



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Manchester's first Garden City project gets underway**

Work has started on Manchester's first Garden City scheme in the Piccadilly Basin, part of a long term strategy to make the city greener.

Initially the site is being cleared with the help of the Community Payback scheme and thanks to funding from Manchester City Council and Manchester's city centre management company, CityCo, planting will start in May.

On the south side of the canal will be sun loving annuals including sweet pea and runner beans as well as herbs such as chives and sage. On the opposite bank wild flowers including poppies, camomile and corn flowers will be sown in striking blocks of colour, to provide a haven for native butterflies, bees and dragon flies. These will be divided by bands of ornamental grasses to help encourage local diversity.

Members of the business and residential community are being asked to volunteer to help transform these two pieces of land on either side of the canal bank.

Manchester Garden City is an independent initiative supported by CityCo, Manchester's city centre management company and Manchester based architect and design practice BDP. It aims to increase the amount of temporary green space on brownfield sites and encourage gardening and sustainable eating.

Manchester Garden City is also trying to secure £5,000 of funding from The Co-operative's Join the Revolution initiative. People can vote for the Manchester project by clicking on <http://www.co-operative.coop/join-the-revolution/manchester-garden-city> by 30 April 2011.

Steve Merridew, Environmental Design Associate at BDP and a founder of the Manchester Garden City scheme said: “This initiative started as an informal chat between friends so it’s great to get to this stage and see things starting to take shape. Garden City is all about bringing public and private sector organisations together to create biodiverse environments for the people and wildlife of Manchester city centre.

“We are trying to create a brand which can provide the vision, expertise and framework under which individuals and organisations can deliver Greening initiatives in the city centre.”

Gary Ellis, Operations Director at CityCo said: “Piccadilly Basin is the first of several Garden City schemes we’ve identified across the city. This is part of a longer term strategy to bring nature back to the city centre and provide food sources for local residents. What we’re trying to do is create a model that others can adopt. We see it as a bit like a franchise where various organisations can help own and grow the brand, greening the city as they go. We also plan to install more bat boxes and duck houses in the coming weeks. We now need to secure further funding and support so we would encourage people to get on board by volunteering or voting for us.”

Councillor Nigel Murphy, Executive Member for Environment at Manchester City Council, said: “The garden city project will create another green space within the city centre providing a picturesque retreat where visitors can step out of the hustle and bustle of city life to discover an island of tranquillity.

“Manchester City Council is dedicated to developing a low carbon economy aiming to reduce the city’s carbon emissions by 41 per cent over the next decade. We believe passionately that cities must lie at the heart of plans to tackle climate change and the garden city is one of many steps we must take to reduce carbon emissions.”

The Garden City project is supported by Town Centre Securities who own the land at Piccadilly Basin.

Anyone wanting to volunteer from 4-14 May 2011 or pledge their support for the Manchester Garden City initiative should email [manchestergardencity@bdp.com](mailto:manchestergardencity@bdp.com).

For more information on Manchester city centre visit [www.cityco.com](http://www.cityco.com).

**Ends**

For further information please contact Roz Hughes on T: 0161 838 3256 or M: 07967 800395

**Notes to editors**

Cityco works in partnership to manage and market city centre Manchester. It is an independent, not-for-profit, company funded by both public and private sector.

Piccadilly Partnership is managed by CityCo, Manchester's City Centre Management Company. For more information visit [www.cityco.com](http://www.cityco.com).