



Press release

Family entertainment blooms wild at this year's Dig the City

Mr Bloom and Wild Rumpus join UK's biggest summer garden festival



Dig the City, Manchester's summer garden festival, which takes over the streets of the city centre from Friday 31 July - Thursday 6 August with show gardens, shopping events, kids' activities and talks, is planning an extravaganza of free family activities for its 2015 event.

Leading the pack at the award-winning festival is Wild Rumpus, the brains behind the stunning Just So Festival, who will bring nature's wildness into the heart of the Manchester's shopping district on Thursday 6 August, with their first ever inner-city project, Run Wild, Child.

CBeebies' popular Mr Bloom will also take part in Dig the City, on Sunday 2 August and Monday 3 August, to have fun with children and their families and encourage children to get their hands dirty with some gardening activities. Mr Bloom commented: "Dig the City is a

fabulous local event and I'm looking forward to meeting the Tiddlers and parents of Greater Manchester."

The National Trust will also be setting up camp all week, with their garden shed, courses on dry stone walling, barefoot walking, giant wild art and mud-pie and kite making, giant garden games and loads more fun things to do throughout the whole seven days. Plus, Remembering our Lost Gardens, the campaign run by Dig the City, National Trust and the Manchester Evening News will be displayed at the festival for the first time, so all members of the public who have contributed will be able to find their memories.

Elena Lyons, Project Coordinator for the National Trust said, "This is the third year that the National Trust has been involved in Dig the City. The National Trust Tree-house will be on-site and this year, we are focussing on a 'Wild Time' programme for the kids with a range of new interactive activities all linked to nature and outdoor play. 'Lost Gardens of Manchester' is another theme for us this year, where we will invite all age groups to reflect and share their treasured garden memories of the past- 'Remembering our Lost Gardens.'"

At the heart of the festival are more than 20 amazing gardens: a mix of show gardens, community gardens and 'take-over' urban interventions which line the streets of Manchester city centre. Many of these gardens are interactive with lots to do such as smoothie and apple juice making, as well as the chance to graft your own apple tree and attend a variety of talks and planting sessions. Visitors can also have a history lesson with a difference, as the Imperial War Museum brings its Horrible Histories inspired Blitzed Brits 'Dig for Victory Garden' to Dig the City.

Wild Rumpus's Run Wild, Child is an ambitious event which makes for a final festival day to remember. It will encourage children and their families to turn into wild urban detectives for the day and look beneath the streets of Manchester for secrets, clues and the unexpected. Families who run wild for this one unique day on 6th August, can join the fun where they can meet the creatures of the wild, discover their secrets, and find their way through their tricks, mysteries and clues via crazy characters, music, craft activities and theatre installations.

The day culminates in a stunning moment of revelry – a giant water-fight in the city centre. Families who plan to run wild should be prepared to expect anything, get muddy and, in particular, get wet.

Rowan Hoban, Director of Wild Rumpus said; "We have long believed in a secret wild world underneath the streets of Manchester. We're incredibly excited that working with Dig the City means that we can gather the families of Manchester on an extraordinary adventure to find the creatures and secrets of the wild."

Entering its 3rd year, the festival is now the UK's largest and most respected urban gardening festival and has won plaudits from Monty Don, Rachel De Thame and Diarmuid Gavin as well as being recognised as 'Outstanding' at the 2014 RHS Britain in Bloom Awards.

For more information on Dig the City, including how to volunteer at the event, go to www.digthecity.co.uk and follow @digthecitymcr on Twitter.

To enter a memory for Remembering our Lost Gardens email nturbangardener@nationaltrust.org.uk or tweet using the hashtag #digthecitymcr and all memories will be used in a National Trust installation on display at 2015's Dig the City.

Festival sponsor NCP has created a Dig the City deal of a 25% discount when drivers pre-book their parking online using the promo code "Dig15", during the festival dates (31st July 15 to 6th August 15) at selected car parks. More information on the offer can be found at www.ncp.co.uk/dig15

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Notes to Editors

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About Dig the City

Dig the City is Manchester's summer garden festival and newest summer attraction. The event transforms the city's shopping streets – taking in Market Street, New Cathedral Street, St Ann's Square, King Street, Deansgate and Greengate Square.

There are Show Gardens, horticultural talks and workshops, children's activities, live music, entertainment, fine food – and special shopping events and promotions.

The 2014 festival won 'Outstanding' recognition at the 2014 RHS Britain in Bloom Awards – following a 'Gold' award in 2013. The 2013 festival won a Commendation at the 2013 UK Events Awards.

Dig the City is produced by CityCo on behalf of the Heart of Manchester Business Improvement District (BID) – a consortium of over 380 city centre retailers.

The festival is supported by Manchester City Council, Manchester Cathedral, Salford City Council, Visit Manchester and the National Trust, alongside event partners and sponsors.

More information can be found at digthecity.co.uk

About the Heart of Manchester BID

The Heart of Manchester Business Improvement District (BID) is an independent not-for-profit company governed by a Board of retailers and city centre stakeholders.

A Business Improvement District is a successful management model operating in most towns and cities in the UK, and across the USA and Europe. Manchester's BID is a specific geographical area encompassing over 380 retailers spanning King Street, St Ann's Square, New Cathedral St, Exchange Square, Market St and part of Deansgate.

The BID is financed by a levy made on the basis of rateable value – meaning over £1 million per year will be invested for a period of 5 years. Agreement to launch was made through a successful legal ballot. The BID is focused on delivering customer service and promotional initiatives aimed at increasing footfall and retail spend in city centre Manchester.

More information about the Heart of Manchester BID can be found at www.heartofmanchester.com

NCP

NCP Manchester Limited (NML) was formed in 1999 as a joint venture between NCP and Manchester City Council. NML has allowed the city to change the way parking services are delivered, serving as a gateway to the city whilst integrating with the city's various transport systems. NML delivers many cutting edge innovations to ensure that Manchester enjoys the finest car park facilities, including our pre booking system, where customers can book their parking at selected car parks in Manchester through www.ncp.co.uk to guarantee their space at all times.

For more information please contact: pressoffice@ncp.co.uk