



Dig the City 2015 – Show Gardens Announced

Pop-up Meadows, Bridgewater Hall, Digital Gardens, Horrible Histories and more



Pictured: Floral dress from Dig the City 2013, Dig the City judge & BBC presenter Diarmuid Gavin

Dig the City, the UK's biggest urban gardening festival and summer party has revealed the spectacular Show Gardens and green installations taking over Manchester city centre from Friday July 31st – Thursday August 6th.

The week-long event celebrates summer in the city, and will transform Manchester's shopping streets into a giant garden party. Each Show Garden and installation will be judged by celebrity gardener and BBC presenter **Diarmuid Gavin**, who describes Dig the City as "a joyous and slightly leffield occasion, which puts urban gardening squarely on Manchester's map."

Successful entries have come from designers both professional and amateur, as well as community groups and businesses. The 2015 festival theme is Innovate and Interact, and highlights include a **pop-up meadow on wheels** from horticultural institution Kew Gardens, an **erupting garden** bursting from cracks in Manchester's pavements, a garden of the future using **hydroponics** – and a vision of **vertical growing by Incredible Edible**.

Digital gardens designed by University of Salford students include an installation that will bring 'sleepy and subterranean' city features alive with vines, and another will use stunning video to digitally represent blooming plants and flowers.



Pictured: Digital Garden design from the University of Salford

Dreamscape Gardens make their much anticipated return to the festival this year. Gardener Dan has exhibited for the past three years, and thanks to encouragement from BBC presenters and Dig the City judges Monty Don and Rachel de Thame, this year he's successfully entered into RHS Tatton Flower Show 2015. He will be bringing elements of his Tatton garden to Dig the City; a playful space celebrating the light and colour of nature.



Pictured: Dreamscape Gardens entry from Dig the City 2014

Bridgewater Hall, Manchester's international concert venue, has teamed up with the Landscape Institute North West to create a **Performance Show Garden**. Designed to be used as a bandstand, the space will include a full musical programme curated by the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester Jazz Festival and city's best musical talent.

The Moss Cider Project is taking over King Street with a pop-up orchard, where visitors can juice their own apples or take away a special edition **Dig the City Cider**. Visitors can also try a 'Moss Side Mojito' made from fresh-pressed local apples. There will be tree grafting workshops too, so people can take home their own apple tree.

Hulme Garden Centre, winners of last year's 'Best in Show', have extraordinary plans to transform the steps from New Cathedral Street to Cateaton Street into a **mountain stream**. Tim Knight from Hulme Community Garden Centre said: "Being part of Dig the City again was a simple decision. Apart from the warm welcome and valuable exposure it provides us with, we see our 'community' as the whole of Manchester. The festival gives us the opportunity to encourage and engage the residents of our great city, in the great art of gardening."



Pictured: 'The Edible Tunnel,' Hulme Garden Centre's winning Show Garden, from Dig the City 2014

Pendleton Together has designed a '**Friendly Fences Garden**', to show how boundaries can be adapted for play, experimentation and learning; as well as growing food, encouraging urban wildlife and injecting a whole heap of glorious colour.



Pictured: Pendleton Together and Plan-IE LLP 'Friendly Fences' garden design

There will also be a special '**Wellbeing Garden**' which will be rehomed at Royal Manchester Children's Hospital for young patients to enjoy.

Festival producer Nelson Beaumont-Laurencia said: "We've got the pick of the bunch this year, with everything from **textile vegetables and green post boxes**, to a garden made from entirely **reclaimed and upcycled materials**. We're excited to welcome along Imperial War Museum North's '**Dig for Victory**' allotment too, inspired by their summer **Horrible Histories** exhibition."

"We can't wait to green up Manchester's shopping streets and invite everyone into the city for our giant summer garden party. The festival is going to be our biggest and brightest yet, and we've got much more yet to announce."

Manchester's city centre retailers are also in on the act, and will be blossoming into life to celebrate.

Top retailers including Manchester Arndale, Selfridges, Harvey Nichols, House of Fraser, Jigsaw, Molton Brown and LK Bennett will be hosting **One Big Shopping Weekend** on Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 August, and throughout the week, shops will be showing off their **Floral Window Displays**, throwing garden parties, offering special discounts and food and drink exclusives.

One garden will even inject some retail glamour. **A green cocktail bar** from Wythenshawe Community Housing Group includes a 'Jimmy Chew' shoe stand, floral 'Grow Bag Handbags' and edible jewellery.

Dig the City will also offer a full programme of FREE events for children and their families. Cbeebies allotment favourite **Mr Bloom** will be helping mini-gardeners design their own dream gardens. **Wild Rumpus**, creators of the magical Just So Festival, will stage a family finale '**Run Wild Child**' on Thursday 6 August. The event will turn children into wild urban detectives for the day, treasure hunting to reveal Manchester's undiscovered creatures and secrets of the wild - ending in a giant water fight.

The National Trust are back too, curating jam-packed 'Wild Time' activities for kids and parents, including a barefoot walk, dry-stone walling, the chance to create nature art and much more.

For programme announcements visit www.digthecity.co.uk

Follow [@digthecitymcr](https://twitter.com/digthecitymcr) on Twitter and Instagram.

Join the event on Facebook. Search Dig the City.

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Full List of Show Gardens to date – more to be announced

Ashton Hydroponics and AutoPot

Hydroponic Garden

A show garden of the future using special hydroponics systems.

The Landscape Institute North West

Bridgewater Hall Community Performance Garden

A show garden designed to be used as a bandstand.

Chorlton Post Box Café

Chorlton Postbox Café Garden

Using the post boxes on St Ann's Square to create a garden café.

Dreamscape Gardens

A version of their 2015 RHS Tatton Flower Show garden, which plays with light and colour.

Geoff Fisher

Wildlife Haven

A garden erupting from the ground.

Grow Wild - A project by Kew Gardens

Movable Meadow

A meadow on wheels in different shapes and sizes.

Hulme Community Garden Centre

Step Change

A mountain stream breathing life into concrete, using plants and organic materials.

Incredible Edible Salford

Celebrating Community Growing the Incredible Edible Way

A vertical garden, Mud Kitchen, Bug Hotel, a wormery and a raised bed full of edibles.

Pendleton Together and Planit-IE LLP

Friendly Fences

A garden that celebrates how boundaries can be adapted for play, growing food and encouraging urban wildlife.

Real Food, Wythenshawe Community Housing Group

Green Cocktail Bar – '50 Shades of Green'

A fun space where edible planting will be 'performing' unexpectedly.

Sow The City

Tales from the Plot

A garden that provides a retreat and chance to listen to stories from local people involved in community food growing projects.

Sue Jeffries Garden Advice and Training

The Playful Garden for the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital

A garden that uses plants to stimulate all our five senses and connect us with nature.

The Moss Cider Project

A pop-up orchard and cider and apple bar with juicing and grafting activities.

Green Installations to date

Anita Mattioni - University of Salford

Digital Garden

Stunning video projections of blooming flowers.

Cabbages and Nettles

Textile Vegetable Garden

A vibrant life-size garden of hand-stitched plants and veg, including the soil.

Gorgeous Gorse Hill

A Garden on Every Street Corner

A lamp-post takeover to show how our cities and suburbs don't need to be fields of grey.

Imperial War Museum North

Dig for Victory Garden

IWM North bring a garden installation with stories, props and activities from a mock-up World War II allotment, in celebration of their Horrible Histories: Blitzed Brits exhibition.

Manchester Pride

Devotion

A planted, flowering piece of art to celebrate Manchester Pride's 25th year, that will be Sackville Gardens post-Dig the City.

Turton Tower Kitchen Garden Group

Simply Scavenged

Using a city lamp post Turton Tower will create a space made entirely from material they have scavenged from their Kitchen Garden.

Venessa Scott

University of Salford

Escape & Create

An artistic installation across the city of string and wool vines hanging from trees and creeping up sign posts.

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