Portmeirion with design proposals for Old Moat which led to several students making on-going contributions to live improvement projects for the area. A broader range of encounters were developed through a city-wide collaboration, working with artists Michael Mayhew and Jenny Savage, urban designer David Rudlin and psychotherapist Steven Potter, on the 12th of December (12/12/12) to make and transform a large-scale model (20mx20m) of Manchester over 12 hours. We participated in and instigated over forty wildly diverse events which engaged a wide range of people in discussions about the future of 'the human' in the city and these influences and connections were both used to drive changes to the urban form during the event and build on and develop each of the students diverse collaborative projects - some of which are presented here - but many of which already have a life outside of the school. Our thanks to all our partners.

MSAp is led by Helen Aston and Stefan White

1 Geoff Green, Emeritus Professor of Urban Policy at the Centre for Health and Social Care Research, Sheffield Hallam University. Adviser to the WHO European Healthy Cities Network on Age-Friendly Cities.

2. Dr Tine Buffel, Belgian Ageing Studies, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Marie Curie Fellow.



12-12-12 Humanity

12-12-12 Humanity was the umbrella for a number of projects and events which took place on the 12th December 2012. The events involved artists Michael Mayhew and Jenny Savage, psychologist Steve Potter, urban designer David Rudlin and the students and tutors from MSAp who collaborated together to explore how we respond to each other as humans and how we live together in cities. Groups of students from MSAp worked together to create different events around Manchester, the results of which were then recorded on a giant 3d model of the city moulded from plasticine.

Events ranged from getting young people to think about and question their urban environments through a number of creative activities to a blind brunch in which people got a sense of what it was like to achieve simple tasks with a visual impairment. The Rochdale Canal was populated by a sea of light in a flashmob using LEDs and long exposure photography. Other events included a conversation with the residents of Withington over a cup of tea and cake. Hulme Hippodrome threw open its doors to the local residents enabling them to explore the building and suggest ideas for its future. The residents of Old Moat were presented with a selection of different sensory props in order to discuss what feelings and memories they provoked whilst 'mapping differences' brought together a psychologist, a mixed race resident of Salford, a scientist, an imam and an architecture postgrad to discuss what makes us human.

The Manchester model was created over a period of 6 hours whilst the events around the city were held. All of them had a focus on sharing the city and helping to engage with its fabric and the people who inhabit it. The second six hours of the day were used to map the changes and experiences discovered during the events to create a remodelled version of Manchester. The result was a sea of orange plastercine which showed a vastly affected city.

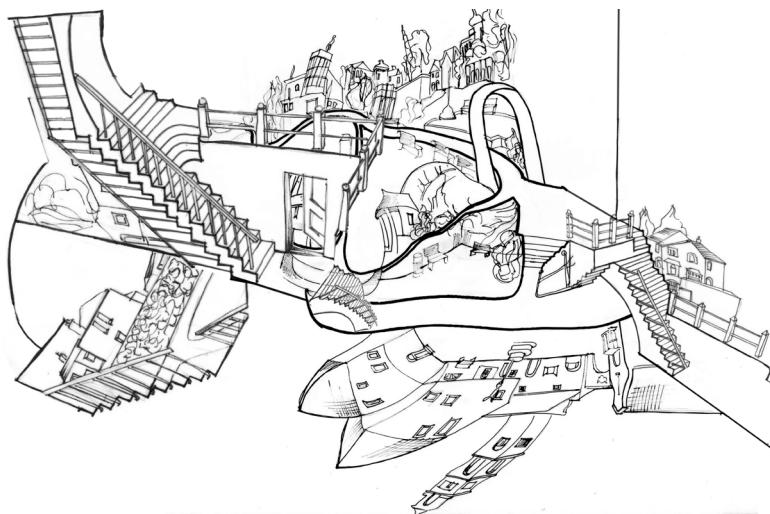




Portmeirion Field Trip

In October MSAp embarked on a three day field trip to the Welsh ‘village’ of Portmeirion. Portmeirion was designed between 1925-1939 by Clough William-Ellis on his return from service in WW1. His inspiration for the village was the architecture of the Mediterranean, especially referencing the topography and typologies of Portofino and he aimed to provide a haven from the horrors of war. From the start Portmeirion was a holiday destination with royalty amongst some of the very first visitors. Portmeirion was used as an exemplar for William-Ellis’s campaigning for the preservation of the English countryside which led to the Town and Country Planning Act of 1946, establishing Green Belts, forbidding ribbon development and laying down nationwide constraints on building in rural areas.

Through making films in groups we explored the nature of a constructed place and the production of architectural affect. We used Portmeirion as the set and introduced five themes or influences from elsewhere. Later, we used the films made on the trip as the basis of montage workshops juxtaposing aspects of Portmeirion with Old Moat (Withington), where we based some of our initial Manchester engagement work. Old Moat, built in the 1920’s, followed the principles of the Garden Suburb and vestiges of the English picturesque in the estate layout can still be detected.





Year 5

Masters of Architecture (MArch)

Manchester School of Architecture Projects atelier (MSAp) was set up in 2005 to develop architectural projects with a life outside of the school. Each year around 25 post-graduate (MArch) Architecture students develop collaborative projects which examine the potential of architecture and urban design to affect issues of social equality. The MArch course lasts two years following a first, three year degree in Architecture (BA) and a year in practice. The students are therefore referred to as 5th years and 6th years and develop design methodologies and research in the 5th year and go on to produce resolved building proposals in the 6th year.

Student Projects

Manchester Skills Exchange | Richard Coskie

Drifting in the City | Katherine Livermore

Slip Between the Cracks | Tom Lyth

The Old Moat Motion Picture Experience | Jordan Taylor Moore

Music for Old Moat | Samuel Neal

The Rochdale Canal Project | Mariacarla Norall

Mobile Public Services | Rufus Nugent

Breaking Barriers in Old Moat, Withington | May-Ling Nuttman

DiverCity Community Hub - Access all eras | Adam Shah



Richard Coskie



Katherine Livermore



Tom Lyth



Jordan Taylor Moore



Samuel Neal



Mariacarla Norall



Rufus Nugent



May-Ling Nuttman



Adam Shah



Manchester Skills Exchange

Richard Coskie

In an attempt to reutilise the unwanted items in our consumer society, combat street waste and help local people gain and share skills, the Manchester Skills Exchange is a project in Moss Side that facilitates the dissemination of craft labour skills through the upcycling of furniture and household items.

The building incorporates a depository tower for the organised dumping of unwanted items, a number of material specific workshops and a retail space, offering jobs and skill learning positions at all points of the building programme.

The building materiality and structure reflects the design and making process of recycled furniture by utilising the dumped waste materials of Moss Side, acting as a physical symbol of how recycling can help create a more sustainable community.

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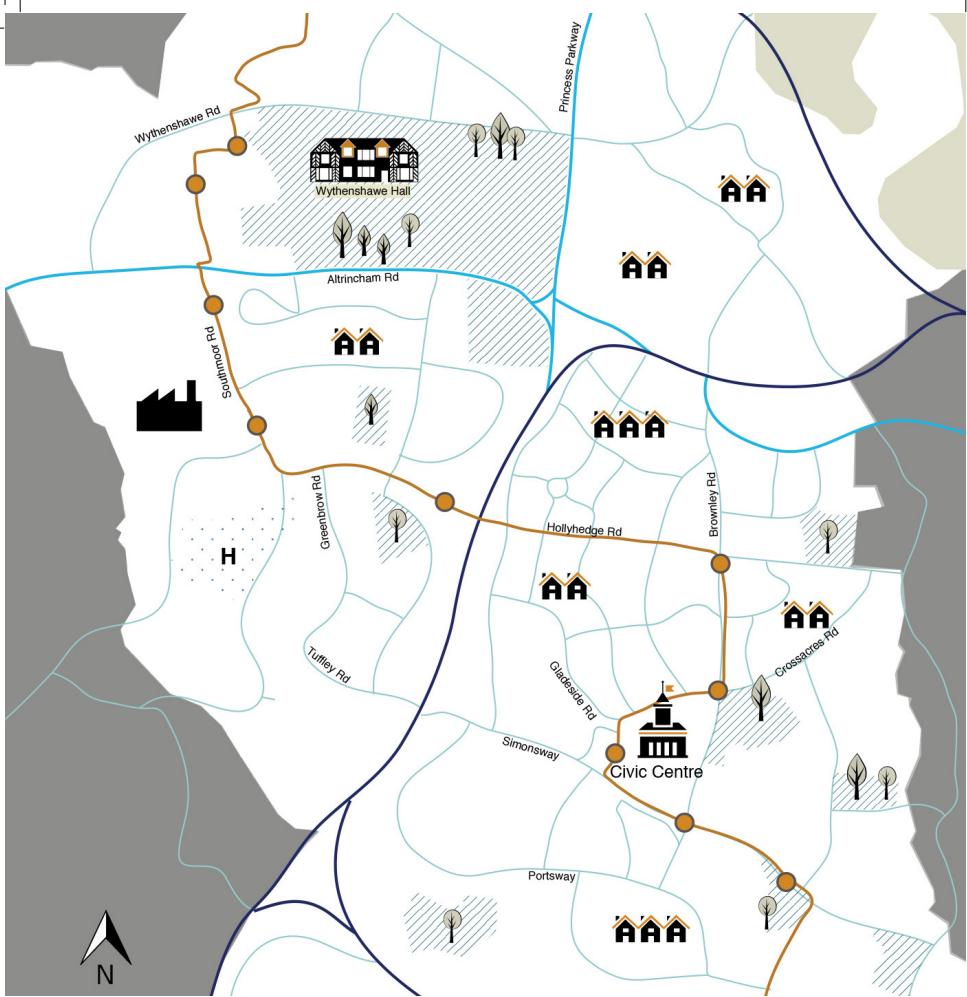


Engagement

Richard Coskie

The project idea grew from discussions I had with residents of South Manchester at the Age-friendly event in Withington. A number of conversations divulged problems with street rubbish and the dumping of unwanted household goods, alongside the levels of unemployment in areas of South Manchester. These current issues inspired investigations into the throwaway culture of our consumer society, and the existing route into employment.

Consequently the project collaborated with The Wesley Community Furniture Centre; a charity who upcycle furniture and household products and reinstate them back into the local community of Moss Side. Through the physical upcycling of a number of furniture items for the charity, I was able to learn craft skills, decipher the workshop mentality and discover how people can best interact in a skills exchange from the engagements with The Wesley Centre.



Drifting in the City

Katie Livermore

The role of the volunteer is becoming increasingly important in society. Often it is a stepping stone to employment or further education, as well as being a way to contribute to the local community. Wythenshawe Volunteers work throughout the city to provide services for young and old, however there is a lack of facilities which support the health, well-being and existing skills of these volunteers.

Through events and meetings with the volunteers, it was established that the M56 motorway created a physical barrier, dividing the people and services of Wythenshawe. This led to research into the role of infrastructure in the city; how people use it, how it connects places and activities as well as forming barriers between space. The concept of drifting and play in the city were introduced to explore alternative uses of infrastructure as a method of connecting people.

This project challenges the conventions of the tram infrastructure of Manchester to loosen the control associated with public transport; allowing elements of play and chaos to break down existing expectations and social encounters. Tram interventions would provide moving spaces for the volunteers. Their services would be able to cater for a wider demographic of people, on a larger scale; providing a flagship for their work.

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Engagement

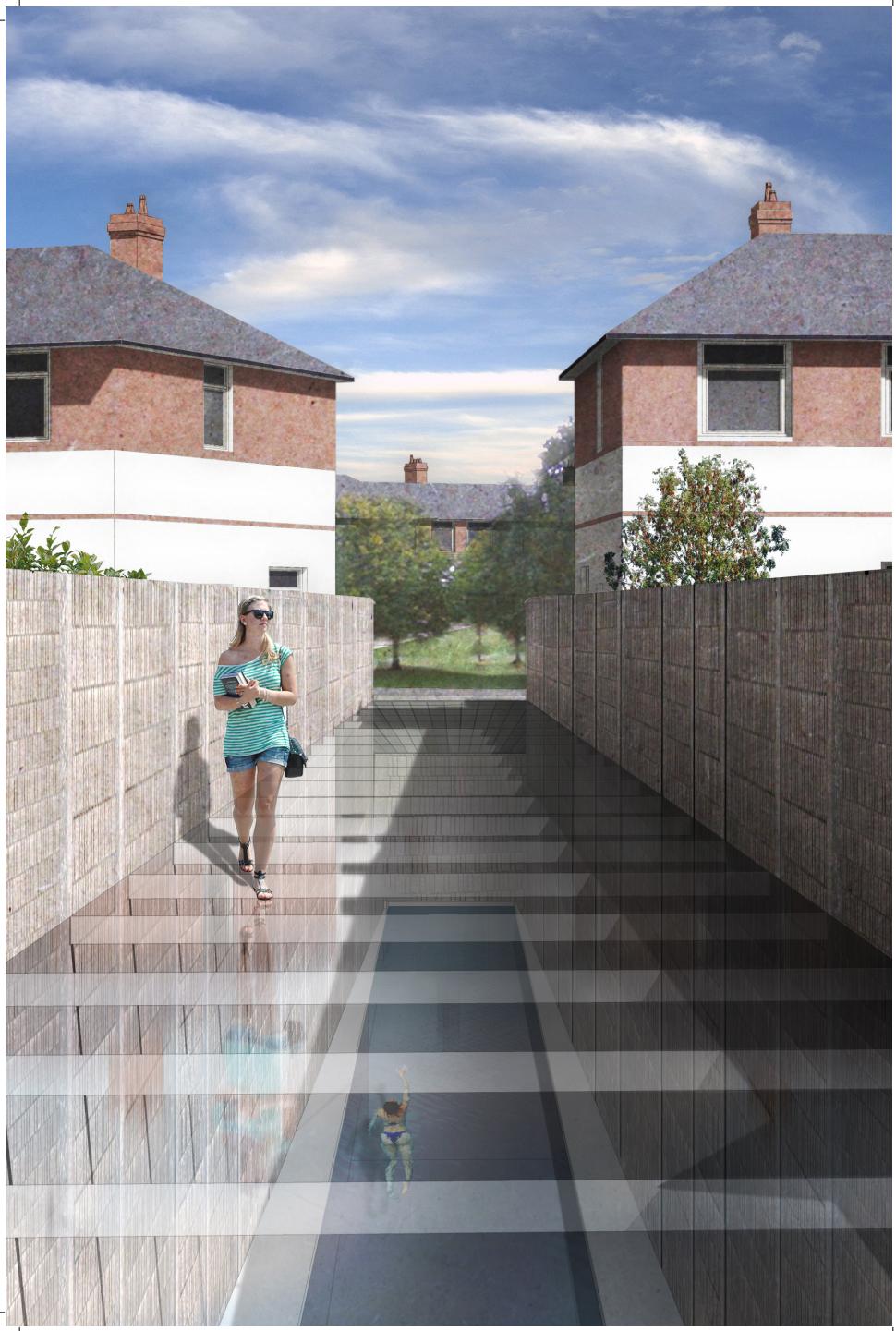
Katie Livermore

The research undertaken this year has had a focus on the perception and appropriation of public space. Engagement exercises have explored how activities within under-used space can alter the way in which they are perceived by their inhabitants, as well as how they can facilitate new social encounters.

Engagement research has taken shape as interactive public installations, meetings and urban games; which seek to gain the opinions of a wider public through physical actions.

Blind Brunch was an installation set up in Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester city centre. A brunch table laden with food and beverages acted as an incentive as well as the final destination for a guided route around the vicinity. The guided route was undertaken wearing sight-restricting glasses; a method to promote awareness of the disorientation of urban places for partially sighted people. The installation also allowed Piccadilly Gardens to become appropriated with a new use for a short amount of time.

Flashymob was an interactive light installation which used the Manchester Canalways as a processional route across the city. A timed audio recording provided instructions and activities which provoked interesting reactions from the participants.



Slip Between the Cracks

Tom Lyth

This project aims to enhance the quality of life for the residents of Old Moat by expressing the unseen potential within the ginnels. By utilising the assets of the community and listening to their concerns, alongside an in depth analysis of the existing ginnels, I produced a range of customised concepts for the ginnels. Each of these concepts contains their own character and function to benefit the local community of Old Moat.

The concepts that contribute to this master plan include the following;

a swimming pool and outdoor gym to compensate for the closure of Withington Baths and its facilities.

a water feature running under a walk way as a historic reference to a brook in order to add a calming restorative feature to a busy commute route.

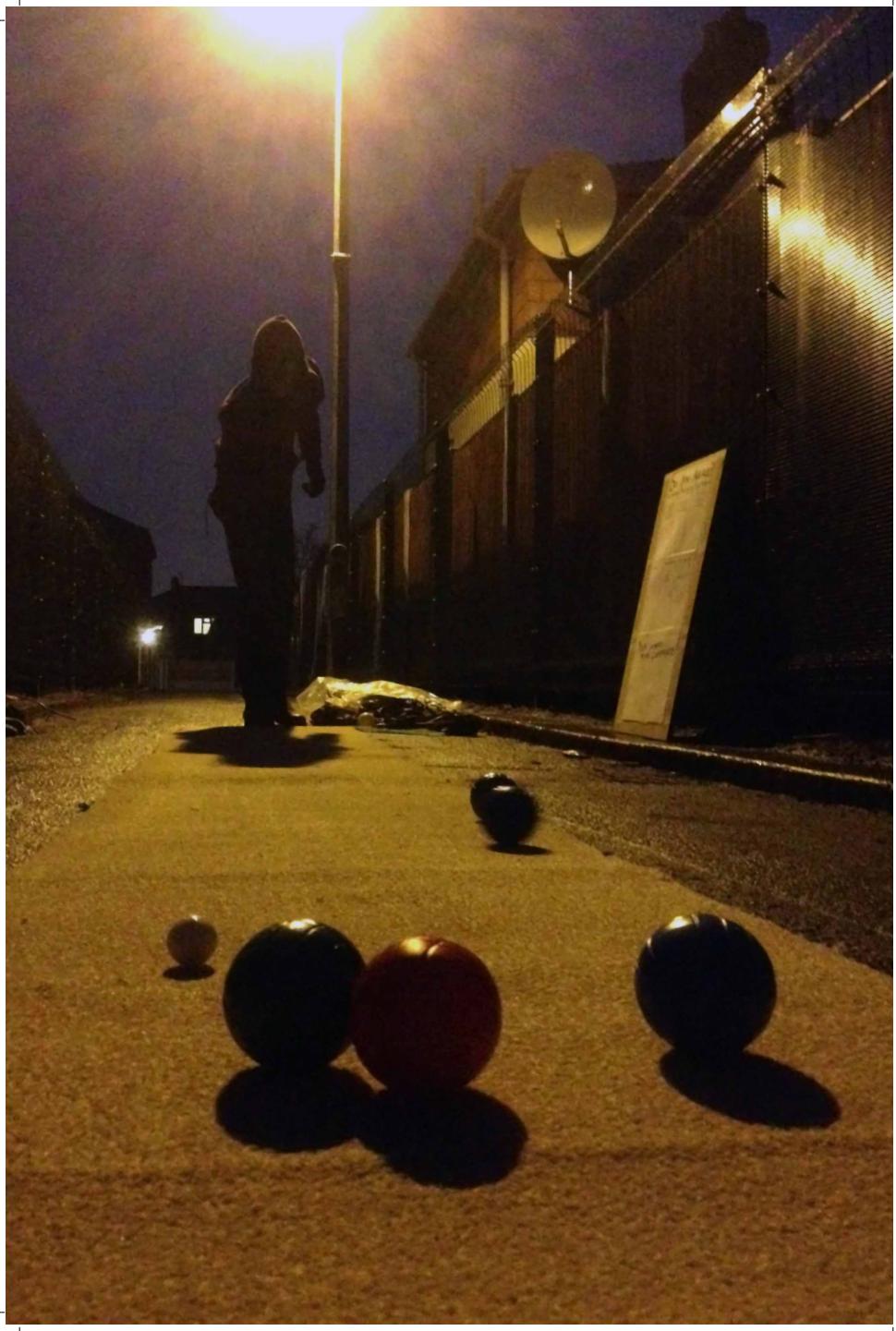
a gallery to exhibit the art work of the members of the Minehead Centre, a community building for older people.

a market and a range of vegetable plot units to work in relation to the extremely popular local allotments.

a set of virtual shopping units and distribution centre to reduce the distance for walking for groceries to less than 500 metres for all the residents of Old Moat.

a linear playground for the students of Old Moat Primary School to identify with on their commute.

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Engagement

Tom Lyth

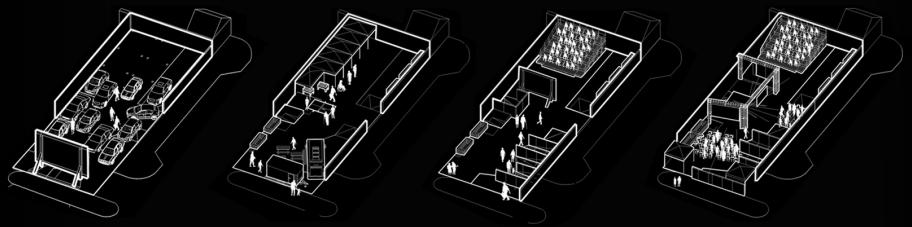
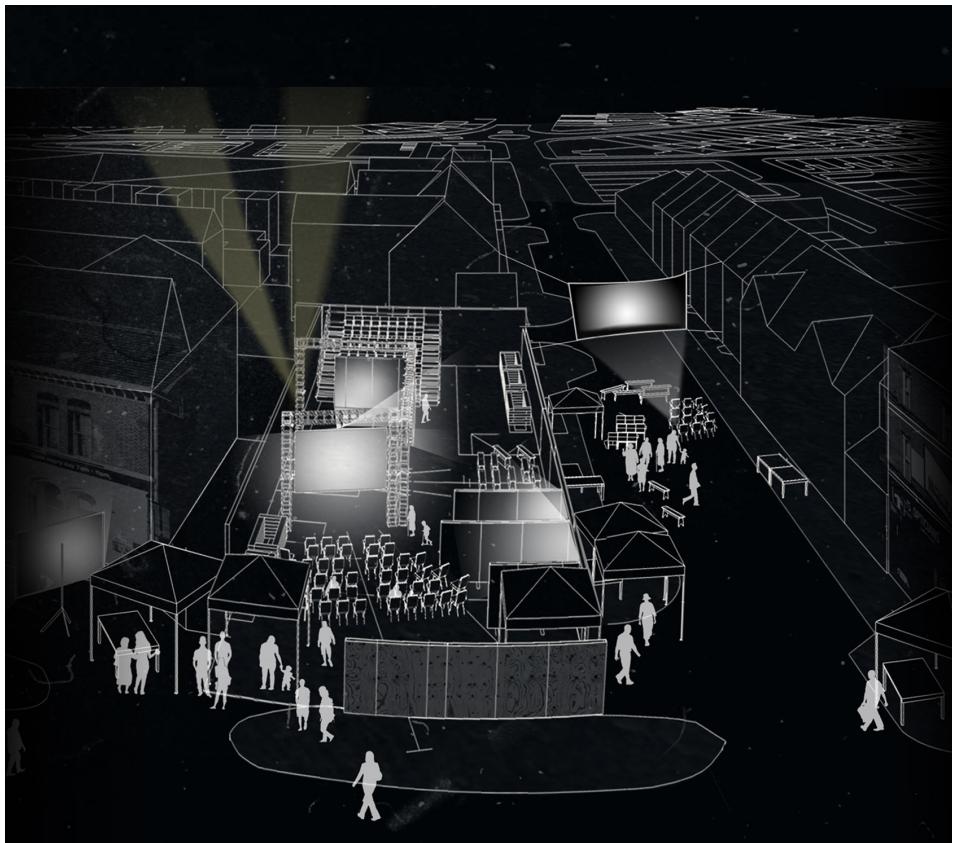
Following the topics raised in a community workshop, I decided to investigate the perception of crime within Old Moat and the communities' attitude towards the ginnels.

I discussed these concerns with Councillors and the local police force. I also held an engagement exercise within the ginnels themselves to get feedback from those who use the ginnels on a regular basis.

To improve Old Moat as a whole, the most effective approach proved to be to emphasise the positive attributes of the area, rather than attempting to reduce the negative aspects. Each of these attributes themes was then related to one or more of the ginnels based upon their physical location and form.

By providing the ginnels with their own characters and functions, the residents would have a fresh perspective, sense of pride and respect for their community.

These extensions of their current attributes are specifically adapted to the community of Old Moat to ensure the long-term effectiveness of each scheme.



The Old Moat Motion Picture Experience

Jordan Taylor Moore

While people often seek to affect change in their local areas, the lack of local facilities and spaces for communities to gather together, collect and organise can have a major impact on their ability to effect change. The creation of informal gathering spaces, accessible in both function and location, can be critical for fledgling community groups and partnerships in the early stages of development.

The Old Moat Motion Picture Experience proposes the creation of these spaces in the communities of Old Moat and Withington, through the device of cinema. Presented as a series of film screening events designed to draw people together, the scheme creates a collected focus that is accessible to all residents, regardless of age and across social boundaries, through the universal love of cinema and film.

The project is centred on the site of a former local cinema, but can operate as smaller screening spaces that act as a network across Old Moat and Withington, in any location and at any time, maximising accessibility and availability to local residents.

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Engagement

Jordan Taylor Moore

The focus on cinema as part of the project was informed by the local residents' nostalgia for the former cinema in Withington. I documented and recorded local residents memories and experiences of cinema and film. By running film screening events and "Afternoon Tea" sessions with residents, I was able to gather experiences and memories illustrating the importance of cinema in residents lives.

This engagement was aided by working with the "Small Cinema" in Moston for three months, helping to understand how a cinema or screenings could be set up, as well as the particulars of projecting and screening films to the public. Working with the North West Film Archive I was able to set up screenings of Historic footage of Withington in the local library in the early part of 2013, giving me an opportunity to test concepts and theories for the mobile cinema.



Music for Old Moat

Samuel Neal

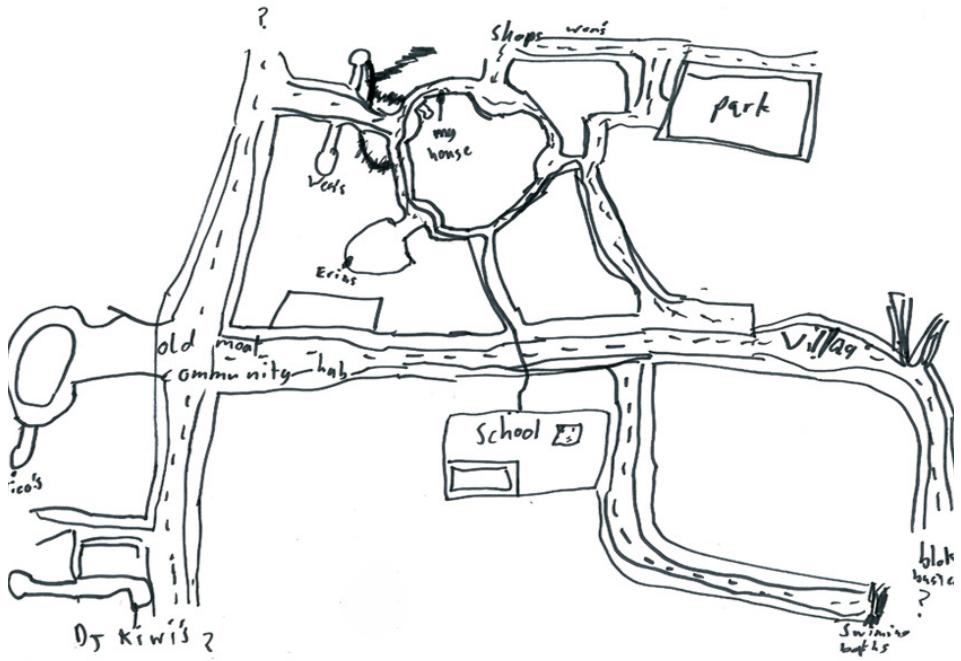
Through conversations with the residents of Old Moat and the students and teachers at Old Moat Primary School it was clear that many people felt disconnected from their local community and let down by a lack of social and cultural facilities.

Further conversations and independent research highlighted music as a great way to break down social barriers and bring together a fractured community. Music is ageless and in its many forms is enjoyed by all walks of life. Music has also been proven to improve academic ability, reduce anxiety and increase personal wellbeing.

The Old Moat Music School is a purpose built music hub in South Manchester. The school shares its site and facilities with Old Moat Primary School and is situated in the heart of community.

The school offers music lessons, workshops and activities to all ages as well as a lively hub for numerous other community activities and a popular social meeting point. The practice rooms can be booked by local musicians or independent music teachers and the café and music garden can be enjoyed by families and older people alike.

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Engagement

Samuel Neal

Designing for a community starts with understanding who that community is and what it is they want or need. Architects can go about this in many ways but within MSAp we go directly to source and talk to the people that make up that community. We understand the importance of local knowledge and community identity within designing within a community.

Meeting with key members of a community (residents, local businesses, schools, community groups, local authorities...) leads conversations to the heart of existing positives and negatives within the area and provides an insight into what the community need and how they want to go about it.

Music for Old Moat started off as a conversation that highlighted a need and led to a series of events in Old Moat and the surrounding area. Along with two other members of MSAp we designed and ran paper craft, modelling and music workshops in local primary schools and galleries.

These events were designed to allow children to communicate their feelings and perceptions of space and community through different 'languages' or activities. These workshops allow the children to have a voice within the designing of their community in ways they are confident to express themselves.



THE ROCHDALE CANAL PROJECT



The Rochdale Canal Project

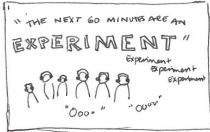
Mariacarla Norall

“Welcome to the Rochdale Canal Project. Whether you are in want of a relaxing walk, an alternative night out, or simply a bit of exercise, the Rochdale Canal Project offers something for whatever floats your boat, right here in Manchester’s city centre”

The Rochdale Canal Project is a master plan for Manchester’s Rochdale Canal, located at the heart of the city centre. The master plan proposes a series of interventions aimed at encouraging city dwellers to make use of this beautiful space.

Opened in 1804 at the height of the industrial revolution, the Rochdale Canal was once the driving force of Manchester’s economy and a fundamental means of transport through the city. With the decline of the industrial revolution the canal fell into disuse and many stretches of water have been covered up and forgotten. The Rochdale Canal Project uses interventions such as the ‘Urban Oasis’ and ‘Not-so-secret-cinema’ to bring people back into these fascinating spaces and value their history.

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RSVP on facebook @ MANCHESTER FLASHMOB

FLASHYMOB

12th December 2012

@ 2:45pm

meet at the shed entrance

What you need:

mp3 player or smart phone // headphone // camera // pen or pencil

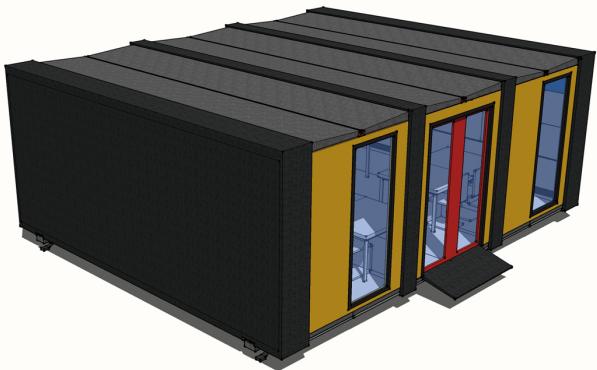
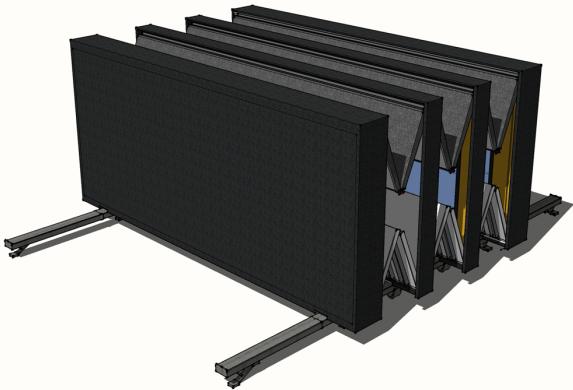


Engagement

Mariacarla Norall

My project for the Rochdale Canal was informed by the Flash(y)mob in which participants were instructed to bring their mp3s or smartphones in order to download and listen to a specially recorded audio file. This was activated simultaneously at a given time and contained instructions about what to do on the canal. The Flash(y)mob formed a crucial part of my project since it confirmed my opinion about the Rochdale Canal's great potential. Feedback from the Flash(y)mob participants allowed me to develop ideas about the Rochdale Canal as an alternative means of transport and leisure in the city.

Through collaboration with the Ancoats Canal Project (ACP) I was able to build on the ideas I collected during the Flash(y)mob. The ACP works to bring local people together to make the historic canals in Ancoats cleaner, safer and more attractive places for everyone to enjoy. I joined the ACP at their committee meetings and exchanged ideas about how to improve Manchester's canal experience.



Mobile Public Services

Rufus Nugent

The project explores ways in which opportunities of contact can help strengthen and build bonds within a community. It identifies the support from local key public services as integral parts to the well being of an area, as well as a platform for residence to meet each other and build a rapport with the local authorities.

The project proposes an architectonic mobile solution in light of the recent government cuts to local public services, such as adult learning facilities, leisure centres and community hubs. It explores ways these services, in particular adult learning can continue to be delivered in areas where centres have been closed and reach areas that did not previously have access to them.

From a central site in Moss Side, these autonomous mobile structures are driven around on hook-lift trailers to support the surrounding areas of Old Moat, Burnage and Chorlton. The structures, which come equipped with the necessities to fulfil their requested function are designed to expand and unfold. Once the activity has finished it collapses into its original form and moves on to the following location.

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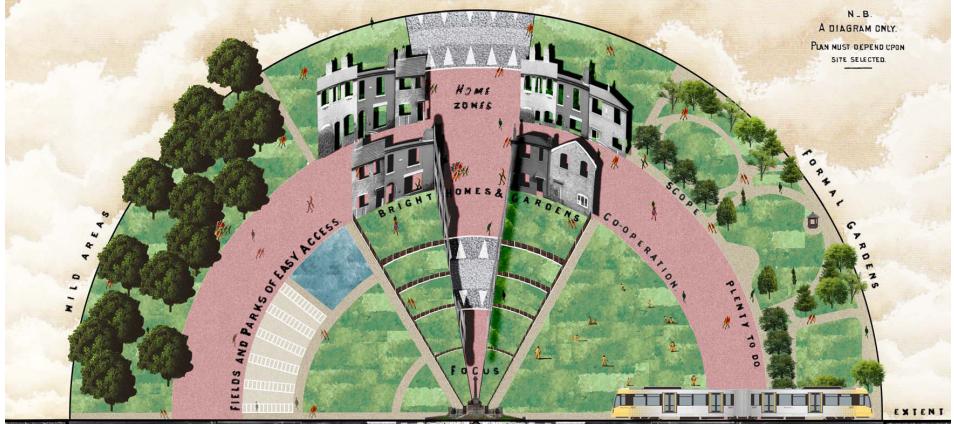
Engagement

Rufus Nugent

Focusing on adult education and supporting people into employment, my project draws upon dialogues held with members of Southways Housing Trust, The Old Moat Adult Learning Hub and the local residents of Old Moat and Withington.

Much of the feedback echoed similar concerns regarding the impact of local government cuts to key services on the well being of the local community. This was reiterated by staff from Southways Housing Trust, Catherine Morris and Gavin Brotherston, as well as Paula O'Reilly, Director at The Old Moat Adult Learning Hub.

Key public services such as the aforementioned adult learning centres evidently play a vital role in building the confidence of those affected by government savings. With growing concerns over welfare cuts, it became evident that supporting tenants and local residents back into work in order to subsidise their household income has never been of greater importance.



Breaking Barriers in Old Moat, Withington

May Ling Nuttman

This project investigates meaningful and valuable ways to promote mental health and well-being for older residents in Old Moat. Inspired by numerous conversations and engagement workshops and events with local residents, many older and vulnerable residents of the area felt disengaged and isolated from the rest of the community.

Through the exploration into methods which empower older and vulnerable residents, the majority of people claimed to seek respite from stresses of daily life through restorative environments. Such environments allow people to recharge their batteries and leaves them feeling more able to deal with challenging situations and events. People experience these environments through their five senses and this project explores the possibility of a person experiencing a space with a sixth sense, emotion, and adopts methods and concepts of environmental psychology in order to improve their mental health and well-being.

Consequently, sensory nostalgic experiences and spaces were proposed where specific senses were captured as sensory triggers to recreate positive memories. This environmental support was a step towards trying to overcome issues of loneliness and isolation, aiming to empower Old Moat residents to feel more confident within themselves, hopefully improving community cohesion and engagement as a result.

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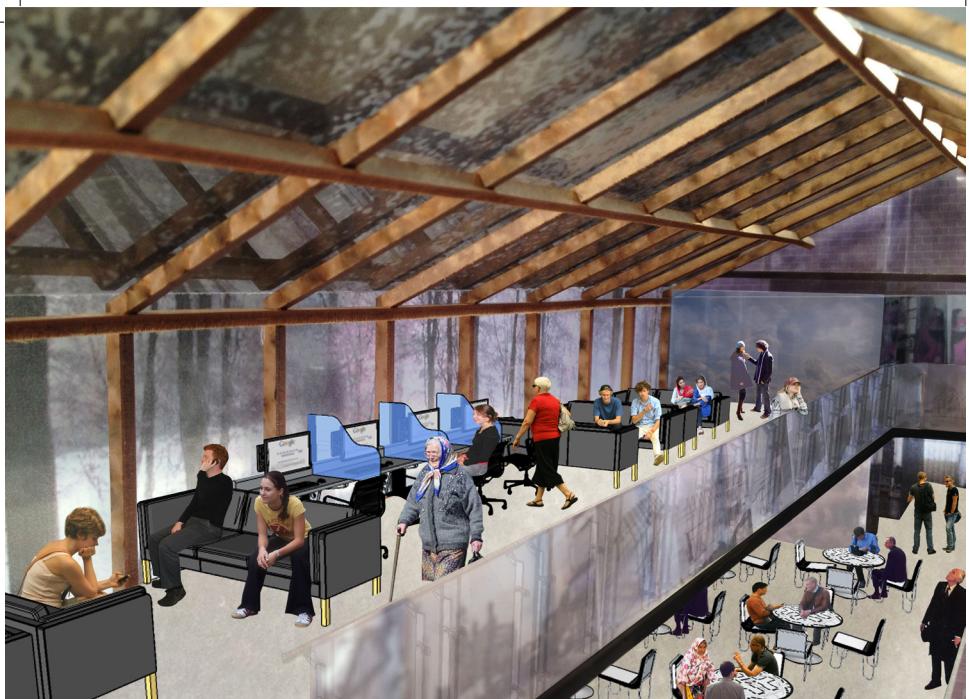
Engagement

May Ling Nuttman

After gaining a better idea of whom my project would focus around through initial investigations, engagement workshops and research, I set up a workshop in a local day centre for over 55's at the Minehead Community Centre in Old Moat. This workshop aimed to investigate what different scenes, sounds, textures and smells older Old Moat residents liked and disliked and they were also encouraged to share stories and memories that these sensory samples triggered. This produced a valuable sensory palette I used in my proposal to create nostalgic restorative experiences.

Having already established a positive relationship with the centre, I held another event encouraging older Old Moat residents to draw their favourite (restorative) places in their neighbourhood. These drawings highlighted specific environments that affected their emotions positively and through a series of drawings, I was able to draw out emergent themes. Following this exercise, I drew up a chart where these participants could voice their opinions and vote for the themes they felt most passionate about.

Throughout my engagement with the community, I have been able to invest my time and efforts in creating bespoke meaningful and valuable spaces for the older Old Moat residents I engaged with. I was able to gain a deeper understanding into their lives through this process, immersing myself into their world and I feel that this approach is incredibly valuable as we are able to provide useful and helpful design interventions that effect the community positively and delves beyond superficial face-value happiness.



DiverCity Community Hub - Access all eras

Adam Shah

Architecture is inherently linked to the needs of people and society. In the context of an ageing society, it is increasingly important for buildings and the public realm to be designed to consider the needs of older users.

Many of the residents in the Old Moat estate, in Withington, South Manchester are over 50 years of age. Using a participative approach I was able to engage with the residents which enabled me to understand their needs and discover the key issues that later informed my design. The main issue that my proposal aims to tackle is the lack of communication, particularly between generations, that leads to other issues such as isolation, loneliness and stereotypes.

The DiverCity Community Hub incorporates a café, radio station, learning facilities, meeting room, a physical rehabilitation space and a skate park. The facilities embrace the needs of both older and younger people. The location (adjacent to the university accommodation and bus route) draws students into the area, encouraging them to mix with the older residents of Old Moat, therefore helping to break down barriers in communication, reduce isolation and loneliness and remove stereotypes. The hub aims to provide a platform for interaction across generations, to create a more diverse, age-friendly environment.

The materiality of the building uses printed glass, with images taken of people and places in the Old Moat community. The idea being to promote nostalgia and that when one enters the building, they enter the community.

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Engagement

Adam Shah

During this project I have conducted workshops and walking interviews, appeared on the radio, been involved in a protest and had conversations, cake, and cups of tea with a variety of people in the community ranging from age 9 - 89. Each person, no matter what their age, or background has been critical in informing me about their neighbourhood. I believe that it is crucial in the process of design for the users' voices to be heard in order to provide a solution for both physical and social issues.

"A participative approach aims to empower both users and clients to play an active role in the decision-making and the creative process... In a participative approach, the possibility of expression and evolution of participants 'desire' is the precondition of their empowerment."

Doina Petrescu

Year 6

Masters of Architecture (MArch)

Student Projects

Scott Bearman | British Youth Parliament

Philippa Birch | Action For Sustainable Living H.Q

Simon Bottomley | Harpurhey Transitions

Robert Chilton | Hello Hulme Hippodrome

Sara Dowle | Let's Live in Old Moat!

Hannah Dyas | The Com-operative Grocery Lab

Francesca Fernandes | The Leaf Street Bridge Centre

Helen Flynn | Children's Creative Centre - Old Moat

Christina Gregoriou | Tactile Futures in Manchester City Center

Lucy Hale | S.P.A.C.E - Specialist Places for Autistic-Spectrum Care and Education

Redeate Kenbata | Re-imagine Longsight

Derin Kinacigil | Chronic Care in the City

Tiago Luxton | The CO-OP Aqua Farm

Sam Morris | Turning empty houses into homes

Stephanos Spirakis | Brunswick Participatory Museum & Community Archaeology Project



Scott Bearman



Sara Dowle



Christina Gregoriou



Tiago Luxton



Philippa Birch



Simon Bottomley



Robert Chilton



Hannah Dyas



Francesca Fernandes



Helen Flynn



Lucy Healy



Redeata Kenbata



Derin Kinacigil



Sam Morris



Stephanos Spirakis



British Youth Parliament

Scott Bearman

The British Youth Parliament will bring together local and national youth organisations and charities in order for them to work together to promote youth voice. This will allow them to effectively lobby government and councils on issues and campaigns which affect them. The building merges informal public meeting and social spaces with more formal campaign offices and media facilities, all centred around a multi-functional debating chamber. This operates as a place for debates, meetings, exhibitions and concerts.

The project ties into development plans for the Central Library and Town Hall Complex in Manchester, creating a third space for young people to relax, socialise and interact in the city centre. The open ground floor ties into the St Peter's Square redevelopment with a café, amphitheatre, skate park and covered market places. The building is designed to be as permeable as possible, allowing people to see and interact with the building without having to enter it. This breaks down ideas of exclusivity and inaccessibility by enabling young people to engage with the building as much as they feel comfortable with. A green bridge cuts across St Peter's Square, linking the building with the Town Hall Extension, and evolves to become the major circulation route around the building. This culminates in a grass plain, high above the square giving views across to the Library and Town Hall.

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Engagement

Scott Bearman

My initial research began with the 2011 riots, specifically at the anger that seemed to be directed towards government and the police, and the participation of so many young people. This developed into a partnership with a group of teenagers and Manchester City Council in developing and set up the Manchester Youth Council, launched in November 2012. In a time when recession and austerity measures are impacting public services and news articles are discussing the poverty that many young people are growing up in, it seemed important to me to develop a forum in which their opinions could be voiced. I have worked with the Youth Council for over a year and a half, participating in a number of events to help form its structure and campaigns based on engagement with young people. At the same time, we forged links with regional and national youth organisations, such as the NorthWest Regional Work Unit and the British Youth Council.

In the summer of 2012, Manchester City Council asked me to develop and run a consultation workshop with 20 young people across the city to help with the design of the Central Library and the Town Hall Extension. The workshop aimed to explore how the Council could increase the number of young people using the library and what facilities it should have in order to facilitate this. The workshop also looked at the issues of Youth Employment and how the Council could better tailor its services towards young people, as well as engaging more of them in democracy and civic duty. This involved discussions and interactions with the architects, the client teams and local councillors, who attended a presentation and offered to champion ideas which they felt had particular merit.



Action For Sustainable Living H.Q

Philippa Birch

I propose a new central HQ for the award winning charity Action For Sustainable Living that raises AWARENESS of their cause, recruits volunteers and educates the public on how to create sustainable communities. The latter is achieved by teaching the public about the civil unity and resourcefulness that occurred in Manchester during WWII, a period that is a relevant precedent in dealing with today's environmental and economic difficulties.

Much like the projects AFSL organise, the building tackles the waste in society by reusing, reclaiming and recycling waste objects (building materiality), waste talent (visitors/potential volunteers) and waste space (the site, incorporating a forgotten air raid shelter).

The new, stacked tunnel typologies create a connection to the existing deep structures of the arches beneath. These forms cantilever into main thoroughfares to draw attention. The continuous translucent skin, printed with promotion, offers an idea of the activities within whilst giving anonymity.

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Engagement

Philippa Birch

To understand what the charity Action for Sustainable Living do first hand, I attended a training weekend and became an AFSL local project manager.

This gave me a thorough understanding of the type of activities AFSL host and the types of spaces they need. It gave me a direct line of contact to the project coordinators to create a brief of their needs.

It was through AFSL that I got involved with Rusholme Job centre. I produced a questionnaire asking unemployed 18-24 year olds, the potential users of my building, if they had considered climate change and volunteering. I also conducted a focus group with job centre clients discussing how it could improve to become an inspiring place where skill sharing and volunteering is more heavily integrated.

Engaging with the users of my design proposal has made it all the more realistic and sympathetic. It has made me a more confident and passionate person. I have been developing my own AFSL project with City South Housing Association throughout the year.



Harpurhey Transitions

Simon Bottomley

Manchester has the highest number of “Looked After Children” in the U.K, with statistically 3 in every 200 children having been through the care system (3 times the national average). With recent funding cuts to Youth Services by Manchester Council and their habit of ‘dumping’ these young people on other Local Authorities, the necessary provisions for the vulnerable within our society are not in place.

Through analysis of the audience and of Manchester a suitable site was chosen within the town of Harpurhey, North of Manchester City Centre. Through engagement with charitable organisations the programme was established; a respite care centre, a care home and a transitions centre (acting as a point of reference for families, young people and carers, and a space in which the local community can engage with those in care).

The design process carried out, followed a deconstructive nature, analysing what currently is on site and reconstructing the idea of it. This followed the ethos of the programme in providing homely spaces for those in care. The vernacular of the terraced house that surrounds the site was deconstructed, and along with the necessary external landscaping, a design, which struck the balance between private and public, was developed.

simon_bottomley88@hotmail.com

ENGAGEMENT DIARY 2012 - 2013

Simon Bottomley
MSc. RIBA / MArch
MSc. CDT

Wednesday

12th



Moston Small Cinema Event

December

October



Harpurhey Factory Youth Zone Event

together
trust

care • education • support • since 1870

Engagement

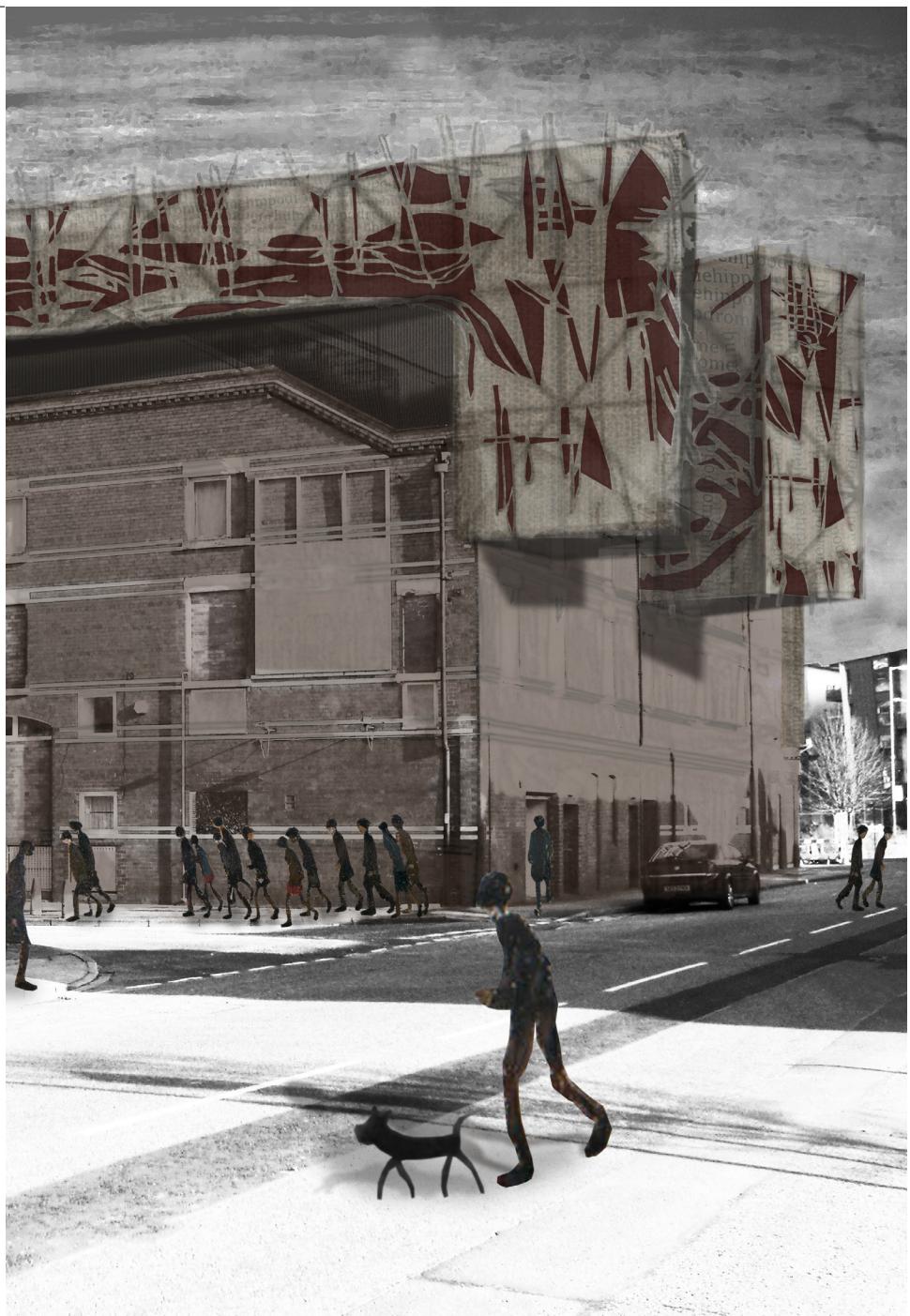
Simon Bottomley

With the sensitive nature of my target audience it was all but impossible to talk to any children within the care system. However over the course of the year I engaged instead with a couple of charities that deal with looked after children, the main charity being The Together Trust.

Through a series of initial meetings with The Together Trust I was given the opportunity to visit a residential care home within Stockport for young children that suffer from autism. This gave me the opportunity to engage with the staff and carers of the home and aided in my understanding of the main challenges and issues facing young people in the care of Manchester City Council. It was also possible to discuss the functionality and programming of a building specifically designed for this audience, and the feedback gained was taken through to the design stages.

To increase engagement with younger people I set up an event at Harpurhey Factory Youth Zone as a means of understanding the context in which my site lies and the spaces a child might like to see within their residential settings. Through liaising with the arts director at The Factory Youth Zone, a series of suitable events were created that would engage the users of the club without intimidating them. These events included the 'cool wall' (a Top Gear inspired wall that allows the user to move a building between 'uncool' and 'sub-zero' based on aesthetics and programmatic values), an interactive map (where thoughts of places within Harpurhey could be noted) and comment cards.

Through these meetings / events a thorough understanding of site and audience was established and all comments made were considered during the design process.



Hello Hulme Hippodrome

Rob Chilton

Between 2011 and 2012, just 1.5% of the UK's population participated in a play or drama, 0.9% in a musical or opera, and 9% in dance. My research proves that participation in the arts has a positive impact on community life, encouraging people to interact with each other and develop a sense of identity and belonging.

Hulme Hippodrome has fallen into a state of disrepair. My project proposes the restoration and revitalisation of its beautiful auditorium, while redefining the surrounding spaces so that they truly benefit the people of Hulme. I have taken the notion of 'community theatre' quite literally – a new architectural addition at roof level incorporates a residential street. Here, local people and touring actors can live alongside one another, communicating constantly with the range of activities and events happening in the building below.

My proposal is ambitious yet sympathetic. This is a place where people can define their own agenda and take part in a celebration of the arts.

rob.chil@hotmail.co.uk

HELLO HULME HIPPODROME

Your name: **Tony Wright**

Do you live in Hulme? **NO / Ardwick**

Want to be more involved?
Please write down your email address:

Are you part of a local group or organisation? **The Youth Village LTD**

Have you been inside the Hippodrome before? **YES**

What is your vision?
**Community hub, Supporting the Local
communities Providing services
that are affordable and accessible to
them. A place where Community
Residents can find out about ~~how~~
to access local services, Socialise
and meet new friends**



Engagement

Rob Chilton

Having engaged with staff and users of Manchester's Contact Theatre in order to discover their thoughts about theatre-community relationships, I worked closely with the social enterprise, The Youth Village, to organise an open day at Hulme Hippodrome.

The event was an opportunity for local people to explore this fascinating building and make suggestions for its future. I was impressed with the visitors' enthusiasm, whose visions for the Hippodrome were crucial in developing my proposal for the revitalisation of the building. Importantly, I asked people what kind of community space people would benefit from in Hulme.

I gained the support of neighbouring organisations including Hulme Community Garden Centre and Z-Arts, as well as having an article published in the Manchester Evening News. I have become passionate about this building and believe that local people should be involved in securing its future.



Let's Live in Old Moat!

Sara Dowle

With an increasing ageing population, it is apparent that the cities and towns where we live require adaptions in order to create inclusive places where everyone can live comfortably.

As part of the Age Friendly Cities research on the Old Moat estate in Withington, south Manchester, my project provides a design solution to the key issues effecting the residents, the majority of whom are over 50, and Southway Housing Trust, their landlord, both of whom I worked closely with throughout. These include social isolation, the “Bedroom Tax”, shortage of diverse housing stock, standards of housing and the negative perception of social housing.

Through the redesign of key areas in the estate, street layouts are improved creating permeability in the urban grain and an increase in shared green space. Alongside new adaptable housing typologies with larger internal areas and designed to Lifetime Homes, mixed uses including retail, community enterprise and Southway offices create a heart for a more diverse, age friendly place to live.

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Engagement

Sara Dowle

Starting with an Age Friendly workshop for Old Moat and culminating with a meeting for the stakeholders of the estate, my engagement with the community in Withington has been extremely varied and has had genuine impact on my project.

From chatting with local residents at an afternoon tea session I organised with Withington library to speaking with the social housing provider, Southway Housing Trust, about the issues they and their residents face, from discussing homeshare with the local elderly residential home to marching with the community to 'Save Withington Baths', from presenting my design development to experts at the worldwide Age Friendly City conference to creating models with the younger residents at Old Moat Primary School, I really believe that engagement is key for us as architectural designers to understand the wants, needs and wishes of those we are designing for.

"to form a relationship with the communities that they will be serving and ultimately become part of"

Cesal 2010 p191



The Com-operative Grocery Lab

Hannah Dyas

This project responded to research conducted into the Food Futures programme and its strategy for reducing food poverty in Manchester. The scheme aims to tie together the programme's many valuable and engaging initiatives. Such initiatives include cooking classes, social dining programmes, nutrition seminars, community growing projects and food-related social enterprise schemes.

Situated in Collyhurst, the scheme offers a closed-loop sustainable, healthy and affordable food system for the local community. Food is grown, prepared, cooked and sold on the site. The scheme empowers the local community to make better food choices and grow their own food, increasing health and reducing dependence on supermarkets. Collaboration with city-wide businesses also offers participants the opportunity to gain the skills needed to unlock new employment prospects across the catering industry and beyond. The scheme also seeks to increase community cohesion and strengthen neighbourhood bonds.

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Engagement

Hannah Dyas

My project developed as a response to a number of insightful and invaluable community engagements I conducted with a wide variety of community groups, policy makers and neighbourhood residents. These engagements not only enriched my project and the quality of the design, but also enabled me to develop my personal understanding of the role that the architect should adopt in contemporary society. Every single person that I met during these engagements positively contributed to the success of the final design, and without these people my project would have been far less rich.

Having the opportunity to discuss my project with the Food Futures staff enabled me to better ground my project in reality. Enthusiasm from the staff I consulted enabled me to push the design forward with more enthusiasm and momentum, ultimately helping me to develop a project to be proud of.



The Leaf Street Bridge Centre

Francesca Fernandes

The Leaf Street Bridge Centre will enable disenfranchised youths to have a better outlook on life, system of care and support network enabling social integration whilst combating stigma and creating equal opportunities. This can be achieved through a three-stage programme on site with varying degrees of privacy for varied users groups who are part of the local community.

The scheme provides community gardens, youth rehabilitation services, conference facilities, a cookery school, retail outlets and dining facilities. The journey from one end of the site to the other should provide disenfranchised youths who may have mental health issues with the opportunity to reintegrate into society and have first hand interaction with the local community. The design features reduced on-site construction, uses prefabricated primary and secondary structure from renewable timber sources and harvesting of fruit and vegetables on site. The dining facilities and cookery school will bring youths from the rehab programme and the general public together in order to integrate, socialize, learn skills and generate income. Food and produce will be sourced from the local area and from fruit and vegetables on site. This will enable a sustainable income, which will be fed back into the centre.

francesca.fernandes@me.com



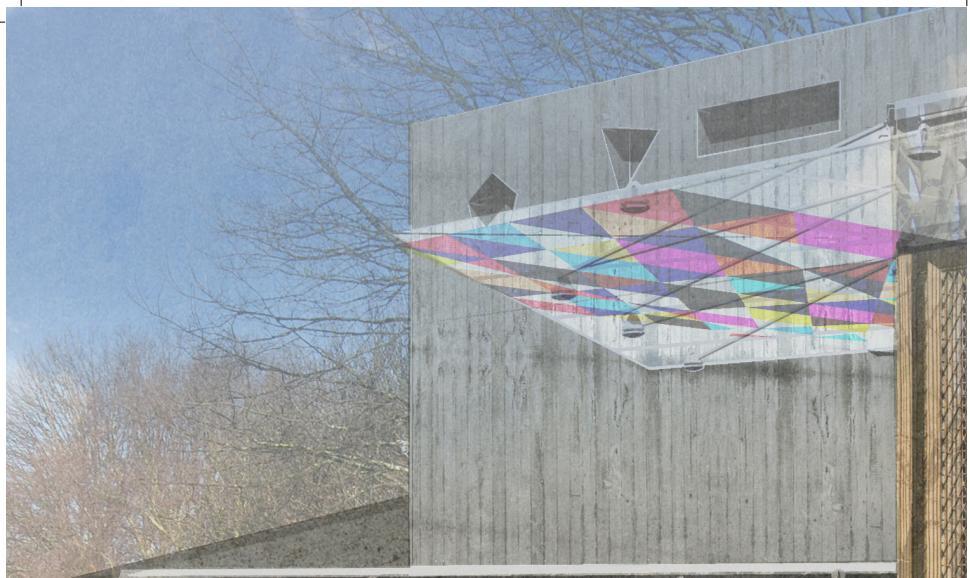
Engagement

Francesca Fernandes

I decided to investigate mental health issues in the community in Hulme, Manchester and what struck me most was the youth generation who were affected by poor education and poor diet. By changing the way we look at mental health care and re-examining the system we can make positive changes in society and communities.

I ran an event with Manchester MIND Charity to bring people in the community in Hulme together to have a Christmas Meal. It was held to connect these people through food, where they could chat and meet new people or catch up with colleagues. My aim was to investigate how people could communicate with each other freely whilst having their dinner, whether this was the catalyst that brought them all together and whether they felt that food was the most important factor at the event.

I investigated how people communicated with each other, whilst trying to run the kitchen, set up the seating and tables and serve the food, all tasks that I greatly enjoyed as I knew it was going towards a good cause. The people who came along enjoyed the food, enjoyed the chat and most of all enjoyed 'embracing humanity' through food.



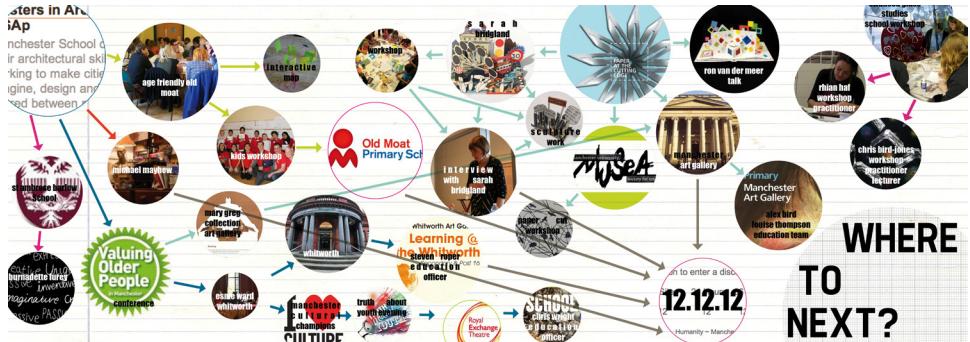
Children's Creative Centre - Old Moat

Helen Flynn

Evidence shows that integrated art education and encouraging creativity can impact on learning and behaviour in schools (Furey, 2006). The intention of this design project was to investigate the benefits of craft and making as a tool for teaching children of primary school age. The design project would instil the value of making and material possibilities in young children and change their perceptions of 'enjoying art' and 'making' whilst increasing its accessibility. The project addressed and raised awareness of the importance of learning styles (visual, auditory, logical and kinaesthetic) to aid education.

The product is a centre for craft and making specifically designed for children in Old Moat. It was initiated by discussions with Staff from Old Moat Primary School, who stated that many of the extra curricular activities were focused in the neighbouring schools in the area, there being a lack of focus on Old Moat. The form was influenced by skills to be taught in the centre. Material considerations for the centre were linked to processes and skills e.g. glass, printing, paper engineering and modelling. Transparency was the main theme to be considered as the project aimed to break the impermeable 'Moat' barrier (road network) around Old Moat, allowing access to neighbouring resources, such as green spaces, and linking the area to the rest of the city.

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The image contains promotional text for 'Urban Craft' at the Manchester Art Gallery. It includes the gallery's address, opening hours, target audience, and a free admission note. A small photograph of a craft activity is visible in the bottom right corner.

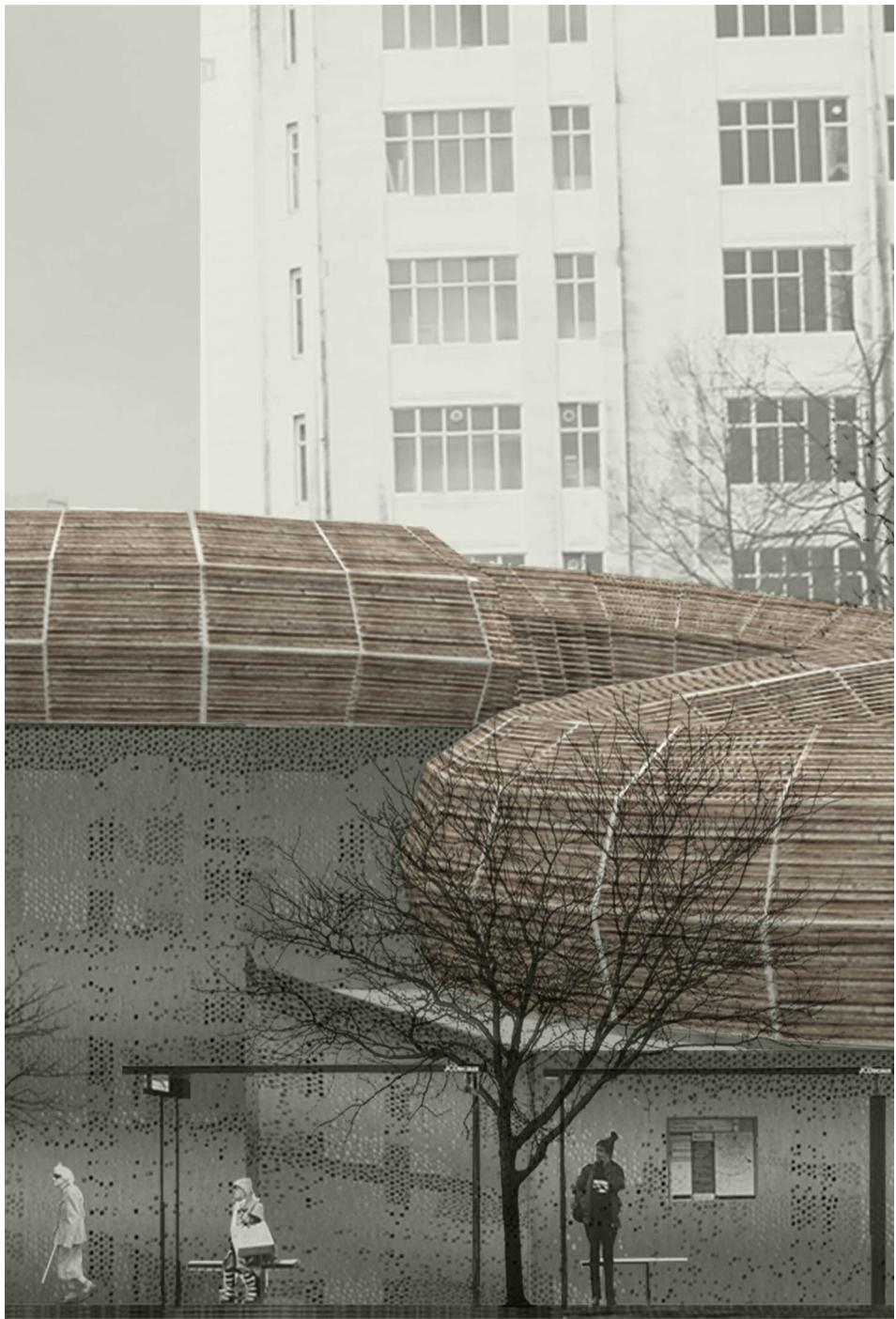


Engagement

Helen Flynn

A large network of engagement was established following an initial workshop and activity day held with the children of Old Moat Primary School. Next, a number of engagement and workshop events were held in order to conduct primary research into the topic of art and education. These included craft workshops with the children of Old Moat Primary using paper and clay, an open access workshop at the Whitworth Gallery, school assemblies, discussions with the education departments of the Whitworth Gallery, Manchester Art Gallery and Royal Exchange Theatre, and conversations and questionnaires with artist practitioners and teachers. These events together with discussions and craft workshops allowed the investigation of themes such as place-identity, craft, learning through making, and interdisciplinary skills. In addition, understanding the gap in education in relation to art and making by conducting a literature review and primary research was important to inform the design process and create a grounded and rich project.

Discussions and workshops with the residents of the area and children of Old Moat Primary School allowed a thorough understanding of the issues and the specific needs of the area, thus assisting in the development of a design brief and coherent design proposal which related to the site and its residents. The engagement process has not only enriched the project by making it realistic and moving it from purely aesthetic and academic levels, but it has also given me the confidence to engage with people in order to inform my future design projects.



Tactile Futures in Manchester City Center

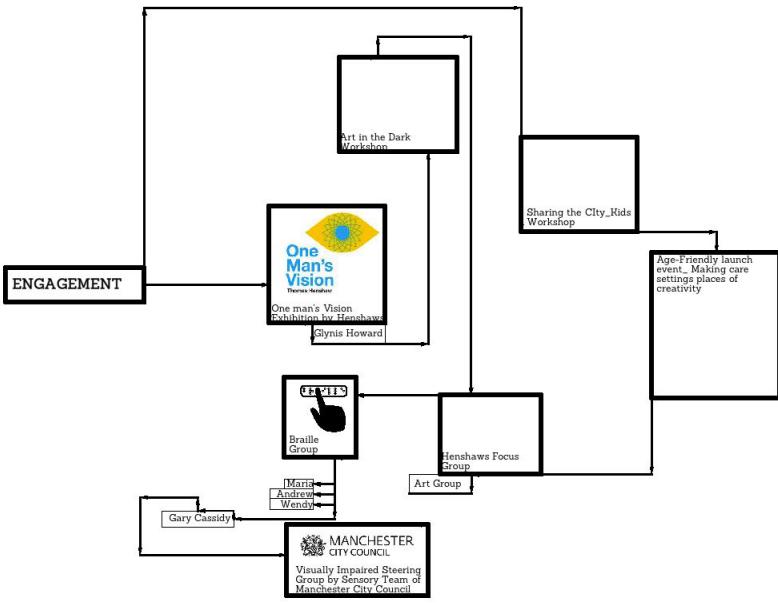
Christina Gregoriou

Urban environments, especially in the Manchester City Centre, are subject to constant change and development. Despite the positive impact these changes have on individuals within the city there are also negative impacts that affect smaller social groups. One of which are the Visually Impaired who are probably the biggest victims to change. These changes can often result in isolation and exclusion in the city, as justified by engagements carried out throughout the project.

By investigating the perception of space of the visual impaired and understanding the issues raised by change, the project suggests solutions that will facilitate independent mobility around the city center focusing around the area of Piccadilly Gardens. In addition to this, awareness to the sighted could improve the quality of life for the visually impaired in an indirect way.

The program of the building proposal focuses on both of the issues of support and awareness. Firstly, to provide support, both physical and psychological to the visually impaired, within a confidential environment. Secondly, to promote awareness to sighted people of the issues associated with visual impairment.

The public areas of the building act as a welcoming station to both sighted and visually impaired people to come and engage with it in a more playful way through the sense of disorientation and tactility. This gives visitors a more experiential interaction into the issue of visual impairment.



Engagement

Christina Gregoriou

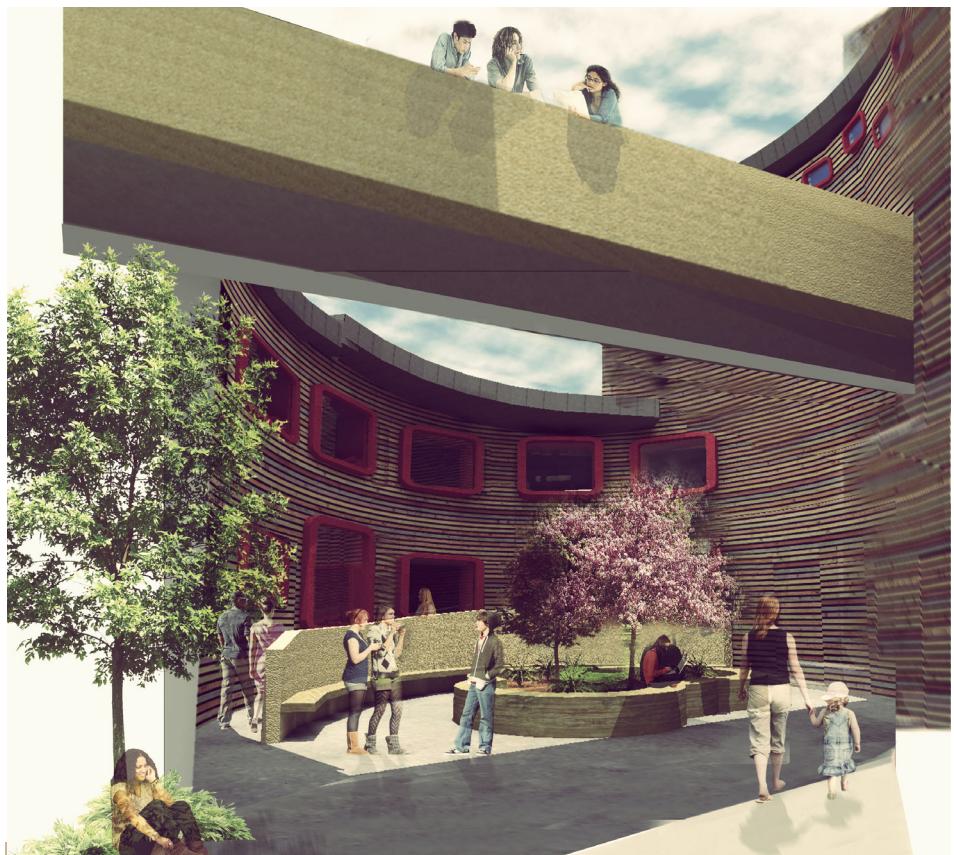
My first engagement, needed to reinforce the research methodology of the project, was a focus group meeting with members of the Henshaws Society. This involved conversations with visually impaired people, carers and staff members, who later invited me to attend the visual impairment steering group meetings in Manchester City Center.

These interactions and conversations helped me understand the issues and difficulties people with visual impairment have to face within the urban context, in relation to mobility, navigation and orientation; especially around the area of Piccadilly Gardens.

It also brought to the surface the ignorance that a big group of sighted people has towards this issue. The need for awareness informed the main theme around the second of my engagements, the 'Blind Brunch', which was also part of the 121212 workshop.

During the workshop pedestrians in the area of Piccadilly Gardens were asked to wear specifically made glasses; each with a different type of a visual impairment lenses. With the help of other pedestrians, the participants were guided to a table where they had the chance to eat brunch continuing to wear the glasses.

Blind Brunch's aim was to raise awareness and understanding of the sense of disorientation experienced by the visually impaired.



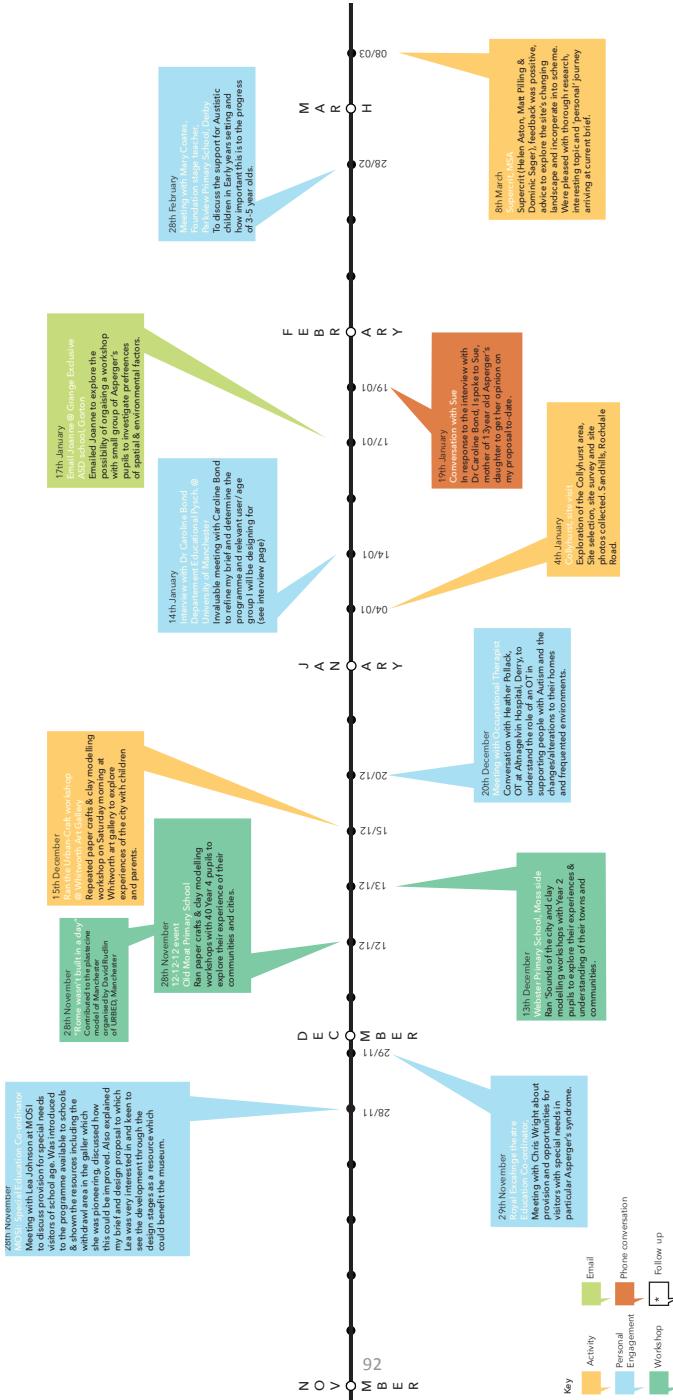
S.P.A.C.E Specialist Places For Autistic-spectrum Care & Education

Lucy Healy

Autism affects the way an individual socially interacts and perceives the world. People of all ages with autism lose out because they find their environments threatening, confusing and overbearing. Our cities and buildings overlook the needs of every 1 in 100 people who live with autism, causing them to feel misunderstood and isolated from participating in their communities. It is my intention through this thesis design project to look at reworking our education, health and social care facilities, to be more 'autistic-friendly' and promote inclusion so as to increase awareness for people affected by Autism.

At SPACE (Specialist Places for Autistic-spectrum Care & Education) children with high functioning Autism aged 5-19 years, their families and mainstream peers, are welcome to use the centre's learning, arts, social care, wellbeing and health facilities.

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Engagement

Lucy Healy

My engagement began with the Manchester City Council and the National Autistic Society (NAS) in Trafford who provided me with the resources to initiate my research and have been a 'go-to' source of knowledge throughout.

A mother & daughter who live with Asperger's everyday have been my motivation, enabling me to understand the concerns, needs and reverberating effects on everyday life for people who are affected by an Autistic spectrum condition.

I have had many discussions with special needs practitioners as well as visits to Pictor Special Needs School Timperley, The Rainbow Rooms resource base, Moss Side, Grange Exclusive Autistic School, Gorton which have further contributed to the rigour of the scheme.

Interviews with Dr Caroline Bond, (DoEd,UoM) whose research into educational provision in Manchester for people on the Autistic Spectrum, enhanced the project programme and physicality of the spatial and atmospheric qualities.

Over the course of the year I have met with special educational needs co-ordinators at MOSI, The Royal Exchange theatre, Whitworth Art Gallery and the Manchester Art Gallery to discuss interventions and provisions for supporting people on the spectrum.

To continue this legacy I will be attending the 'Autistic Show' in Manchester at the end of June ...



Re-imagine Longsight

Redeate Kenbata

Longsight has seen many changes in the recent years, however there still exists a negative perception within the public, often associated with the ward's history of high crime rates and gang culture during the early 1990s.

This project aims to promote and celebrate the positive aspects of the ward through developing a proposal 're-imaging' Longsight.

A series of interviews with people in the community highlighted the need for sports facilities, as well as a lack of activities for the youth within the ward.

Further research and conversations with local residents revealed the greater role Longsight Market played in serving the community by providing a space for social and cultural interactions to occur.

The project seeks to strengthen the role of the market through development of a market square that also incorporates a sports centre. The proposal will create a flexible environment providing social spaces, recreational areas for sports and a market. In-turn strengthening the community of Longsight and promoting a new vision of the ward.

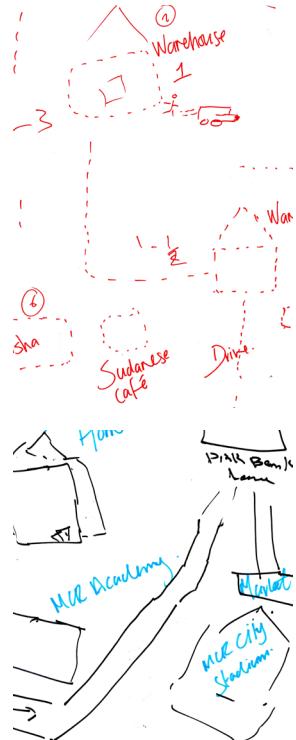
[redeate@live.co.uk](mailto:redeteate@live.co.uk)

My Longsight Market

Share your ideas for your vision for the future of the market



11 / 12 / 12
9am - 5pm



Engagement

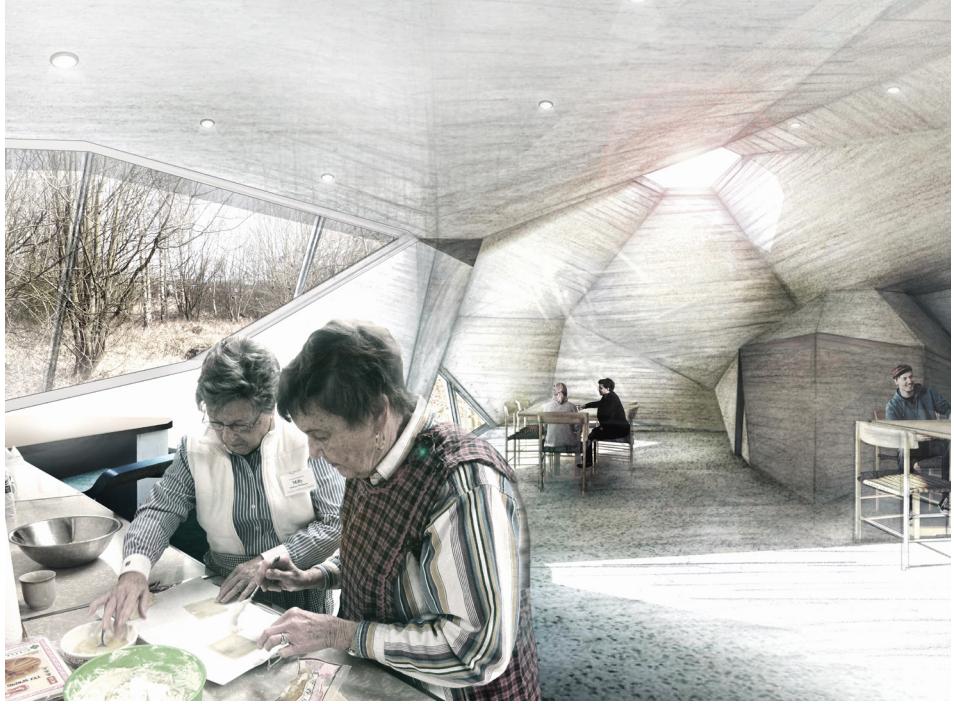
Redeate Kenbata

As part of my project development, I was able to arrange a stall at Longsight Market that allowed me to engage with customers, to explore their relationship to the market and Longsight.

Conversations with customers and residents highlighted the feeling that the market was the strongest element and formed the hub of Longsight. However people also felt the site had potential to fulfil other roles during the times the market wasn't in operation, suggestions for alternate functions included a cultural centre- celebrating the multi-cultural population, and a sports centre- providing sports activities for the youth and encouraging healthy living in the wider community.

Part of the workshop included an exercise that required customers to sketch a journey that they made regularly to develop an understanding of how people used the ward. This helped highlight the need for social and recreational spaces in the ward as people stated neighbouring wards such as Rusholme in providing social, recreational and green spaces.

The information gathered from the event was used to inform the programme and proposal for the market square-sports centre.



Chronic Care in the City

Derin Kinacigil

Each year 150,000 people in the UK have a stroke, and it is the leading cause for chronic disability in the UK. Manchester has one of the highest numbers of stroke cases in the UK and is reported to offer poor levels of care and rehabilitation for stroke survivors.

According to national statistics Newton Heath is one of the most deprived wards in the UK, resulting in residents having an increased chance of suffering from a stroke due to living an unhealthy lifestyle.

The project aims to provide facilities necessary for the long term care and support of stroke survivors and carers in Newton Heath. The scheme offers a programme tailored to the specific demands of the stroke survivor, aiming to reduce social exclusion in the community experienced by those who are left with a brain injury. The proposal aims to provide a tranquil and healthy environment focused on improving the health and wellbeing off all members of the community.

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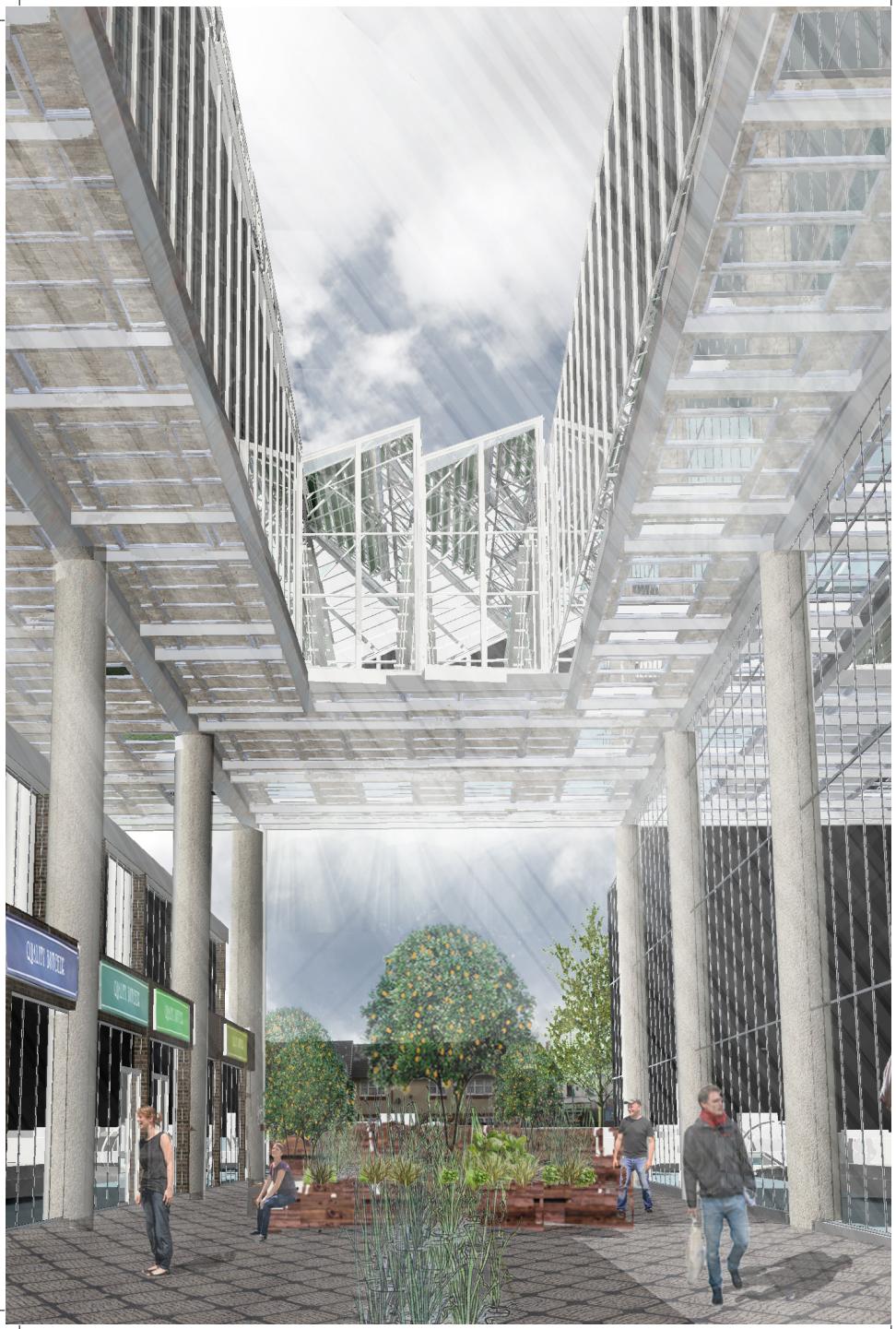
Engagement

Derin Kinacigil

Throughout the year I have worked with the Stroke Association, who are the leading charity, which works to prevent stroke, and support anyone who is affected by a stroke.

On 10.12.12 the creative ‘Design your care day’ event was held in Sydney Jones Court, Moston. The event was designed and orchestrated by myself, and supported by the staff from the Stroke Association. The event was arranged in light of the 12.12.12 Art in Manchester initiative.

The event was designed to offer stroke survivors and carers of North Manchester the opportunity to raise issues about the care they have received since having a stroke. Participants were also asked to take part in the ‘create your own care’ exercise, whereby both stroke survivors and carers were provided with a simple interior view of a room with which they could build a photomontage that represented their ideal environment for receiving care and support after a stroke.



The CO-OP Aqua Farm

Tiago Luxton

My 5th year work regarding LETS (Local Exchange and Trading Schemes) and localised urban farming, revealed that minor interventions would only have minor economic effect if there is a lack of local production. It was this rhetoric along with my Brewing Co-operative engagement that led to designing a pioneering industrial urban farm in the deprived inner-city area of Moss Side on the site adjacent to the now abandoned Hydes Queens Brewery. Aims of the CO-OP Aquafarm include: local job creation, health and food awareness, creating a replicable, local and environmental industry as well as pioneering research into aquaponics (symbiotic production of aquaculture and hydroponics) as well as water filtration, all through the re-appropriation of the breweries infrastructure.

In order to compete within the free-market paradigm, realistic financial backing would come from the Co-operative food group. This manifested itself with a CO-OP supermarket below the world's first urban Aquafarm bolstering environmental and moral credentials and to lead the way in extreme local food production. The masterplan takes advantage of the breweries location between two degrading social service buildings, providing a perfect opportunity for the integration between local production and the users of the social services through education and training.

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Sale
t Site
of Uses

tares)

Ran McLaughlin

JONES LANG
LASALLE
828 6440



Engagement

Tiago Luxton

Brewery & Co. is a co-operative benefit society, set up by the Manchester Brewing CO-OP, acting as a network for a small mix of co-operatives who were seeking to buy the historic Hydes Queens Brewery in Moss Side, owned by the Hydes family since 1899. The plan was to use the scale of the Brewery to enable the possibility of a micro-industry production site by creating artisan foods and drinks, employment opportunities in the area and healthy produce which could be distributed locally through venues, events, markets and by delivery.

I became involved with the project in September 2012, attending a number of preliminary general meetings with the members of the Brewing CO-OP as well as interested parties from the various ethical, local enterprises involved in the proposed 'eco-business park'. Through a series of smaller meetings with the main contributors we discussed and diagrammed the various spaces within the brewery and how best it could be re-developed. The proposal involved permanent offices, a micro-brewery, a café/bar and regular markets on site enabling produce to be sold directly to the general public. The on-site micro-industries would be operated by subsidiary co-operatives, paying rent and a percentage of profits to Brewery & Co. for use of the site. In turn, Brewery & Co. would have provided an enabling platform for these co-ops by offering low rent and, when possible, financial support through reinvestment.

Unfortunately the bid failed, however helping compile the business plan for the CO-operative Bank and the Hydes board, was an invaluable experience. The failure of the bid was largely due to lack of experience, scale of the project and generally the Brewery & Co. bid was seen as quite high risk and 'alternative' by both parties. However it was this ethos of the project, to make a practical contribution to developing a network for community development in and around food, that was carried forward in my project.



Turning empty houses into homes

Sam Morris

SHAPE (Self Help Action Property Enterprise) is a new empty homes charity for Greater Manchester.

SHAPE will facilitate the engagement of local actors, many of whom are in housing need, to renovate empty and/or derelict properties. The programme has volunteers at the heart of its work – providing training and experience for the long term unemployed, ex-offenders and other people disadvantaged in the employment market. As members of the newly formed self help charity, the volunteers and their families will typically go on to tenant one of the homes they have worked on at an affordable rate.

The site for the first SHAPE intervention (in Broughton, Salford) features eight derelict homes which will be renovated as part of a design brief that realises a base for the charity. Critical to the SHAPE ambition is a self-build narrative that is present throughout the project. The product is a fitting formalisation of intricate social and urban systems that are forecast to significantly improve both people and place.

samorris19@gmail.com



National Empty Homes Conference, London, November 2012:
George Clarke (TV presenter & independent empty homes advisor to the
Government) & David Ireland (Chief Executive of the Empty Homes Agency)

Engagement

Sam Morris

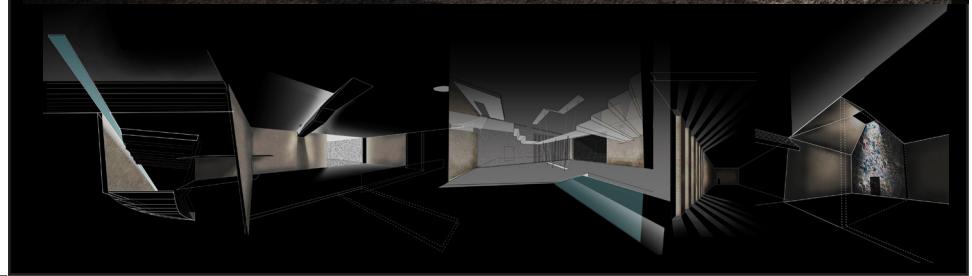
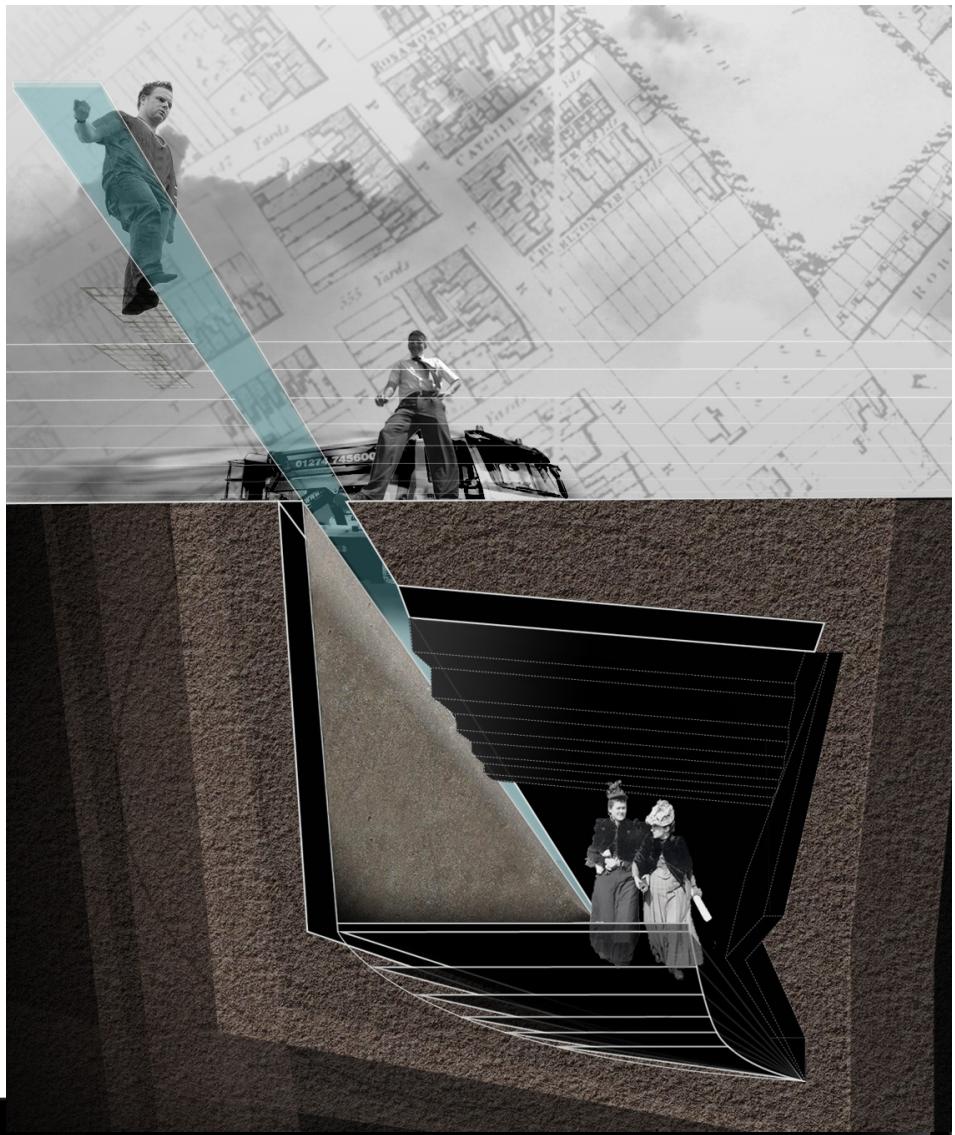
“The minute you occupy an empty home, you start an amazing chain reaction of events. You don’t just bring homes back into life, but neighbourhoods and communities. And businesses and jobs follow in their wake.” Don Foster, MP

Since the start of the 2012/13 academic year I have been investigating the national scandal of empty homes.

I have expressed this project at a macro scale, placing it in the context of the housing shortage, and at a community scale as I sought to inform a product brief. My strategy for developing the brief focused primarily on engaging with various actors in order to grasp the reality of the situation and subsequently develop a relevant pilot study.

I have been engaged in a dialogue with a multiplicity of persons and organisations related to my project, each of which has had a resultant impact on the direction of my process. Through various meetings, visits and conversations, I have structured an informed network relevant to the field of empty homes - an invaluable resource in creating a successful output.

The response to my enquiries and proposals has been overwhelmingly positive and serves to confirm a relevance, passion and need for an inclusive intervention



Brunswick Participatory Museum & Community Archaeology Project

Stephanos Spirakis

The proposal forms part of a wider vision for the integration of Brunswick Housing Estate and is an extension to a Masterplan developed in my 5th year of studies. The proposed scheme advocates local heritage as a means to safeguard place identity in the process of the area's impending regeneration. The Participatory Museum takes the form of a subterranean building of unique experiential qualities, facilities for the local community as well as an exciting, welcoming landscape for visitor and local to interact within.

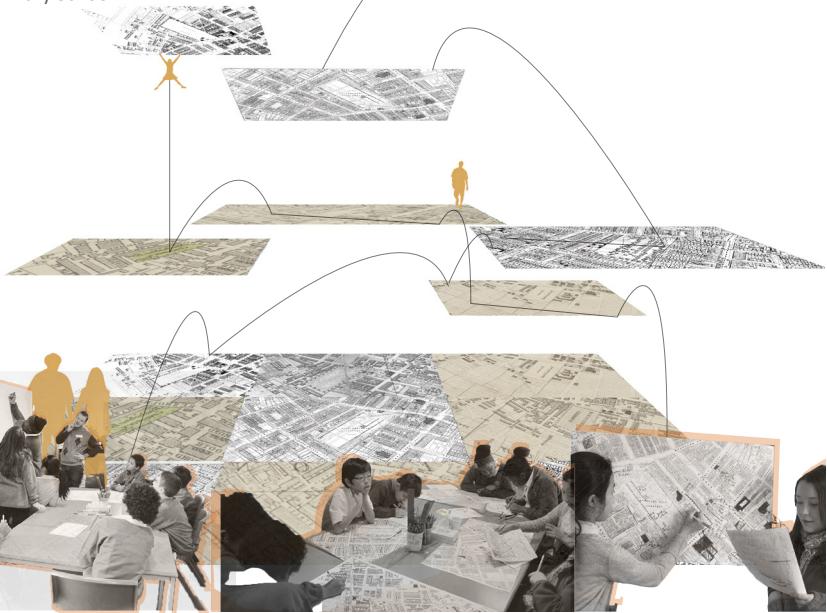
By acknowledging the area's significant -yet neglected- history, where the first nonconformist burial ground in Britain was established, the Participatory Museum subverts the traditional relationship between museum and the city and offers an alternative means to commemorate our lost loved ones. A constantly evolving exhibition, co-curated by the public, tells the story of the everyday life of residents in Manchester; thus ensuring their remembrance, regardless of their socioeconomic background or religious beliefs.



Brunswick Tenants and Residents Association

Placing the Human into the Urban

Event: Building Characters workshop -
Medlock Primary School



Engagement

Stephanos Spirakis

Both 5th and 6th year design studio projects have been driven by ongoing engagement with residents of Brunswick Housing Estate, a socially and physically excluded area, located on the doorstep of Manchester city centre. Characterised by the Radburn layout (and unable to be surveyed) the estate has fallen into neglect and become a hotspot for crime. With limited amenities that could foster any sense of community, Brunswick has gradually been transformed from being an area of choice into an area one resides in out of necessity.

Through a common desire to foster the social sustainability and integration of the area, a series of engagement events have been carried out (in collaboration with the Tenants and Residents Association, the Friends of Gartside Gardens, children attending Medlock Primary School as well as their parents) in an attempt to collect as many residents' "affects" as possible, directly influencing the design process.

Initially, events were held in order to gain an in depth understanding of the resident's needs, what they would change as well as their concerns with regards to the imminent regeneration of the area in the next 5 years. Later on in the engagement process, focus was put on issues such as place identity and the area's rich, forgotten heritage. By employing creative engagement techniques, a mutual understanding of the area's potential to become a vibrant, healthy and inclusive environment has been achieved. It is this potential that both Masterplan and the Brunswick Participatory Museum aim to articulate.

Collaborators

Each student has consulted or collaborated with particular stakeholders in the city's development - contacts they have developed as part of their research. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has offered their support and invite anyone interested in collaborating with us to get in touch:

42nd Street / Maurice Shapero	Manchester Youth Council
Action for Blind People	Medlock Primary School
Action for Sustainable Living	Methodist Housing Association
Age Friendly Cities Conference	Minehead Centre
Age Friendly Manchester Conference	Museum of Science and Industry
Ancoats Canal Project	National Autistic Society
The Architectural Investigation Unit / Jennie Savage	ODD Theatre Company
Autistic Society of Greater Manchester	Old Moat Primary School
Biospheric Foundation	Pictor School
Brunswick Parish Church	Powerhouse Library
Can Cook Studio	RNCM
Community Arts North West	RNIB
Community Food Coordinator at Withington Community Hospital	Rochdale Housing Initiative
Contact Theatre	Royal Exchange Theatre
The Co-operative Food	Salford City College
Co-operatives United	Salford City Council
Cracking Good Food	Salford Housing and Urban Studies Unit
English Heritage	The Small Cinema
Factory Youth Zone	South Manchester Environmental Forum
FC United	Southway Housing Trust
Food Futures	Catalyse / Steve Potter
Fountain Gate Chapel	Stroke Association
Friends of Gartside Gardens	Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
Fuse FM	Together Trust
Gilbert Deya Ministries	University of Manchester Department of Education
Grange School	Urban Gardening Project
Groundwork	Urban Futures-Human Futures / Michael Mayhew
Henshaws Society	URBED / David Rudlin
Hideaway Youth Project	Webster Primary School
Hulme Community Garden Centre	Wesley Furniture Centre
Longsight Market	Whitworth Art Gallery
Lostock Community Partnership / Maureen Reilly / Heather Henry	Withington Adult Learning Centre
Manchester Adult Learning Hub	Withington Baths
Manchester Art Gallery	Withington Civic Society
Manchester Brewing Co-operative	Withington Library
Manchester City Council	Withington Methodist Church
Manchester Craft Market	Wythenshawe Forum
Manchester Digital Development Agency	Wythenshawe Volunteers
Manchester Mind	The Youth Village
Manchester Town Hall	Z-Arts
	Zest

To Get Involved Contact:

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