

Press release



A taste of the summer at UK's largest Garden Party Manchester's finest restaurants and bars join forces for Dig the City

Foodie favourites such as Harvey Nichols, San Carlo, Annie's and Hotel Football have joined forces to offer special events, menus and offers during Manchester's award winning summer garden party, Dig the City.

The summer festival takes over the streets of central Manchester from Friday 31 July - Thursday 6 August with show gardens, shopping events, kids' activities and talks, and has just announced a smorgasbord of foodie delights across the city centre.

From afternoon tea with a floral twist at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel, floral inspired cocktails at The Lowry to tours of the henhouses and bee hives and a special Dig the City menu at the Hard Rock Cafe, food and drink is going floral this season. Harvey Nichols will bring a touch of France to New Cathedral Street with the pop up Grey Goose Street Terrace and the Grey Goose camionette with food by Harvey Nichols. Cocktails will include a bespoke Grey Goose Martini, Grey Goose Fizz and a Grey Goose Mule. Allotment Bar in Northern Quarter is offering 50% off its Summer Garden cocktail and the Mal Rose, and a lychee cocktail is only £5 at Malmaison. And while you're there, don't miss the hotel's own floral display.

Grill on the Alley locked some of their bartenders in a greenhouse to see what would develop this at year's Dig the City. The result? Fresh Plum and Thyme muddled with Bombay Dry Gin, fig liqueur and lemon.

If you'd rather make your own, the mixologists at The Alchemist are offering a FREE drink-making demonstration on Wednesday at 6pm. Floral cocktails, explosive cocktails and a taste of Alice in Wonderland: find out why there's much more to good cocktails than just botanicals.

For beer fans, taste the freshest and crispest Budvar, listen to live music and chill out with some street food among the gardens at the King Street Budweiser Budvar Tankové Pivo Bar. The Budvar Bar, Moss Cider Project bar and garden, and the busking stage all come together create the perfect place in which to spend your lunch break or to wind down after work. There's even ping pong for those who require added entertainment.

You can also chill out in the Dig the City Den during our coffee mornings and take in a free talk every morning at 11am throughout the festival. Topics

include a history lesson on the Lost Gardens of Manchester, guerilla gardening (with a seed bomb making class) and Rob Smith, winner of this series of BBC 2's Big Allotment Challenge.

There'll be live music and refreshments every day and evening at the Den, but don't miss Speak Easy Night on 1 Aug where you can kick up your wellies whilst sipping on botanical gin cocktails and dance like it's 1929!

The Den offers Dig-goers craft ales, afternoon tea, cheese and charcuterie boards, pulled pork and paella. The bar will be open 10am – 11pm, Friday 31 July and Saturday 1 August. From Sunday 2 August – Thursday 6 August, the opening times are 10am – 8pm daily.

Clean eaters can take their pick on Saturday, when the SUBWAY team will be in Market Street from 11am – 6pm with a 'pop up' salad bar. The team will be handing out free salad bowls and encouraging people to pick their own salad from a mobile salad garden.

Dig the City is offering a grand 7 days (and evenings) al fresco with blooming show-gardens and floral installations to brighten Manchester's city centre streets. Across the city centre will be more than 20 amazing gardens: a mix of show gardens, community gardens and 'take-over' urban interventions. Many of these stunning gardens are interactive with lots to do such as smoothie and apple juice making, cocktail making and seed sowing.

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.

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

For further information please contact:

Jennifer Middleton – jennifer@lemonzestpr.co.uk or 01757268283 / 07708155501

Lucy Allen – lucy@lucyallenpr.co.uk / 07968145611

Ellen Howells – ellen@lemonzestpr.co.uk or 01757268283

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