

Be a weather presenter for the day at Birmingham Weather Roadshow

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A University of Birmingham scientist is set to join weather experts from across the country to help the local community learn more about weather and the climate with hands-on activities and demonstrations at a week-long roadshow coming to the city this half-term.

Organised by the Big Lottery funded Open Air Laboratories (OPAL) project, the OPAL Weather Roadshow is taking place between Wednesday 1 June and Sunday 5 June at Canon Hill Park and will feature an exciting range of activities providing all ages with the chance to investigate their local weather.

One of the highlights will be the opportunity to become a weather presenter for the day using the latest green-screen technology where University of Birmingham geographer, and OPAL Community Scientist, Dr Adam Bates, will be on hand to discuss climate forecasts for the local area.

Dr Bates, from the School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences said:

"Changes to our climate strongly impact both people and wildlife; whether through small changes in long-term amounts of rainfall and temperature, or extreme events like large floods and tornadoes, the weather affects us all.

"The OPAL Weather Roadshow gives people the opportunity to find out more about how changes to their local climate might affect them, and to gain first-hand experience of how weather is measured, predicted and reported. It will also be really fun."

Other activities taking place during the roadshow include the chance to create a tornado, although this will be on a much smaller scale than the 2005 Birmingham tornado which caused £40million worth of damage. Infra-red temperature guns will allow people to measure the temperature of clouds in the sky and a lightning ball will provide a glimpse of lightning up close.

As well as hands-on activities, a professional weather station will display measurements of temperature, pressure, humidity, wind speed and solar radiation. Weather experts from the Royal Meteorological Society and Imperial College, London will be on hand to explain their significance, enabling people to learn more about weather and climate in an interactive way.

The OPAL Weather Roadshow will be held at Canon Hill Park, Birmingham between Tuesday 31 May and Sunday 5 June and is free and open to everyone. For more information see www.opalexplornature.org/WeatherRoadshow (<http://www.opalexplornature.org/WeatherRoadshow>). Further information about the OPAL project can be found at: www.opalexplornature.org (<http://www.opalexplornature.org>).

For further information, please contact Amy Cory, University of Birmingham Press Office via 0121 414 6029 or a.cory@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:a.cory@bham.ac.uk>).

Notes to Editors

About OPAL

- Open Air Laboratories (OPAL) is a nationwide partnership initiative, led by Imperial College London, that inspires communities to discover, enjoy and protect their local environments. It aims to create a new generation of nature-lovers by stimulating interest through local and national projects which are accessible, fun and relevant to anyone who wants to take part. OPAL provides the skills and materials needed for the first national community-led study of the world around us. For more information, please visit www.OPALexplornature.org (<http://www.opalexplornature.org/>).

- The Big Lottery Fund, the largest of the National Lottery good cause distributors, has been providing grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since its inception in June 2004. It was established by Parliament on 1 December 2006. Full details of the work of the Big Lottery Fund, its programmes and awards are available on the website: www.biglotteryfund.org.uk (<http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/>).

- The Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme was launched in November 2005 to help communities enjoy and improve their local environments. The programme funds a range of activities from local food schemes and farmers markets, to education projects teaching people about the environment. A £11,760,783 Changing Spaces grant was awarded to the leading OPAL partner, Imperial College London, in August 2007.

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