TV Meteorologist to Open Birmingham's Two New Weather Stations

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BBC

weather presenter John Hammond and Professor John Thornes with one of Birmingham's new weather stations

John Hammond, BBC weather presenter and former University of Birmingham student, will open Birmingham's two new weather stations on Tuesday 28th June.

The weather stations are situated at the University of Birmingham and at Paradise Circus in the city centre and will help scientists to discover more about and be able to better predict climate change and extreme weather conditions in an urban environment.

The University has teamed up with the city council's Environmental Partnership, the West Midlands Climate Change Adaptation Partnership and the Met Office to develop the city centre station.

The new equipment will play a major part in measuring the Birmingham 'urban heat island', which has not been measured since the 1980s. The scientists hope that, by gaining greater insight into how weather and temperatures affect our city, this will help planners to better prepare for periods of extreme heat or other weather events that could dramatically affect the population and the city's infrastructure.

Professor John Thornes, applied meteorologist from the University of Birmingham's School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences, and lead investigator said, *'We hope that by installing new stations in these two locations we will be able to get accurate data about climate change at a neighbourhood level in cities. The University has climate data going back more than 100 years and as we are gathering new data this will be used by planners and health authorities to improve planning decisions and the health and well being of Birmingham residents.'*

Cllr Paul Tilsley, Deputy Leader of Birmingham City Council, said: *'The impact of climate change can already be seen in Birmingham with the average temperature increasing by 0.6oC over the last 30 years.*

'We also know the 2003 heatwave saw temperatures top 38.5oC nationally, which caused over 2,000 excess deaths in the UK.

'Research already suggests these could be average summer temperatures by 2040 – so we need to understand how future weather events will affect people's health and the city's infrastructure, which is exactly what the weather station will enable us to do.'

Notes to Editors

The schedule for the openings is as follows:

Photocall opportunity:

Tuesday 28th June

10.30am: City centre (Paradise Circus) weather station launch by John Hammond

11.30am: University of Birmingham weather station launch by John Hammond

1. John Hammond studied the University of Birmingham's MSc in Applied Meteorology and Climatology.
2. The Environmental Partnership contributed £5000 and DEFRA contributed £17,200 for the city centre weather station.
3. The new University of Birmingham weather station replaces equipment which has been running since 1979. The new station was funded by the University for £20,000.

For further information
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