

MANCHESTER  
1824

The University of Manchester

Manchester  
Urban Institute





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**Edited by**

Sarah Butler, Andrew Karvonen,  
Laura Partridge and Kevin Ward

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## Preface

During 2015, Manchester writer, Sarah Butler, mapped Manchester's 'Corridor' using the stories of people who have lived, worked and travelled along Oxford Road. Funded through a Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF), awarded through The University of Manchester, these stories generate a layered picture of this rapidly changing part of the city and what it means to the people who experience it. Stories from the Road offers an alternative map of The Corridor. It celebrates the individual stories which inform, create and question our cities and their production and reproduction day in and day out.

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A number of others have supported this work: Caitriona Devery, the former cities@manchester administrator, Claire Lowe, the Partnership Manager at Oxford Road Corridor, Professor James Thompson and Dr Sally Sagar at The University of Manchester, who awarded and oversaw the HEIF award that funded this project, and Martin Dodge in the Department of Geography, University of Manchester, who helped us with the maps.

Finally, we thank all those who shared their stories with us!



JAMES THOMPSON

Oxford Road and The University of Manchester

James Thompson

Associate Vice President - Social Responsibility, University of Manchester

I'm delighted to introduce Stories from the Road from the perspective of The University of Manchester and hope it provides a valuable insight into the importance of the Oxford Road to the life of the University, this area of the city, and to the region more broadly.

No one who has worked or studied at The University of Manchester can forget the influence of Oxford Road on his or her collective experience of the city. I personally studied at both The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University in the late 1980s. The Oxford Road was the very real route between both institutions for me, and also a daily place of living, studying, eating, demonstrating - and, of course, partying. It is central to people's memories of, and of course stories of, working, studying, and living in this great city.





Oxford Road dissects our campus – sometimes in a way that is assumed to be between the sciences on the east side and the humanities on the west, sometimes between old buildings and new, but also between those bits of the campus that are in Moss Side and Hulme and those that are located in the ward of Ardwick. It is as crucial a part of the identity of the University as it is part of the city – with the success of one, bound up in the success of the other. But it has also provided a route map for the University – connecting the student residencies in Fallowfield, to the campus, and then onto St Peter’s Square and the city to the north. Oxford Road quite simply is an artery for the University, feeding our students and staff into the amazing city of Manchester.

It reminds us that we can only exist in partnership with this city – as part of its lifeblood. We only thrive by being in a mutually enriching relationship with its businesses, other higher education campuses, and with its cultural institutions. This explains why we are enthusiastic partners in the Oxford Road Corridor initiative that seeks to harness the collective innovation, creative energy and educational power of this district for the benefit of all who live and work here, and more widely for the city and its region. The University of Manchester strives for outstanding work in our research and teaching, but also has a priority of social responsibility. In many ways Oxford Road is a symbol of this – demonstrating that the University and the city are mutually reliant, both inspired by and responsible for the success of each other. ●



## Oxford Road Corridor - Where pioneering ideas are brought to life

Claire Lowe

Partnership Manager, Oxford Road Corridor

Manchester has a history, present and a future as a revolutionary city. Now something new and radical is happening in the city. Culture, science, health, education and commerce are coming together to create a magnetic new home for today’s innovators on Oxford Road Corridor.

From a multicultural, dynamic and eclectic exchange of ideas, we’re creating a sustainable community – rich with culture, built on solid foundations of training and education – and revealing the benefits of knowledge for all to enjoy – a place where pioneering ideas are brought to life.

We’re making the unseen, seen – sharing all the hidden genius of Oxford Road Corridor, it’s the home for the creators, the pioneers and the experimental.

The Oxford Road Corridor means so much to so many people – it’s where academics and clinicians rub shoulders with business, where communities are welcomed to interact with all kinds of culture, where students find a vibrant place to study and live.

We are happy to sponsor the publication of Stories from the Road, it’s full of fascinating tales, set in this truly remarkable area that brings us inspiration as we work, study, live, play and do business in the Oxford Road Corridor.

The stories show what has happened here - let’s make Stories from the Road spark a thousand conversations! ●

CLAIRE LOWE



## Introduction

Sarah Butler, Andrew Karvonen,  
Laura Partridge and Kevin Ward

### Enter Manchester

Manchester has been termed the ‘shock city’ of the industrial revolution; the first major industrial city to emerge in the mid-eighteenth century. The city enjoyed significant economic success at the height of the industrial era. However this success came at a human cost. The city became as known for those poor social conditions as for its factories and mills that were famously documented by Friedrich Engels in 1845. Environmentally, Manchester became known for its terrible environmental conditions, with chimneys, polluted-millstreams and smoke-filled skies every bit as symbolic of the industrial age as the Spinning Jenny.

Over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth century a particular landscape was established alongside the emergence and reproduction of the city’s capitalist industrial system. Communications, educational, energy, housing, and transport infrastructures were designed, planned and built. Colleges, housing estates, hospitals, parks, roads and train lines: all were built to support a particular industrial system, to allow workers to get to and from work, to allow the children of workers to go to school, and so on. Over time some of this fell by the wayside. Swimming pools were closed. Train lines lay abandoned. Meanwhile, new developments emerged. New roads built, schools merged and re-launched. A system and its city (and a city and its system) co-evolved. It is within this wider urban system that we locate the story of one particular road: Oxford Road.

## Introducing Oxford Road

Oxford Road and the surrounding area has been influenced by a variety of planning movements over the last century as Manchester has sought to revive its decaying industrial fabric. Victorian Gothic architect Alfred Waterhouse was hugely influential in the early twentieth century, and over the next few decades the Garden Cities movement was also to have a bearing. The 1945 City of Manchester Plan was by far the most ambitious and influential vision for the Oxford Road. Some of the designs and principles first aired in this plan are still shaping the redevelopment of the area over seventy years later, for example, with the removal of cars from sections of the Oxford Road to form a Parisian-style boulevard of green space.

Post Second World War, the area on and around Oxford Road continued to undergo significant change. Several thousand Victorian terraced houses in Ardwick, Hulme, Moss Side and Rusholme were flattened over the course of the 1950s and 1960s. Communities were broken up and populations distributed across Greater Manchester. In their place were erected a range of new high- and low-rise estates, including the infamous Hulme Crescents. At the time of their opening in 1972 the Crescents were the largest public housing development in Europe, home to 13 000 residents. Yet, by the mid-1990s they were closed, marking the beginning of another attempt to regenerate Hulme, this time through the use of City Challenge funds.

Across the Oxford Road, in Ardwick, the Brunswick Estate was built over the course of the 1960s and 1970s in the place of the Victorian terraces. Again it was a mix of high-rise flats and low-rise maisonettes. While the estate fared better than the Crescents, its residents did not. They too experienced a range of economic and social issues. Rather than knocking down the estate, more recent redevelopment strategies have focused instead on its refurbishment. Since 2013, Solutions 4 Brunswick, a consortium of four organisations - Contour





Homes, Equitix, Galliford Try and Mears – have been overseeing a £113 million regeneration of the Estate. By the time it ends in 2020 it is claimed the estate will look and feel better for residents.

### Enter The University of Manchester and other institutions

The origins of The University of Manchester are closely linked to the imperatives of the industrial age, and also to various other Oxford Road institutions. When it was founded as Owens College in 1851 school education was not yet compulsory. It was the desire to educate workers that was behind its establishment. The College incorporated the Royal School of Medicine and Surgery in 1872, the beginning of a longstanding relationship between the University and the local hospitals. Although originally located in Quay Street in central Manchester, the College soon outgrew its original headquarters and moved to Oxford Road in 1870 (by this time Owens College had become the Victoria University), and the famous University Quadrangle was complete by 1903.

In 1956 the College of Technology gained independence and, ten years later, during a period of expansion, the College of Technology was renamed The University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST). Changes to legislation meant that in 1994 UMIST became a completely autonomous university with its own degree-awarding powers. Ten years later it merged with the Victoria University of Manchester to form The University of Manchester, the largest single-site university in the UK.

The first half of the twentieth century saw the University expand rapidly, on both sides of the Oxford Road. The nearby Whitworth Art Gallery, which had been operating independently since 1889, and which opened its first building in 1908, joined the University in 1958. This happened after decades during which the Gallery curated national collections of modern art and print. It made hundreds of acquisitions

between the 1930s and the late 1960s, including a collection of wallpapers to rival that of London's Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A).

In both the late-1960s and the mid-1990s the Gallery was redeveloped. Initially its Edwardian building was overhauled, while latterly the Sculpture Court was added. However, space remained limited, as visitor numbers continued to increase, reaching almost 200 000 per year by the end of the first decade of the twenty first century. In 2015 it reopened after a £15 million redevelopment that doubled the size of its galleries and created new spaces that better integrated it within the park with which it shares its name. Visitor numbers continue to rise, with almost half a million passing through the doors of the Gallery in 2016.

Manchester Museum also holds strong historical links to the University. The Museum dates back to 1821 when Manchester manufacturer John Leigh Philipps' large private collection was purchased by the Manchester Natural History Society upon his death. The society grew rapidly and absorbed the collections of the Manchester Geological Society in 1850, before being incorporated into John Owens College prior to the collections being opened to the public in 1890. The Museum has been hugely successful, especially in recent years, with European Regional Development funding and Heritage Lottery funding, and a range of other sources helping support a major refurbishment in the early 2000s.

On 1 January 2009 the Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust came into being. Subsequently on 1 April 2012 the organisation was joined by the hospitals which were previously under the management of Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust. This came after the opening in March of the new Central Manchester Hospitals by Her Majesty the Queen, following a £500 million redevelopment. Currently the Trust treats over a quarter million patients a year. The oldest of the hospitals that comprise the Foundation Trust







is the Manchester Royal Infirmary which was established in 1752. It moved to Oxford Road in 1908, its new building opened by King Edward VIII on 6 July 1909. It joined other hospitals already on Oxford Road, such as Saint Mary's Hospital built in 1790, Manchester Royal Eye Hospital built in 1814 and Royal Manchester Children's Hospital built in 1829.

Manchester Metropolitan University can trace its origins back to 1824 and the foundation of the Manchester Mechanics Institute. However it was not until 1970 that it was established as Manchester Polytechnic, gaining university status in 1992. Initially located across seven campuses, in recent years it has overseen a major overhaul of its estates. It has increased its presence on Oxford Road through an on-going £350 million investment programme that includes it taking ownership of what used to be the Cornerhouse cinema located on the corner of Oxford Road and Whitworth Street.

In and amongst these large and significant cultural, educational and health institutions, the Oxford Road has also been home to a range of retailers of all shapes and sizes over the years. From bars to cafes, churches to clothing shops, hairdressers to fast food joints, music instrument shops to nightclubs, pubs to restaurants; the Oxford Road has sustained a wide range of businesses, the customers for whom have tended to be the students at the two universities. Many of these businesses have brought the Road to life at night and at weekends, resting places and feeding stations in many cases, on the walk from the centre of Manchester out to the student communities in Rusholme, Fallowfield and Withington.

### From Oxford Road to Corridor Manchester

The emergence of the notion "Corridor Manchester" in 2007 reflects a wider trend in the ways in which cities and universities imagine their futures. This use of the corridor concept reflects a focus on economic development along a transport route. Although not entirely new, the naming of corridors and their bounding, and the establishing of a governance structure over them, has become more common in recent decades as a strategy to generate economic growth. Accompanying the language of "urban assets", to refer to cultural, educational, and sporting infrastructure, the aim in establishing a corridor is to secure economic advantage by co-branding and promoting the individual assets in a strategic manner. It is hoped that they become more than the sum of their parts and that there are benefits to be wrung out of the close physical proximity of the so-called "assets".

Now known as Oxford Road Corridor, the partnership brings together the prominent organisations and stakeholders covering a particular section of Oxford Road, and selective areas either side.

The partnership's vision is to establish the Oxford Road Corridor as a globally recognised hub of knowledge-based economic development. In making this claim, it is not alone of course. Other urban authorities around the world do likewise with reference to their own version of "Corridor Manchester". The 243 hectare area runs from St Peter's Square in the City Centre to Whitworth Park on the Oxford Road, and generates £3.2 billion each year, employing 63,000 people and providing 25% of Manchester's GVA. It is thus economically and culturally important to the city and to the wider Greater Manchester city region. It is also more than that of course. It is home to a wealth of experiences and memories. Over the centuries it has been made and remade: the Oxford Road is a palimpsest built up over the years. ●



## Manchester's Oxford Road

Sarah Butler

Author

There are no lines telling you where it starts and where it ends. So let's draw them in. Two trails of coloured chalk across the tarmac. Here: from park to shops. Here: from library to hotel.

Let's make them both the beginning. This is, after all, a place where things start: life; adulthood; careers; love affairs; ideas; my own entrance into the world amongst them – on a snowy Thursday morning, April 1978.

Let's make them both the end. Things come and go, after all: dingy clubs and office blocks, bridges and grand plans – all that dust.

Two beginnings. Two ends. And everything in between lined up one after the other. Except this place doesn't like to stay still. Corridor. *Correre*. A run, rush, hurry part of town.

*write me a line, hold your breath, walk the length of it, as far as you can go without falling off*

The busiest bus route in Europe, they say. Thousands shuttling from stop to stop, forever changing their collection of strangers. Amongst them, bikes weave their own, solitary patterns along the road. And the cars. And the taxis. And the people who walk. You never step in the same corridor twice.

Corridor. Forget lines of chairs under fluorescent lights, noticeboards crammed with warnings about salt and cigarettes and unprotected sex. Forget swilling crowds of school kids. Forget carpeted non-spaces lined with closed doors. Forget the place where the shoes get left.

*The thing about lines is that you can break them.*

Under the bridges, everything is amplified. The slap echo of a manhole, not quite flush with the tarmac. The stink of traffic fumes. The lack of somewhere to sleep. The colour grey.

*Out of line.*

*Cross the line.*

*Down the line.*

*End of the line.*

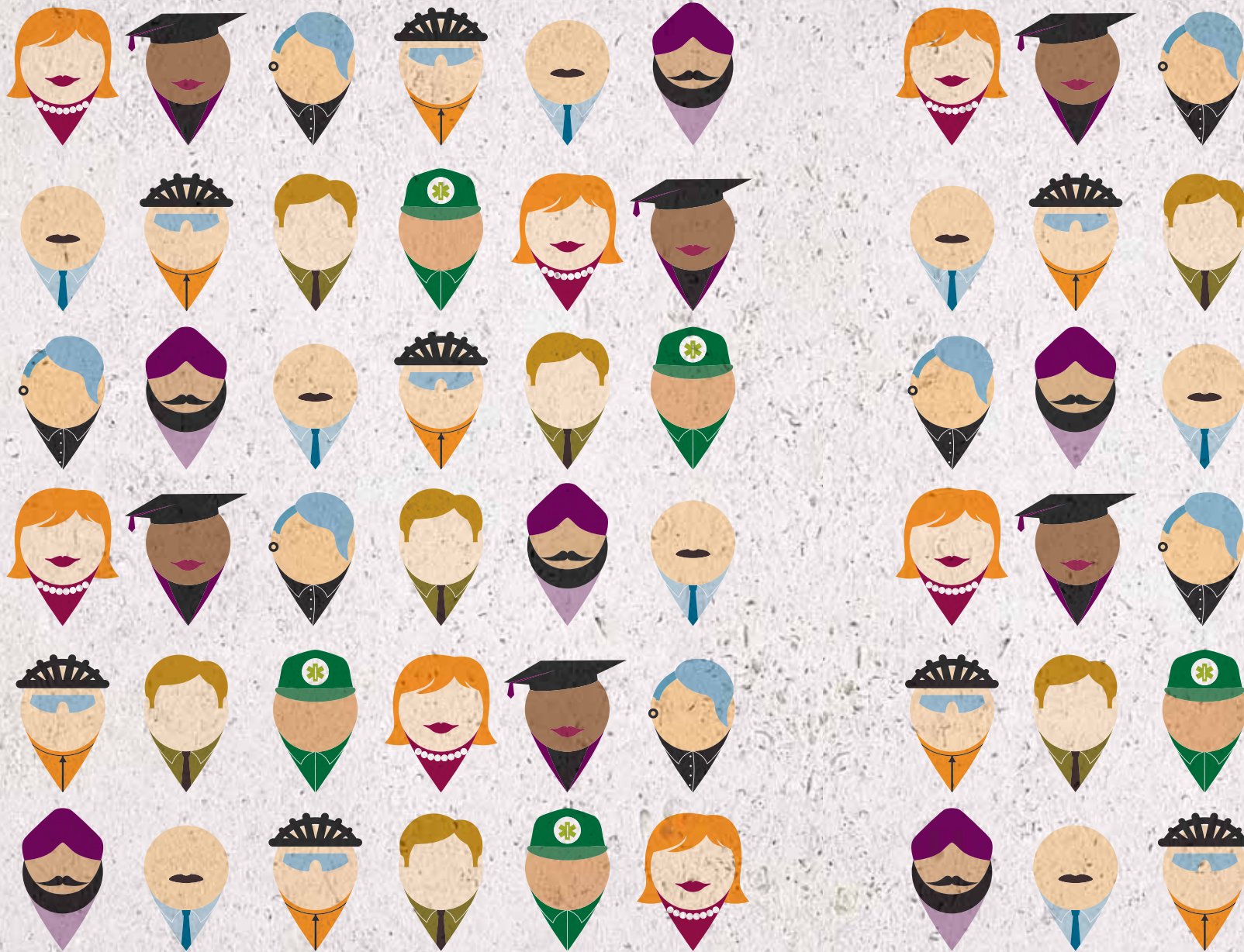
*Bottom line.*

Free books. Pizza. Burrito. Noodles. Theatre ticket. Plug adaptor. Memories. Cheap veg. A place to go. Guitar string. Lamb Karahi. Family swim. Concerto. Americano.

Chameleon. Knowledge. Music. Prayer. Pre-loved jumper. Haircut. Bank loan. Fertility treatment. Contemporary art. Trees.

A line into and out of the city. A place of beginnings and middles and ends. A string of and then, and then, and then. Except nothing will stay in place. In August it sleeps; come September it's frenetic. In the early hours, the night time stragglers do-si-do with street cleaners, delivery vans, early shift workers.

There are no lines telling you where it starts and where it ends. So let's draw them in. Two trails of coloured chalk across the tarmac. Here: from hotel to library. Here: from shops to park. A beginning and an end. An end and a beginning. All this life and dust in between. ●



THE STORIES

### Pete Abel

Love Your Bike volunteer

Place: 2-4 Oxford Road

Formerly it's known as 2-4 Oxford Road; nowadays it's a Spar Supermarket and a Holiday Inn Express Hotel. I don't know when it was knocked down and rebuilt, but the reason I want to talk about it is that in 1985 it was an office block and in that office was the War On Want Regional Northwest Office. I worked there for nine months, while I was planning a two year round-the-world bike ride to raise money for a health programme in Eritrea that War On Want supported. The programme was a real model of people solving their own problems even though there was a conflict. It was largely underground; they were reusing everything; there was real involvement of women, so it was a very interesting project. We also arranged the ride to try and get there, which we did – we were very lucky to get in.

There were lots of warreny small offices in the building – I remember lots of dark wood panelling. There were solicitors and other businesses in there, but in the little bit I was in there were lots of little offices off a shared space. There were a number of different groups – politically active – one campaigning around workplace hazards, one doing work about women's international labour rights. Basically it was relatively cheap office space; second floor, pretty poky, a bit dingy, but cheap. It had a little bit of light but not much of a view. It was nice though that there was this central space with tea and coffee and a big table so people could have meetings, and if you got fed up with your little cubicle you could go and sit and chat with someone else.

If people visited, you'd say 'it's diagonally opposite the BBC building' – that was the landmark – but of course now that's a car park. I wonder at what point we'll stop saying 'opposite the ex-BBC'. I remember the building being very run down

### 2-4 OXFORD ROAD





and unloved – now it's gone and been replaced. I can't even remember the last time I looked at it properly, and I couldn't tell you when it disappeared.

The shop fronts round there have come and gone. You've got more coffee shops; when I first moved to Manchester you couldn't get what I'd call a decent cup of coffee anywhere. It was all Mellow Bird's or instant. Now you've got the student accommodation too. You used to only go into the city centre to work, or maybe drink, no one lived there. We'd have evening meetings, and the place was dead, even the roads, because why would you drive in?

I left Manchester in October '86 to head off for said world bike ride and came back in August 1988. We cycled down to Dover, got the ferry, then France, Spain, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia. Couldn't go across Libya because it was closed at the time, so flew to Egypt. Went up the Nile into Sudan and Khartoum, left the bikes there and went into Eritrea, spent about five weeks there, came back and flew to what was then Bombay. Cycled up through India into Nepal. Had a plan to go through Tibet into China but at the time the Chinese would let you in but you couldn't cycle, so we decided not to do that. Flew from Kathmandu to Lima in Peru and went all the way up through South America, Central America, Mexico, up the West coast of the States, across the States, into Canada and back down the east coast and then back to Britain. It's a great way to travel – you do get to see more of a country, and meet people. Because you're going so slowly – 50-60 miles a day – you go to places that aren't in the guide books. In the States we stayed with people you never get to see in the mainstream media – ex-Vietnam veterans who'd set up their own little village in Oregon; radical activists in various places; and there was – probably still is – a very large Eritrean Diaspora. We plotted our route to visit various different Eritrean campaign groups, and hooked up with the Quakers – so we could do slide shows, we could do press.

I don't do so much development related stuff now, I do more on bicycles! I worked for a long time looking at European and International-level policy around the arms trade, but then I realised that I knew nothing about where I lived. So I took a conscious decision that I wanted to do work – paid and voluntary – around where I lived in Manchester.

**“ When I first moved to Manchester you couldn't get what I'd call a decent cup of coffee anywhere. It was all Mellow Bird's or instant.”**

I would suggest that most people who cycle have a love hate relationship with Oxford Road. I probably cycle it two or three times a week, some days more than others. But I've been involved since 2009 with lobbying around the work that's going to be done on Oxford Road. It's good. We now have a proposal for largely separated routes. The original design was what we would call the bike as the meat in the sandwich: it was the classic bus stop, little bit of green paint, and then a moving 20 tonne bus. It took us four, nearly five years to convince the city council and TFGM not to do that. This is a flagship route. That's why we chose to focus on it and spend five years of our lives banging away at it. On its own, it's not going to solve all the problems, but the arguments around it, the changes around it – they're important. I've probably spent too much of my life these last few years in meetings, looking at maps, walking along the road, taking photographs, arguing with people, etc. etc. I shall be bloody glad when they've done it! ●

## Grace Barry

Shop Manager, Goodstock for vinspired

Place: Goodstock, 6a Oxford Road

vinspired is a youth volunteering project – they run various projects nationally to support young people to find opportunities to develop new skills and experience, to help them find employment in the future.

Goodstock is our first every charity shop. It's targeted at young people. Everyone who works there apart from me is a young volunteer, so it's very much run by young people for young people. We aim for the shop's environment, and everything we sell, to be relevant to young people.

My manager Jayne chose this site. She had looked around different areas of Manchester, but she chose this shop because there aren't any other clothes shops on Oxford Road, and also there isn't an obvious community space for young people around here. There are the universities and student unions, but this is very much separate from that. Anyone can access it, and there's all this space for young people to be creative and put their own stamp and style on Oxford Road. We have a lot of students who volunteer here, and we also target local youth centres, LGBT centres, job centres. We want to give everyone the opportunity to get involved. We try to use the shop as a hub for all young people.

Since opening, a lot of our volunteers have gone on to find paid employment, where they did struggle before. Working in retail, everyone seems to want you to have retail experience, but how can you get the experience if you can't get a job in the first place? The shop's really good for helping with that.

The majority of the stock is donated by the general public just dropping in. At first it was difficult to instil that into people's minds, because we don't look like a charity shop!

## GOODSTOCK, 6A OXFORD ROAD





Our volunteers have done a fantastic job of promoting that and spreading the word. We're getting more and more donations as the months go by, which is really exciting to see. All the volunteers really enjoy rifling through everything! We have guidelines for things we should sell in the store and things we shouldn't, and we all work together to judge what we can use and what we can't.

We also want to be a staple of the Oxford Road community, by running events from the event space on our top floor. As well as volunteering in the shop the young people have the opportunity to put on their own events. They come up with really creative and impressive things – it's really inspiring to see. We've had all sorts of exhibitions, gigs, DJ sets, and film screenings going on up there. It attracts new people and it's a great environment for young people to link up and meet each other.

Before working for vinspired, I worked for Urban Outfitters and then for Agent Provocateur for five years. Everyone says: you were at Agent Provocateur for five years and now you're working for a charity shop! But it's what I want to be doing. When I was at Agent Provocateur I was volunteering for MASH, which is a charity working with vulnerable women. I just found it so much more interesting and fulfilling and a better use of my time working for a charity. So when I saw this opportunity I thought it would be perfect.

Through volunteering in the shop I know that a lot of young people have had the opportunity to meet people who they wouldn't usually meet in daily life. One of the things that I enjoy most about the volunteering environment is that it's so diverse. You tend to meet people and have conversations that you otherwise wouldn't have had. The development and progress that you see is amazing. Young people come in, they're quiet and shy and I can see that they struggle to

interact with each other, and then a few weeks later I look at them and they're firm friends. I might not have thought that they had much in common, but they'll find a common ground.

Volunteering means different things to everyone – some people will come because they like clothes and they like fashion, others volunteers have had mental health problems and are doing volunteering to help combat that. We've got other volunteers who don't have a very strong grasp of English, and through volunteering and making friends their language comes along really well. Often I'll be on the shop floor and hear volunteers teaching each other bits of their own language – I really love to hear that: people taking a real interest in each other and taking everything from the experience that they possibly can.

**“ Goodstock is our first every charity shop. It's targeted at young people. Everyone who works there apart from me is a young volunteer, so it's very much run by young people for young people.”**

I think Oxford Road is a great place for young people to be because it's so culturally diverse. You've got the student unions; all the different types of food, different smells as you're walking down the road; you've got the little park – when it's sunny it's full of people; you've got the book sales; you've got Sidney Street doing their LGBT stuff; the college of music; you've got gigs at the academy, you've got the Deaf institute. There's so much going on, so much to get involved in; it's an exciting place to be and to work. ●

FIG. 1



Oxford Road area in the early 1850s as captured on the Ordnance Survey 5 foot plan

3



VICKY'S STORY

## Vicky Bridge

Manager, The Hepburn Hair Project

Place: The Hepburn Hair Project, 340 Oxford Road

We've only been here a year. It was a struggle at first but it's picking up now. We opened up early July last year, so we had a few of the students and then it just went dead. Probably only about 30% of our clients followed us from where we were before in Withington. Plus no one ever knows where this place is – so there's that as well. So it was dead quiet and then all of a sudden in September it just exploded.

It's called The Hepburn Hair Project because Seamus who owns this place loves Audrey Hepburn – we've got loads of books about her here. He wanted to do a project for his next salon: so open this one and then eventually another. So this'll be like our little flagship. We're on the verge now – in August we've got a new stylist starting, then in September hopefully another. So it's starting to build.

This place was a computer shop before. I first came here when it was a shell. This was three rooms, so they opened the lot up. I think it took about eleven weeks for the builders to change it all. I was a bit involved with choosing colours and stuff.

There's quite a community spirit round here, I think – all the people from the hospital, and then you've got the Uni. We know everyone from Gregs and McColls, and we get on quite well with a few of them from the bank. It's quite good really, and if there's anyone knocking about who's a bit dodge everyone will let each other know. We've got a community support officer who's always knocking about too. It's alright actually. We used to have a homeless guy who'd sit outside here, he was 65; dead sweet. He always came in and chatted. I think he's got a house now.





THE HEPBURN HAIR PROJECT,  
340 OXFORD ROAD



I just kind of fell into hairdressing. I love it. It's great fun. It's dead social – and I like to chat. Especially round here, there's challenges all the time, because there's so many different nationalities: everyone's hair's totally different. So you'll have a lot of Chinese for instance and their hair's totally different to European hair. The shape of it's different – each individual strand.

**“ This place was a computer shop before. I first came here when it was a shell. This was three rooms, so they opened the lot up. I think it took about eleven weeks for the builders to change it all.”**

We've just got through to the British Hairdressing Business awards, and we won an English Hairdressing award for best in Manchester. Clients vote online for it. Then you go to a panel and they send in a mystery shopper. I think we won because we're the best, of course! And because it's really relaxed this place. We always have a good time. I like to keep it so that when you walk in you feel like you belong. ●



## Ian Carrington

Deputy Manager, Blackwell's

Place: Jean McFarlane Building, University of Manchester

I used to be a good church boy. I went to a church in Didsbury, which Jean McFarlane also went to; she was a devout churchgoer and well known for that. Someone arranged for me to do some cat sitting for her. I remember being in her living room; her sound system was a portable CD player that made a really loud whirry noise all the time; me being into music thought 'how can she cope with this?!' The cat was nice – well, I was bringing it food. I've always been a massive cat freak. If I had a spirit animal or whatever, it would definitely be a cat. I did an interview with Jean for the church magazine. It was just after the vote to televise parliament and she was totally in favour. She was very traditional in her religious beliefs, but very modernising and forward thinking. She was quite a cool Baroness: she'd had this career in midwifery and nursing; she was vice-president of the League of Nurses at St Bartholomew's Hospital, and a fellow at the Royal College of Nursing; and then she was awarded a life peerage for her work in the 70s.

She let slip in the interview that her cat – which was a black cat – was called Blackmail, which is just amazing, and still my favourite cat name. I asked her why, and she said, 'Because it is a black male,' with a twinkle in her eye. I can just imagine if she'd been someone else, she'd be told, 'You can't call your cat Blackmail,' because that's just a gift to your enemies, right? But the thing with Jean McFarlane was, she was kind of spotless. You look at her career and it's just selflessness and giving and integrity, through and through. I don't think that's just me being nostalgic – you read the obituaries and there's this phenomenally strong, principled woman, who's so unimpeachable she can call her cat Blackmail!

## JEAN McFARLANE BUILDING, THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER





I'm Deputy Manager at Blackwell's. Throughout most of the 90s, I was a journalist, then in '97, '98, I started Christian bookselling for Wesley Owen in Manchester. I got the job at Blackwell's in 2007. Coming here was about me getting out of that Christian bubble. I've no desire to ever walk into a church again. Not because of belief reasons, it's just stuffy and old and not me – it took me a long time to realise that. I just wanted to put it all behind me.

I'd been working in Macclesfield for three years, and it was so different to move to Oxford Road. I remember thinking how big the buildings looked, realising how wide this road is, and how tall and fat the buildings are. It's such an impressive area in which to work.

**“...it was so different to move to Oxford Road. I remember thinking how big the buildings looked, realising how wide this road is, and how tall and fat the buildings are.”**

The Jean McFarlane Building wasn't here then, nor a lot of these University buildings. They've built a lot in quite quick succession and the Jean McFarlane Building – the school of nursing, midwifery and social work – is one of them. I didn't particularly think anything of it at the time; I didn't make the connection.

It was when I was listening to Radio Four that I twigged. It was in 2012 – the building was built in 2009 – I just had the radio on in the background and Last Word came on. I never listen to Last Word normally – I don't like morose things. But the lead story was the death of Baroness Jean McFarlane. And they said enough in the report for me to think that was my Jean – that was the Jean McFarlane I interviewed, but was too young and naive to take in how important she was. I looked her up on Wikipedia, and that's when I made the connection with the building.

I find it weird that I came away from here to escape – not to escape, but as a cut off from the young me that did the religious stuff – and I'm actually working opposite this talismanic figure of my past. I buy my jacket potatoes from there! It's really, really strange: a weird circular thing separated by two decades. I don't really like the past: I'm always trying to get away from it. I think my problem is that I am dweller, I could dwell for eternity; I've had so much bereavement in my life, it would be very easy for me to load myself up with regrets. So as a survival thing, I let go of the past quite easily. I think actually I hold onto a lot of stuff psychologically, but I try not to be sentimental, I try and purge that side of myself. Even so, it's quite nice having the building there. ●



## Sharon Doyle

Outreach Officer, RECLAIM Project

Place: Rotters, Oxford Street

I left school when I was fifteen – I was one of the youngest in the year – and I started working straight away. I worked at Shepherd Gilmour on Deansgate. The girls I met there were going out to Rotters. So I went home and I went to my mum and dad, can I go? I was fifteen, nearly sixteen, so I was obviously under age, but the rule was, if I was big enough to go out to work and earn my own money, then I could go out – providing I didn't get drunk and was home at half past one in the morning. The nightclub closed at two, so that was a big bugbear of mine.

You worked for your weekend: you hated your job but you just went there all week just so you could go out on a Saturday night. You'd plan what you were wearing all week and then we used to take a day to get ready. I was terrible at putting fake tan on and I always had lines down my arms. I had a perm, and red lipstick – I'd wear off the shoulder gypsy tops, culottes, and Doc Marten shoes.

You didn't have mobile phones. We didn't have a telephone at home, it was at my gran's who lived in the next street, so I'd go round my gran's on Friday evening and wait for everyone to ring me to confirm we were going out Saturday. Then we'd meet Saturday afternoon, go clothes shopping, come home, get ready and then go out Saturday night. It was brilliant.

We used to go to the pubs in St Anne's Square first and then we'd go on to Rotters. I'd never experienced anything like that – growing up we were never taken to pubs, we weren't that type of family, so going out and meeting all these people was a brilliant experience. We used to drink blue Bols and lemonade –

## ROTTERS, OXFORD STREET





there's really not much alcohol in it, but we drank it because we thought it made us look mysterious – actually all you ended up with was blue lips and a blue tongue!

We'd walk in Rotters like we owned the place. I always went to the DJ first of all and asked for Neneh Cherry Buffalo Stance. He'd put it on and I'd dance, thinking I was dead cool. It was around the time of Neneh Cherry, Bobby Brown, Salt and Pepper. We all used to dance as if everyone was watching, we wanted everyone to watch us. I remember it being all dark inside. It was big, on two floors. It had the dance floor, and they had Chesterfield sofas for everyone to chill on.

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**“ We didn't have a telephone at home, it was at my gran's who lived in the next street, so I'd go round my gran's on Friday evening and wait for everyone to ring me...”**

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I had to be home at half past one in the morning, so I'd leave at twenty five past one. We lived in Salford. I'd run out, get a black cab and peg it all the way home. My dad would be sat there in his vest and my mum would be sat there with her nightie on, waiting for me to get in. I used to pretend not to be drunk, but the more you pretend not to be drunk the more you're bouncing off walls.

When you were in Rotters – which my granddad used to call Rottweilers – you always had taxi fare home, no matter how much money you'd spent, and that was because towards the end of the night the boys would have too much to drink and they'd always end up fighting over a girl. They all had change

in their pockets; they'd all be on the dance floor, fighting, and there'd be this money everywhere, so you always found your taxi fare home then! Looking back now, even though there were fights, it was a safe environment, there was no drugs, no real violence, it was just trying to be grown up in a very childish environment that sold alcohol.

I've worked for RECLAIM for three and a half years. We used to be based just off Oxford Road on Portland Street. We work with young people from working class communities, enabling them to be seen, be heard and lead change. It's not a naughty kids project, it's not a gifted and talented kids project, we work with a whole range of kids, developing leadership potential. Every child has leadership potential, from the goggiest one to the quietest one. It's about building on their skills. We start working with them when they're 12, on an eight month programme in the first year. We start with a conference and they build a manifesto, based on what they're passionate about, what they want to change or see changed. They then go out and hand deliver their manifesto to people and talk about it. We have four strands of work: Leadership, Enterprise, Activism and Development (LEAD). We offer them tasters in each area, and we also do pastoral care: I do one to one and group work with the young people. It's all about getting them to have self belief, teaching them confidence. I try and get them to understand that it's OK to be different, because different rocks. In the second year of RECLAIM, they choose an area to specialise in. It's all about giving children different opportunities. ●

FIG. 2



Oxford Road in the Edwardian era according to Ordnance Survey 25 inch mapping. The overlaid areas indicate the extent of the Victoria University in the early twentieth century and how far its campus has expanded by 2015

6



ALI'S STORY

## Ali Hanbury

Centre Manager, LGBT Centre

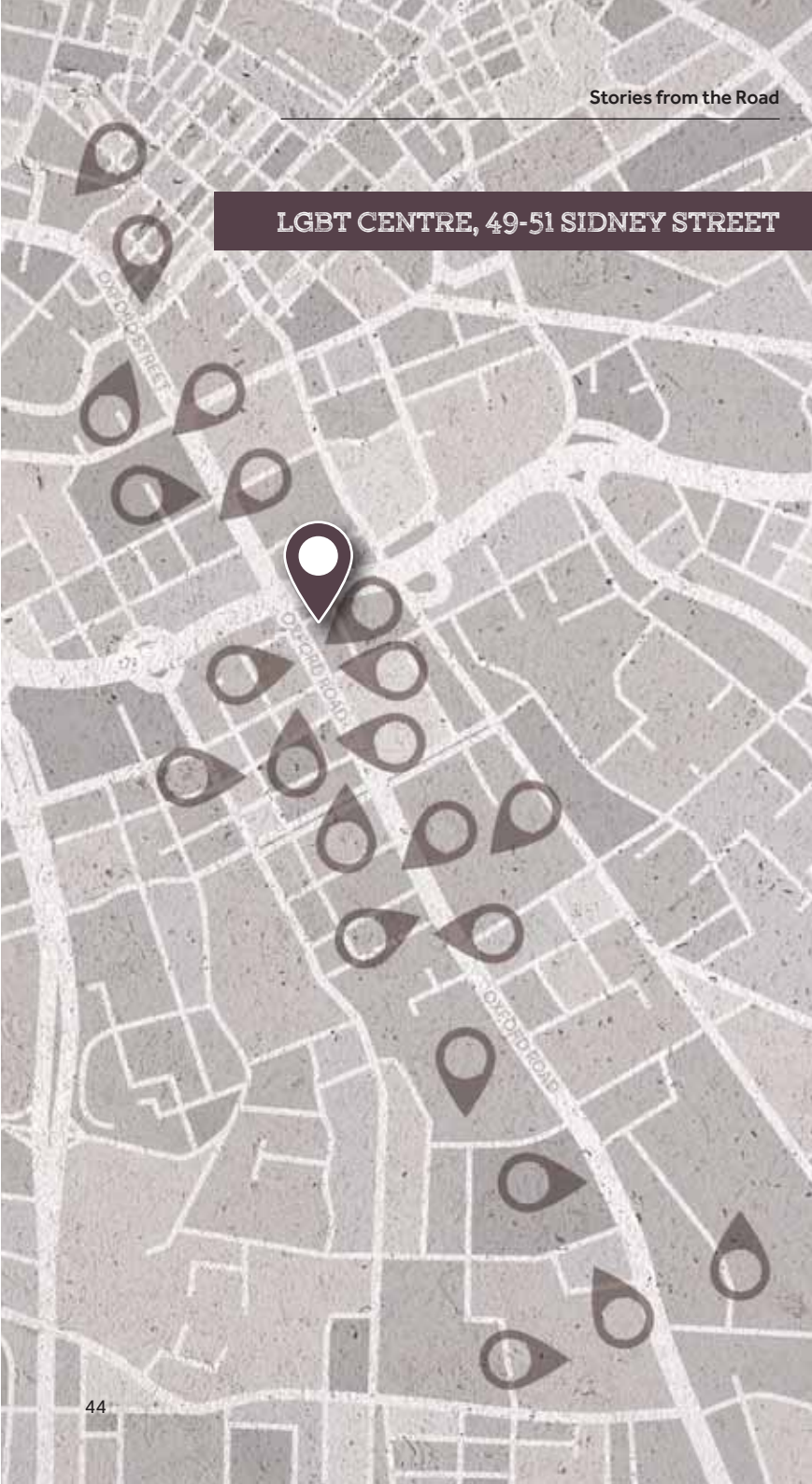
Place: LGBT Centre, 49-51 Sidney Street

The centre's been significant for me, even before I worked here. I used to work for a local authority youth service over in Cheshire. I was working with some lesbian young women, and there was an opportunity for them to go on a residential summer camp in Hebden Bridge, which was run by the youth organisation that operates out of this centre. I signposted them into that and came along as a volunteer to help on the residential. That was maybe seven or eight years ago. I would come back and do that residential every year. Then I started working in Manchester for a sexual health organisation. So again I was signposting LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans) young people to here and LGBT people from here to the sexual health organisation, and I'd do some workshops here too. I just got more and more involved, and then a job came up here and I applied. I've been working here for two years as the centre manager. It's used by between 15 and 20 user groups. They're all autonomous, volunteer-led largely, and they provide their own services and sessions here for different members of the LGBT communities.

We're the first publicly funded LGBT centre in Europe that we've found. There was a version of the centre on Bloom Street, then in Waterloo Place on Oxford Road for a while. Then they got this site and built this building, which opened in 1988. One of the main things lots of people tell us is that because it's not in the Gay Village, you don't have to out yourself by coming here – because you could be coming to the sports centre, the cafe, the Islamic Institute, the music shops, the universities. Also, because we have Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, because we have faith groups and young people's groups, it's completely dry – we don't have any alcohol here. So it's really inclusive of families, people with alcohol addiction and



LGBT CENTRE, 49-51 SIDNEY STREET



young people who don't drink. So that's a really nice positive too. Quite often, for a lot of people, their first port of call going to a gay venue would be a pub. We're quite clear that that's not our focus. The centre's got a bit more of a grass roots, activist slant to it.

The centre was originally known as the Gay Centre. Then, as terms changed, it became the Lesbian and Gay Centre, then the LGBT Centre. For the centre's 25th anniversary it was renamed after Joyce Layland. She was the parent of a young gay man. She didn't find anything for him in Manchester at the time, so she was integral in setting up a lot of the youth support services and helping with support for parents. Quite often women's names aren't associated with buildings and statues – Manchester's really rubbish at that actually, though some of the University buildings are named after women – and within the history of the LGBT political movement there are a lot of gay men who are known and recognised and celebrated. There's also the fact that she was a heterosexual woman. She was an ally, someone who really supported LGBT rights, and we're not going to advance without really recognising and supporting and working with heterosexual allies; so renaming the centre was a nod to recognise her contribution.

When the coalition came in and a lot of funding was reduced for local services, and they wanted to transfer assets from councils to charities, we needed to think of ways to help cover core costs and keep the centre running and open. So we decided to open the cafe – there used to be one here years ago. We have three part time paid staff and everyone else is a volunteer. The cafe's open to everyone – as long as you're not a homophobe, and you're hungry, you can come in! We do outside catering too. Since we opened the cafe we've used Have A Banana – the stall over the road – which sells really really affordable fruit and veg. We grow a lot of our own stuff at allotments in Fallowfield, but we also buy from them across the road.





We're in a great location – on the Oxford Road Corridor which has quite a diverse demographic, largely because of the universities. It's nice being just outside of town but close to town. The transport links are brilliant for people who want to travel in. So we have people who travel from Cheshire to come to groups, from Blackpool, and Liverpool too.

**“ One of the main things lots of people tell us is that because it's not in the Gay Village, you don't have to out yourself by coming here...”**

We're sandwiched in between the Islamic Institute and the Eighth Day Co-operative Cafe, and then round the corner there's King's Church, and Johnny Roadhouse, so you've got a really nice mix of people. We've had quite a fractious history with some of the faith organisations who challenged the plans for the centre, but now we're all really nice positive neighbours.

It's good that we've got All Saint's park just across the road too. Sometimes, if it's a hot day and we've got a meeting, we'll go across the road, put a blanket down and use that space. It's great to have a little green space in quite a built up area. ●

7



MICHAEL'S STORY

## Michael Hebbert

**Emeritus Professor, University of Manchester**

**Place: Geoffrey Manton Building,  
Manchester Metropolitan University**

The reason why Oxford Road is for me particularly fascinating is because it encapsulates so much of the history of the twentieth century street. I'm a historian originally, and have worked on the history of planning cities. I've been doing a lot of work on streets; how we've treated the street is a very fascinating aspect of twentieth century design history.

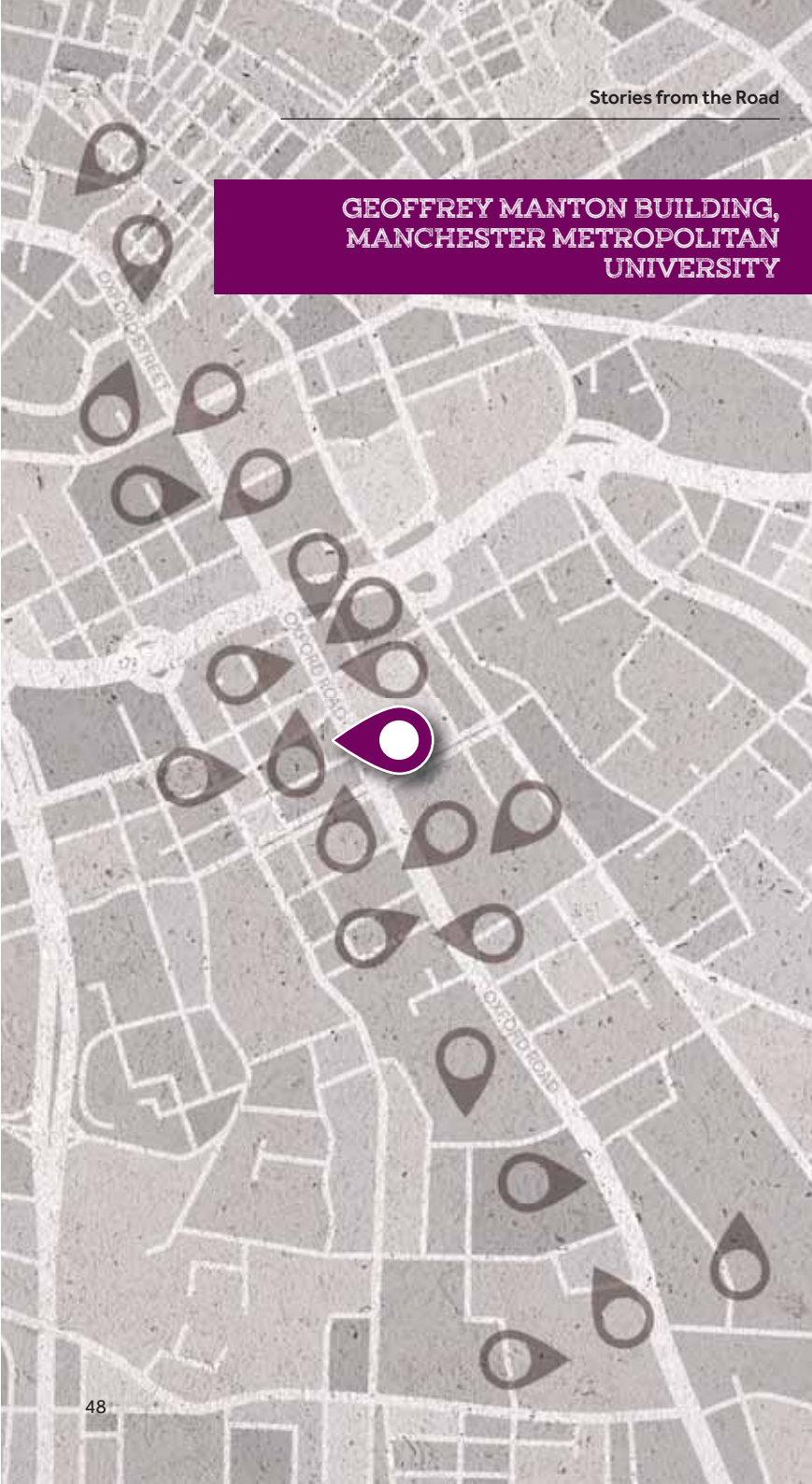
Oxford Road was the object of a great design experiment from around 1960 to around the millennium. That experiment was linked to developments in London, which I've also worked on, seen best in somewhere like the Barbican: where you tried to rebuild the city as a vertical city in which pedestrians would move at one level and vehicles would move at another. So this is part of the larger twentieth century design story, which is about living with motorisation. Manchester was manfully struggling against industrial decline, and determined to demonstrate that it was still a centre of modernity and progress.

So in the 1960s you've got the national computing centre down Oxford Road; you've got the new conservatoire building – the RNCM – a fantastic building; you've got the redevelopment of the metropolitan precinct. And then at the Victoria University – as it used to be called – you've got the giant red-brick buildings by Wilson and Wormesley that were intended to be connected up with a deck, with upper level pedestrian walkways and bridges linking all the way to Piccadilly Station. You can still see faint traces of that. Down at All Saints it's quite obvious that the MMU theatre building used to incorporate a walkway. The Royal College of Music for years and years had a front door at the upper level, and an extraordinary undercroft which fronted onto Oxford Road, a dark sort of shadowed space





**GEOFFREY MANTON BUILDING,  
MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN  
UNIVERSITY**



with a few dying cotoneasters in it, They subsequently reclaimed it by filling the space with practice rooms visible through that wonderful glazed facade.

In a way even more interesting than the half-cocked attempt to take pedestrians up, is what happened from about 1985 onwards when it was realised that this dream was never going to come off and the action was going to remain at pavement level. The city council stopped requiring buildings to include upper level pedestrian segments and the new buildings that were created started to look towards the street again. The Geoffrey Manton building, of the MMU, is particularly fascinating – made by good Manchester architects who were very much part of the movement of getting back to street based urbanism, so no sheer cliffs of brick work, blank walls fronting onto a canyon which would be dominated by vehicles, but getting back to the civility of nineteenth century architecture.

People were looking at the great Victorian buildings of Manchester, and asking, why are these buildings so fantastic? Why do they work? And realising that it was partly the aesthetics of the facade. The typical Victorian building along Deansgate is designed in a way that has a ground floor level, which has scale to the street, scale to pedestrian movement, has a front door that welcomes you and displays the building. There's the torso of the building, with its ranges of windows of the main rooms. And then an upper level, a third part of the composition, where you top off the building, you put a face and a hat on it. If you look at the Victorian buildings of the old university, you have a strongly marked cornice and then maybe a frieze, then attic storeys, and then you might have spires and pinnacles.

You can begin to see how the Geoffrey Manton building is attempting to get back to that. It's not a slab, the façade has rhythm and is designed in traditional Manchester materials. In all of that the architecture was moving in the right direction,





and yet was still so wrong in other respects. There are two things that make that building a remarkably bad contributor to the street scene. It's actually facing the other way round – the entrance is on the other side – so it doesn't have a front door, but because of fire regulations it has to have fire exits, and those are put as snouts on either side of the building. They stick out from the beautifully measured facade, and produce blank walls which debouch onto this set back surface which they didn't want people parking on, or sleeping on, or doing anything on, and so they paved it with bricks set at an edge, the most hostile, ugly, repellent, barbarous piece of street architecture. I love it because it shows a building that is half trying to do the right things and still doggedly doing entirely the wrong things. It's taken us such a long time to get back to understanding what a well-mannered urban building is about.

**“...the giant red-brick buildings by Wilson and Wormesley that were intended to be connected up with a deck, with upper level pedestrian walkways and bridges linking all the way to Piccadilly Station.”**

I grew up in Blackburn, at a time when the East Lancs mill towns, following the lead of Manchester, were very much trying to modernise. Textiles had been in a long decline, but they were plucky, they wanted to bring themselves into the twentieth century. Unfortunately that involved pulling down the Victorian city centres and building new shopping centres, new covered markets, which looked pretty cheapskate and didn't work as well as the glorious old covered markets. It was really watching that that made me interested in the planning of cities. ●



FIG. 3



The tram and bus routes along Oxford Road and surrounding main roads shown on this 1930s era public transport map

## Naomi Kashiwagi

Artist and Student Engagement Coordinator,  
The Whitworth and Manchester Museum

Place: Cornerhouse, 70 Oxford Street

My art practice explores everyday life through reinvention to reveal potential enchanting moments and joy in the everyday. Noticeably for me, over the past five years I've been incorporating small, often spontaneous gestures, actions, interventions that aim to catalyse the potential for joie de vivre and vivification into my everyday life and as a consequence, sometimes into the everyday lives of others. For example, I fold my bus tickets into origami animals and then give them back to the bus driver! I usually make a squirrel. My last name, Kashiwagi, means oak tree, so I have an intrinsic affinity with oak trees, acorns and squirrels! Consequently, my origami technique is now more refined as nearly every time I have taken the bus since 2007 I have made an origami creature, or 2, when on Finglands's buses (their tickets were longer, so I could make a pair of creatures!).

This aspect of what I do in everyday life is something that I've wanted to channel into my art practice. In 2013, I was commissioned by Cornerhouse to produce new work for their final exhibition Playtime (Sat 22 Nov 2014 – Sun 15 Mar 2015) before they moved to HOME. The Jacques Tati film, Playtime and also Cornerhouse, inspired the exhibition.

Cornerhouse was situated on the bustling intersection of Oxford Street and Whitworth Street. There's a pedestrian crossing just outside, which you could traverse as if on a carousel, if you wanted to, which also links to the final scene of the film Playtime! I thought it would be playful and fun to produce and document a performance piece on that site. Initially, I assumed it was a pelican crossing, but through research I learnt that it was a puffin crossing! Puffin stands for pedestrian user friendly intelligent crossing (at these

## CORNERHOUSE, 70 OXFORD STREET





crossings, the green man is at the side as you are waiting, to encourage pedestrians to look at the traffic approaching the crossing rather than on the opposite side of the road). Pelican stands for pedestrian lights controlled crossing. I loved that even though it's all about health and safety, there's this playful element.

**“ I want to animate and illuminate the fantastic cultural offer on the student corridor.”**

Puffin Crossing Carousel was one of my commissions that explored an unintended use of a pedestrian crossing: as a carousel that people can merrily go round while others look on; extraordinary and playful, yet still embracing the inherent function of the puffin crossing. Puffin Crossing Carousel aimed to show how small, extraordinary moments and things can inspire joie de vivre in everyday life. Puffin Crossing Carousellers performed wearing black and white and accessorising orange umbrellas, inspired by the puffin's colours. Their movements were based on everyday movements in the city and the music was from the film.

The puffin crossings safely orchestrate the ebb and flow of moving traffic and pedestrians passing through and across Manchester. This puffin crossing is a place with an ever-changing temporary audience; waiting pedestrians, stationary drivers and cyclists, all of whom unexpectedly encountered, experienced and engaged with Puffin Crossing Carousel! The performance was photographed and the images were transferred onto slides and shown on a slide carousel in the gallery space next to my second commission, Swingtime.

For my piece Swingtime, I wanted to unlock the playful potential of a gallery space. Swings are usually placed outside in playgrounds, parks and gardens. The experience of swinging encapsulates a love for life; the feeling of weightlessness

and the gleeful repetitive swinging motion transports you somewhere else and forces you to lose a sense of time and place. The sounds activated by the swinging were recordings of beeps and traffic from the puffin crossing outside Cornerhouse. I found out that the beeps last for 21 seconds at that crossing, and then the traffic goes for 56 seconds. So when you went on the swings they catalysed those sounds. As the swings were for people to interact with and swing on, I needed playground matting, which you can get in all kinds of different colours. So I took inspiration from the puffin bird! I looked at its ratio of colours, and then made a checkerboard pattern: mainly black and white, two squares of orange, one each of the red and the yellow, three of grey. The swing frames were painted using the same puffin bird colour ratios and for the opening of the exhibition my outfit was also inspired by the puffin! I'm really proud of being able to produce work that has the potential make people of all ages smile, laugh with joy and have fun.

I'm from West Yorkshire and came to Manchester to study BA and MA Fine Art at Manchester School of Art and then MA Art Gallery and Museum Studies at University of Manchester. There is a fantastic energy along the Oxford Road corridor area where I work. Manchester's twenty-first century gallery in the park and Museum of the Year 2015 finalist, the Whitworth and the wonderful archaeological, anthropological and natural history curiosities in Manchester Museum are such incredible resources for students and I'm proud that I'm the Student Engagement Coordinator at both. I want to animate and illuminate the fantastic cultural offer on the student corridor. I've done this and continue to do this in a number of ways, ranging from my student engagement programmes at the Whitworth and Manchester Museum, to music, soundscape and art commissions. I founded and produce The Student Weekender which highlights art, music, science and culture on this student corridor through events, exhibitions, talks and performances. Over 1400 students came to the launch event! ●

## Naomi Kashiwagi

Artist and Student Engagement Coordinator,  
The Whitworth and Manchester Museum

Place: The Vivarium, Manchester Museum

I work as Student Engagement Coordinator at Manchester Museum and the Whitworth, which are both part of The University of Manchester. I have worked at the Whitworth since 2009 and at Manchester Museum since 2011. I vividly remember the first meeting with both the Whitworth and Manchester Museum's Learning and Engagement teams together at Manchester Museum back in 2011. Andrew Gray, who's the Curator of Herpetology – the Curator of Amphibians and Reptiles - gave a fascinating and wonderful presentation about his work at Manchester Museum, as well as his role teaching at The University of Manchester's Faculty of Life Sciences.

Andrew leads on looking after Manchester Museum's vivarium where the live amphibians and reptiles are on display. The museum plays a leading role in the conservation of some of the world's most endangered amphibians, including the critically endangered and exquisitely cute Lemur Leaf Frog, which I sponsor. Lemur Leaf Frogs have an extraordinary ability to change colour and have 24 hour camouflage protection!

Andrew was so passionate, caring and engaging. Half-way through his presentation he revealed one of the red-eyed tree frogs from a glass tank on a trolley at the back of the room that I hadn't even noticed!

After the meeting, I went to talk to him. There were some other glass tanks on the trolley, and a few of us were curious to know what was in them. One of tanks had a chameleon in it. I'd never seen a chameleon first hand. He brought it out and placed it on his arm and it was just mesmerising being in such close proximity to such an exquisite creature. I learnt that

## THE VIVARIUM, MANCHESTER MUSEUM





it's a misconception that chameleons change colour according to their environment – they change colour according to their mood. Many of the Panther Chameleons are multi-coloured and when they become more peachy in particular areas it means they're happy and content. If they are not as brightly coloured, they might not be feeling content and they can turn black if they're sad or angry or they've been threatened. I love that it's all to do with mood and feelings.

Andrew asked if I wanted to have the chameleon on my arm, and I delightedly said "yes please!" The chameleon walked onto my arm very slowly. I use my hands expressively when I talk, especially if I am enthused; with this chameleon on my arm I had to be still and very mindful – I even talked at a slower pace, everything naturally slowed down. The chameleon was perched there for about half an hour and then suddenly it started to move at quite a pace up my arm. It noticed long strands of my hair that must have looked a good route towards the top of my head, it climbed up and happily sat there for about five amazing minutes. It was the most extraordinary experience. Afterwards, when I came out of the museum, it was absolutely pouring down and I had to cycle back to the Whitworth. I was pedalling along, getting drenched and then half way to the Whitworth I suddenly thought "Wow! I just had a chameleon on my head!" It was pouring down and I was just beaming.

I kept going back to the Vivarium and still do - I integrate these short enchantment breaks into my working day. From my first encounter with the vivarium, Andrew could see I was enthused and he showed me behind the scenes. I remember seeing New Caledonian geckos - geckos don't usually have eyelashes, but these ones did, and not only that, theirs are bright yellow! It has been wonderful discovering my fascination with different types of rare and endangered species of frogs and learning about conservation and sustainability issues via Andrew, who really cares about them and wants to share his knowledge.

The notion that chameleons change colour according to their mood had, and continues to have, an impact on the way I dress. I had already started buying more bright colours as I had started to cycle and wanted to wear highly visible and colourful attire. To begin with it wasn't a conscious thing, but then it became more conscious. I started playing around with colour in everyday life and looking to nature for inspiration for colours and colour ratios, in particular chameleons, bullfinches and the Lemur Leaf Frog! One time, I went to the museum and was wearing all black. I bumped into Andrew and immediately upon seeing me, he said in a concerned tone "What's happened? Are you alright?" It was because I was wearing all black! In response to this, I started to wear a circular smudge of bright green coloured eye shadow just at the bottom edge of my eyes. If I did want to wear black to work, I'd wear blue or green eye shadow so that when I went to the museum Andrew would know I was ok! It was and is a colour code, that I still use, mainly because I like the accent of colour! The whole process makes me reflect on how I'm feeling and I think about colour in a very different way.

**“...I suddenly thought “Wow! I just had a chameleon on my head!”**

Last year, I made a gift for Sir David Attenborough, to express my admiration of him and also as a memento for his recent visit to the Vivarium to film the BBC programme, Natural World: Attenborough's Fabulous Frogs. I made an origami Darwin's frog (one of his favourite critically endangered frogs) contained in an origami Blue Bird of Paradise inspired box (one of his favourite birds). Andrew kindly gave it to David Attenborough on my behalf and said that he absolutely loved it! Today, I'm wearing my sparkly frog ring. On my way into Manchester I turned my bus ticket into an origami frog, which I then gave to the bus driver upon leaving. In everyday life I turn my bus tickets into origami animals, usually squirrels (Kashiwagi means 'oak tree' and I have a natural affinity with squirrels!) and give them back to the bus driver as origami creatures! ●

FIG. 4



Extract from Bartholomew's Town Plan of Manchester from the late 1930s

10



CATH'S STORY

## Cath Keane

Principal Regeneration Officer, Manchester City Council,  
Hulme Ward Co-ordinator

Place: Whitworth Park

My journey to Manchester was through university clearing. I decided to go to Manchester Polytechnic on the Friday and I started the course on the Monday, so it was a really crazy weekend.

I was a student between 1986 and 1989, at the start of the Madchester effect: everyone wearing their baggy jeans and feeling very proud of the city – it was a very cool place to be. I was fortunate: our family didn't have a lot of money so I had a maintenance grant and didn't have to pay the tuition fees which students have to do today. It was a very positive experience.

I was into my second year, sharing a house with friends in Rusholme. It was cheap and cheerful and very convenient, about a 10-15 minute walk to Whitworth Park. I would walk through the park, down Oxford Road to All Saints – Manchester Polytechnic, as it was at the time.

You always had the sense you had to be a bit careful walking through Whitworth Park: it was a bit dark and overgrown then. One day, in the autumn term, I was walking through and I had a sense that there was something not exactly right. And then, from nowhere, an Alsatian dog jumped onto my back. I felt like I'd been attacked by a wolf in a way. I remember there were paw marks on the back of my black coat. It was only afterwards, when I was in my lectures, that I thought, *I don't think I'll walk back that way*. About a week later, there was an attack in the park. I almost felt like the dog had done me a favour, because it jolted my fear factor not to go back into the park. It felt like the dog wanted to protect me rather than frighten me. It was a pivotal moment – I still remember it.



## WHITWORTH PARK

Whitworth Park's had funding and improvements in the last ten, fifteen years. That's been transformational – I think about it in the 1980s and that incident with the dog, and now I think about how I feel walking through this wonderful park. They've reconfigured the space, so there's a large circular area in the centre which has got lovely grasses and other types of flora and fauna which are self-sustaining – a real statement in the centre of the park. It's had all the benefit of the work that's happened because of the Whitworth Gallery, and they've got friends groups which link in too. There's play equipment and an outdoor gym that's been installed. You're right next to Manchester Academy which means there are a lot of school children coming through. And you've got the hospitals across the road. So hopefully whether people are going to school or hospital or the gallery, they will see some benefit in walking through and sitting in the park. It's very nice in the summer time in particular.

**“ I was a student between 1986 and 1989, at the start of the Madchester effect: everyone wearing their baggy jeans and feeling very proud of the city it was a very cool place to be.”**

I stayed in Manchester for a while after University. Another journey along Oxford Road was going to work at JMB, the examination board, behind the Contact theatre – it's called AQA now. Today I work around the corner from there, at the Active Lifestyle Centre. After a summer at JMB, I got bits and pieces but then left Manchester for a while. I got a job back in here with the City council in 1992. I've had various careers within the organisation, and now work for the council's central







regeneration team. My work is mainly focused on Hulme. We're doing a lot of work on the Burley campus, part of MMU. That's another irony, working with MMU when I used to go to Manchester Polytechnic – there are a lot of circles going on, a lot of coincidences.

Coming as a student to Manchester, benefiting from the opportunities to work in the city as I have, I always feel like I've owed something back. Working with the public has always been a really important aspect of life for me, especially coming to work for the city council. My job is very much about people; that's been very important and valuable for me. ●



## HENRY'S STORY

## Henry McGhie

Head of Collections and Curator of Zoology,  
Manchester Museum

Place: Manchester Museum

I work at Manchester Museum and I love it, I really really love it. I live in Liverpool so I go up and down the Corridor twice a day, to and from work. I get the coach from Liverpool at half six and usually do some work on the way in. It's a very productive time – I'm sharpest in the morning.

I'm mad keen on nature. I grew up in a little village and I was always out in the countryside. Mad on birds and collecting things. I used to have loads of skeletons: I used to go looking for dead things on the beach – you never knew what you were going to find – then I'd boil them up and get the skulls out.

I'm only interested in museums because I'm interested in live birds – that's what I got into museums for: for understanding populations of live birds now and in the past. When I was a student I discovered the collections behind the scenes in Inverness museum. I volunteered there and I sorted out their egg collections and I started writing things about historical records and how you could use these collections to understand past distribution of plants and animals, especially birds. I used lots of taxidermy records to study changes in distribution of predatory animals in response to game keeping.

After I came to Manchester Museum, I moved to being more about environmental education and conservation education. So it's about how what people do here relates to the world beyond. It's not just a kind of doll's house of the world; I don't like that idea at all. I don't like the idea of the museum just being an escape from reality – that's OK if people want that, but it should be capable of being an awful lot more than that as well.



## MANCHESTER MUSEUM

There used to be a private museum in Manchester, down next to the Central Library; there's still a street there called Museum St. It was a private members society. That society fell on hard times and the collection was offered to the University. So the University took it on in 1868 – to teach students and to show to the public, which is what we still do. The museum was custom built for that collection. It was done by Alfred Waterhouse, who also did the town hall. The museum's grown and grown and grown down Oxford Road.

The behind the scenes collection here is massive. It is 4.8 million objects. 4.6 million are natural history specimens: about 2.8 million insects, about 750,000 herbarium sheets – plants pressed on pieces of paper; 750,000 mollusc shells. The humanities collections are much much smaller but very important; we have a collection of 18,000 objects from ancient Egypt, plus archaeology collections, and lots of anthropology objects. Most of our collections weren't collected to be looked at, they were research collections. We probably have about 40,000 objects on display.

**“ There used to be a private museum in Manchester, down next to the Central Library; there's still a street there called Museum St. It was a private members society.”**

Museums like this are healthy reminders of how we know what we know. Rather than just taking information and arguments at face value, like we have to do from the media, it's a very healthy return to 'well actually this is how we know this stuff'. The museum helps exemplify the journey that's got us to where we



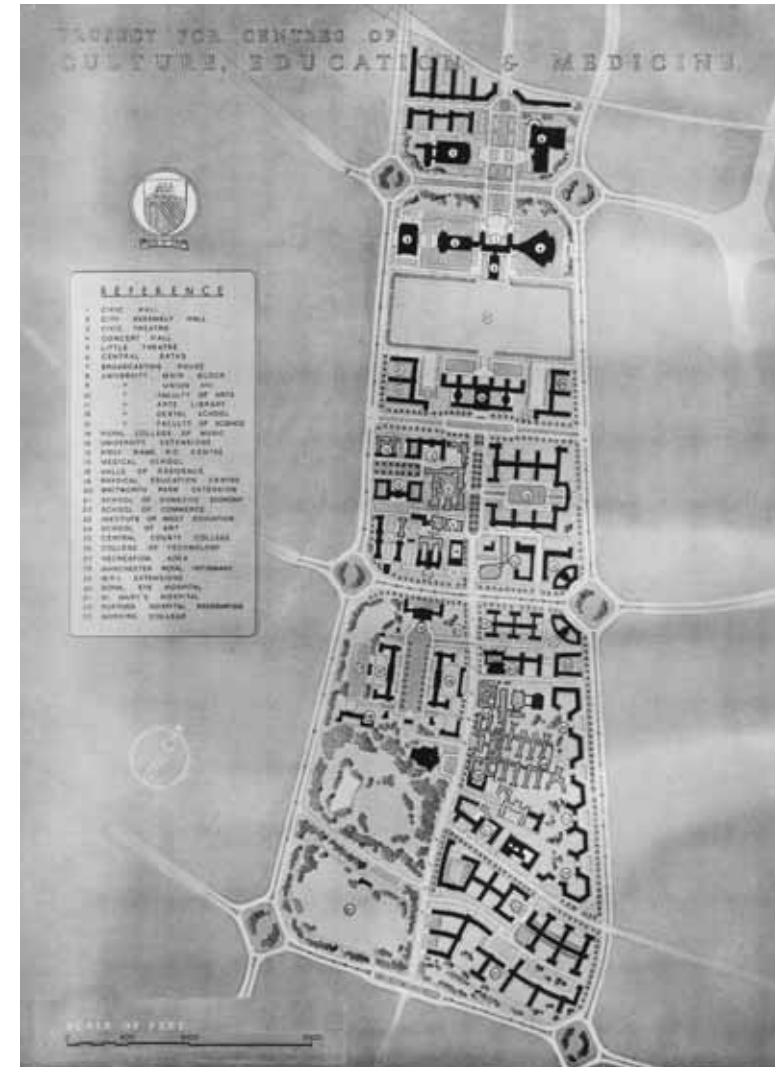
are, both in terms of how the world is the way it is, and also how we understand it the way we do.

I was quite bookish when I was little. I think I must have pestered my mum to buy books from a book club. It's really funny, I've got this book – it's called something like The Concise Encyclopaedia Of Birds. It talks about their bio-geography and their structure and internal anatomy and that kind of thing. I got it when I was something like seven and I think I practically memorised it. Similarly, I've got this great big encyclopaedia that says 'to Henry, from your mum and dad on your 9th birthday'. I have that kind of encyclopaedic kind of mind, and that's why I think museums really suit me – without sounding really dysfunctional!

I'm definitely aware of birds in the city. It's not that hard to identify things from their calls – it's just practice. There are more birds in Manchester than you'd think. Round the museum you'd get wood pigeons, magpies, carrion crows nesting next to the precinct, gold finches, blue tits, some great tits, feral pigeons, blackbirds where there are bushes, robins and dunnocks. In Whitworth Park you get long tailed tits – lovely little things – black and white with a little bit of pink; very cute. They make a spherical nest with lichens which is knitted together with spiders' webs, and then as the eggs grow – they have maybe even ten, twelve eggs – the nest expands. ●



FIG. 5



The bold vision for a new cultural and education zoning set out in the 1945 City of Manchester Plan. Much of the vision would remain unrealised



## Aamar Mahmood

Assistant Chef, Abdul's

Place: Abdul's, 133-135 Oxford Road

Oxford Road is the busiest road. Abdul's is the busiest take away! Abdul's opened more than 35 years now – it started in Rusholme. Now there's one here, one in Fallowfield, one on Stockport Road. This shop has been open nearly 25 years. Abdul is the owner. It's a family business really. Sometimes he comes up; sometimes his sons come up. He's getting old though now.

**“ Abdul's opened more than 35 years now - it started in Rusholme. Now there's one here, one in Fallowfield, one on Stockport Road . This shop has been open nearly 25 years.”**

I've worked here nearly 15 years. Everything's alright for me. It's good money. Times fly here. It's not far from my house. The job pays my mortgage, feeds my kids.

When the students aren't here then this road's nothing – we have no business. When the students are here, the boss is happy, we're all happy. We're open til four in the morning. I used to work nights so I've seen everything. Daytime you get decent customers. Night time you get drunk people, so they don't know what they're asking. I try to avoid troubles, I tell people: 'Look I'm working here. If you're going to say something then just say it, and get your food and go outside.' We've never had any troubles with anyone, never got involved with the police,

## ABDUL'S, 133-135 OXFORD ROAD





nothing like that. Whoever comes up, we can deal with them nicely. We don't want to fight with anyone.

I was born in Pakistan. I came here when I was 22. Now I'm 43. I've got five kids. I'm doing everything for them. My youngest is five. My oldest daughter is nearly 21, she's doing neuroscience in King's College. She's made her mind up, so I'm happy with it. You have to make your mind up when you're growing up. I tell them – I've not had any education, I'm selling kebabs, so you can make something of yourself.

**“ We're open til four in the morning. I used to work nights so I've seen everything.”**

When I'm hungry I can eat anything, but if I had to pick one dish I'd go for a lamb karahi. It's easy to make when you know how. You get the lamb, onions, tomatoes, all those spices – garam masala, chillies, coriander – they all go in the pan and you start cooking. It takes about forty minutes to get the lamb soft. When the lamb gets soft you put a little bit of oil in it, give it another five or ten minutes. When the oil comes up your karahi is ready. ●

13



CHERYL'S STORY

## Cheryl Martin

Poet, playwright and theatre director

Place: Contact Theatre

I grew up in the Maryland suburbs of DC. I came to England to study, and stayed. When I first came to Manchester, I was doing a PhD at Manchester University, on Edward Bond the playwright. I didn't finish it: I was in the middle of writing up my PhD when I got my first commission as a playwright, and I decided I would rather be a playwright.

One of the first places I got taken to when I came to Manchester was Contact. Contact, The Green Room and the Cornerhouse were my three main cultural references; Contact's the only one left now. I got my first commission and my first Arts Council funding because I had come to a workshop at Contact – the woman running the workshop recommended to the Arts Council that I get the money. So from the beginning I had a real connection here.

In 1993 and 1994 I was writer-in-residence at Contact for Richard Gregory and Rennie O'Shea, who now run Quarantine theatre company. Richard was an associate director and Rennie ran the youth theatre. The youth theatre at Contact in the early 90s was the only diverse theatre that there was in the whole of Manchester, including the rest of Contact which was very non-diverse. I helped run the Contact young writers scheme. I ran workshops, read and chose scripts, and dramaturged them for the showcase productions they did.

I got a bit disillusioned with theatre towards the end of the 90s because, as I said, Manchester was very non-diverse as far as theatre was concerned. I went to the BBC instead, and started writing radio plays. That was on Oxford Road too – it's gone now.



## CONTACT THEATRE

In the meantime there was the fire at Contact, and a lot of change. They rebuilt it and John McGrath came in 1999. He was really proactive about looking out for people who weren't in the theatre ecology, and reaching out to black writers. They had this thing called Live and Direct, which started in 2002. It was an Arts Council national initiative looking for emerging black directors and out of it I turned director – that was a big shift for me, and marked me getting back into the theatre more than radio. I worked part-time at the Royal Exchange for three years and then I came back to Contact as Associate Director, New Writing/New Work. I was here for 3 years. The work at Contact was about welcoming people in: getting people who would not be going to drama school, giving them some fundamentals and then maybe after that they might consider going to drama school. With the new writing we were looking for people who wanted to create new forms of theatre. We worked with MCs, DJs, novelists, musicians. We ran tons of programmes. The year before I left, I started hiring people who were my ex-young writers for real jobs as part of the beginning of starting to hire young people to actually run the place as well.

**“ One of the first places I got taken to when I came to Manchester was Contact. Contact, The Green Room and the Cornerhouse were my three main cultural references; Contact's the only one left now.”**

I've just done a one person show at Contact, called Alaska. It's based on a book of my poems, but it's about what's behind them. I suffer from very severe depression. When I was at Contact in the mid-00s, I had a major clinical episode. It was lucky for me that I was here; they were super supportive,





but it was very, very bad. I wrote a lot of poems at that point. Alaska is called that because of the frozen tundra, emotional wasteland that that period represented. Commonword published the poems and I decided to do a one-person show based on it.

Darren, whom I taught in the Contact youth theatre back in the 90s, is directing me in Alaska now. When we first sat down to think about it, I was telling him about what was going on in my life when I wrote the poems. That was what he felt was most important, and that's actually what's in the show. So it's me growing up and what it was like as the illness got worse as I got older; the hospitalisations, which were horrifying; and suicide attempts. It's sort of an exorcism. Until I got sick in 2007 I'd just been in terror of being the way I was in my 20s again, and then it happened. So after it happened I thought: this time I'm going to remember. The thing is you just don't talk about that stuff, because it upsets people. Darren insisted he didn't want it to be a pity-party, and it isn't; it's more: "this is what happened." I never have been able to talk about it all. So finally I can say that this is what happened. It's never too late for the cycle to stop, or at least to get easier. ●



FIG. 6



Extract from Geographia Plan of Manchester and Salford from the early 1950s



## Steve Millington

Senior Lecturer in Geography,  
Manchester Metropolitan University

Place: Manchester Central Library and Library Walk,  
St Peter's Square

The library and the town hall extension complement each other, and in that complementation they've created this space, Library Walk. It's absolutely unique, almost an iconic space in Manchester. I enjoy walking through it: it's curved, while the rest of Manchester is almost like a grid pattern. The curve is an esteemed aspect of great architecture: you can see down it so there's a clear line of sight and that makes you feel comfortable, but because you can't quite see round the end it invites you in to discover what's on the other side. I've been quite intimately connected with the library and the Walk, right from an early age and more latterly because of the Walk's closure.

I was raised on the outskirts of Salford, but my family are from Hulme and Moss Side – they were all mad City supporters. My grandparents were still living in Moss Side, right next to the Man City ground, when I was young. And my dad used to work at a place called Rational House on Bridge Street for a small firm of accountants: for Mr Philips, a Polish émigré who came here having just been liberated from Auschwitz. He was quite a character – quite a scary man actually. So right from an early age I got into this kind of routine: we'd come into Manchester, go and see my dad at Rational House, then walk to Oxford Road either to get the train back to Irlam, or the bus to my gran's. Library Walk was the through route from my dad's office to Oxford Road. One of my first experiences of coming to Manchester was holding hands with my mum, walking through Library Walk. It absolutely cemented Manchester city centre in my geographical imagination as a place.

## MANCHESTER CENTRAL LIBRARY AND LIBRARY WALK, ST PETER'S SQUARE







I've been a member of the library for years and years and still am. As a PhD student I'd come here and use the reading room. I have to be honest, the most intensive time I used it was when they opened the CD library! I really got into progressive jazz rock music, because you could go and borrow the stuff and try it out and if you didn't like it you didn't like it. I could probably align my love of Miles Davis to being able to experiment with the CDs from here.

Quite a few years ago I ended up helping out a playwright called Tony Bengé, who had been commissioned by Salford City Council to write a play to commemorate the 150th anniversary of a chartist meeting in Salford. He wanted someone to do some historical research to capture a sense of the time. So I spent a few weeks in the library, just going to through old copies of the Manchester Guardian, looking at what was going on in the city. It was really fascinating history. Manchester was a genuinely radical place.

I was part of an activist group which challenged the city council about their decision to close Library Walk. It tells you a lot about planning in this country that we had 30-40 people, most of which were well educated; we had access to legal expertise; we had access to activists who had intimate knowledge of rights of way law, and we had all this real evidence – all that was dismissed.

**“ One of my first experiences of coming to Manchester was holding hands with my mum, walking through Library Walk.”**

In a city where we've got issues around the privatisation of public space, the enclosure of public space, and the surveillance of public space, this really brings into question well

what is public space in this city? Are we becoming a privatised, securitised city for an elite? That's the danger.

I'm a human geographer – studying the relationships between people and places. I'm based at MMU so I'm pretty familiar with Oxford Road, having worked on there for such a long time. With another hat on, I do public engagement work with the Manchester Modernist society. A number of times now we've run walking tours of the Oxford Road corridor – the science modernism tour – the site of the first computer, graphene, all those kinds of associations. We also look at the positioning of higher education within the strategic planning of the city, which first emerged in the 1945 reconstruction plan. The idea was to close Oxford Road. As you went down Oxford Road from the city centre, when you got to where All Saints Park is there'd be this huge plaza with this kind of Stalin-type cultural mausoleum in the middle and the University buildings behind. They imagined the Brunswick estate adjoining being a kind of Left Bank of Manchester, where academics would mix with – and I'm quoting the plan here – 'continentals' and other kind of 'Bohemian types'. Obviously it doesn't function like that! So there was this whole vision of the place of higher education in the city, as being part of Manchester's reconstruction as a kind of modern progressive city in contradistinction to the squalor of the industrial city of the nineteenth century. That plan kind of evolved over the 60s following the Buchanan Report which advocated separation of people from traffic. The new vision was to create an elevated city: so the pedestrians on a first floor level and traffic on a ground floor level. ●



### Rosie Nyabadza

Medical Doctor

Place: St Mary's Hospital

My cousin was born here – that was my first connection with St Mary's. I thought it was pretty cool that I could work here, and my uncle and my family in Zimbabwe couldn't believe it. I never thought I'd end up in Manchester, so it's a bit of a random thing to have happened.

I came to Manchester because this crazy orthopaedic professor in Oxford told me, if you ever get the chance to go up north, do it. When I finished university, I didn't have anything tying me down to anywhere, so I thought why not, and came up to Manchester.

**“ St Mary's is an incredible place of hopes and beginnings, but also of endings...”**

St Mary's is the women's hospital here. I worked here for six months as part of my training. I hadn't done obstetrics or gynaecology since medical school. Even though you're a doctor and you've been qualified for three years, learning a new speciality is like going back to the beginning. You get thrown into the deep end immediately. I remember a woman coming in on one of my first night shifts. You have to ask really specific questions in different specialities and I didn't know what I needed to do to be safe. So I remember talking to the night nurse, who'd been there for thirty years, and saying, before I go and see the patient, tell me what I need to ask her! She gave me four or five specific questions and specific things I needed to do – and that's how I learnt how to do Obs and Gynae. I am eternally grateful to those nurses.

### ST MARY'S HOSPITAL





St Mary's is an incredible place of hopes and beginnings, but also of endings right at the beginning as well. It was a really dichotomous place to work – where sometimes you were involved in some of the saddest moments of people's lives. I'm the kind of person who likes to tell gory stories to my friends over the dinner table. For the first time, at St Mary's, my friends would ask about my job and I'd tell them a few stories but there were some things that were just too sacred to tell. The sadness that was involved had a different quality to the other illnesses that I had experienced. There are some things that I wouldn't even tell my mum. I've never really experienced that in medicine before.

For me, what's protected me being a doctor is just trying to be as present as possible at the time and be the best I can be at that moment. Then I try not to take it on, or take it home with me. If I didn't do the right thing, or do all I could, in terms of being kind especially, then I'd go home and that's when the weight would be on my shoulders. At St Mary's I'd make sure that just in that moment I'd done all I could – held a hand, stroked a back or whatever, and maybe gone beyond what was expected of me; that helped my own healing, if you want to call it that.

I'm training to be a GP. Hospital work has more camaraderie, more of a team feeling – it's more uplifting in a way. But you don't really develop the relationships with patients, which you have in General Practice, or they're more momentary. There are pros and cons to both. I think people allow themselves – not just in medicine, but in life – to get bored. But being alive is this complex amalgamation of processes that is so intricate – literally: moving your finger, or breathing, or whatever – that even in the most boring situations, that internal experience – knowing that just being here is already incredible – for me at least, makes it easy not to be bored. I try to find the wonder in things, to be interested and inquisitive. That's what keeps me going. ●



FIG. 7



The Manchester Education Precinct Plan, 1965



### Rosie Nyabadza

Medical Doctor

Place: Fruit and Veg Stall, outside All Saints Park

I met my two most amazing friends in a chance encounter at a street party in the Northern Quarter five years ago, and we've been friends ever since. We went to a music festival about two years ago where I met one of their friends – this amazing Greek girl who's just finished a PhD in psychology. She works at the fruit stall on Oxford Road.

She's just a really gentle, loving, kind spirit – someone who uplifts you, who gives you a really good boost just by being around her. She would never think that about herself, but that's what she's like, she's just a beautiful beautiful person.

I barely ever stop at the fruit stall, maybe once a month, but when I go past on the bus I stick my head down and try to look under the stall's awnings and see if she's there. Then I'll send her a little bit of love from the bus. She has no idea! She may find out, she may never find out about it. ●

**“...I'll send her a little bit of love from the bus. She has no idea! She may find out, she may never find out about it.”**

### FRUIT AND VEG STALL, OUTSIDE ALL SAINTS PARK





### Jackie O'Callaghan

Writer and Administrator, The University of Manchester

Place: Whitworth Art Gallery

I chose the Whitworth because there's a strong connection with my mum. When my marriage split up, my mum suggested that we should club together and look after each other; so I moved from Derby to Manchester where she lived. My daughter was only three at the time and had epilepsy; she was quite poorly so I wasn't really working full time.

My mum was very enthusiastic and excitable! She was so excited about Manchester: she took me all over the city, introduced me to the Cornerhouse and all the theatres, and to the Whitworth. I remember we went around the park first of all, and then we went to the small cafe which used to be at the front. It was a treat to come here – we all thought it was very expensive but it was fun. I was unemployed, a single parent by that point, and it was just the highlight of the week to meet mum here and go around.

My daughter fell in love with the gallery too – all the costumes and the paintings – and we used to come here together before she moved to London. There's a little bit of everything here, and the new exhibitions as they come in. It's like a roomful of ghosts this place, you go through all the different galleries and you can see the industrialists and the influence on Manchester of the cotton barons. You can walk through here and see the hardship really, Lowry-type stuff. Manchester was very industrial and very dependent on those industries, and when they collapsed it's so sad because everything else collapses. We've always liked to look into things like that in my family: understand the roots, and where things come from.

My mum and I had a very very close relationship. We had a great eighteen months in Manchester before she was ill. Then she had a nearly fatal heart attack. She was actually driving us

### WHITWORTH ART GALLERY





at the time, my daughter in the seat next to her; I managed to stop the car at fifty miles an hour as she was having this heart attack. She didn't really recover. She lived another eight years, but she got brain damage because she was too long without oxygen. So I became her carer as well. I've put it over there now – you have to do that or it'll drag you down. I don't get depressed about it, what's the point? It could have happened to anyone. It's a matter of making it into what you can live with, and I've chosen to say well, thank god for that, I'm still here. We had another eight years with my mum, she was a lovely lady. And I've got a very fit and healthy daughter now – she grew out of the epilepsy.

**“ This is my counselling – the green spaces in the city. It's when I get creative, when I can fill my head up with ideas.”**

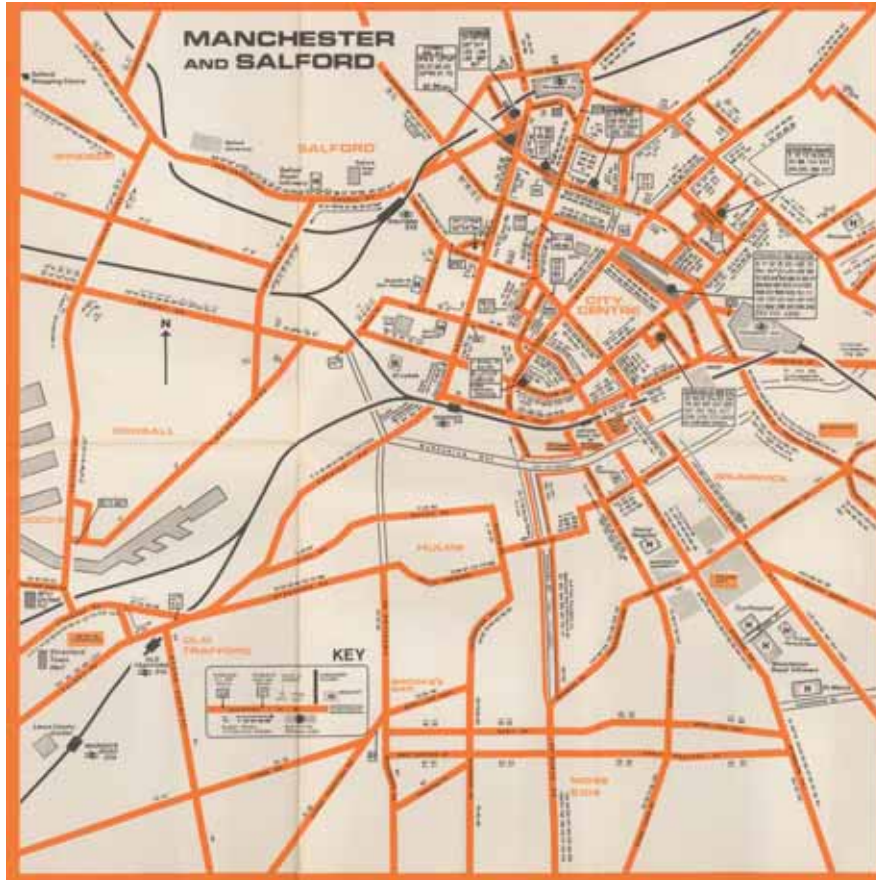
I walk two hours a day – from Withington to work every day, religiously. On my walk I walk past the Whitworth, and because I visualise a lot, every time I walk past I can see my mum waving at me through the door. It's a great comfort. It doesn't upset me, it's just familiarity. My mother and father lived in Fog Lane in Didsbury. He studied at University and she worked at the Barton Arcade and sold crockery to support him through University. I think about him on his motorbike – a Norton 650 – dropping her off at the Barton Arcade and then going to the University and then picking her up again, they were so happy. She was so thrilled to take responsibility for putting him through university. They had no money. They were thin – two little sparrows, but they did it.

They got divorced thirty years later. I know they used to come to the Whitworth Art Gallery together and in a way, this place is as close as I'll get to having my dad and my mum under the same roof. My father, who's now very ill with Alzheimer's, was brought up here the other month and we sat in the cafe together. There's no point saying, 'this is where mum used to come', because it would just upset him, but it's nice for me. And now when I walk past in the morning I've got him here and I've got my mum waving at me, so in a way I've formed this space as a little house. I know it's only transient and it's a spiritual thing, but I would really be upset if that door wasn't there because I can see her there. She used to wait just inside the door and wave to me; that's thirteen years ago now, and I've never not seen it.

I'm living mostly in the flight or fight – so it's no wonder I don't put weight on. I've had three near fatal car accidents, and for years I lived with a bag packed ready to go to hospital. It takes a lot to wean yourself off that. But these walks have really helped. It's been very therapeutic – and it's been free! This is my counselling – the green spaces in the city. It's when I get creative, when I can fill my head up with ideas. I don't think I've got any more to digest about the things that have happened to me, but I've got so much free space now to think about other things.

Every time I come to the Whitworth I find a joy in it, because of all the things here that I love. I take away this new stuff, and remember it as it was. I suppose I've just refused to let my mum go, but I don't want to – why should I? ●

FIG. 8



Selnec bus route map, mid 1970s

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LAURA'S STORY

### Laura Partridge

Co-ordinator for cities@manchester,  
University of Manchester

Place: The Salutation Pub, 12 Higher Chatham Street

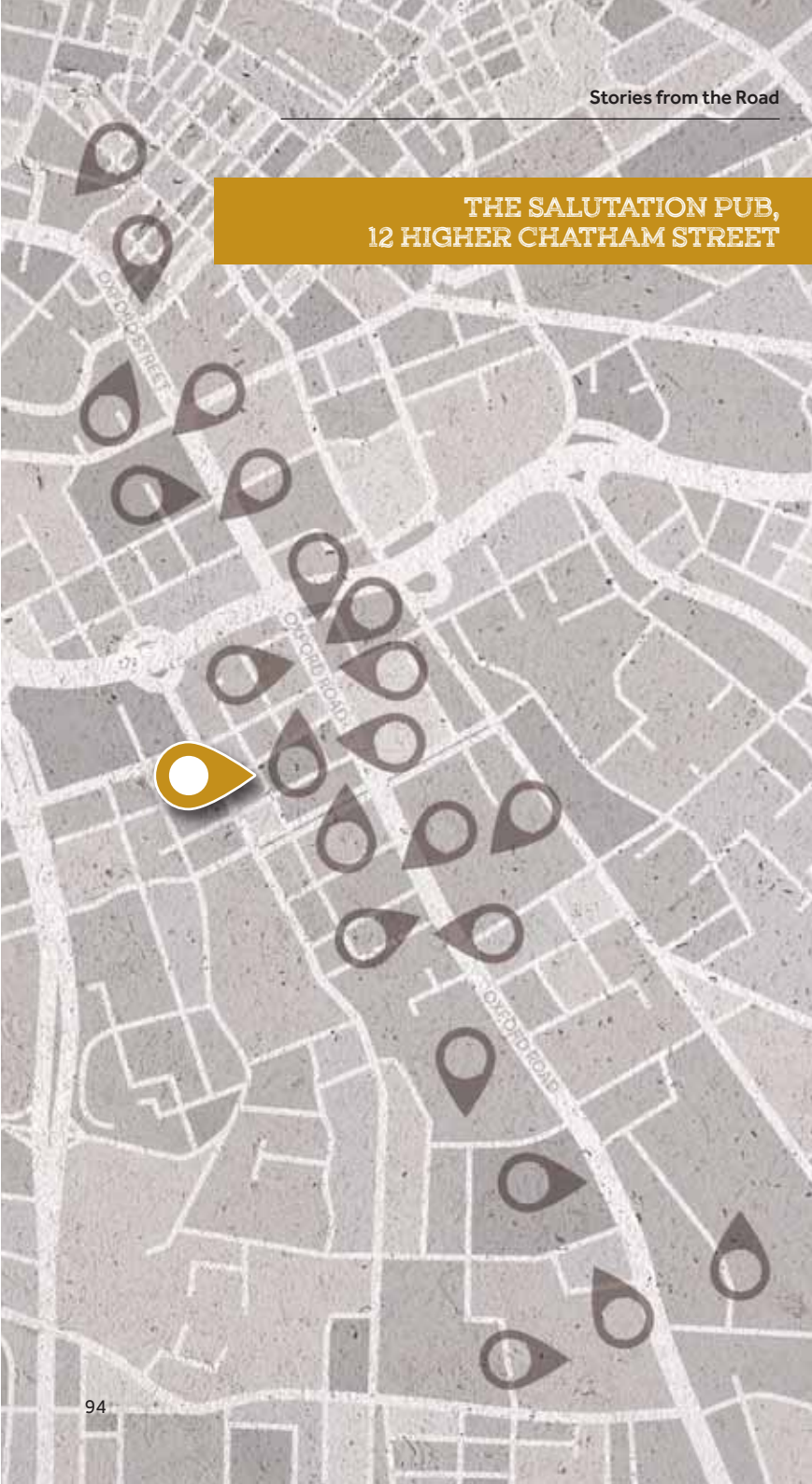
The Salutation was right next door to where I first lived when I moved to Manchester as an undergrad. It was the first place I ever went for a drink.

I was born in London but I grew up in North Yorkshire. I didn't really know what I wanted to do with myself other than get to uni and see what happened. I knew I wanted to stay in the North but live in a city, because I lived in a very small town. The music history and the heritage really attracted me to Manchester, and the fact of its urbanness. It was a city that I never intended to stay in for this long. I've moved away a couple of times but I've always ended up coming back. So there's a sort of magnet in the Oxford Road corridor that seems to keep me here. And every time I think it's time to move on, or I change roles, or I look to do something different I either don't go, or I go away and end up coming back.

I remember my first trip to the Salutation being a real introduction to the city. Me and two or three of my at that point total stranger flatmates decided on our first night that we had to go for a drink. We literally walked out of the door of our halls and walked into the first pub, which was the Salutation. Unbeknown to us, we were only the second year of students to live in those student halls. They'd been built on what was previously quite a popular green area of Hulme, frequented by quite a lot of long term Hulme residents – quite a big strong community, which had been there all the way through the regeneration of Hulme, who had stuck with it and had seen it through all sorts of phases and guises. The Sally had long been their local. Let's say there were probably some mixed feelings amongst the locals about these little middle class kids with no idea what they were doing, on their patch.



**THE SALUTATION PUB,  
12 HIGHER CHATHAM STREET**



There were three of us, all girls, all drinking pints – it was quite bad lager, but it was beautifully cheap. I think the locals didn't know what to make of us. I remember one of them, quite a big scary guy, with a lot of tattoos and piercings, alternating between being flirtatious and aggressive. He just didn't know how to deal with us, but he knew he had to deal with us somehow! In an attempt to see if we were men or mice, and decide whether he wanted us in the pub or not, he decided to show us his pierced scrotum. I think the fact that we just picked up our beers, looked the other way and carried on drinking probably sealed our fate! I think we blushed, and were quiet and a little bit awkward, but we thought 'no, we're grownups now, we live in a city. We can handle this!'

In the intervening years, of which there have been quite a few, I've seen in the new year twice in that pub; I've celebrated successfully getting new jobs in there; I have drowned my sorrows in there; I've gone for quick post-work pints in there. It's changed a lot over the years. It's currently owned by MMU students' union and is now frequented by a lot of the Manchester School of Art crowd, because it's right next door to them. I'm really glad that MMU have kept so many of its original features. It's a very beautiful, traditional old Manchester pub. All these academic buildings have grown up around it, on a different scale, with different architectural styles – it almost illustrates the development of the corridor as it's become more and more based around the knowledge economy.

You can map my entire CV post-19 in probably a square mile or square half mile along the Manchester corridor. Which either makes me really boring, or is a good thing. It worries me that I haven't gone very far, but I try and remind myself that if not geographically, hopefully I've gone further than a quarter of a mile in my life!

I did my degree. After that I mucked around a bit - briefly waitressed in the Eighth Day cafe after it reopened, and did







the occasional shift behind the bar in the Sandbar; I went travelling for a bit; I moved home for a while, then I came back to Manchester, again not really knowing whether I was here for good. I took on a temp job at Blackwell's which was going to be for three months, and three and a half years later I was deputy manager. Whilst that was going on I was part of a Manchester local independent record label. So I was kind of living two lives: running a book shop and also loosely speaking running a record label.

**“ I remember my first trip to the Salutation being a real introduction to the city.”**

After three and a half years with Blackwell's, I thought 'Ok, what else is around here?' I'd got to know the University really well through my academic liaison role at Blackwell's. It gave me this insight into all the academic departments at both The University of Manchester and MMU, and made me realise the University was definitely somewhere I wanted to work. I joined working for a brand new research institute called the Brooks World Poverty Institute, which was an interesting role. I've had various positions since then, mainly in research communications and research support right up until now with cities@manchester.

I think there's more room for the sense of this area to really come into its own. It's a place I've put a lot into, and it's given me quite a lot back in terms of the jobs and the friendships and the socialising and the life choices that I've made. The Corridor lends itself to so many different activities, interests, career choices, courses, whatever it is you want to do. It really is, in its own way, quite a compelling part of the city. And it's exciting to see how it's going to evolve next. I think the length of the Corridor lends itself to diversity; with each few steps it changes and becomes something else as you go through. ●

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ROSIE'S STORY

## Rosie Stuart

Young People's Programme Producer, HOME

Place: Royal Northern College of Music, 124 Oxford Road

I've chosen the Royal Northern College of Music because I was a member of their Junior Strings Project from when I was five until I was about thirteen or fourteen. It was quite a pioneering project, working with children at that age. You could just sign up and it was free. When I first started, the Royal Northern was out somewhere in Moss Side. I remember this place being built and us all moving here and it all being very new and exciting. It was every Tuesday and Thursday evening, so my mum religiously drove me into town from Altrincham. On a Thursday we'd go to the McDonald's on Parkway on the way home. It was a real routine.

For the first year we didn't have instruments. We did dalcroze and kodaly: different methods of learning rhythm and sounds and scales and things like that. We'd have some lessons where we'd be bouncing balls and throwing around scarves, learning different rhythms and how to conduct, and then lessons learning scales and tempo and pitch. We did that for a year and then we were able to choose our instruments. I chose the violin, which I loved, but I always found really difficult; I didn't practice enough! We used to have one-on-one lessons with students from the college – we thought they were very very cool. We had an orchestra too and in the summer we used to go to Norfolk on a kind of music camp. Quite a lot of opportunities came out of it. We were in an opera here once, Joan of Arc; they wanted children as extras, so they came to us. I was a peasant child and a choir girl. We just thought the actors and actresses were very cool and very grown up.

The project was a huge part of my life for a really long time. And then I became a teenager and got a bit of a social life and decided I didn't want to go to music twice a week. I'm sure



ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC,  
124 OXFORD ROAD



my mum must have thought, after all those years, she should have at least got quite a good musician out of it, but I just kind of gave up; other things took priority in my life. I have definitely taken things from it though. I like to think I've got a sense of rhythm, and an appreciation for music. I now work in arts engagement. Having been part of a project like that, I can see the benefit of offering free opportunities to children and young people – I've definitely taken that away from it. Also, that kind of socialising at a young age, making friends out of your comfort zone, away from school, and meeting a really diverse range of children from across Manchester – I can't imagine life not having had that.

**“ I really liked moving to Cornerhouse and being on this road, in this part of town again. I hadn't really had any reason to be round here for a while.”**

I went to Queen Mary in London to study drama. Whilst I was at Uni, in my summer holidays, I was helping with the youth theatre at the Library Theatre. It was based in Central Library, down in the basement. When I graduated I had a year out and came back to Manchester. I carried on with the youth theatre and got involved with a couple of other projects. I started realising what theatre engagement and education was and that I could apply my skills to that – I knew I didn't want to act. After that year I went and did an MA in Applied Theatre and started full time at the Library Theatre when I finished. They'd already moved to Zion Arts then and the youth theatre was doing plays at Capitol Theatre. Then it was decided we'd merge with Cornerhouse. So two years later we moved into the Cornerhouse. And then three years later we're at HOME. It's been a very long and interesting journey.





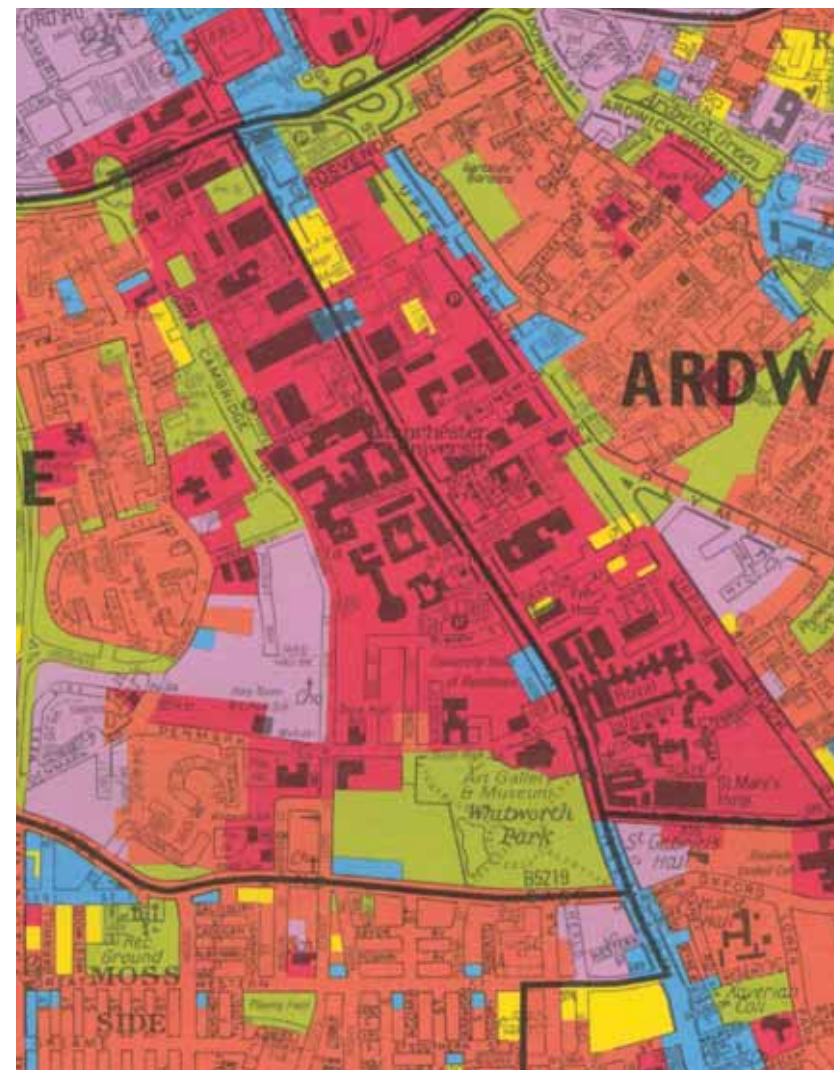
I really liked moving to Cornerhouse and being on this road, in this part of town again. I hadn't really had any reason to be round here for a while. It's a nice place to be based – you're just a bit outside the centre of town, it's a nice little quarter I think. HOME is five minutes down the road from Cornerhouse. It's really opened that space up, and having an arts centre there, rather than it just being restaurants or shops, I think it really makes a difference. It feels new and exciting. I think it's really changing the city. I went when it was a concrete shell, and then the next time I went it was when we were moving into the office. We've watched it come up from the ground, and been able to do a lot of consultation with staff and community groups and our audiences about how they wanted it to be and how they wanted it to feel. It's been really nice to have it purpose built and be able to put our stamp on it – everyone's stamp on it. It has been built for our audiences – I think it's quite special that we've been able to do that.

I work on the young people's programme, for 15-25 year olds. So creating free opportunities for young people to engage with our work through courses, projects, workshops and different schemes. We offer opportunities for young people to try something new, work in a professional environment and discover ways to express themselves through creativity'. Being part of something like that myself has definitely informed my work now. The fact that I'm working in the arts, having been surrounded by it my whole life in one way or another, probably started with me as a five year old bouncing a ball around.

I don't play my violin any more. I still have it and I'll never get rid of it, I absolutely love it. I fairly recently got it restrung – the bow had all rotted in the box. I thought 'I'm going to start playing again' but I didn't. I really want to. I really feel like, one day, I'm going to pick it up. ●



FIG. 9



Extract from City of Manchester Inner Area Land Use Map, 1985

## Ken Thompson

Stringed instrument specialist

Place: Johnny Roadhouse Music, 123 Oxford Road

This place was always called Johnny Roadhouse. It opened in 1958 or 56 I think, long before I came to Manchester. I'm from the other end of the ship canal – Liverpool. I came here to study sculpture in the late 60s, at the art college over the road, when it was Manchester Regional College of Art.

This place always fascinated me. It was a rundown music shop when I first got here. Old John wasn't here most of the time. He was the lead saxophonist and clarinettist for the Northern Dance Orchestra, just up the road with the BBC. He spent most of his time there. One day he came in and said 'it's just a load of junk in here,' and so he turned it into a junk shop. He had a big notice outside saying 'I buy anything', and he did. He once asked me if I wanted 200 electric irons! I did his repair work on old musical instruments that came in. My father taught me to play fiddle when I was eight. He wanted me to play classical, but I wasn't interested. I did like folk music though. I'm not the best Irish fiddle player in the world, but later on I joined a folk band as their fiddle player. I still go out occasionally as part of a duo or a trio.

When I was at college, somebody lent me an instrument called an Appalachian Dulcimer. I liked the sound of it but I couldn't afford to buy one, so I made one. After about six months it fell apart, and I wanted to know why. So I went into the technicalities of instrument making and repairing, and I've done it ever since, partly as a job here, and partly as a hobby. I buy stuff and repair it, sell it again in order that I can buy some more.

In the 80s, old John's son, young John came along. The place had had a compulsory purchase order on it and was very very run down, leaking like mad. Then the compulsory purchase order was lifted and that meant that the value of the place rocketed,

JOHNNY ROADHOUSE MUSIC,  
123 OXFORD ROAD





and also they were able to get grants to rebuild. That's when it became the music shop we know and love today. I was an arts teacher for a long time. I took early retirement, and as I'd been doing all John's repair work here, it seemed logical that I would come and work for John. One of my friends owns Hobgoblin music, and I suggested to him that this become a franchise, which we worked out between us.

We specialised in folk instruments – the odd, the old, the unusual, the peculiar, and that was just the staff! It's been going twelve, fifteen years now. We've got brass and woodwind instruments but it's still mainly folk. I don't think you'd go in many music shops and see this number of mandolins or that many banjos or these more unusual instruments.

I was always interested in folk music. I used to live in a flat in Whalley Range and the guy on the top floor was called Paul Graney. If you go down to the John Rylands library you'll now find a Paul Graney collection of folk tapes. He went all over the place collecting folk music and folk stories, particularly from the Manchester folk scene. I got to know Paul very well. He supplied me with an awful lot of folk material and folk songs. Manchester folk songs are very left wing. Basically because it was the hot bed of the cotton industry, and the cotton industry were not very nice to the working class, put it that way.

As far as I'm concerned, a stringed instrument is a functional sculpture. It's a beautiful thing in itself. Some of them are absolutely glorious, beautifully carved, beautifully inlaid. It's a sculpture, but it works. I put my artistic bent, if you like, into carving heads and so on on musical instruments. Back when I was at college, I was taught by I think one of the best wood carvers in England, Ted Roocroft. Wood can be absolutely beautiful. I like the smell, I like the feel, I like the look. My favourite wood is maple, which makes beautiful fiddle backs. Their natural grain is stunning – it's sometimes called tiger stripe. ●

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ANNE'S STORY

## Anne Tucker

Community activist and long term local resident

Place: Waterloo Place

I first moved to Manchester in 1977. I managed to get somewhere to live in Levenshulme, and was trying to find where the interesting leftie places in Manchester were. Manchester was really different then: there was no theatre really, the Royal Exchange had just opened and that was it. The Green Room hadn't opened, the Cornerhouse hadn't opened. The only fringe theatre you could see was upstairs in the Whalley Hotel in Whalley Range – nothing else. The University was much more tatty. Everything was tatty, I have to say. In the mid 70s Manchester was in a terrible state: all the mills were closing down, there was huge unemployment everywhere, I just remember litter and newspaper flying around St Peter's Square, it was really hard living – lots and lots of redundancy and unemployment. Nobody really knew this beautiful little terrace, Waterloo Place, at that point, apart from one house, about half way along. Downstairs was Manchester University's Student Community Action Programme, where there was lots of community development stuff and social action. The upstairs bit was called the Attic Bookshop and it was a wonderful wonderful second hand bookshop, just run by all sorts of unusual people – mostly left-wing activists.

“ In the mid 70s Manchester was in a terrible state...”

I went in there – I didn't really know what it was. It was like a tatty old terraced house with these tatty old wooden stairs – when you went up it was clatter clatter clatter, so they always knew people were coming. Downstairs there were just tables and placards and boards and posters on the walls. It was a feeling that I felt very comfortable with. It was like an anarchic palace really. The reason I remember it so clearly is that



## WATERLOO PLACE



I went upstairs and met this man. I said, 'tell me a little bit about Manchester', and he basically sold me Manchester. It was just fantastic, he was saying: this is happening, and this is really exciting, there's been a huge project to save the terraced houses in Moss Side and a great housing project over there. He just described lots and lots of socialist and further left organisations and what they were doing in the city. He gave me loads of phone numbers, loads of contacts. So I left that building feeling, this is a really good city to come to.

The reason it was such a lovely place was that you could go there and you'd know it would be full of people like me: activist types. There was no Facebook, no email, none of those things. So you had to find each other. There was the Eighth Day and Grass Roots Books on Oxford Road too, both with notice boards. All the political organisations went on the notice board at Grass Roots and all the health things went on the notice board at Eighth Day. So you had the combination of those two on that side of the road, and Waterloo Place on this side, which was a real meeting point. One of the very first things I did was work on the editorial for the Manchester Women's Liberation Newsletter. Then I was really involved in CND; in Manchester we led the anti-Cruise movement.

I'd been teaching French and Drama in a secondary school in London, and had decided to apply to Theatre In Education courses all over the country. The only one that said I could go without an equity card was Contact Theatre here, so that's why I came to Manchester. By luck, I moved in two weeks before I went to Contact. When I got there they said, 'we're really really sorry we've made a terrible mistake, we're not allowed to have you here without an Equity card'. I thought, Oh my god, I've moved up to Manchester, I've settled in! But fortunately because I had settled in I just thought, oh well, tough. They let me volunteer, but I couldn't get a job, and it was really hard to get an Equity card then. So I worked as a volunteer at Contact on Saturday mornings, got involved with a community theatre somewhere else, and ended up working as a community artist. ●

FIG. 10



Aerial photograph of the Oxford Road area, 1995

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ALISON'S STORY

## Alison Walker-Twiste

Ex-goth and Oxford Road commuter

Place: The Banshee Nightclub, 37 Oxford Street

There's nothing more boring than an old person going on about clubs that they used to go to, or music that they used to listen to; but this isn't really about the club, it's not really about the music either, it's about that point in your life when you're in your early twenties, you're moving away from your family and into the city, and you find your tribe. You realise that there are other people like you in the world; you find a place and a group of people where you're at home. For me and for my friend Anna – we were inseparable at the time – it just happened to be this club. They played the kind of music we were into at that point in our lives, and perhaps more importantly it was full of boys who we really, really fancied!

Anna and I were working together at an advertising agency in Didsbury in the late 80s and early 90s. She lived in Didsbury, so we started to go out in town. A night out would start at her house, then we'd get on the number 42 bus which would wend its way through Fallowfield and down Oxford Road. We'd get off at the Salisbury pub. I never remember being inside the Salisbury, I just remember standing outside the doors, near the bins. I think it was probably so we could keep an eye on who was coming in and going out. Then at eleven o'clock everyone would pile out and totter up that short bit of Oxford Road, past the Cornerhouse and the Palace Theatre to The Banshee.

We used to go on Thursday nights, partly because at that time we were tough enough to do so and still turn up for work the next morning and also because on Thursday nights, it only cost one pence to get in! On the door, there was a bouncer called Mark who was a really nice, friendly guy. He always used to wear a yellow duffel coat. I never saw him in a fight and I can only assume it's because people didn't want to take on someone who bore a faint resemblance to Paddington!



**THE BANSHEE NIGHTCLUB,  
37 OXFORD STREET**



There were two floors in The Banshee. Upstairs they played Glam Rock music. A lot of the music was pretentious, over-the-top, complete and utter rubbish and we knew it, but it was a joyous place to be. As Louis Walsh would say, we 'owned' the dance floor, truly believing 'we were the best dancers in the world, this is the greatest place ever!' – a mixture of youth, over-confidence and a lot of drink! . It was filled with moments like that – just a fantastic place to be.

**“ The Banshee was part of a horrible, horrible old building. I used to actively try and avoid seeing it in the daytime, because it was so awful it ruined the magic of it for me.”**

Downstairs was where they played more Goth-type music. It was a basement with lots of little twisty turny corridors and one or two bigger rooms, one with a bar and one with the main dance floor in it. The whole of the downstairs was painted dark red. I think it was emulsion. So when it got hot and sweaty the paint would start to drip off. If you leant against the wall you'd come away with red paint on you. We used to buy outfits to go out in and then just throw them away afterwards because they were covered in red paint that wouldn't come off.

There was always about half an hour when everyone stood outside after the club closed at 2am, though on reflection, this must only have been in the summer. There was a lamppost just outside, and people would lean against it to chat, or twirl around it, or be sick on it. It was all part of the evening. People would then traipse down to the bus stop outside the Palace Hotel and catch the night bus back to Didsbury. Maybe I was







too naive or young or stupid to spot any possible dangers, but I always remember the bus home also being a really happy, communal experience and an integral part of a night out. The Banshee was part of a horrible, horrible old building. I used to actively try and avoid seeing it in the daytime, because it was so awful it ruined the magic of it for me. It was maybe three or four storeys high. There was the club on the left hand side, then an empty derelict space, then on the right I think a barbers shop, and on the corner there was a pizza place, which always smelt fantastic at two in the morning but if you went past it in the daytime you wouldn't want to go in.

Oxford Road has always been such a melting pot, with the universities and the Northern Ballet School and places like that; they attracted so many people from other parts of the world. You also had the theatres there which attracted one type of audience, and the nightclubs that attracted a different audience again. It was just this massive bumping together of cultures and age groups and people all coming out into the city to do different things. Some people were there to study, some people were there to work, some were there to go out and have fun, go and see films – the big old Odeon cinema was still at the end of Oxford Road at that time – it was just a chaotic, colourful, mad kind of place. I think it still is, really and it's that that I like. It's easy to see it just as a route into central Manchester, but it's much more than that. ●

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VINCENT'S STORY

## Vincent Walsh

Rusholme resident and cycle campaigner

Place: Plaque commemorating the 1945 Pan-African Congress, Manchester School of Art, 153 Oxford Road

I arrived in Manchester for the first time in 1994. I'd just returned from Kenya, where I served for two years with Voluntary Service Overseas. I came back with a Kenyan wife and a Kenyan step daughter and we settled here for that year. Lo and behold, as I arrive in Manchester I spot, high on this obscure wall of Manchester School of Art a plaque: it commemorates the meeting, in 1945, of the Pan-African Congress, and included on the plaque is Jomo Kenyatta, who in due course became the first President of Kenya. I was in Kenya in 1993, the 30th anniversary of the country's independence.

I've lived in various places in my life, and I always try to make connections between where I am and where I've been, and perhaps where I might be going, and between people and places. So this plaque was a nice connection with where I'd just been. My Kenyan wife, Millie, was desperately homesick. I was always trying to make connections with home, so I pointed it out to her.

My professional background is nursing, and I was employed as a health educator in Kenya. The job was about promoting health and preventing disease. I lived in the southern hemisphere and commuted across the equator to the northern hemisphere, on my motorbike. The project worked with villagers to identify sources of potential clean spring water, to create protected springs. That was one end of it. The other end was sanitation, so assisting in building pit latrines.

Millie was working on a sister project. What I'm wearing at the moment is my wedding outfit. We married when we were out in Kenya, in Kisumu, on the shore of Lake Victoria. After twelve months in Manchester, we moved back to my



**PLAQUE COMMEMORATING THE  
1945 PAN-AFRICAN CONGRESS,  
MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ART,  
153 OXFORD ROAD**



house in Sheffield and lived there for several years. The marriage eventually came to an amicable end. The reason I returned to Manchester is The Guardian – blame The Guardian! I found a Guardian Soulmate, Rosie, who was based in Manchester. I moved across here in Spring 2001 and have been here ever since, in the same Rusholme house.

**“ I cycle along Oxford Road many times a week. It claims to be the busiest bus corridor in Europe; and will become – we hope – one of the busiest cycle corridors...”**

Oxford Road is very important, because it's my main route into the city centre. It's lined with great places: Whitworth Park and Art Gallery; the RNCM. With my nursing background, I have worked for a time, but not now, at Manchester Royal Infirmary. My daughters are at school beside another iconic building the Toast Rack on Wilmslow Road opposite Platt Fields Park.

I cycle along Oxford Road many times a week. It claims to be the busiest bus corridor in Europe; and will become – we hope – one of the busiest cycle corridors, with the changes in the road layout outlined in the Velocity 2025 plans. I'm a member of Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign and we've done a lot of work to try and fine-tune these proposals. Soon I and my children will be able to cycle from home into the city centre on a segregated cycle route, which is fantastic. ●

FIG. 11



Oxford Road Corridor, 2017



## Editors

### Sarah Butler

Sarah explores the relationship between writing and place through prose, poetry and participatory projects. Recent writing residencies include writer-in-residence on the Central line; at Great Ormond Street Hospital; and Tideline – a public art project linked to a major regeneration project in Belvedere, East London. She has two novels published by Picador: *Ten Things I've Learnt About Love* and *Before The Fire*. More about Sarah's work can be found at [www.urbanwords.org.uk](http://www.urbanwords.org.uk) and [www.sarahbutler.org.uk](http://www.sarahbutler.org.uk)

### Andrew Karvonen

Andrew is an Assistant Professor in Urban and Regional Studies at the KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm where he conducts research on the politics and practice of sustainable urban development. His current research activities are examining the spatial aspects of urban experiments as embodied in living laboratories, test-beds, smart cities, and other modes of place-based innovation. Beyond his academic work, he has a decade of professional experience as an environmental and sustainability consultant and he is a licensed engineer in the State of Washington.

### Laura Partridge

For two years Laura was the Coordinator of cities@manchester (later Manchester Urban Institute). She is interested in the potential of universities as anchor institutions and engines of economic growth. After working on Stories from the Road she was Innovation & Engagement Manager at the N8 Research Partnership – a consortium of the eight research-intensive universities across the North of England. With a background spanning communication, project management and regional development she has recently joined the Great Exhibition of the North as Innovation Champion.

### Kevin Ward

Kevin is an urban geographer interested in the financing and governance of cities. He is Professor of Human Geography and Director of Manchester Urban Institute at The University of Manchester. He has lived in Manchester for almost twenty five years and has seen the campus and the wider city region undergo significant changes during this period. When not writing about cities he can be found cycling in and out of them.

EDITORS



# MANCHESTER URBAN INSTITUTE

## Manchester Urban Institute

Established in late 2016, the Manchester Urban Institute brings together over 50 academics and researchers and over 100 graduate students from across a large number of disciplines, including architecture, business studies, development studies, education, engineering, geography, history, medicine, planning, political science, social anthropology and sociology. It builds on the work of a number of longer established urban research centres and the work done through cities@manchester to bring together colleagues from across the campus and the wider city region. It is home to various international networks of academics, activists, policymakers and practitioners working across the cities of the Global North and Global South.

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