

‘THE BIG WALK’ HITS THE ROAD TO CELEBRATE COMMUNITY SPIRIT ACROSS THE UK

18 May 2018

Walkers in Morecambe at the start of The Big Walk

Four teams of walkers set off today on a three week journey across the UK, as The Big Walk returns for its second year!

Epic journey across the UK to bring communities together

Designed to shine a light on the great people at the heart of our communities, The Big Walk sets off from Morecambe – the geographical heart of the UK

4 groups of walkers travelling across the UK, finishing simultaneously in their home towns on Sunday 3 June in time for THE BIG LUNCH!

Download film for Online desks available at <https://vimeo.com/268936592/2703bb1dd4>

Broadcast live on BBC's the One Show, seven members of the public set off from Morecambe to reach their respective homes in the four corners of the UK. All are taking part in this year's The Big Walk - heading home in time for a celebratory Big Lunch as part of the UK's annual get together for neighbours on Sunday 3 June.

The Big Walk is designed to shine a light on the people at the heart of the UK's communities, who work together to make great things happen every day. This annual event sees four teams of walkers embarking on an epic journey across the UK, visiting projects and community groups that are making a real difference to local lives and encouraging everyone to join The Big Lunch.

An idea from the Eden Project made possible by the National Lottery, The Big Walk and The Big Lunch share the simple premise that great things happen when you bring people together. Eden launched the Big Lunch in 2009.

Hundreds of well-wishers lined the route of the start of The Big Walk in Morecambe as Comedian and Presenter Jo Brand sounded the start klaxon back in the One Show studio in London.

Having endured a long distance walking challenge herself, Jo is all too familiar with pounding the pavements for days on end. "I know the highs and lows that the walkers will face along the route," she said. "The days can sometimes seem endless, but the whole point of The Big Walk is to get into local communities and meet these ordinary people doing extraordinary things. That's all the motivation they'll need to keep putting one foot in front of the other. I was at the start of The Big Walk last year so I know how excited everyone will be to get going. I wish them luck, good weather and great snack stops. I know it's going to be amazing. And if like me you've binned your trainers and prefer to support from a sofa, then keep your slippers on and take part in The Big Lunch on 3 June. No sportswear required!"

Peter Stewart, Eden Project Executive Director, says: "The Big Walk celebrates the great things people make happen where they live. The Big Lunch is a chance for people everywhere to build those friendships and connections locally, which help to create stronger, happier communities. Last year 9.3 million people had fun together at over 96,000 events across the UK - so give our walkers a smile and a wave, and sign up to bring your own community together for a Big Lunch on June 3."

Joe Ferns, Director of Funding at the Big Lottery Fund, added: "All of the walkers are playing an important role in helping us to celebrate and showcase the great things people are doing within their communities each and every day. The Big Walk and The Big Lunch bring people together and shine a light on fantastic community projects - many of which are National Lottery-funded - that are making a real difference to people's lives across the UK. We're proud to support them and hope to inspire many more to build the friendships and connections that help communities thrive."

Angus McLeod is captain of Team Scotland walking from Morecambe to Dundee. He says: "The Big Walk is an opportunity for me to take time out of my normally busy working life and enjoy a journey of discovery, finding out more about what is currently happening in some of our local communities. I'm looking forward to walking in the sun (hopefully!) and meeting interesting people, whilst taking the opportunity to shine a light on some of the incredible projects that good people are currently engaged in."

Anyone can take part! Order a free pack and join millions of others across the UK for The Big Lunch on 3 June www.thebiglunch.com and don't forget to follow #TheBigWalk to see lots of inspiring communities in action.