

the big lunch

an eden project

Detailed Briefing For Supporters



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The Big Idea

Imagine a summer's day on which millions of us, throughout the UK, sit down to have lunch together – in the middle of our streets, around tower blocks and on every patch of common ground. The food, entertainment and decorations we will have grown, cooked, or created ourselves. This will be a day to break bread with our neighbours, to put a smile on Britain's face. It's called **The Big Lunch**, and this is your invitation to get involved as a supporter organisation.



TOM CHANCE

The Big What?

The Big Lunch is an Eden Project initiative which aims to build and strengthen communities by encouraging as many of the 61 million people in the UK as possible to sit down and have lunch together, with their neighbours, in their street, as a simple but profound act of community.

The Big Lunch took place for the first time last year and there were over 8,000 events. Up to a million people took to the streets in the biggest set of street parties since the Golden Jubilee. Postcode analysis (as well as lots of feedback) shows that Big Lunches took place in every kind of community from the most challenged to the most secure.

1 in 3 participants rated their Big Lunch 10 out of 10 and three-quarters rated it between 8 and 10. In addition, well over 80% both feel closer to their neighbours and are planning future events. We know that many communities now have websites and social networking groups and have an active, collaborative approach to local issues.

This year we'd like to see even more people out on the streets, having lunch and enjoying being part of their community, and we'd like your help to achieve it.

“What a fantastic idea. It really brought our community together and I am sure will have done the same throughout the country.”

Big Lunch organiser, Watford



The Big When?

Sunday 18th July

Chosen because we're building on the tradition of the Sunday lunch and it's a day when most people don't have to work. There's lots of daylight and hopefully some sunshine, it doesn't clash with other big national or philanthropic events and it's safely after both the World Cup and the General Election. Before The Big Lunch came along this was already the most popular street party weekend in the UK.

The Big Where?

Big Lunches can take place anywhere within communities. The biggest impact happens when people work with their Local Authority to close their street allowing people to re-discover the road as a social space rather than a transport system. However some Local Authorities are reluctant to close streets and with major arterial roads it's impossible. Last year Big Lunches also happened in parks, gardens, community centres and even on bridges. They can take place anywhere neighbours can get together, as long as the relevant permission is granted.

The Big Who?

The Big Lunch is for everyone. It has appeal across all types of communities and last year we worked with 265 supporter organisations to get the word out to as many different groups as possible. From city centre to rural village, across different faiths, ethnicities, cultures and generations, The Big Lunch brings people together.



The Big How?

Last year, supporter organisations helped spread The Big Lunch message to their staff and families, the communities they work with and their member networks. If you were one of them – thank you, we couldn't have done it without you. If you'd like to get involved this year, we'll add a profile for your organisation to the supporters section on our website. We've tried to make it as easy as possible – here's what you can do...

- **Help spread the word**

We can send you some sample text, illustrations and photos of last year's Big Lunches to include in your newsletters, magazines or on your website.

- **Encourage your staff**

Run a competition for the best Big Lunch run by a staff member, swap ideas and share planning tips.

We're also keen to talk to supporters who would like to work with The Big Lunch in a more sustained strategic partnership. If The Big Lunch particularly chimes with your organisation, project or with a campaign you're running please get in touch!

- **Resources**

Online you'll find lots of resources to help you spread the word and organise your own Big Lunches. From downloadable and printable leaflets and posters that you can customise to a step-by-step action guide to putting on your own Big Lunch, it's all there.

Go to www.thebiglunch.com sign up, download templates and add your content.

Now all we need is you.



How might your organisation benefit?

Apart from the lovely feeling you'll get from helping to build and strengthen communities across the UK, making people feel happier and safer, The Big Lunch is also a great opportunity for charities to reach out and for organisations to show they care.

Organisations or companies open on Sunday 18th July – hold a Big Lunch for your staff and customers.

Charities – ask your supporter network to theme their own community Big Lunches to raise awareness locally of the charities work, raise funds and recruit new volunteers.

“The Big Lunch, with its bottom up approach, has managed to create a new sense of community across the fragmenting neighbourhoods of Britain, sparking new, sustainable networks of value for people. In an era of constrained public finances and complex social challenges, an era in which ‘doing more for less’ is more and more necessary. The Big Lunch’s lessons about how to make communities work better may prove to be essential.”
Local Government Information Unit

The Big Why?

Once upon a time people knew why they lived where they did. Communities grew up around villages, towns and cities drawn by a particular industry or natural advantage on offer.

Today isolation is more pervasive than it's ever been. Work done on the 2001 Census by the BBC shows that 97% of British communities are more fragmented than they were in 1971. One in three households are single-person and it's rising all the time. Our general level of social trust in the UK has almost halved to 30% in 2002/3 from 56% in 1959 and is amongst the lowest in Europe. Only 39% of people in England and Wales felt they could influence decisions affecting their local area in 2005, down from 44% in 2001.

In April, 2008, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation conducted a survey of 3,500 people. Their biggest single concern, across the social spectrum, was that communities are weak and people are increasingly isolated from their neighbours.

Academic studies show there is almost a mathematical correlation between people's sense of security and happiness and the number of neighbours they actively know. Now, amidst this period of economic uncertainty, and in the face of almost overwhelming environmental problems, we need to focus on community.

“What could be better than sharing food with family, friends and neighbours – especially if you've made it or grown it yourself? Sustain is supporting The Big Lunch because it will help put good food back where it belongs – at the heart of every community.”
Jeanette Longfield MBE, Sustain



The Big Aims

The Big Lunch aims to create a moment in which Britain rediscovers neighbourliness and local connections as the bedrock of community and the springboard for hope.

Specifically, our objectives are:

- To put a smile on Britain's face
- To stop neighbours being strangers
- To start actions by communities that will continue thereafter
- To bring all generations together, beyond the confines of their families
- To raise money and volunteering time for local charities
- To prove the redemptive power of simply growing or creating something
- To repair and improve the environmental fabric and shared facilities around where we all live
- To express "Modern Britishness" in a way that is inclusive, optimistic and inspiring

The Big Family of Partners

The Big Lunch would not be possible without the help of our partners and supporters.



LOTTERY FUNDED

The Big Lottery Fund are supporting and helping to build on the success of last year's Big Lunch to involve even more people with their neighbours and local community. BIG is committed to bringing real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need and that is why we are involved as Sir Clive Booth, Chair of BIG explains: "Bringing communities together, reducing loneliness and isolation and helping to make a difference locally is at the heart of the Big Lottery Fund's mission. The Big Lunch last year helped neighbours across the land build a stronger sense of community. With this funding and a big serving of community spirit, we can all work towards achieving this goal."



As Britain's largest producer of low-carbon electricity, EDF Energy is proud to support The Big Lunch and encourage 'human warming' – communal, social and environmental action – as the antidote to 'global warming'.



MasterCard is partnering with The Big Lunch for the second year running. Last year, our research into what matters to the people of Britain highlighted a real desire to reconnect with those that live closest to us: our neighbours. We believe The Big Lunch is the starting point for a return to community values and shared action. By supporting The Big Lunch, we're celebrating a simple act of community and helping to create thousands of priceless moments across the UK.



The Department for Communities and Local Government is working with The Big Lunch to encourage more cohesive and empowered communities through collaboration across all kinds of neighbourhoods in the country. There is a particular emphasis this year on working with Housing Associations and encouraging neighbours of different cultural and religious backgrounds to come together on Sunday 18th July and thereafter.



The Big Birthplace

The Big Lunch is an Eden Project initiative. Since opening, The Eden Project, based in Cornwall, has attracted more than 11 million visitors, of whom 2 million have visited more than once, and it is feted internationally as an inspirational form of environmental education. The Eden Project is owned by the Eden Trust, a registered educational charity. Eden have always believed that social change and environmental change need to go hand-in-glove and that strong communities are the vital missing link in tackling climate change.

“The Big Lunch is probably one of the most positive events for communities in the UK this year. It brings together neighbours and gives people a chance to rediscover the richness and diversity around them at a time when everyone needs to find a way to work together towards recovery and a constructive future. It’s also a great opportunity to have fun, make new friends and find out how you can actively make the place you live an even better place.” **Julia Middleton, Founder and Chief Executive, Common Purpose**

The Big Contacts

Get in touch with the team

- By phone 0207 307 3140
- By email –
claire.crook@thebiglunch.com
kate.groves@thebiglunch.com
- By post (we love a good letter) –
The Big Lunch (London Team)
10 Stephen Mews
London
W1T 1AG

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