



PRESS RELEASE

16 August 2016

BRITAIN'S LARGEST DRAGON BOAT RACE COMES BACK TO BIRMINGHAM

Eighteen dragon boats are getting set to race each other across Edgbaston Reservoir this August bank holiday, as the centrepiece of a community festival celebrating Bangladeshi culture.

The event, taking place on Sunday 28 August, is run by the Canal & River Trust – the charity that cares for Birmingham's canals - in partnership with Nowka Bais, Community Connect Foundation, Midland Sailing Club and Legacy WM.

In addition to the race, which is the largest of its kind in Britain, the carnival will include Bangladeshi street food, cultural stalls, a funfair, rowing and sailing taster sessions, as well as live music.

This traditional form of dragon boat style racing originates from rural the villages of Bangladesh and is normally held after the monsoon rains. Each boat was traditionally forty feet long, painted bright red, white, yellow and green, with a 16 man crew all robed in dazzling colours, paddling with boundless energy to the beat of the drummer in the prow of the boat.

Bashir Ahmed, from the Canal & River Trust, said: "It's great to welcome the dragon boat race back to Edgbaston Reservoir, it's a really exciting spectacle. We're delighted our partners are choosing the Reservoir as the venue, as we hope it helps to showcase everything our city's waterways have to offer."

"The boat race is great fun and this year we've entered several teams made up of the Trusts staff and local volunteers who have been working with us so we're really hoping they do well and clinch the winner's trophy."

Johur Uddin from Nowka Bais, said: "This is a very traditional sport in Bangladesh and is influenced by the waterways which are an important element of Bangladeshi life. Nowka Bais is a jubilant, colourful, lively action pact event in Bangladesh and it is a joy bringing it to Birmingham once again."

For more details about the festival, visit www.nowkabais.co.uk

Edgbaston Reservoir was built in 1827 by Thomas Telford as a top up for Birmingham canal system and is still used for that purpose today. For more information on the work of the Canal & River Trust visit www.canalrivertrust.org.uk

ENDS

For further media requests please contact: Sarah Rudy National Press Officer on 01908 302 584 / 07788 691 219 or email sarah.rudy@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Notes to editors:

The Canal & River Trust is the guardian of 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales, caring for the nation's third largest collection of listed structures, as well as museums, archives, and hundreds of important wildlife sites.

We believe that *living waterways transform places and enrich lives* and our role is to make sure there is always a place on your doorstep where you can escape the pressures of everyday life, stretch your legs and simply feel closer to nature.

www.canalrivertrust.org.uk @CanalRiverTrust @crtcomms

<https://www.facebook.com/NowkaBaisUK/>

<https://twitter.com/nowkabaisuk>

<https://vimeo.com/140206341>