

Preserving a piece of history, whatever the weather

December 21 2010

The Whitworth Meteorological Observatory is a fully-automated, state of the art meteorological facility, replacing the original observatory set up and located in Whitworth Park in August 1892.

The new site, funded by the legacy of Sir Joseph Whitworth, will fulfil his wish to maintain the original observatory as a source of data for scientific, education and popular interest following the demise of the original in 1958.

Data from the new observatory will be used in support of scientific research projects focusing on urban climatology.

They will also be used to support projects by undergraduate and postgraduate research students as part of the School of Earth, Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences curriculum.

Real time data and graphical summaries of key parameters are available on the dedicated website <http://www.cas.manchester.ac.uk/restools/whitworth/data/> as well as on a screen in The Manchester Museum.

Professor Tom Choularton, Professor of [Atmospheric Physics](#), said: "The Whitworth Observatory was originally set up to provide [weather information](#) freely available to the general public.

"In that spirit we have set up a station as close as possible to the original

site, bearing in mind the need for security. We have used modern equipment and provided a range of measurements that were simply not possible in the early 20th century.

"The data gathered is freely available on our website and will be displayed in the Manchester museum as soon as possible. In addition to providing a resource for the general public the data will be extensively used in student projects in the University.

"An investigation into light snow falling from freezing fog is already being undertaken by a postgraduate research student. We are very grateful to the Whitworth foundation for providing the funds for this station."

Data will be provided free of charge to members of the public and educational establishments for teaching purposes.

Where data are required in support of commercial activities or funded research projects a financial contribution towards the maintenance of the [observatory](#) will be sought thus helping to ensure its future.

Provided by University of Manchester

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