

# Eden Project Communities Evaluation Report

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Belong Network

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## Foreword by Professor Dominic Abrams, OBE

**Director of the Centre for the Study of Group Processes, University of Kent and Co-Chair: British Academy/Nuffield Foundation *Understanding Communities* programme**

I am delighted to introduce this report which analyses the outstanding achievements of The Big Lunch and associated programmes coordinated by the Eden Project, from its inception in 2009 till now. The programme has been generously supported by The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) - the largest community funder in the UK. This funding has shown an exceptional return on investment, particularly through The Big Lunch in which 10 million people a year support one another in their local communities. Critically, as well as a significant contribution to the economy, there are major social returns on this investment in terms of improved social cohesion and connectedness. These spread well beyond the people who choose to participate to embrace their wider communities. Building social bonds within and across neighbourhoods is an essential basis for the stronger social, environmental and economic future we want to create in the UK. Caring about and for one another is the basis of cooperation, and cooperation is the basis for ensuring collective benefits that far outweigh what people can achieve in isolation. Work to build openness, interest and engagement toward people who may share very different religions, cultures and social class backgrounds to ourselves is essential for establishing a tolerant, safe and healthy nation, one that can more effectively ameliorate and cope with environmental, social and economic challenges.

As this report details, the benefits to individuals include greater confidence and skills, and the benefits to communities include a wealth of fundraising initiatives for good causes, strengthening those communities and building resilience to face the future together. The Community Camps and the Network that has been created, linking local organisers together across very different geographic, social and political landscapes, bear out the findings from a wide range of research projects about how groups working together can challenge prejudice and polarisation. More broadly, the programme is building a wider sense of shared purpose. Building and sustaining social and cultural infrastructure requires both serious financial investment and a huge amount of local commitment, voluntary involvement and on-the-ground work over very sustained periods of time. Such infrastructure is easily lost or swept away and extremely hard to replace.

As the current economic climate poses clear threats to that infrastructure, the vital contribution of the Eden Project, The Big Lunch and the support of TNLCF become increasingly evident. Sustaining these and other forms of support in the context of alternative priorities requires explicit economic and social justification, and that is why this report is so important. The report provides evidence, through Return on Investment calculations, that the funding spent on programmes like The Big Lunch results in substantial savings to public services, in the areas of health and wellbeing, addressing loneliness and reducing anti-social behaviour in particular. This is not just a heartwarming outcome. It highlights the kind of work that is fundamental to the capacity of society to thrive, to its economic growth and a sustainable future. The report also demonstrates the critical value of developing systematic and wide methods for measuring these impacts to reinforce the economic argument for financial and other investments. The report includes recommendations for government, to learn from findings of this report and others on the benefits of The Big Lunch and also similar initiatives linked to celebrating together. The Eden Project is uniquely positioned to incorporate environmental awareness as an outcome, and has successfully achieved this – it is a beacon of what has been achieved and what is so essential to build upon in the years ahead.

## Executive Summary

### Purpose of this research

Eden Project's mission is to demonstrate and inspire positive action for the planet. The UK is facing the inextricably linked threats of a nature and human health crisis. In response, the Eden Project helps to build community resilience by connecting people with each other and with nature right across the UK. The Eden Project believes in the power of community to shape a positive future for both people and planet and their work aims to build social capital and the levels of agency and community action in the general population so that everyone can feel hope for the future, wherever they may live.

The Big Lunch is the UK's largest annual get-together for neighbours and communities and takes place on the first weekend in June. This nationwide act of community friendship is a chance for different people to meet, share food and have fun together. Building its momentum since 2009, the most recent collection of events held in June 2024 saw 10 million people participating in The Big Lunch.

Alongside The Big Lunch, through its community team, Eden Project implements and support several activities including Community Camps, online events, courses and the Network with the aim of bringing people together and building community skills and confidence to enable more positive change in communities.

Belong brings to this evaluation specialist knowledge of what is needed to build social cohesion and the benefits to communities of long-term strategies that bring people together across difference. The substantial amount of data from the Eden Project has been analysed in the context of different policy initiatives since 2009, including austerity policies and the withdrawal of services run by local councils, the cost-of-living crisis and the pandemic.

The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) has been the major funder of The Big Lunch and the work of the communities team at the Eden Project since 2010. As the current funding strategy and support from TNLCF draws to a close, the purpose of this review is to evaluate the impact The Big Lunch and the supporting programme of initiatives such as Community Camps, courses and the Network have had on society, communities, and individuals over the duration of the funding, and to objectively review the return on investment for the funding provided for both Eden Project and TNLCF.



## What the existing research tells us

There is robust evidence of the importance of food sharing for social cohesion and for building social capital in communities. Social cohesion refers to the glue that holds a society together, at the street level through to the nation. Social capital describes connections between people, categorised as bonding (within-group connections), bridging (between-group connections), and linking (connections to people of greater power or institutional authority). Sharing food in public spaces, such as parks, in the streets where people live, in community centres and faith buildings is especially important in urban settings. People from many unfamiliar cultural backgrounds often live side by side with others who they may only meet on public transport, through schools where these have pupils from diverse backgrounds, or through fleeting conversations in shops and other spaces that they may use.

Social isolation and loneliness have been found to be key drivers in motivating people to engage with food sharing initiatives, enabling them to form bonds with people living near them. A meal together can also support bridging relationships, helping people to initiate relationships across (dis)abilities, generations and cultures. It can also have impacts on the environment, social inclusion, happiness, health and well-being and sense of security. Joining together with others in relationships that can then be sustained over time can help to inspire a sense of belonging and catalyse new local community and environmental projects. Those involved may go on to link with those in positions of power and thereby contribute to communities feeling a greater sense of belonging and trust in democratic processes. The more empowered people feel to make a positive difference, and when they feel that their voice will be heard, then that has important spin-offs for not only their individual outcomes, but also those of the communities that they live and work in. The Big Lunch and the associated Network and Community Camps all contribute to these wider outcomes.

Forming a key part of integrating people of all ages into the community is The Big Lunch, which Sonia from North Yorkshire says is always a highlight of the year: “I love seeing people relax and spending time with people they might not have seen for a while. It’s the spirit of it all – we had an elderly lady who found walking difficult but would always travel over half a mile on foot to The Big Lunch. It would take her forever but she’d be the first one there. She’d look forward to it every year.”



## Summary findings

The collective impact of The Big Lunch, Community Camps, and the Network is impressive. Since the Lottery began funding the programme in 2010, there have been over 109 million Big Lunch participants and over 1.4 million Big Lunch events across the UK. On average, £11 million pounds was raised for good causes each year between 2015 and 2024. Since 2013, over 2,000 participants have attended one of the 28 Community Camps or 8 online courses, resulting in 1,100 new community projects.



In terms of Return on Investment from funding provided by The National Lottery Community Fund, The Big Lunch and its associated programmes by 2024 had evolved to the following costs by 2024:

- For every £1 invested by TNLCF, £13 is generated in fundraising for good causes, a statistic that is especially relevant in disconnected communities which are estimated to cost the UK £32billion annually in services provided
- Cost per attendee 6 pence and per event £4.95
- Cost of The Big Lunch per attendee reporting relief from loneliness 10 pence, with similar costs for each person becoming more active in their community, reporting a stronger sense of community and becoming more interested in environmental issues.
- In 2024, 16% of participants reported as feeling lonely. When scaled up, even if only 10% of these participants maintain being less lonely, this amounts to a saving to services of almost £1.3billion annually.
- Almost two-thirds of attendees participated more often in local voluntary activities as a result of participating in The Big Lunch events. If only 10% of those who had not been volunteering previously then continue to do so after attending The Big Lunch, that has an added value to their communities of £2.6bn annually.

## Evolution of Outcomes

From 2013 to 2024, the initiatives' outcomes grew in complexity and scope. The Big Lunch's early focus on straightforward participation targets evolved to include more nuanced goals around inclusivity, wellbeing, and social cohesion (Document #10). Similarly, Community Camps and courses began with straightforward targets that evolved over time. Initially (2013-2015), the primary goal was for 300 people from UK communities to participate in camps, with 80% becoming actively engaged in more community action. By 2024, the outcomes expanded to include more complex goals around planet-positive action and enhanced wellbeing.

## The Big Lunch - Overview of the outcomes and whether they were reached

As mentioned above, the outcomes of The Big Lunch evolved significantly over time, growing in both size and complexity. The overview below draws from Document #10, a document with an overview of TNLCF outcomes and grants for the programme.

### **Early Years (2010-2013)**

In the early years, The Big Lunch focused on straightforward goals, primarily increasing participation and fostering a sense of community. For example, in 2010, the target was to have 3 million participants (not met), and by 2013, the goal increased to 6.3 million participants (this was exceeded). Alongside participation numbers, the programme sought to ensure over 60% of participants felt a stronger sense of community – a target that was exceeded, laying the foundation for deeper community engagement.

### **Mid-Period (2014-2017)**

Between 2014 and 2017, the outcomes expanded to include broader regional representation and greater inclusivity. The programme aimed to increase the number of participants from deprived areas and achieve proportional representation across the UK nations – a target that was met. Participation targets also grew, with a goal of 16 million participants across 2016-2017 (met). In addition to quantitative targets, qualitative outcomes were introduced, such as fostering stronger connections and encouraging participants to return to their communities to inspire further action (met).



### **Later Years (2018-2021)**

During this period, the programme's scale and complexity increased significantly. Participation targets became more ambitious, aiming for a cumulative total of 43 million by 2021 – this target was not met and was further impacted by the onset of the COVID pandemic. Diversity and inclusivity goals became more nuanced, with an emphasis on reaching vulnerable communities and promoting awareness of TNLCF funding. New dimensions were added to the outcomes, including fostering new relationships, reducing loneliness, and encouraging voluntary work and fundraising. The programme also started tracking its impact on community-building and social wellbeing more comprehensively.

### ***Recent Years (2022-2024)***

In recent years, The Big Lunch broadened its scope to address not only community engagement but also sustainability and environmental action. Participation targets remained ambitious, with a goal of 20 million participants across 2022 and 2023 (exceeded), while placing greater emphasis on diversity and inclusivity. Specific efforts targeted groups more likely to experience poverty, discrimination, or disadvantage, with participation tracked across all UK nations and quintiles of multiple deprivation. This diversity target was partially met with participation in Scotland (6%) and Wales (4%) being slightly lower than proportionally represented (England 83% / Scotland 9% / Wales 5% / NI 3%).



Additionally, the programme introduced and met their goals related to fostering connections with nature and promoting planet-positive behaviours. For example, community camps were designed to equip attendees with skills to lead environmentally sustainable projects, with 70% of participants reporting increased confidence in these areas. Efforts to support wellbeing were also central, with events aiming to make attendees feel more connected to their neighbours and communities while reducing loneliness.

Alongside these community and environmental outcomes, The Big Lunch placed greater emphasis on inclusivity, aiming to ensure proportional representation across protected characteristics such as age, race, and disability. Although some

participation targets were not fully achieved, significant progress was made in promoting sustainability, social wellbeing, and diversity, while maintaining strong engagement in vulnerable communities. This period reflects a growing focus on interlinking social and environmental goals to create more holistic community outcomes.

Over time, the programme shifted from simple numerical targets to complex, interwoven goals that combined community participation with social, environmental, and emotional outcomes. All the recommendations that follow are for wider discussion and implementation by government and major funders, such as TNLCF.

**Returning from a Community Camp, Saffi began expanding her work in the community, running sessions encouraging people to take part in The Big Lunch, the Eden Project's annual day for community celebration, and beginning a leadership role at Wolverhampton Voluntary and Community Action. Together with her colleague, Saffi has since launched Wolverhampton for Everyone, an initiative connecting people, places and communities to unlock potential and create positive change.**



## Recommendations relating to reducing loneliness and improved sense of wellbeing

1. Ensure that the cumulative outcomes of The Big Lunch, Community Camps and Network on local communities continue to be supported and linked to government drives to reduce loneliness and improve health and wellbeing outcomes.
2. Utilise the evidence base, including the Return on Investment findings, to demonstrate how community events are crucial to informing national approaches to reducing loneliness and reducing the costs to the NHS.
3. Develop a national strategy for ongoing support for training, networking and measurement to build the quality of interactions at events to maximise their effectiveness in supporting social cohesion and enhancing health and wellbeing.
4. Incorporate the findings of this report to build the business case for programmes that support social infrastructure development where people can meet with others in shared spaces to encourage lasting connections locally.

## Recommendations relating to agency and community resilience

5. Encourage long-term funding such as that provided by The National Lottery Community Fund to tackle long-term and enduring challenges found in areas of high socioeconomic deprivation and/or population churn that require complex and sustained initiatives, such as The Big Lunch, that build individual agency and community resilience.
6. Maintain support structures that encourage local voices to be heard within an inclusive and nurturing environment, using social media and other online environments to build networks that support local organisers to initiate and develop environmental and infrastructure developments, such as those developed following attendance at Community Camps.
7. Recognise the unique positioning of Eden Project to act as a catalyst for local initiatives that bring people together and address environmental concerns alongside building community resilience within the UK's most disadvantaged communities.

## Recommendations relating to belonging and democratic renewal

8. Encourage more initiatives like The Big Lunch that contribute to people having a strong sense of connection and belonging to the places where they live. Learn from the success of linking with national moments.
9. Recognise the important role of The Big Lunch and its associated Community Camps and Network in contributing to people's sense of belonging and motivating people to be more engaged in civic and political processes that aim to reduce divisions within a particular place.



## Conclusion

The report has detailed a wide range of findings and why these are significant. Some of these findings relate to how the programme might be improved. Many of the findings have wider significance currently. Bringing people together across difference and improving people's sense of belonging, as well as the local environments that people live in, are crucial for health and wellbeing, and contribute to wider strategies to reduce loneliness. The findings are also relevant to building individual agency, where people feel their voices matter and where local networks can be built that are resilient to shocks like the pandemic, as well as divisive messages designed to exclude and alienate. The findings have shown how linking The Big Lunch to national moments, such as the Queen's Jubilee and the King's Coronation expanded the numbers of people taking part and have important implications for how communities build a sense of belonging, both to the place where they live and the wider nation.

Eden Project has demonstrated how all these positive impacts can be achieved through a national programme that is sensitive to regional/national differences. The development of different offers in different regions/nations has been possible through the long-term funding for the programme provided by The National Lottery Community Fund. The learnings and adaptations over the years demonstrate the benefits of this long-term strategy which has resulted in a successful and responsive programme that has successfully engaged millions of people over the years.



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Eden Project's mission

Eden Project's mission is to demonstrate and inspire positive action for the planet. The UK is facing both a nature and human health crisis. These are inextricably linked and in response, their work on The Big Lunch and a wider programme of activities, helps to build community resilience by connecting people with each other and with nature right across the UK. The Eden Project believes in the power of community to shape a positive future for both people and planet and their work aims to build social capital and the levels of agency and community action so that everyone can feel hope for the future, wherever they may live.

The Big Lunch is the UK's annual get-together for neighbours and communities and takes place on the first weekend in June. This nationwide act of community friendship is a chance for different people to meet, share food and have fun together. The Big Lunch is an idea from the Eden Project, originally conceived as a national thanks-giving day for neighbours in order to bring people and communities closer together.

Starting in 2009 when 700,000 people took part, The Big Lunch has since gone on to support national moments of celebration including The Diamond Jubilee in 2012, and in recent years The Big Jubilee Lunch in 2022 and the Coronation Big Lunch in 2023 with over 30 million people joining in over those 2 years. Her Majesty The Queen, formerly HRH The Duchess of Cornwall has been the patron of The Big Lunch since 2013 and supports the aim of bringing people together to create stronger, more resilient and more hopeful communities better able to take local action and tackle challenges together. In June 2024, 10 million people participated in The Big Lunch.

Alongside The Big Lunch, through its community team, the Eden Project implements and supports several activities including Community Camps, online events, courses and the Network with the aim of bringing people together and building community skills and confidence to enable more positive change in communities. Face-to-face Community Camps and online courses, running since 2013, offer support, learning and connection to those who want to do more in their communities. They are immersive events, building the confidence and boosting the skills of community-minded people UK wide, helping them to take their own projects and ideas forward.

The Network is a place where people, organisations and projects can connect with others to build relationships, skills and connections and work together at a community level, take forward their ideas and make a

Returning from Community Camp with newly-found confidence, Gwen and Alan stepped up to the challenge of establishing an inclusive cycling scheme – and helped to establish Just Ride Southend in 2014. Aiming to offer people of all backgrounds the chance to cycle in a safe and supportive environment, Just Ride has gone from strength to strength and now has 120 adapted bicycles which are available to be used four mornings a week at a local athletics track. The scheme has been hugely popular, and is used by groups ranging from retired individuals looking for somewhere to exercise, to people with additional needs and others recovering from health issues who want to build up their strength. Gwen continues to volunteer there, and Alan has recently taken over the administration of the charity.

difference. It is a space to share advice, learn new things and support one another as they bring ideas to life. Engagement in the Network can be through attending a workshop or seminar, through a Facebook group for peer-to-peer learning and support, or more sustained involvement over time to build up a variety of skills. Network activities are made as accessible as possible, running either online or face to face in community spaces around the UK.

## 1.2 What Belong brings to the table

The guiding principles for successfully building social cohesion and connection in communities were developed as a part of Belong's Beyond Us and Them Research project which was funded by the Nuffield Foundation and conducted in partnership with the University of Kent. The Beyond Us and Them (2021) research project was a comprehensive longitudinal study (May 2020 – May 2022) investigating the impact of COVID-19 on our social relations. A key finding from that study was that local areas that had invested in social cohesion programmes demonstrated higher levels of social connection, neighbourliness, trust in local institutions and services, much higher levels of volunteering, more positive attitudes towards migrants and higher levels of subjective wellbeing. These investments were often in the form of neighbourhood and/or town and citywide events and building on the legacy from such events in terms of the networks they promote and support.

Therefore, Belong has brought specialist knowledge to examine the longitudinal shifts that have taken place because of The Big Lunch, the Community Camps, courses and the Network that Eden Project has developed. The data has been analysed in the context of different policy initiatives since 2009, including austerity policies and the withdrawal of services run by local councils, the cost-of-living crisis and the pandemic. The pandemic brought new ways of working which have not entirely reversed since restrictions were lifted, with more remote working and much higher levels of reported mental health issues across the UK. The need for connection and a sense of belonging have been severely challenged over the last 15 years. Belong examined how the Eden Project has adapted its work with communities to address these challenges.

## 1.3 Purpose of this evaluation

The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) has been the major funder of The Big Lunch and the work of the Communities team at the Eden Project since 2010. As the current funding strategy and support from TNLCF draws to a close, the purpose of this review is to evaluate the impact The Big Lunch and the supporting programme of initiatives including the Community Camps/Courses and the Network, have had on society, communities, and individuals over the duration of the funding, and to objectively review the return on investment for the funding provided for both Eden Project and TNLCF. This report complements previous research commissioned by the Eden Project team that examines how better-connected communities can impact the lives of people across the UK.

## 1.4 Layout of this report

The next section in this report places the evaluation in the context of other research around the societal benefits of people sharing a meal together in a shared space. It also provides an overview of what is known to support people to develop social capital and the widespread benefits to individuals and the neighbourhoods and communities they live in as well.

Section 3 contains a description of the methodology used to analyse the documents. Then section 4 analyses the findings. Section 5 is a discussion of the findings and the implications for both the Eden Project moving forward and wider social policy. Finally, section 6 draws conclusions and provides recommendations for government and funders.



## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Sharing a meal with strangers and building social capital

There is robust evidence of the importance of commensality (the act of food sharing) for social cohesion and for building social capital. Research on social eating patterns (Dunbar, 2017), commissioned by the Eden Project and funded by The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF), showed that one-third of weekday evening meals are eaten alone, and 69% of people have never shared a meal with neighbours. This study suggested that social eating might be an evolved mechanism for social bonding. It found that 76% of respondents believe shared meals bring people closer together, and that laughter and reminiscences had by far the strongest bonding effects.

Social cohesion is a frequently used term discussed alongside or interchangeably with the term social capital (Horsham et al., 2024). Social cohesion refers to the glue that holds a society together, at street level through to the nation. Although there are various definitions of social cohesion, at its most effective, everyone is valued for their unique contributions, within a framework that is working for the common good. Social capital also has various definitions (see Putnam, 1994; Claridge, 2018; and Cook, 2022 for reviews). Broadly, social capital describes connections between people, categorised as bonding (within-group connections), bridging (between-group connections), and linking (connections to people of greater power or institutional authority).

Bonding capital refers to the bonds between people with similar interests and confers several benefits, including emotional support, addressing loneliness and isolation and the fostering of reciprocal norms associated with trust (Claridge, 2018). However, bonding capital can also be associated with negative outcomes due to its high levels of exclusivity. Networks with high levels of bonding capital may develop higher levels of prejudice and discrimination, intergroup conflict and competition and consequently, this can be detrimental to social cohesion (Belong, 2023; Claridge, 2018; What Works Wellbeing, 2022).

Further research commissioned by the Eden Project and funded by TNLCF indicates that disconnected communities could be costing the UK £32 billion annually (Cebr, 2017). This is based on a £15 billion valuation of the resources shared and the help provided between neighbours resulting in a £29 billion valuation of the resources that could be shared if neighbourliness (catalysed by things such as involvement in community initiatives like The Big Lunch) was more widespread. The calculation includes an estimated saving of £205 million (equal to the median yearly salary of 6584 police officers) due to reduced demand on policing. Also, research indicates that having access to quality green spaces would result in annual savings of £34 billion (Fields in Trust, 2018). They estimate that for every £1 spent on parks, there is £7 in value for health, wellbeing and the environment.

Bridging social capital describes the connections between communities which may be separated by divisions such as race, class, or religion (Claridge, 2018). People experiencing high levels of bridging capital may possess high levels of shared interests or goals despite stark differences in their social identity (Belong, 2023; Pelling and High, 2005). The notion of bridging capital is strongly tied to the UK's concepts of community integration and cohesion, and various policies introduced since the early 2000s have aimed to increase bridging cohesion between communities within the UK.

Bridging social capital increases tolerance for diversity through increased intergroup contact and levels of trust (Lundâsen, 2022; Pettigrew et al., 2011; Schmid et al., 2014). Nonetheless, contact is not necessarily equally beneficial for all parties (Hässler et al., 2020; Tausch et al., 2015) and must be carefully navigated if it is to produce lasting and positive relationships. Consequently, there is a need for communities to have a balance of bonding and bridging capital to maximise community development and social cohesion (Kearney, 2003). What connects bridging and bonding social capital is that both are regarded as being horizontal forms of social capital (Woolcock and Naryan, 2000), by laterally connecting people of similar status and power.

Linking social capital describes the connections between individuals who are interacting across power gradients within their society (Belong, 2023; Szreter and Woollock, 2004). An example of linking social capital would be the relationships that develop between community-based organisations and funding partners. Linking capital is critical to the development of communities (Flora, 1998). Linking capital may also extend bridging capital by involving networks and connections between individuals or groups in public agencies, businesses, legal institutions, or political groups (Healy, 2002). Social activist networks develop high levels of linking social capital and the skills needed to successfully make changes in their local and wider environments.

## 2.2 Evidencing the need for programmes like The Big Lunch

Sharing food in public spaces, such as parks, in the streets where people live, in community centres and faith buildings with people of different faiths eating in the same space is especially important in urban settings (Veen, 2019). People from many unfamiliar cultural backgrounds often live side by side with others who they may only meet on public transport, through schools, or through fleeting conversations in shops and other spaces that they may use. Sharing a meal together, when it is done with the express intention of inviting people who would not normally come together, can help promote the sharing of concepts and methods of hospitality and care and can contribute to people embracing social differences. Shared meals serve as temporary linkages between individuals, groups, initiatives, and services, supplying the glue in ways that are difficult to gauge using straightforward quantitative methods and, hence, are rarely articulated (Marovelli, 2019; Neal et al., 2018).

**In her role at the housing association, Carol has organised much larger Big Lunch events with her colleagues in communities across Swansea. For example, working with the Chinese Elders Project at the Swan Gardens they have organised a large-scale Big Lunch event every year. They use a community field near the local allotments where they put up a marquee and invite people from all different backgrounds to cook and contribute food. In addition, there are live bands, games, and in previous years the mascot from Swansea football club has attended too.**

Whether living in an urban setting or in a rural location, social isolation and loneliness have been found to be key drivers in motivating people to engage with food sharing initiatives. The literature notes that many initiatives are using sharing food together to widen opportunities for being with others. It refers to food sharing as having the potential to inspire collective spaces of ethical responsibility (Popke, 2009; Amin, 2012). Initiatives such as The Big Lunch support bridging relationships, helping people to

initiate relationships across generations and cultures. They can also have impacts on the environment, social inclusion, happiness, health, and well-being and more (Radomska, 2023) when consciously designed to do so. The importance of eating together is stressed across disciplines. When people are motivated and supported to improve the social infrastructure in their neighbourhoods, such as shared spaces in which to meet, it will have consequences for the general health and wellbeing of a community, not just those who attend a one-off event. Improved social infrastructure is also linked to higher levels of social cohesion (Baylis et al., 2019, What Works Centre for Wellbeing, 2022).

When a one-off event is organised in ways that are deliberately encouraging everyone to feel included and welcome, this can have an important role in being part of an eco-system that encourages a sense of belonging which in turn leads to wanting to care for the surrounding environment. National moments, such as the Queen's Jubilee and the King's Coronation, can be reflected locally through street parties. The spark of an event that impacts on the nation as a whole can lead to ongoing community engagement (Jo Cox Foundation, 2023).

However, it is possible for events such as a shared meal to have quite the opposite effect if there are barriers put in the ways of people attending or if the depth of the welcome is extended more to some people and not to others (Belong, 2024). Some facilitation is often needed to bridge across divides that may exist within a neighbourhood (Amin, 2012). If inclusivity is not at the heart of a meal sharing initiative, then it can have a negative effect. The concepts of conviviality (understood as the connective interdependencies between people) together with community (understood as being in common with others) (Neal et al., 2018) can provide an understanding of the complexity involved in creating events based around the sharing of food and organisers' best intentions to make such events inclusive.

## 2.3 Addressing divisive narratives

Divisive narratives and disinformation about minority groups are more widely accepted in communities where connectedness, resource availability and agency are low (Deo and Malik, 2024). These same communities show low levels of trust in democratic processes, a lack of social connectedness and feelings of anger, pessimism, fear and hatred. Scarcity narratives around the economy and cost-of-living are the fuel that creates a sense of competition and resentment between social groups for access to housing, jobs, healthcare and education.

Feeling a sense of safety is fundamental to people being able to welcome strangers in their lives (Khan, 2024a; Abrams, 2023). Neighbourhood social media is more commonly associated with preventing crime and having a crime watch function in more socio-economically deprived neighbourhoods. In less deprived neighbourhoods, neighbourhood social media may contribute to recycling initiatives as neighbours pass on household items they no longer want. Networks can encourage joint action to improve the neighbourhood in ways that enhance the natural environment as well as the exchange of information and neighbourly advice about local services, places to go, local experiences and events (Zahnow et al., 2024). Often there will be spin off networks, such as mums' groups and around sport and hobbies, all impacting on health and wellbeing outcomes as well as building a sense of belonging and supporting social cohesion.

The Community Life Survey (2024) that finds that only 41% of people report that people in their neighbourhood can be trusted, with responses falling well below this level for many people from minoritised

backgrounds. The levels vary from 44% among White ethnic groups to 27% for Pakistani and Black African respondents. Mechanisms that have been found to be successful in building trust are local initiatives especially where these are supported by wider support structures. Indeed, across 300 different measurement items and 23 data sources, the most frequently assessed constructs for measuring social cohesion have been social trust; belonging and identity; civic engagement; openness and tolerance towards others; and political engagement (Abrams et al., 2023). Community events such as The Big Lunch play an important practical role in positively influencing each of these, as the analysis that follows demonstrates.

## 2.4 Value for Money, Social Value and Return on Investment

Quantifying the impact or return on investment (how value is returned from investment made) of an annual sharing of a meal in a community setting and the social capital generated, along with the creation and support of community networks, is hard to do. It is also difficult to isolate from all the spin off activities that can result from the relationships and networks that form as a result. However, methodologies and approaches exist which adopt a different approach to that which might be used in a traditional financial Return on Investment analysis. These methods are often collectively called Social Return on Investment (SROI) and they provide a socially focused framework to be used in line with nine guiding social accounting principles (Social Value UK).

An important principle to include in any SROI analysis is capturing the value of acting ‘upstream’. In a social investment context, ‘upstream’ investment focuses on early intervention and addresses the root cause of social issues and thereby avoids public services being mobilised. Placing a financial value on these upstream investments includes estimates of public service preventative spending (for example by providing community support to those at risk of declining levels of mental health as their condition will be stabilised before problems become more acute and they require more expensive interventions from NHS).

Best practice in SROI analysis is informed by Social Accounting principles and includes an estimate of how much (if any) of improved social outcomes can be ‘attributed’ to The Big Lunch, Community Camps and Network and the extent to which an adjustment for ‘deadweight’ should be applied (i.e. what would have happened anyway). Using these principles allows for a robust £ spent to £ return analysis to be generated using proxy monetary values which provide equivalent £ value for the individual and to public service providers. They are respected by past funders and reassure existing and future funders of the value created. The analysis will also use Social Value principles consistent with the nine principles of Social Value (Social Value UK). In particular we will:

“We enjoyed The Big Lunch so much that we wanted to help other people at the same time. The causes are always close to our hearts. We raised funds for a dementia charity after my mum sadly passed away, and have donated money to our local hospice when a neighbour’s relative was there.”  
Lynda, Essex

**Avoid overclaiming:** By attributing impact in a prudent way and where strong evidence exists. Asking the key question of whether the benefits happened without The Big Lunch.

**Be transparent:** We have shown how the calculations were made and assumptions made.

## 2.5 Catalysing systems change

Finally, the literature provides analysis of the advantages and challenges of short-term funding versus longer-term sources of funding (Mills, Firth and Cairns, 2023). Funders quite rightly want their money to deliver tangible results within a short time frame. However, systems change rarely occurs within single-year grant cycles. Multi-year funding is especially important when tackling enduring and complex problems and where funders desire social and 'systems change' (Brown et al., 2020). Three years of funding is often considered a long-term commitment. However, three years can be considered a basic minimum requirement when pursuing social and systems change. Meaningful systems change takes time and requires long-term strategies. The analysis that follows provides evidence spanning more than a decade and contributes to knowledge about the benefits that can accrue from stable funding.

There are three sections within this methodology section. The first section clarifies the scope of the research by focusing on the guiding research questions. The second section describes the approach to the analysis and the third section discusses the challenges and limitations of the methodological approach.



## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Scope of the research

The Eden Project identified the following research questions with a focus on providing an overview of all the years since the Eden Project programme began in 2009:

1. To what extent have The Big Lunch, Community Camps, courses and the Network produced the intended outcomes in the short, medium, and long term? If so, for whom, to what extent and in what circumstances? Include case study examples of communities, organisations or individuals who have benefitted from participation in The Big Lunch, Community Camps, courses and the Network.
2. Have there been any unintended results or any interesting findings from The Big Lunch, Community Camps, courses and the Network?
3. To what extent have The Big Lunch, Community Camps, courses and the Network represented the best possible use of available resources to achieve results of the greatest possible value to participants and the community and what is the Return on Investment (ROI) for TNLCF and for Eden in delivering this work? Does evidence exist, and if so, what does that look like, to support the business case for the future funding of the elements of this programme for interested parties such as funders, philanthropists or corporate supporters?
4. How have learnings and reflections helped inform iterations of The Big Lunch, Community Camps, courses and the Network and how have these been adapted over the duration of the funding to remain relevant, impactful and reflect changes in approach? How might this inform future direction?

The Eden Project also requested the development of recommendations and learnings regarding the future delivery of community focused activity to support the delivery of their mission. The recommendations were extended into those useful for funders, commissioners and policymakers in the fields of community and volunteer-led events, health and wellbeing, public safety, and environmental concerns.

### 3.2 Approach to the analysis

The first-order qualitative analysis was desk-based research and involved a comprehensive analysis of the Eden Project's community initiatives, drawing from a wide range of sources including: yearly evaluation reports of The Big Lunch, Community Camps and courses, and the Network; quantitative data analysed both internally and by external evaluations for various years of the different programmes; case studies that had been collected by the Eden Project; and external reports and articles that contributed to interpreting the data. Detailed analysis was applied to 15 documents (see appendix for table of sources analysed, together with the logic used for selecting each document). The categories for analysis were based on the research questions and aggregated into the following list:

**Table 1 – first-order categories for analysis****Framework of categories used for analysis**

Name of resource, author, year published, case study examples

Focus of the Report (if not about Big Lunch, etc.)

Project / Initiative short description (name, what, when, where),

What year(s) does this report cover?

Context - key background information/key background information from interviews

Key findings / Main argument(s)

Intended Outcomes (what they were),

Met the intended outcomes? Yes / No / Somewhat

(a) When? (in short, medium, and long term)

(b) For Whom?

(c) To what extent?

(d) In which circumstances?

Gaps / limitations in the data, or the report

Unintended results / interesting findings

How learnings & reflections informed iterations of the activities

How activities were adapted over time to remain relevant, impactful, & reflect changes in approach

How could these learnings inform future direction

How might this inform practice more widely

Recommendations & learnings for Eden re future delivery of community-focused activities

To answer the third research question and understand the extent to which Eden have made best possible use of resources of the greatest value to participants and the communities that they live in, Return on Investment (ROI) and well-established Social Return on Investment techniques (SROI) were used. These are based on five key stages:

- Identification key social outcomes from available documents
- Calculation of programme costs
- Assessment and contextualised evidence to understand levels of added value
- Alignment and calculation of programme outcomes against proxy monetary values
- Assessment of the robustness of evidence in relation to principles of social accounting

The National Audit Office successful commissioning toolkit assesses value for money based on 4 criteria. Our analysis used the 4 criteria to provide insights into the research question. We assessed:

**Effectiveness:** By examining the extent to which results have been delivered as compared expected impacts.

**Efficiency:** Looking for ways in which resources have been used and whether they have they been used in the best way. Several cost benefit metrics were utilised to understand how costs compare to outputs delivered.

**Economy:** Evidencing how the cost of inputs had been minimised.

**Equity:** Understanding whether the project had reached all the people intended.

The second-level analysis moved the findings into the theoretical realm and linked them to accumulated knowledge about elements that are important for building social cohesion and where this overlaps with health and wellbeing and sense of safety, social capital and care for the environment. This secondary analysis was supplemented with four semi-structured interviews with staff at the Eden Project who had been closely involved in developing the programme of activities. Together, these provided answers to the final question in the brief from the Eden Project and informed the discussion section.

**Table 2 – second-order categories for analysis**

**PLACE Themes**

Using the demographic data  
Knowing the services to hand  
Partnership working  
Knowledge of the physical geography  
History and culture  
Online communities (and hybrid)

**PEOPLE Themes**

Bonding with others in the neighbourhood  
Bridging with others in the neighbourhood  
Linking to improve the neighbourhood

**ENVIRONMENTAL Themes**

Greater use of green spaces  
Motivated to get involved in environment focused voluntary action  
Linking with others around environment-related themes



### 3.3 Challenges and limitations of the research

The main challenge was to decide which documents to analyse as the Eden Project has conducted rigorous evaluations over many years of their different programmes. There has also been a substantial number of evaluations and other reports for specific years of the different programmes commissioned. We selected years with particularly high and low numbers participating (2022, and 2010), as well as the report from the mid-point of the programme (2017). With guidance from key Eden Project team members, we were also able to identify key documents that focused on the Community Camps/Courses, the Network, or overarching reports to include in our analysis.

The phrasing of the questions used in participant surveys changed over time and by 2024 enabled much more informative data about the extent of mixing happening at each individual event and how the programme supported growing awareness of environmental issues. Although the variations hinder comprehensive trend analysis, it highlights the advantage of longer-term funding, where measurement can get more sophisticated, and outcomes more ambitious.

Through necessity during the pandemic years, the format of The Big Lunch and the delivery of the Community Camps had to move to online delivery. The decisions which enabled the programme to adapt to the emergency were recorded, but not the process that led to those decisions. Inevitably, the situation had an impact on the quantity and quality of material for analysis. Necessity can also be the mother of invention and much of the Eden Project's offer has remained online or transformed into hybrid approaches. Capturing the relative benefits of in-person and hybrid approaches was as much a financial necessity as a positive decision related to who could access the Community Camps and associated training. At times, it was difficult to ascertain which played the dominant role in decisions that were taken.



The quantitative data highlights overall trends but lacks qualitative insights into specific participant experiences, making it harder to identify precise areas for improvement. However, the inclusion of case studies and regular check-in meetings with key team members at the Eden Project provided more qualitative data. The interviews with other members of the team were conducted at a late stage of the analysis so they could also fill in any gaps in knowledge or understanding of the programme. Their combined expertise has been invaluable in helping to shape this report and guide the findings and recommendations. Their approach of active learning has strengthened the analysis and discussion that follows in the next two sections. Recommendations for future practice more widely are included in the conclusion.



## 4. Findings Section

Comprising three sub-sections, this section addresses the research questions as identified in the methodology. Section 4.1 explores the findings of the intended and unintended outcomes, thereby presenting our analysis for RQ1 and RQ2 together. It also analyses whether the outcomes were short, medium or long-term. Section 4.2 discusses the findings on Value for Money and Return on Investment with reference to The Big Lunch 2024. This is followed by 4.3, the sub-section that addresses RQ4 on the learnings and adaptations of the initiatives. The final sub-section brings together the common themes and differences found across the three initiatives, as well as longitudinal insights. The document numbering throughout the findings section refers to the list in Appendix 1.

### 4.1 Findings: Intended and unintended outcomes

#### The Big Lunch: Outcomes

The short-term impact of The Big Lunch consistently exceeded its target of having “60% of participants feel a stronger sense of community” (Document #10). The 2013 LGIU report showed 88% of participants met new people and 82% felt closer to neighbours immediately after events (Document #1, p. 3). By 2018, these figures remained strong with 89% of organisers and 83% of participants reporting stronger community bonds (Document #7).

The Big Lunch successfully reached diverse demographics, particularly in deprived communities, with 22% of participants coming from the 20% most deprived areas across the UK by 2017 (Document #9). As one participant notes, “households of two totally different types of people could sit side by side...and all of a sudden, the barriers are being broken” (Document #5, p. 14). However, engagement showed clear demographic patterns. Between 2018-2024, the 25-34 age group showed highest engagement (36%), with younger demographics (16-24, 20%) also significant, while participation remained notably lower in older age groups, especially 55+ (9%). Data highlighted more limited representation from ethnic minorities (Document #7) in the early years but growing to be in line with the general population. This is due to the targeted work of the Eden Project team and their creative ways of adapting the programme to appeal to wider sections of the population.

Regional/national impact varied significantly. In Scotland, The Big Lunch struggled to gain similar levels of participation as in other regions/nations (Document #5). Northern Ireland demonstrated exceptional results with 100% wellbeing improvement ratings in regional/national events (Document #12). The programme proved most popular when aligned with significant national moments – for example, during the Queen Elizabeth II’s Diamond Jubilee in 2022, participation

**In 2023, Lucinda held an extra special Coronation Big Lunch, to not only commemorate an important moment in history, but a major milestone for Wilstock Hub too. As well as enjoying a Big Lunch with live music, crown making and barbeques, the community was guided by a local artist to create a large-scale mosaic on a wall that will form part of their future communal space. Now that nearly all the £1.5 million required now raised, all groundwork for the new site has been completed, with building work set to get underway very soon and the community eagerly awaiting their new community hub.**

reached 17.2 million people, including 11.5 million at street parties (Document #8, p. 23). However, this boost was most significant in England, Wales and parts of Northern Ireland and the participants more white and middle class than in other years.

Medium-term impacts (3-6 months post-event) showed strengthening trends in diverse community engagement. By 2017, 58% of attendees reported The Big Lunch brought different ethnic communities together, an increase from 43% in 2012 (Document #9). The year-on-year data shows 82% of participants maintained contact with people they met at previous Lunches, leading to tangible community outcomes (Document #1).

Long-term impact (12+ months) revealed substantial community development, particularly among female participants, with many progressing to organise further community initiatives (Document #13). Environmental and community space development emerged as significant outcomes in line with the Eden Project's wider mission. However, these were not 'official' intended outcomes in their original Grant Application. Over time, The Big Lunch events sparked substantial environmental initiatives, exemplified by the creation of a nature reserve in Horsell (Document #1, p. 12). The year-on-year data showed increasing engagement with local green spaces, reaching 77% appreciation rates by 2024 (Document #7). In Swansea, The Big Lunch events unexpectedly supported the case for a new community hub, demonstrating how single events could catalyse larger environmental and infrastructure developments (Document #5, p. 34).

## Community Camps and Courses: Outcomes

Short-term outcomes consistently exceeded expectations in building participant confidence and community engagement skills. Pre- and post-camp surveys showed dramatic improvements in funding and finance confidence (32% to 77%) and using outdoor space for play and learning (57% to 83%). Post-camp confidence in working collaboratively and community engagement reached 96% and 95% respectively (Document #11).

Demographic patterns revealed both successes and challenges. While female participants comprised 75% of attendees, with strong engagement among middle-aged adults, younger age participation (18-34) declined significantly from 2017-2024 (Document #11). Regional distribution showed England accounting for 70% of participants, with notably strong proportional engagement from Scotland (13%), Northern Ireland (9%), and Wales (8%) relative to their UK population shares (Document #11).

Medium-term impact data from six-month post-camp surveys (2013-2023) showed 89% confirming the camps made "a lasting impression on me and my motivation to do something for my community," while 77% reported developing existing community projects (Document #11). In the six-month follow up survey 25-37% of participants had already secured some funding.

Long-term outcomes revealed that nearly two-fifths (39%) of surveyed participants

**"Burn has a population of only 400 people, but more than 200 turned out to enjoy a barbecue, live music, stalls, a quiz and more at our Big Jubilee Lunch. We all packed into marquees and gazebos bedecked with balloons and bunting to celebrate and support our nominated charity for 2022. Selby Community Fridge also benefitted as spare burger buns and other items were donated after the event. In the end, Burn village's biggest Big Lunch collected more than £800 for NHS staff!"** Sonia, North Yorkshire

remained actively engaged after five or more years (Document #13). Success often involved collaboration with local infrastructure, as evidenced by one participant's explanation, "going to the Eden Project Community Camp, learning a range of different things. Plus knowing someone who worked for the Local Authority" (Document #13).

The Community Camps/Courses revealed exciting outcomes in professional development and skill enhancement. Unexpected professional and organisational development emerged as participants transitioned into formal employment roles,

with one becoming "continuously employed as a community gardener, bringing people together with plants, leaves, stems and roots" (Document #13, p. 13). Others established formal organisations, securing substantial funding, including a "Lottery grant of 125k" (Document #13, p. 13). These developments were supported by dramatic skills enhancement beyond expectations, with pre- and post-camp assessments showing remarkable improvements. Confidence in funding and finance increased from 32% to 77%, while confidence in using outdoor spaces for learning rose from 57% to 83% (Document #11). The six-month follow-up surveys demonstrated sustained impact, with 89% reporting their attendance had "made a lasting impression on me and my motivation to do something for my community" (Document #11).

Lisa was new to the Lockner Estate in East London in 2009 when she first saw an advert for The Big Lunch and decided to register, with the hopes of getting to know her neighbours, who she didn't often see. Since then, the annual event has snowballed, capturing the imagination of many people living in the 200 homes at the estate. The Lockner Big Lunch now secures regular funding from Hackney Council and features music, workshops, food - and sometimes even fire-eating sessions! Best of all, the event has brought the estate closer together, leading to a wave of positive change in the community, including introducing the first open access community defibrillator on an estate in the UK.

## The Network: Outcomes

The Network successfully achieved its short-term goals of hosting accessible events and providing networking opportunities. Across multiple documents, there is evidence that The Network exceeded its targets for event frequency and participation, with 101 in-person events (2,258 participants) and 60 online events (1,060 participants) in 2022 and 2023 (Document #12). Events strategically targeted areas of deprivation, with 70% held in areas ranking within the top 20% of the IMD index (Document #12).

Participants reported remarkable improvements in wellbeing (98%), connections to others (98%), and skills development (92%) (Document #12). Environmental engagement emerged as a catalyst, exemplified by one participant - "I planted something and I had not done so in a really long time. This made me appreciate and know the importance of planting and inspired me to start a kitchen garden. I shall do this as well with my own community as a project" (Document #12, Slide 7).

Medium-term outcomes were most significant among active members who successfully transitioned from bonding to bridging connections (Document #14). The extent of impact in fostering these connections was notable, facilitated by the circumstances of residential events and online platforms, which supported members in building confidence and accessing new opportunities (Document #14).

The Network's development also revealed surprising patterns in both growth and challenges. Exponential growth in connections exceeded expectations, with a Social Network Analysis showing a 487% increase in connections, accompanied by larger increases in reciprocal connections (648%) and trusting connections (545%) after just one year (Document #14, p. 2). However, this success led to emerging challenges, with some members experiencing unintended pressure to reciprocate or "give back", leading to stress (Document #14, p. 28). Geographic dispersion created unanticipated barriers to interaction, while long-term members sometimes "lost clarity about the Eden Project Network's purpose" (Document #14, p. 16).

Long-term impact revealed interesting patterns in engagement. Members who developed bridging connections across different camps tended to sustain active engagement, while those with only bonding connections often "shift[ed] from active to passive" (Document #14, p. 35). Some areas faced challenges in maintaining momentum, with 18% of organisers believing there were no lasting effects (Document #14). How these challenges were dealt with is explored in the Learnings and Adaptations Findings Section.

## Section Conclusion

### Differences in Achieved Outcomes

#### *Reach and Demographics*

While all initiatives aimed to engage diverse demographics, there were distinct patterns in their reach. As highlighted above, **The Big Lunch** successfully engaged participants across socioeconomic backgrounds. For example, between 2016-2017, 22% of BL participants across the UK were from the most deprived communities (Document #9). Data covering the UK between 2018 and 2024, show that male participants consistently exceeded female participants (58% vs 42%). Outreach to more ethnically diverse populations continued to develop, reaching levels in line with the UK population. Monitoring of the mixing of different communities, both in terms of ethnicity and social class improved with a change of wording in the survey to encourage more feedback on this important aspect that builds bridging social capital (Document #7).

In contrast to The Big Lunch, **Community Camps** attracted primarily female participants aged 35-64 (Document #11), showing consistent engagement from minority ethnic groups, though participants were predominantly White (86%) (Document #11).

The **Network's** distinctive approach focused on nurturing long-term relationships among community leaders from various backgrounds, with particular success in reaching communities experiencing disadvantage (Document #14, p. 3).

#### *Extent and Circumstances*

The initiatives varied in the extent of their achieved outcomes and the circumstances influencing their success. **The Big Lunch's** impact was most significant in urban areas (including city centres and suburbs), where 65% of sustained participants resided, compared to the 21% coming from villages or rural areas (Document #7). It could be said that engaging rural communities remained a consistent challenge across all three initiatives. However, it is important to keep in mind that the programme's geographical disparity is reflective of the UK's

population spread – as of 2024, 84.4% of the UK's population live in urban areas (Worldometers, 2024).

Community Camps' short-term outcomes were particularly strong in building confidence, with dramatic post-camp survey improvements (Document #11). Medium-term impact was evident in participants' motivation to contribute to their communities (89%) and develop existing projects (77%) (Document #11).

The Network's success depended on members transitioning from bonding to bridging connections, with active members more likely to sustain engagement (Document #14, p. 3). Face-to-face events proved crucial for creating new connections, while online platforms played a supportive role (Document #14).

## Longitudinal Insights

### *Sustained Impact*

The longitudinal data demonstrates the initiatives' ability to create lasting change. **The Big Lunch** consistently achieved its 60% community spirit target across multiple years (Document #7). **Community Camps** showed nearly two-fifths of participants remained actively engaged after five or more years (Document #13). The **Network's** long-term impact was evident in members' continued confidence and community involvement, even as active participation evolved (Document #14).

The rich data spanning over a decade demonstrates these initiatives' success in fostering community cohesion, building confidence and skills, and creating lasting impact. While there were differences in reach, extent, and circumstances, all three initiatives contributed to strengthening community connections and promoting active participation. The longitudinal insights reveal their evolution, sustained impact, and adaptability, offering valuable lessons for future community-focused efforts. After the following section on Return On Investment, section 4.4 will expand on these learnings and adaptations.

## 4.2 Findings: Value for Money and Social Return on Investment (SROI)

As introduced in section 2.4 we have adopted widely accepted principles of Value for Money and Social Value (HACT, 2022; Simetrica-Jacobs (2020); National Audit Office). Specifically, we have concentrated on an analysis of The Big Lunch 2024. The analysis provided is the Social Return on Investment (SROI) from the funding provided by The National Lottery Community Fund. The programme also benefited from corporate contributions for the years 2022-24 amounting £1,400,000. The corporate contributions have not been added to the SROI in order to provide a clear indication of the benefits directly from money invested in the programme by TNLCF.

Belong believes that the data provided is accurate as it has been collected by a suitably qualified independent organisation. This data provides the information required to generate the Value for Money assessment.

## The Big Lunch 2024 Headline value for money analysis

TNLCF contribution (2024): **£611,910**

Attendees (2024): **10,010,000**

Number of events (2024): **123,528**

Number reporting stronger community (2024):  
**770,770**

Number feeling less lonely (2024): **6,006,000**

Number reporting more voluntary involvement  
(2024): **6,006,000**

Number reporting more planet positive behaviour  
(2024): **7,507,500**

Total additional fundraising (2024): **£8,000,000**

### Evidencing efficiency and economy: The data tells us that benefits greatly exceed costs

The Big Lunch produces good value for money with efficient and economical unit costs per attendee, event and outcomes delivered. This is partly due to high levels of participation and high percentage of participants (70%+) reporting positive outcomes.

It is not possible to conclusively prove costs have been minimised. However, interviews with staff found that knowledge and learning from previous events gained by organisers and increased experience in promotion of The Big Lunch have contributed to more effective use of the resources available, increasing the number outcomes generated and reducing costs.

Evidence to demonstrate low levels of costs in relation to benefits and impacts generated is:

- Cost per attendee 6 pence
- Cost per event £4.95
- Cost of one individual reporting a stronger sense of community costs 8 pence
- Cost of one individual reporting relief from loneliness 10 pence
- Cost of one individual reporting they are more active in communities 10 pence
- Cost of one individual reporting they are more interested in environmental causes 8 pence

All costs have been calculated using TNLCF input costs only.

There is evidence of additional benefits through fundraising associated with The Big Lunch events. It is not possible to conclusively prove that this funding would not have been raised without The Big Lunch. However, it is reasonable to claim that a large proportion, if not all, of the funding would not have been raised without The Big Lunch acting as a focus for the fundraising.

If all the funds raised are assumed to be attributed to The Big Lunch events, then:

- For every £1 invested by TNLCF £13 is generated in fundraising for good causes
- For every The Big Lunch event there is additional £65 raised for good causes
- For every attendee there is an additional 80 pence raised for good causes

**Social Analysis: There is clear evidence of positive social change. There is a lack of evidence to calculate with high levels of confidence the £value associated with the change.**

The Big Lunch is often a stepping stone for an individual to other positive outcomes such as decreasing loneliness, participating in volunteering, feeling like they belong to a stronger community and engaging in more planet positive behaviour.

A complementary method of understanding resource effectiveness is to calculate £values associated with improvements in wellbeing and through preventative public spending (exchequer value) through improved health.

For example, proxy £ values include:

£Value of people participating in more regular volunteering = £3166 per person (HACT Social Value Bank 2022)

£Value of people reporting reduced levels of severe loneliness = £9976 (Simetrica-Jacobs 2020)

Throughout we have used the principle of not overclaiming and being transparent in calculations. Despite there being a strong evidence base to demonstrate the impact there is not the level of detail required to be confident in attributing all value to The Big Lunch. This is because of lack of before and after surveys or consecutive periods of longitudinal data. It is therefore extremely difficult to conclude with high confidence the extent to which The Big Lunch is the causal factor in achieving the outcome.

However, in 2024 we know that 16% of participants report being severely lonely = 1,601,600.

If we estimate that 10% of those who reported being severely lonely subsequently report a reduced level of loneliness, then 160,160 people may be experiencing lower levels of loneliness (from severe to mild loneliness or severe to moderate loneliness)

Which in £ monetary terms can be valued at almost £1.6bn (Simetrica-Jacobs)

It is prudent to apply an additional deadweight of 19% as recommended by Simetrica-Jacobs

Final value = £1,597,756,160-19% = almost £1.3bn

Likewise for more regular volunteering if we assume that 10% begin to volunteer following participation in The Big Lunch (who previously didn't) then we can calculate 1,010,000 more volunteers.

This can be valued at 1,010,000 x£3166 = almost £3.2bn (HACT Social Value Bank)

It is prudent to apply an additional deadweight of 19% (HCA Additionality guide)

Final value is £3,199,066,000-19% = almost £2.6bn



### Value for Money analysis and conclusions all years (2009-2024)

The Big Lunch and the wider programme demonstrate a good value for money across all outcome areas (delivered by a small staff team of 26). This is because of the low unit costs required to produce valuable returns such as a stronger sense of community, reduced loneliness, more planet positive behaviour, higher likelihood to volunteer and increased fundraising income for good causes. When monetised the £value of the benefits far outweighs the £costs. When overall costs (2009-2024) from all funders are considered, The Big Lunch requires 24 pence per person to attend and £18.70 cost per The Big Lunch event

There was significant success in attracting match funding from 2009-2024 to complement The National Lottery funding secured of around 25% of overall costs or £7,000,000.

The evidence is available to present a strong person-centred wellbeing influenced business case that investment in early intervention and preventative initiatives such as The Big Lunch, Community Camp and Network will generate social value returns and more than offset annual costs.

The quality of the data is strong and provides information to demonstrate high value for low levels of costs but currently requires several assumptions to be made to generate a more robust set of £values for the outcomes which are produced. A sample of before and after surveys with the same people would help to improve the strength and confidence in the £values generated.

## 4.3 Findings: Learnings and adaptations and how these informed future direction

The learnings, adaptations, and resulting evolution of The Big Lunch, Community Camps/Courses, and the Network are woven through the Outcomes Findings Section (4.1). This section expands on these learnings and adaptations, providing more context and detail.

### The Big Lunch - Learning, adaptation and evolution

**Learning from local adaptations** and **responding to regional and cultural contexts** emerged as key drivers of programme evolution. Case studies from the 2013 evaluation revealed diverse adaptations, from the Falcon Estate developing community gardening initiatives, to Canterbury evolving their lunch into ongoing support for elderly residents (Document #1, p. 7-8). By 2017, organisers were successfully adapting The Big Lunch to reflect local cultural celebrations, with Diwali-themed lunches helping “recently arrived residents feel more connected and less isolated” (Document #5, p. 14, 17). These community-led innovations informed wider programme development, with successful adaptations being shared through organiser networks.

**Strategic national event integration** demonstrated sophisticated learning from previous experiences. The 2022 alignment with Queen Elizabeth II’s Diamond Jubilee showed how the programme had developed specific guidance for organisers on incorporating national themes while maintaining local relevance.

The **evolution of support systems** was directly shaped by organiser feedback. The 2022 evaluation showed that 55% of organisers felt resource packs significantly improved event quality (Document #8, Slide 11), leading to further refinements in support materials, including more localised organiser packs and practical solutions for common challenges like road closures.

**Pandemic adaptations and lasting impact** necessitated significant innovations in maintaining community connections. While 2020-21 saw a shift to “virtual and socially-distanced formats” (Document #5, p. 29), these adaptations yielded unexpected benefits. Some communities developed hybrid approaches combining online and physical elements, which continued post-pandemic. The Happy City report noted that this period led to communities developing more resilient and adaptable approaches to fostering connections (Document #2).

The Big Lunch also identified areas needing attention through **addressing gaps and challenges**. The 2017 evaluation highlighted geographic disparities in engagement, particularly in Northern regions in England (Document #9, Slides 64-67), leading to targeted strategies for underrepresented areas and the development of region-specific support materials. Recognition of demographic gaps also prompted new approaches to engage younger participants and diverse communities (Document #7).

## Community Camps and Courses - Learning, adaptation and evolution

**Demographic responsiveness and inclusion** emerged as key areas for programme adaptation between 2015-2024. Responding to declining engagement among younger age groups (18-34 years), the programme introduced targeted changes including youth-focused workshops, mentoring relationships between younger and more experienced community organisers, and specific funding streams for youth-led initiatives. The underrepresentation of ethnic minorities prompted additional changes, including partnerships with diverse community organisations and multilingual resources, though with White participants still comprising 90% of attendees (Document #13), these adaptations highlighted ongoing challenges.

**Geographic learning and regional adaptation** informed specific delivery changes. While England dominated overall participation at 70%, the proportionally higher engagement from devolved nations led to tailored approaches. In Scotland, where participation (13%) exceeded population share (8%), the programme developed specific resources addressing unique Scottish policy contexts. In Northern Ireland, successful engagement (9% versus 3% population share) was built upon through establishing local partnerships with peace-building organisations (Document #11). The urban-rural divide (68% urban participants) prompted specific adaptations including mobile workshop delivery and transport support for residential camps.

**Support system evolution** fundamentally reshaped post-camp structures based on participant feedback. When six-month surveys showed that 77% of participants could “develop an existing community project further” but only 54% could “start something new” (Document #11), the programme responded with targeted interventions including regional mentor networks, project development workshops, and staged funding opportunities. These enhanced support systems led to sustained community engagement and significant funding successes (Document #5, p. 25).

## The Network - Learning, adaptation and evolution

**Evolution of connection types and support** shaped the Network's development through understanding how different connections contributed to community impact. Analysis revealed three distinct connection types: bonding (within same Camp cohorts), bridging (across different cohorts), and linking (with influential figures). This understanding led to structured networking sessions, themed online forums, and mentor-mentee relationships, contributing to remarkable growth in connections (Document #14, p. 2).

**Regional events and local adaptation** demonstrated strategic responses to community needs. Between April and July 2024, the Network positioned 70% of its 20 regional events in areas ranking within the top 20% of deprivation (Document #12). Regional variations in implementation highlighted the need for locally adapted approaches, particularly evident in Northern Ireland's specific considerations for seed station usage and community engagement strategies.

**Platform innovation and digital integration** evolved substantially based on member feedback. While face-to-face events remained crucial for creating new connections, the programme developed sophisticated digital support systems including regional Facebook groups, online workshops, digital resource libraries, and virtual mentoring programmes. The 2024 evaluation showed "98% of participants reporting improved wellbeing and enhanced connection to others" despite geographical distances (Document #12).

**Supporting active member development and marketing and communication evolution** reflected strategic adaptations. Analysis showed members transitioning from bonding to bridging connections were more likely to sustain involvement, leading to leadership development programmes and staged funding opportunities. Communication strategies evolved through targeted newsletters, refined social media engagement, and region-specific marketing materials, responding to challenges like Facebook drop-off rates (Document #12).

## 4.4 Common Themes and Differences Across the Three Initiatives

The extensive timeframe highlights the initiatives' resilience and adaptability. The Big Lunch successfully transitioned to virtual and socially-distanced formats during COVID-19 (Document #5). Similarly, Community Camps adapted their delivery method, moving to online courses both during and post pandemic. This shift, together with adaptations to the course content based on participant feedback, led to improved inclusivity and cultural sensitivity (Document #5). The Network evolved its approach to focus on transitioning members to bridging connections, addressing regional variations and sustaining engagement (Document #14).

The evolution of support systems and geographic and demographic challenges showed both common threads and distinct approaches. Each initiative developed sophisticated support mechanisms while facing similar challenges in achieving genuine diversity and geographic reach. While The Big Lunch successfully engaged diverse communities through cultural adaptations, Community Camps struggled with younger age groups (Document #11). The Network's strategic positioning of events in areas of high deprivation (Document #12) represented a different approach to addressing participation barriers.

The differing approaches to scale highlighted distinct strategies. The Big Lunch focused on broad participation, growing from 600,000 participants in 2009 to 8.5 million in 2012 (Document #1). Community

Camps maintained smaller, more intensive engagements, while the Network developed a middle-ground approach using regional events to bridge the gap between mass participation and intensive support.

### Longitudinal Insights (2013-2024)

**Evidence-based programme evolution** and **impact of sustained engagement** demonstrated sophisticated development based on cumulative learning. Early evaluations focused primarily on participation numbers, but by 2017, measurement expanded to include quality of engagement and community impact. The 2013-2024 Community Camp analysis showed 89% of participants reporting lasting motivation for community action (Document #11), while a Network analysis revealed a 487% increase in connections over time (Document #14).

**Identification of systemic patterns** and the **value of interconnected programming** emerged through long-term data analysis. Demographic patterns and persistent challenges became clear through long-term tracking (Documents #7, #11, #13), leading to more targeted interventions. The complementary nature of the three initiatives became evident as participants often moved between programmes, with Community Camp attendees becoming The Big Lunch organisers and Network members, creating sustained community impact.



## 5. Discussion of findings

These findings, across more than a decade of activity, provide crucial insights for future community development programming. They also highlight the importance of long-term engagement, flexible adaptation, and interconnected support systems in building lasting community resilience and contributing to democratic renewal. Importantly, the findings counteract current trends which suggest declining civic engagement, democratic participation and social capital (Khan, 2024a and b).

### 5.1 Improving wellbeing

The three programmes combined successfully moved people through a process of development of social capital. The impacts on loneliness and sense of wellbeing were primarily achieved through improvements in bonding and bridging social capital, bringing people together and forming networks where neighbours could support those that were more vulnerable. The impacts have clear economic benefits and preventative approaches to health and social care can learn from the longitudinal evolution of the combination of annual events, intensive workshops and ongoing support through the network (Dunbar, 2017; What Works Wellbeing, 2022).

There are numerous examples of The Big Lunch supporting bonding social capital and the many different gains from this linked with reducing loneliness and improving health and wellbeing outcomes. As noted in the literature, bonds between people with similar interests confer several benefits, including emotional support, addressing loneliness and isolation and the fostering of reciprocal norms associated with trust (Claridge, 2018). As set out in the government's loneliness strategy (DCMS, 2018), The Big Lunch is part of the drive to create lasting connections between people. The findings in this report together with the more detailed findings in each of the reports drawn on for this overarching evaluation can contribute to the evidence base on loneliness and can firmly sit among the wide range of initiatives needed to make a significant impact on reducing loneliness. Year on year findings from the annual Big Lunch surveys show that people who report to be lonely often / always are more likely to attend Big Lunch events. Therefore, this is a measure of the programme's success.

The existing research raises concerns about the quality of the connections made between people at an event like The Big Lunch. Without intending exclusivity, when a group of neighbours from a certain demographic group get together to organise an event, they may be unaware of the ways in which they are excluding people, be that because of access, financial, cultural awareness and a range of other factors (Belong, 2023, Claridge, 2018; What Works Wellbeing, 2022). The Community Camps and the Network help to build bridging social capital where people can make relationships across difference which at times requires careful facilitation. This may be geographical, cultural and/or historical differences and the discussions and sharing of good practice can improve the levels of inclusion and sustain people's enthusiasms and resilience through challenging situations. The programme has demonstrated that it is successfully building tolerance and understanding across difference and that this needs to continue to be worked on.

The Community Camps and Network also build participant's skill levels in funding, finance and using outdoor spaces for learning. Many new projects have been initiated because of the inputs that the Eden Project have made in their training sessions and many existing projects have seen significant improvements. All these lead to better resourced local communities, with improved social infrastructure and support mechanisms, impacting on health and wellbeing (Baylis et al., 2019; What Works Centre for Wellbeing, 2022).

## 5.2 Impacts on agency and community resilience

As the findings demonstrate, it takes time to build a programme that touches the lives of 10 million people per year and raises £22 million for good causes. Multi-year funding is especially important when tackling enduring and complex problems and where funders desire social and 'systems change' (Brown et al., 2020). Part of that systems change is the maturing of relationships between statutory services and local communities. As described by a participant, organising The Big Lunch was often a stepping stone into further community organising, resulting in new collaborations between local groups and authorities and evolving into communities "working with them" rather than authorities "working for communities". Thus, evidence that The Big Lunch serves as an initiative that not only builds bonds within communities but between groups and links to local authorities too. When taken as a whole, the gradual evolution of the complexity of outcomes that could be generated from the combination of The Big Lunch, Community Camps and the Network demonstrates the value of taking a long-term approach.

With the Eden Project's commitment to ensuring the involvement of disadvantaged communities, there are powerful examples of how self-organisation focused on The Big Lunch can result in improvements in disconnected communities which cost the UK £32 billion annually (Cebr, 2017). However, this self-organisation would not be sustained if there were no network or social infrastructure, and people may be more vulnerable to polarisation if they feel their sense of agency would be best supported by groups spreading divisive messages. It is important to maintain support structures that encourage local voices to be heard within an inclusive and nurturing environment. The riots in the summer of 2024 showed that social networks can be utilised to create divisions as well as build them. Communities where there is long-term engagement, flexible adaptation, and interconnected support systems promoting connection and inclusivity are as much needed today as they have ever been. Social media can be used to bring people together very effectively and the Facebook group managed by Network members is just one example of many in how the relatively modest amount of funding into the Eden Project has been contributing to community resilience.

Community agency has also been demonstrated through increasing engagement with local green spaces, reaching 77% appreciation rates by 2024. In some cases, this has catalysed larger environmental and infrastructure developments. This ability to bring together greater empowerment of individuals within communities and environmental gains is one of the unique contributions that the Eden Project can continue

**"I wanted to hold a Big Lunch as we don't have any community facilities so it's hard for people to meet up and socialise. It's been amazing to grow our Big Lunch from 20 attendees to 500! We have a diverse population and everyone gets together – now people are always asking me when the next Big Lunch is!"** Lucinda, Somerset

to make to the landscape of initiatives that improve community resilience. The benefits of building this resilience through green spaces has been estimated to total £100 million annually in potential savings to the NHS through improved health (Fields in Trust, 2018).

### 5.3 Impacts on belonging and democratic renewal

In the context of different policy initiatives since 2009, including austerity policies and the withdrawal of services run by local councils, the cost-of-living crisis and the pandemic, The Big Lunch has played an important role in continuing to bring communities together. As was noted in the relevant research, across 300 different measurement items and 23 data sources (Abrams, 2023), the most frequently assessed constructs for measuring social cohesion have been social trust; belonging and identity; civic engagement; openness and tolerance towards others; and political engagement. The government is currently developing an integrated, cohesive approach to tackling divisions within UK society, which will address racial and religious hatred and strengthen cohesion across all communities.

The Big Lunch created immediate connections through shared experiences, with 89% of organisers and 83% of participants reporting a stronger sense of community in 2018, with similar levels each year. This included a similar number feeling closer to their neighbours and maintaining contact with people they met at previous lunches. This is an important piece of the jigsaw in building belonging and identity. The relatively small costs involved pay large dividends in terms of helping to create places that people are proud of and want to live in. This pride can influence how people then engage with the world around them. Building a sense of pride and belonging in the place where you live contributes to neighbours choosing to support each other and work together towards common goals (Belong, 2024). Events such as The Big Lunch, especially when combined with training and networks to maximise the benefits, are part of the solution and neighbourliness has a huge welfare value. A report in 2017 estimated that over £14.5 billion was saved each year because of resources shared and help provided by neighbours who know each other (Cebr, 2017). The analysis of The Big Lunch 2024 confirms the scale of the savings.

Place-based initiatives require flexible approaches as there is no one size that fits all. The Eden Project has really honed their offer to reflect regional differences. The statistics on take up during the years of major events such as the Queen's Jubilee and the King's Coronation varied by nation and this is one example where different approaches can be taken that will appeal to different identities. The underlying message is one of unity and having more in common than in the differences between people in each neighbourhood, region or nation. The findings reflect those found in a report on how national moments, when reflected in local events, can be the spark that leads to ongoing community engagement (Jo Cox Foundation, 2023).

The findings need to be brought into the wider debates about solutions to counteract current trends which suggest declining civic engagement, democratic participation and social capital (Khan, 2024a and b). The continuing cost-of-living crisis, low growth and high inequality is affecting people's living standards. There is clear evidence that scarcity narratives fuel a sense of competition and resentment between social groups. The Big Lunch is a highly successful initiative that has bucked the trends and needs to be supported into the future.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This report has analysed the findings from over a decade of the Eden Project's community team providing the central resources to enable The Big Lunch initiative to flourish across the four nations. This has been developed together with the Community Camps and Network that have been consolidated over the years since 2010. A large amount of data was collected and this report has brought the learnings from that together into one place.

The contribution of the Eden Project's community outreach work to social cohesion and the importance of people being able to come together with people who are 'not like themselves' has been placed within the context of the academic and grey literature. This included a look at social capital – bonding, bridging and linking, both through the connections made locally and through the Community Camps/courses and Network. These Camps and the Network that was built up over the years enabled local organisers to meet with other organisers around the UK and fed their ambitions for positive changes they could bring to their own communities and raised their confidence levels and skills.

The methodology applied was a combination of desk-based research and interviews with key stakeholders who were able to provide a longitudinal perspective on how the programmes had adapted over the years to maximise their effectiveness. That impact has been measured in various ways using both qualitative and quantitative data and key documents were selected for analysis.

While many surveys and research findings indicate that there is less civic participation generally in the population, The Big Lunch has shown that there is a strong interest amongst the general population in bringing people together around food. The data demonstrates sustained impact across all initiatives. The Big Lunch consistently achieved its community spirit targets, while Community Camps maintained active engagement among nearly two-fifths of participants after five years. The Network's impact persisted through members' continued confidence and community involvement, even as participation patterns evolved. The Network was successful in attracting and supporting people from more disadvantaged sections of society who could use their skills and networks to improve their neighbourhoods.

The report has detailed a wide range of findings and why these are significant. Some of these findings relate to how the programme might be improved. Many of the findings have wider significance currently. Bringing people together across difference and improving people's sense of belonging, as well as the local environments that people live in, are crucial for health and wellbeing, and contribute to wider strategies to reduce loneliness. The findings are also relevant to building individual agency, where people feel their voices matter and where local networks can be built that are resilient to shocks like the pandemic, as well as divisive messages designed to exclude and alienate. The findings have shown how linking The Big Lunch to national moments, such as the Queen's Jubilee and the King's Coronation expanded the numbers of people taking part and have important implications for how communities build a sense of belonging, both to the place where they live and the wider nation.

Eden Project has demonstrated how all these positive impacts can be achieved through a national programme that is sensitive to regional/national differences. The development of different offers in different regions/nations has been possible through the long-term funding for the programme provided by The National

Lottery Community Fund. The learnings and adaptations over the years demonstrate the benefits of this long-term strategy which has resulted in a successful and responsive programme that has successfully engaged millions of people over the years. They also demonstrate good value for money and social return on investment.

## Recommendations relating to reducing loneliness and improved sense of wellbeing

1. Ensure that the cumulative outcomes of The Big Lunch, Community Camps and Network on local communities continue to be supported and linked to government drives to reduce loneliness and improve health and wellbeing outcomes.
2. Utilise the evidence base, including the Return on Investment findings, to demonstrate how community events are crucial to informing national approaches to reducing loneliness and reducing the costs to the NHS.
3. Develop a national strategy for ongoing support for training, networking and measurement to build the quality of interactions at events to maximise their effectiveness in supporting social cohesion and enhancing health and wellbeing.
4. Incorporate the findings of this report to build the business case for programmes that support social infrastructure development where people can meet with others in shared spaces to encourage lasting connections locally.

## Recommendations relating to agency and community resilience

5. Encourage long-term funding such as that provided by The National Lottery Community Fund to tackle long-term and enduring challenges found in areas of high socioeconomic deprivation and/or population churn that require complex and sustained initiatives, such as The Big Lunch, that build individual agency and community resilience.
6. Maintain support structures that encourage local voices to be heard within an inclusive and nurturing environment, using social media and other online environments to build networks that support local organisers to initiate and develop environmental and infrastructure developments, such as those developed following attendance at Community Camps.
7. Recognise the unique positioning of Eden Project to act as a catalyst for local initiatives that bring people together and address environmental concerns alongside building community resilience within the UK's most disadvantaged communities.

## Recommendations relating to belonging and democratic renewal

8. Encourage more initiatives like The Big Lunch that contribute to people having a strong sense of connection and belonging to the places where they live. Learn from the success of linking with national moments.
9. Recognise the important role of The Big Lunch and its associated Community Camps and Network in contributing to people's sense of belonging and motivating people to be more engaged in civic and political processes that aim to reduce divisions within a particular place.



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## Appendix 1 - List of Analysed Documents – Eden Evaluation

| Document                                                                                                      | Programme / Focus                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. 2013: <b>The Big Lunch: Feeding Community Spirit</b> by Local Government Information Unit (LGIU)           | The Big Lunch                                                                                     |
| 2. 2019: <b>Closing the Distance Between Us</b> by Happy City with input from What Works Centre for Wellbeing | The disconnection within UK communities& the role that initiatives like The Big Lunch are playing |
| 3. 2017: <b>Cost of Disconnected Communities</b> by Centre for Economics and Business Research (Cebr)         | Measuring the benefits and reduced costs of the social value of The Big Lunch                     |
| 4. 2017: <b>Table for One - Social Eating</b> by Professor R. Dunbar, University of Oxford                    | The Big Lunch & social eating habits                                                              |
| 5. 2022: <b>The Big Lunch Impact and Legacy</b> by Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR)             | The Big Lunch                                                                                     |
| 6. 2010: <b>The Big Lunch Research Findings</b> by Eden Project                                               | The Big Lunch, PPT report                                                                         |
| 7. <b>The Big Lunch Year on Year</b> by Eden Project                                                          | The Big Lunch, Spreadsheet                                                                        |
| 8. <b>The Big Lunch 2022</b> by Eden Project                                                                  | The Big Lunch, PPT report                                                                         |
| 9. <b>The Big Lunch 2017</b> by Eden Project                                                                  | The Big Lunch, PPT report                                                                         |
| 10. <b>Lottery Outcomes &amp; Grants Overview</b> by Eden Project                                             | The Big Lunch, Camps, Network                                                                     |
| 11. <b>Year on Year Summary Camps &amp; Course Analysis, 2013 – 2024</b> by Eden Project                      | Community Camps, Spreadsheet                                                                      |
| 12. <b>'Regional Events Evaluation 2024'</b> by Eden Project                                                  | Network, PPT                                                                                      |
| 13. <b>Long-Term Impact Community Camp 2013 – 2024</b> by Eden Project                                        | Community Camps                                                                                   |
| 14. <b>'Social Capital in the Eden Project Communities Network'</b> by Eden Project                           | Network                                                                                           |
| 15. <b>Case Studies</b> by Eden Project                                                                       | The Big Lunch, Camps, Network                                                                     |