Millions of people start practicing for Her Majesty The Queen’s Big Jubilee Lunch as community get-togethers swept across the UK this weekend

Sunday 6 June, 2021

EMBARGOED FOR MONDAY 00:01 JUNE 5.

There may still be a year to go before The Big Jubilee Lunch, but practising was well underway this weekend as neighbours across the UK joined in the opening weekend of The Big Lunch 2021.

Bunting and baking was out in force as communities in all four nations took the opportunity to come together for covid-safe community celebrations. From Ashford to Wakefield hundreds of people around the UK enjoyed Big Lunches this weekend.

Next year will provide an opportunity for communities and people UK wide to come together to celebrate both the historic milestone of HM The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee and the important local connections that have helped us through the toughest times.

In 2022 The Big Lunch will bring the Jubilee celebrations into the heart of every community. People will be invited to share friendship, food and fun with neighbours, big or small - street party or picnic, tea and cake or a garden barbeque.

This year The Big Lunch is expecting thousands of mini socially safe warm-up events throughout the whole month of June as people give thanks and celebrate their connections and get to know each other a little bit better, have fun and come together in recognition of their valued neighbourly ties.

Peter Stewart, Executive Director of the Eden Project, founder of The Big Lunch said: “We had the huge privilege of bringing people in our UK communities together in celebration of Her Majesty The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee in 2012. It’s a truly incredible honour that we’ve been invited to do that again to mark her historic Platinum Jubilee in 2022! We hope that this year many thousands of small socially safe events will take place so that people can give thanks for the incredible community spirit that’s helped us through an intensely difficult year, warming up for what will be a big-bang of a stupendous celebration next year!”

At a time when the biggest test of society has strengthened community spirit, there are now more reasons than ever to share time and show we appreciate the people we live alongside, as the recent survey conducted on behalf of The Big Lunch, shows 12 million people feel closer to their neighbours now than before the pandemic.

The Big Lunch survey further revealed that a quarter of the population now recognise the importance of good ties to their neighbours, and that 40% of the population are more likely to help in their local community since the start of the pandemic, with 1 in 3 of us now more likely to take social action for a cause we believe in.

TV Presenter and Great British Bake Off finalist Briony May Williams is supporting The Big Lunch: “What a great excuse to bust out some bunting and get baking,” she says. “Food has always been the perfect way to connect people and that’s what The Big Lunch is all about. After such a tough year it’s lovely to be able to meet safely, in small neighbourly get-togethers, to celebrate community.

Peter Stewart, added: “For many of us, the pandemic has brought neighbours and communities closer together, so this year, The Big Lunch – the UK’s annual celebration for neighbours and communities - is spreading out over a whole Month of Community for the first time in its 13-year history. It means you and your community can join in when it suits you and you can support some amazing causes like Carers Week, Small Charity Week, Loneliness Awareness Week and The Great Get Together. The Month of Community culminates on Thank You Day on 4 July when individuals, groups and other organisations will be urging us all to pause to say thank you to each other.”

This year The Big Lunch, an idea for the Eden Project made possible by The National Lottery and new headline sponsors Iceland and The Food Warehouse, is encouraging the nation to safely celebrate communities, neighbourhoods and small charities that have helped to keep us connected. Next Year, The Big Jubilee Lunch will mark the historic milestone of HM The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee.

Media:



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The Big Jubilee Lunch :: As Part Of Her Platinum Celebrations :: Big Lunches :: #MonthOfCommunity ::

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Alongside The Big Lunch, partners in the #MonthOfCommunity include Volunteers' Week, Neighbourhood Watch Week, Carers Week, Loneliness Awareness Week, Small Charity Week, Refugee Week, The Great Get Together and Thank You Day.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors:

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About the research

This online survey of 4,000 adults living in the United Kingdom was commissioned on behalf of The Big Lunch and conducted by market research company OnePoll in April 2021.

About The Big Lunch

The Big Lunch is the UK's annual big date to celebrate and give thanks to our neighbours and communities. Started in 2009, it's an idea from the Eden Project that each year brings 6 million people together, made possible by The National Lottery and supported by new headline sponsors Iceland and the Food Warehouse**.** People meet, chat and have fun in their neighbourhoods, annually fundraising £8m for local causes they care about. This year, there are more reasons than ever to get together and enjoy The Big Lunch as it kicks off a Month of Community, offering a feast of opportunities to share friendship and fun, and make positive local connections where you live from 5 June to Thank You Day on 4 July. Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cornwall has been Patron of The Big Lunch since 2012. In 2022 The Big Lunch will be part of Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

To find out more go to thebiglunch.com or follow us @edencommunities on facebook, twitter and Instagram

About The National Lottery

The National Lottery is the largest community funder in the UK and proud to award money raised by National Lottery players to communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Since June 2004, they have made over 200,000 grants and awarded over £9 billion to projects that have benefited millions of people.

BIG LUNCH CASE STUDY QUOTES BY REGION:

From Ashford to Wakefield hundreds of people around the UK enjoyed Big Lunches this weekend. For further quotes, images and content please contact Nicola Osmond-Evans nevans@edenproject.com or WhatsApp message +44 (07985) 800 108

NORTH WEST:

St Helens, Merseyside

Sam Rigby, Pastoral Assistant, Sutton Team Ministry, St Michael and All Angels Church, Gartons Lane, St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 4RB

Sam Rigby, St Helens Big Lunch organiser, said: "We're having our Big Lunch on Sunday 6 June at 2pm at St Michael and All Angels Church, Gartons Lane, St Helens. We normally have a community cafe on Sunday afternoons on our church lawn, running alongside the Sutton Community Food Project's weekly Foodbank pantry session. So we thought we'd go the extra mile on 6 June by throwing a Big Lunch, offering more than our usual offering of bacon or sausage sandwiches. We're also going to have entertainment, a quiz, some garden games and maybe even a spot of bingo!

We will be having this with our established community of visitors to our community cafe and inviting our three church congregations down as well. We've got some invite leaflets to give to people this Sunday to pass on to people they know so we can hopefully have a great time together."

Sheffield, South Yorkshire

The 'Friends of Burngreave Chapel & Cemetery' group was set up to make the cemetery and chapel buildings accessible to everybody and to educate and enlighten visitors into not only its history, but its wildlife, trees and plants, which overlap and interact. The group is made up entirely of unpaid volunteers who have expertise in various subjects and skills and without whom, the group could not function.

Saleema Imam, Firshill Big Lunch organiser, said: "The Friends of Burngreave Chapel and Cemetery in conjunction with Pitsmoor Adventure playground will be holding their annual well dressing in the cemetery on Saturday 5 June at 12 noon. It will be launched by Kim Streets, Head of Sheffield Museums and followed by a martial arts demonstration by the local Lau Gar Kung Fu group. Children from the playground will deliver invitations to residents in the locality suggesting they bring a picnic to eat on the lawn in front of the chapels."

Lytham, Lancashire

Camille Cutler, Starr Hills Residential Home, 18 Ansdell Road South, Lytham St. Annes, Lancashire, FY8 5PQ (Pics available of two ladies, Sylvia Smith, a volunteer, and Muriel Widdup, a resident who is 102! They have formed a close friendship and loved the communal lunch - volunteer Nigel Ogden, and some residents enjoying lunch)

Camille Cutler, Big Lunch Organiser Starr Hills Residential Home, Lytham, said: "We are combined our Big Lunch with Volunteers Week because we are a care home and can't invite anyone else in at the moment. On Thursday 3 June, we invited our volunteers in to join us for the Big Lunch, and our chef prepared either a roast beef dinner, or a salmon dish. The residents absolutely love our volunteers so were very excited about this."

Kirkby Lonsdale, Yorkshire

Rosie Bradshaw, The Community Cupboard, Kirkby Lonsdale, Carnforth, LA6 2DS. A non-profit charitable organisation aims to provide donated/surplus food to households within our local communities needing support, address period poverty and help to reduce food waste

Rosie Bradshaw, Community Co-ordinator Kirkby Lonsdale's Big Lunch, said: "We've stretched the definition of a weekend a bit, so it's Saturday 5 June until the following Wednesday, with a few different groups around town taking part! This year, although we can't all get together in one place we can still celebrate The Big Lunch in small bubbles! Kirkby Lonsdale's Community Cupboard has invited guests to 'bubble-up' for the Big Lunch by sharing a picnic online, on the doorstep, or over the fence on Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 June or whenever works!

Saturday 5 - Community Group pop-up kiosk at the entrance to the Glebe field (near Ruskin's View 11-3pm)

Sunday 6 June at 3pm - Messy Church family activities and picnic at the Glebe Field in Kirkby Lonsdale

Monday 7 June - The Community Lunch team are hosting a 'Big Community Lunch' and are inviting recipients of Community Lunches to the Rugby Club, to relax amongst friends and enjoy a three-course lunch

Monday 7 June - Kirkby Lonsdale Beavers, Cubs and Scouts will be joining in the Big Lunch festivities, with backwoods cooking and picnics!

Wednesday 9 June - QE Studio's Year 10 Food students will be organizing, preparing and hosting their own 'High Tea', as part of Kirkby Lonsdale's 'Big Lunch'. Students will use the resources provided by Eden Project Communities to guide them through the entire event planning process, allowing them to apply their food and hospitality skills on a live project, helping connect and support the local community.

Salford, Greater Manchester

Christine Sherburne, The Salford Big Lunch organiser, said: "We're planning a lunch at 2pm – 4pm, on Sunday 6 June for 30 people, but we are of course a bit nervous about the regional lockdown rumblings."

Chester, Cheshire

Tweedsmuir, Cawdor Drive, Vicars Cross, Chester, CH3 5PX

Donna Hufton, Muir Group Housing Association's Independent Living Officer and Big Lunch organiser at Tweedsmuir, Chester said: "Our Muir Living schemes recognise the value of community which is why we are excited to be planning a garden party for The Big Lunch at our Tweedsmuir location. We will be holding a garden party for up to 30 residents at the independent living scheme for over 60s. We're also extending the invitation to a few fellow Muir residents living in nearby retirement bungalows. Many of those attending will have been shielding for many months and this will be a socially-distanced celebration and the chance for friends and neighbours to socialise safely in a carefully managed outdoor environment. Our plans include a picnic style lunch, garden games and musical entertainment."

Heywood, Rochdale

Vicki Greer, Cartwheels Stronger Communities Programme Manager

Vicki Greer, Stronger Communities Programme Manager, said: "The Heywood Big Lunch is forming part of an Arts Week which we are hosting on a housing estate in Heywood. We are bringing the whole of Darnhill together, but socially distanced and are very much hoping that local residents will join in an estate-wide Big Lunch. We're hoping people will enjoy a lunch on their doorstep, get outside and chat to neighbours!"

Hoole, Chester, Cheshire

Kate Walsh, Hoole Big Lunch organiser, said: "Our cul-de-sac has a small playing field that is a bit drab and tired. I've contacted the local council and asked if we can spruce it up including new play equipment, some seating areas, a wildflower meadow, and wildlife homes. They have agreed! I've been talking to other small parks in the area that have done wildflower meadows too and I've realised that to do this properly is going to take a lot of work, so that is another community project for autumn time. I have lots of willing helpers!

We recently had a picnic on our field, so I think our Big Lunch event will also include some painting. The council are coming to help us paint the existing play equipment and we are also going to paint the back fence. I'll also have a couple of gazebos for refreshments and a craft table where people can paint some wooden bunting that can be used in the park (great for children and those who may find the other manual work more challenging)."

NORTH EAST:

Hull, East Yorkshire

Tanya Li community development worker for Hessle Road Network in Hull said: "We have lots of exciting things planned for the Big Lunch this year. Hessle Road Network is a community-led organisation that was formed to enable local residents to actively participate in the area. The project is based in an urban location less than two miles from the Hull City centre and although we support people living throughout the West Locality we have a focus on the St Andrews and Docklands and Newington and Gipsyville wards of Hull. Hessle Road Network is a community run, community focussed project delivering services to the local community on a daily basis. We have been involved in the Big Lunch for several years now but this year we have changed things around and will be offering 3 events instead of the usual 1. Alongside lunch, we will have music, a chance to win a food hamper, a general knowledge quiz as well as some good old fashion bingo. Everything we offer during the Big Lunch sessions is free of charge.

Our sessions this year will be:

June 1 - this is a (Parents Group) session where we offer support to parents. We provide a safe and secure environment where parents can come together to allow their children to play and also access support if needed. During lockdown many parents have spent a lot of time alone with their children and this has caused some to feel isolated. Through The Big Lunch we are able to provide parents with a chance to get together and celebrate being part of a close community. As we are a service led charity we asked the parents to design the lunch menu and they have planned; mocktails, chicken fajitas, pizza, nuggets and potato waffles.

3 and 7 June - these (Community Sessions) sessions are mainly accessed by older members of the local community some who are struggling with feelings of loneliness, some with conditions such as dementia, as well as people that are just looking to get out and get involved in community activities. By being involved in the Big Lunch residents will have the opportunity to get together after a difficult year and enjoy some much needed company. During this session our service users have decided they would like a breakfast sandwich with sausage, bacon, mushrooms and tomatoes."

Darwen, Lancashire

Wayne Dixon (KBT ambassador) and his dog Koda are going to grace us with their presence)

Stephen Lomax, Darwen Big Lunch organiser, said: “For the Big Lunch on June 5 we are having a Barbeque on the street. There are a few people who have moved onto the street in the last 12 to 18 months and this will help us get to know one another better. The lockdown brought the street closer together last summer so hopefully we can get a proper community spirit going again after the last winter in lockdown.”

Wakefield, West Yorkshire

Allyson Omoniyi, Havercroft Big Lunch organiser, said: “We’re organising a street lunch in our cul-de-sac with our neighbours, on Saturday 5 June, but extending it down to the other end too. Hopefully we can include some of the people we’ve never spoken to before. We’ve been here three years so that would be nice! We’re getting the grill out and doing burgers, but we’ve got vegetarian options as well. We’re also sorting out fun and games for the kids such as face-painting, egg and spoon races and musical chairs. We’re just getting ourselves organised now and really excited!”

Bedale, North Yorkshire

Joelle Mitchell, Bedale Park Big Lunch organiser said: “I've just popped up posters about our Big Lunch for Bedale Park. I'm holding a community picnic in our local park, where there is plenty of space for social distancing and for children to run around. I hope the weather stays nice and people actually come!

Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire

Heather and Stephen Davis, Founders of K.D A R S for Kids (Kidney Disease and Renal Support for Kids) And KDARS Pitstop in the Park.

Heather Davis Cleethorpes Big Lunch organiser, said: “Since October half-term 2020 we have given away nearly 5,000 hot dogs and lunch bags to children in the local community of North East Lincolnshire.

We thought it would be great to get involved with the Big Lunch on Saturday 5 June from 1pm until 6pm. It’s an extension of what we already do at The Pitstop in The Park, situated on Sidney Park Brereton Avenue, Cleethorpes.

We will provide free hot dogs and lunch bags to every one regardless of age to bring together the community, who already appreciate the efforts we put into making our park a nicer place to visit.

We will open the event to everyone, we have seating outside the Pitstop, it's set in beautiful surroundings and the children will have a few things to play with and things to do, if we are able to we may even get some rock painting activities on the go.”

Wakefield, West Yorkshire

Surinder Sapal, Wakefield Big Lunch organiser, said: “We are mainly focusing on a socially distanced street party on Sunday 6 June. As an estate of new houses, we have never really had the opportunity to create connections and know each other, and obviously Covid lockdown hasn't gone down well with people and mental health. So thought it would be a great idea to join and be part of the big lunch, check on each other and create connections with fellow neighbours which should of happened a long time ago.”

MIDLANDS:

Selly Oak, Birmingham

Claire Johnson, The Oaks Big Lunch organiser, Selly Oak said: “We're going to have a low key Big Lunch this year (as the last 3 have been pouring with rain) and we're doing a big all out event on Thank You day on 4 July. We're doing a drink on the green on Saturday (4-6) and then a kids play out session on Sunday from (1-3)

We held our first Big Lunch in June 2018 when we had met some people on the development and had seen children out playing but we all had busy lives and had no way to meet. I decided to host the event

so that we could all get together, get to know one another and become a real community and from that first small meeting we now have a real community, lifelong friends and an annual Big Lunch, Halloween trail event, Easter egg trail event, Dad's group, Funday Fridays, run various estate events and have an established Neighbourhood Watch Group and lots lots more!"

Walton on Hill, Stafford

Michelle Bakewell, Walton on Hill Big Lunch organiser, said: "We are a small cul-de-sac of 13 houses situated on the edge of Cannock Chase, an area of outstanding natural beauty. We are a close knit street, with residents of varying ages, who help each other out when needed. We have regular get togethers, VE Day afternoon tea, toasted marshmallow with hot chocolate for Halloween, mince pies and mulled wine at Christmas. Basically any excuse for a street party. We will be having a Big Lunch street party next weekend, weather permitting, with all in the street, plus friends and family members, invited. Thankfully it's a quiet road so minimal traffic. We will set out tables and chairs in the road and each household is responsible for providing something. I've used the poster to send to our street WhatsApp, I've put invitations through everyone's doors, and I'll make sure to pop out a collection box to raise some money too."

Gainsborough, Lincolnshire

Jackie Applebee, **Gainsborough Big Lunch organiser said:** "Our Big Lunch Neighbourhood get-together is on Sunday 6 June on the Riverside Walk at 1pm. It will be good to see neighbours and meet new residents. We have two barbeques and a buffet table of fillings such as free jackets and baps lunch for all residents. Food includes hot dogs in glass jars, beef burgers, pulled pork, jacket potatoes, coleslaw, chilli filling for jackets, vegetable chilli for jackets and any desserts as wild and wonderful as you like! We hope this will be the start of great competition between neighbours at our events!

Things on the day include; outdoor tables and chairs, forks dessert spoons, bowls for desserts, serviettes, paper plates, cups, stirrers, grated cheese, butter, baked beans, baps, burger relish, tomato sauce, salad, gherkins, crisps, beverages, tea bags, coffee, milk, sugar, juice, Pimms, lemonade, mint and fruit for Pimms."

LONDON:

Hackney Big Lunch, Gascoyne Est, Wick Rd, E9. Sharon Gammack

Every year we contact our local councillor to apply for a grant, which we use to make The Big Lunch an estate event in Hackney, usually involving a disco and party games.

Sharon Gammack, Hackney Big Lunch organiser, said: "It's our 11th Big Lunch in Hackney and we have applied to close off the street (Wick Road) to allow for a more socially distanced Big Lunch, if not we'll use the Hall. We are having a big lunch party on Saturday 26 June and we are planning to hold a big party on that day. Food and drink will be available and we also ask people to bring their favourite foods to share. This year will be a bit different because we doing Easter and Christmas and New year all in one! - and a bit of everything, games, bouncy castle and dancing. We have our hall if the rules change on 21 June. We have about 25 to 30 people and I include every one for the games, young and old - we do have a lot of fun!"

Elmers Road, South Norwood, London SE25

John Lawlor, Elmers Road East Big Lunch organiser, said: "We are covering the east end of Elmers Road, the Woodside district of South Norwood, Croydon. Due to the pandemic we have chosen a date well past June 21 and are scheduled for July 11 at 1pm, but are watching the news closely. Also, there is no point in using the normal date as Croydon Council cannot afford a road closure. We are delivering the lunch on the pavement on one side of the road. We are a neighbourhood group, six neighbours of which myself and my immediate neighbour Karen, are the instigators. The six of us live in adjoining houses in the road. We have held a couple of meetings in my garden and we want to bring people together, to get to know each other, to do some fundraising and to discuss any community improvements we might be able to make ourselves, or at least initiate."

SOUTH WEST:

Liskeard, Cornwall

Vicky Hooper, Assistant manager St Anthonys Residential Home, Station Road, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 4BY

Vicki Hooper, Assistant Manager of St Anthony's Residential Home, Liskeard said: "This will be the second year we hold The Big Lunch. We will be holding it here at the home, with our wonderful staff and our wonderful residents – we are hopeful some family members will be able to join us. We will hold our event on Sunday the 6 June.

We held this event last year, during the height of the pandemic to help bring some joy to our residents, to give them something to look forward to and to show them and their families that we are doing all we can to promote healthy mental health. This year isn't much different really, we want our residents to know the fun hasn't stopped, and like I said we are hopeful their family members can join in this year which would be so amazing for everyone, if family members can't join us physically, we have plans to facetime or video call with relatives.

We will be celebrating with an afternoon tea style lunch, with cakes, and scones, sandwiches, crisps, pork pie and sausage rolls, a real celebration meal. And music! Cannot forget the music – hopefully by our favourite musicians "Sunnyside Up" who do musical workshops and get everyone playing along on banjo's and with maracas and they really do lift everyone's spirits. We will also play some games, giant floor games and ball games are usually what our residents choose, as well as quizzes, they love a quiz.

We will decorate with bunting and balloons and really make it feel like a celebration. Staff and those residents who wish to will be dressing up in tea dresses and smart wear. We were on the radio last year and it just gives everyone such a boost, and lovely for family members to see and hear. It makes them aware and appreciate what an active role we play in their relatives lives especially at a time when they haven't been allowed much contact with them, we want them to know we do all we can for their loved ones."

SOUTH EAST:

Ashford, Kent

Amy Thomas, Ashford Big Lunch organiser said: "We are planning a walk - various distances to accommodate all abilities - followed by refreshments at the end of the road (we live in a dead end) or in one of our gardens on Sunday 6 June.

This week I am doing the final planning of the routes, so that I can make a basic map for people to follow and then I will send out the invites at the weekend. We have a Whatsapp group for our road, so people are already aware and keen to join in so I feel it should be a good turn-out.

Since the beginning of lockdown our road in particular have been very good at joining in and trying to do stuff to get involved. At Christmas we even participated in Doorstep Carols which was fantastic. So I am hoping we will get the same enthusiasm for this event and potentially make it an annual event! Let's hope for some sunshine."

Slough, Berkshire

Shin Dhother, Slough Big Lunch organiser, said: "We are a local community group in Slough, providing food and essential parcels to those most vulnerable in the community. For the Big Lunch weekend we will be holding street parties and outreach sessions offering free cooked food and refreshments that's be6 kindly donated by local communities."

Barham, Canterbury, Kent

Kerry Overton, Barham Big Lunch organiser, said: "I had the privilege of coming to the Eden project as part of the Big Lunch Extra weekend. At the time I was setting up a social enterprise in my area that involved linking up with community gardens and venues to use kitchens and educate locals to eat healthy food on a budget. Many could get involved with the garden who put on community markets and sell produce at really low cost. But also we encouraged people to 'grow their own.'

Since then, where I live in Barham, which has the neighbouring village of Claydon, like many communities, really stepped up in helping those who had to isolate themselves when we went into 'Pandemic times.' A local lady called Becky, co-ordinated things mainly via Facebook and I was a call handler. People were getting bits of shopping, picking up prescriptions etc at the start of 2020. Between 'lockdowns', I suggested that the groups should become something more sustainable and the 'Good Neighbour scheme' model fitted really well, so, it was transitioned and I chair it.

The Big Lunch on Saturday June 5 is an opportunity in Volunteers Week to bring people together in a safe outdoor space to say we are here! These are the people who have helped our most vulnerable. We

hope it provides the opportunity for people to thank the team of volunteers along with us being able to tell the public what we are doing and if they have anything they would like to initiate that can help build a stronger community.

We are launching a community litter pick, and we have started the talking benches across the community, so we are keen to tell people about these and their purpose. We have the Rural Coffee Caravan Information project joining us and also have the Suffolk Good Neighbour scheme coordinator joining us to capture.

We want to bring people together to connect us all, as the late Jo Cox so succinctly stated, we have 'more in common than what divides us' and nothing shone the spotlight on that more than the pandemic. Our neighbours became all our responsibility, isolation became all of our business. My phrase is I may not know you, but you are all my neighbours."

It is true to say that when we officially started in September 2020 we have not had the demand that we thought we would have had, however, we are here for people and do have some ongoing needs with 'clients' that cannot get out of their homes. Due to the lack of demand, we capped the volunteers and have 13 on the books that include the committee members.

As we set up during pandemic restrictions, we were unable to 'launch' in a big way, and although we have done a leaflet drop twice and have a monthly article in our community magazine, we do feel people do not know we are here. We have also not met together as a committee face to face and barely see our volunteers.

Wouldham, Kent

Claudia Belcher, Wouldham Big Lunch organiser, said: "Our Big Lunch event is planned for this Sunday 6 June at midday. It's taking place in our street which is cul-de-sac of new-builds at Peters Village, Wouldham, in Kent. We aim to use the event to get to know our neighbours. We all moved in around November and December 2020 which obviously meant socialising was impossible due to the pandemic and the Christmas lockdown. This is our first opportunity to properly chat to everyone and have some fun. We have games such as bingo, tennis and swing ball planned. Music and decorations to put up. I'm hoping to bake some biscuits with my four year old daughter, so she can hand them round. So hopefully it'll be a lovely afternoon for us all to get to know one another. Thanks to Eden Project Communities for providing us with the inspiration for our event!"

Robertsbridge, East Sussex

Sara Stonor DL, Vice Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex

Sara Stonor, Robertsbridge Big Lunch organiser, said: " I live at the top of an unmade up lane off Northbridge Street in Robertsbridge and we, under the leadership of Jacqui at No 8, have a big lunch annually with around 20 people taking part. It is held in the allotment at the bottom of my garden, the allotment is owned by Tim Croft. Tim creates miracles from nothing, so a bar-b-que on some old metal and a log or two on which we can boil a kettle and cook potatoes grown feet away. I bring a table, we all bring chairs or sit on Tim's logs, and food we share – it is not at all grand but a good community project. Some people stay for 30 minutes some all afternoon. Not mess or clearing up as we all take our own rubbish home."

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