



PRESS RELEASE: Open Garden Squares Weekend 9 & 10 June 2018

News for release: Public ballot to visit the garden of Number 10 Downing Street opens



This year, the garden of **Number 10 Downing Street** will join over 200 unique and special gardens opening for Open Garden Squares Weekend, London's biggest garden-visiting weekend.

Available via a public ballot, **Number 10 Downing Street** is the official residence and office of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and also the place where the Prime Minister welcomes guests - from Her Majesty The Queen to world leaders to businesses and charities. The garden at Number 10 Downing Street is shared by residents in Number 10 and Number 11.

The terrace and garden at Downing Street were constructed in 1736 shortly after Robert Walpole moved into Number 10. The garden is dominated by an open lawn of half an acre that wraps around in an L-shape. Tubs of flowers line the terrace and roses line the main pathway through the garden.

The garden is looked after by Downing Street's gardener Paul, who was awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) in 2015 for his 31 years of public service to some of London's most precious and unique spaces from the Hyde Park nursery, St James's Park, the gardens at the Houses of Parliament and Downing Street, where he has worked for 27 years.

Entry by public ballot to tour the gardens on Sunday 10 June, no purchase necessary, visit opensquares.org/2018/activities/downinginfo.php#info to enter. Closing date: 5pm 1 May 2018



l to r: Nomura International, Temple, Providence Row

Other gardens taking part in this year's Open Garden Squares Weekend include **Nomura International's** vast roof-top space, the floating gardens of **Garden Barge Square** and the flourishing growing spaces of the homeless charity **Providence Row**. Some of London's premier garden squares will open, including **Eaton Square**, whose past residents include actress Vivien Leigh and Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, **Belgrave Square**, **Cleveland Square** and **Bryanston Square**. Visitors can explore the **Royal College of Physicians'** medicinal garden, **The Master's Garden** within the Temple complex, the gardens of **Charlton Manor Primary School** and bee-friendly gardens at **Bee Urban** and **Melissa Garden Bee Sanctuary**. All private, but opening their gates to visitors over the Weekend.

Ruth Holmes, Chair of the London Parks & Gardens Trust, organisers of the event, said: "London Parks and Gardens Trust opened the first gardens in 1998, hoping to cultivate knowledge and appreciation of London's green infrastructure network. Today, over two decades on, the Weekend is a powerful celebration of the importance of gardens, squares and green spaces to the social, cultural, environmental and economic life of London."

Organised by the London Parks and Gardens Trust, and now in its' 21st year, the Open Garden Squares Weekend highlights the significant social, cultural, environmental and economic contribution that gardens, squares and green spaces make to the capital and its inhabitants. The annual event allows members of the public exclusive access to some of the capital's most exciting, private and unique gardens, and to take part in a whole range of special events and activities.

Advance tickets are priced £15, and are available by visiting opensquares.org. A single ticket gains access to all gardens (excluding those with special conditions for entry) for both Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 June.

To enter the ballot to visit the garden of Number 10 Downing Street visit: opensquares.org/2018/activities/downinginfo.php#info

A full list of the 2018 gardens can be viewed by visiting opensquares.org

Website: opensquares.org

Twitter: @OpenSquares #OGSW18

Instagram: opensquaresweekend

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LondonOGSW/>

Ticket information: one ticket gains access to all gardens (excluding those with special conditions for entry) for both Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 June. Advance tickets are priced £15 and available from opensquares.org. A ticket bought over the weekend is priced £20. Children under 12 go free.

Listings Information: Open Garden Squares Weekend: Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 June 2018. Over 200 private, unique and little-known gardens and green spaces open to the public for one weekend only. Organised by the London Parks and Gardens Trust to celebrate the capital's unique urban, green space network. Includes an exciting programme of free activities, tours, walks, talks and cycle rides.

Weekend tickets: £15 in advance / £20 over the weekend. Under 12s go free

Visit opensquares.org to book and for more info. Follow on Twitter @OpenSquares

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Press images can be viewed at: www.opensquares.org/2018/press/

Notes to Editors:

Open Garden Squares Weekend is run by the **London Parks & Gardens Trust** to raise awareness of the significant social, cultural, environmental and economic contribution that gardens and squares make to the capital and its inhabitants. The Trust provides a centre for education, research, and creative projects for the improvement and conservation of London's green urban spaces. londongardenstrust.org

Partners:

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Open Garden Squares Weekend also works in partnership with **Transport for London**.