

‘The Journey to Hope’ garden

The Multiple Sclerosis Society Show Garden

BBC Gardeners’ World Live, 15 – 18 June, NEC Birmingham



As part of an awareness building campaign, the Multiple Sclerosis Society (MSS) will take part in BBC Gardeners’ World Live with their first Show Garden. The Show Garden, designed by Mike Baldwin of Derby College, follows on from their Gold Award success in the Beautiful Borders at BBC Gardeners’ World Live 2016.

The ‘Journey to Hope’ Garden illustrates the journey of those who suffer with MS, from diagnosis to living with the disease, raising awareness for the 100,000 UK sufferers and the work that the MS Society undertakes. The Show Garden is a part of the 60th anniversary celebrations of the Derby and District Branch of the MS Society.

The Show Garden starts at a point in life before diagnosis where the planting is full of colour, from here visitors reach a bridge, representing the point of diagnosis and its devastating effects. The bridge itself is supported by the often-hidden caring hands of those who offer help and hope. A juxtaposition of spikey and soft planting signifies the difference for sufferers between their good and bad days.

From the bridge, the garden develops into an area representative of post-diagnosis, centred around a calming biophilia retreat - a safe area for reflection and mindfulness, where a support network can meet to heal and re-energise. Alongside this is a waterfall showing that hope and quality of life.

This Show Garden conveys a strong message about MS, a neurological condition faced by over 100,000 people in the UK alone, and will serve well at raising awareness of the work of the MS Society. Visitors will also be inspired by the great planting combinations and stunning design ideas that can be recreated at home.

Designer Mike Baldwin, from Derby College, says: *“We started planning the garden this time last year and it is a massive project involving many different skills amongst the staff and students here. It is our biggest project for many years, with the involvement of over fifty students, but everyone is very focused and we are confident that the results will be striking.”*

Peter Milner, Group Leader of MSS Derby and District, continued: *“The design is very powerful signifying the highs and lows of the condition and I know it will resonate with people who are living with, or caring for, someone with MS.”*

Come to see this and many more Show Gardens at BBC Gardeners’ World Live, 15-18 June, NEC Birmingham.

Ends

For more information, interviews and competitions please contact Sarah Sandys-Renton on sarah.sandys-renton@riverstreetevents.co.uk or call 020 3405 4286.

31 May 2017 is World MS Day. Read more here: <https://worldmsday.org/>

Read more, including plans for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of BBC Two’s *Gardeners’ World* here: www.bbcgardenersworldlive.com

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