



STUNNING VISION An artist's impression of how the spectacular £33m Irwell City Park would look if it wins lottery cash backing, due to be decided this autumn. The plans have the backing of Manchester, Salford and Trafford councils and have involved consultation with the local communities

# Spectacular Irwell park will have you walking on water

£33m Lotto bid could pay for 'visionary' link

Scheme will 'unlock the river's potential'

NEAL KEELING

It is the ribbon of water that divides two cities – and now there are plans to transform its banks into a spectacular city park.

The River Irwell was turned into a filthy running sore during the Industrial Revolution, as factories and warehouses sprang up along its banks. But its image of being a 'dark and sinister moat' that keeps apart Salford and Manchester could soon change spectacularly.

Next week, the two cities and Trafford council will submit a bid for £33m of lottery cash to turn the river into a city park.

The park scheme is one of 23 projects short-listed for Lotto cash. A decision is due in the autumn.

If successful, as these exclusive images show, it would transform the waterway with a seven-mile boulevard-style walkway from Salford Quays, through Manchester centre, to Salford University.

Signs of regeneration are already springing up around the river, with highlights including The Lowry Hotel in Salford – linked to Manchester by the stunning Trinity Bridge – and the Spinningfields area.

As part of the city park plans there would be attractive public spaces along the route and new

bridges, lighting, seating and cycle paths. Amphibious buses, which drive on the road and in water, are part of the plans.

Local people have contributed their ideas, including children from The Friars primary, in Salford. Headteacher Pat Arnold said: "We've been really involved in the consultation and pupils have been inspired by the project and created their own pictures of how they envisage the park to look."

Salford council leader John Merry said: "We are confident

that this is a strong bid, backed by incredible support from the community, who share the belief that Irwell City Park will unlock the potential of the river and create a wealth of cultural, leisure and business opportunities."

Manchester council leader Sir Richard Leese said: "The proposals for Irwell City Park are ambitious and imaginative in their scope but they are entirely deliverable."

"The Irwell has the potential to be a fantastic asset at the heart of our city, enhancing the connections between Manchester, Salford and Trafford."

Trafford council leader Coun Susan Williams said: "This has the potential to set this area and region apart from the competition."

neal.keeling@mee-news.co.uk



WATER SIGHT How the banks of the River Irwell would look near the Lowry Hotel under the proposals

## 'Apprentice' Jadine denies breakdown

APPRENTICE loser Jadine Johnson has insisted she is not cracking up – despite bawling her eyes out on the show.

The 27-year-old single mum said she was emotional because she was missing her nine-year-old daughter, Ja-Dae.

Four years ago she was sectioned under the Mental Health Act and hospitalised after battling chronic depression.

Friends expressed fears she would not be able to cope with the strain of competing for the £100,000 job with Sir Alan Sugar.

Jadine said: "I think it's a awful thing to suggest I

**YOU'RE FIRED**  
Jadine Johnson got kicked off The Apprentice by Sir Alan Sugar



wouldn't be able to cope now, and the wrong message to send out. When you come through something like that it shows your strength and what you can achieve."

Viewers saw her break down on the show and Tre accused her of being emotionally unstable.

## Happy 79th anniversary!

ONE of the longest married couples in the world will celebrate their 79th wedding anniversary this weekend.

Frank and Anita Millford, of Devon, tied the knot on May 26, 1928.

Anita revealed: "A little argument now and again lives things up."

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