**Donegall Pass Community Garden set to connect locals with nature and each other at Eden Project event**

The Eden Project has partnered with Donegall Pass Community Forum to invite people from across Belfast to enjoy a day together using nature as a tool for community connection this Friday 14 June.

The free event is open to anyone interested in community action and volunteering and takes place at Cormac Regeneration Initiative and Donegall Pass Community Garden, a vital hub for the community offering a varied programme ranging from a youth centre and IT courses to welfare advice drop-in sessions and a food bank.

The interactive day is both a celebration of community volunteering, and an opportunity to consider the positive impact nature can have on our wellbeing. It forms part of the Month of Community in June, which kicked off with Eden Project’s The Big Lunch, and invites people to celebrate everything that makes their communities great. With partners including Refugee Week, Great Big Green Week and Loneliness Awareness Week, the Month of Community saw over 14 million people take part last year, and £35 million raised for great causes.

As well as offering opportunities to network and share ideas, the event in Donegall Pass will highlight impactful local community projects already making a difference and provide creative low-cost ideas to develop more sustainable communities where people work together and look out for each other.

Lisa Partridge, Community Network Developer at Eden Project Communities, said: “At this fantastic event, we hope to explore nature as a simple tool for connection and share in the passion that the people of Belfast and Donegall Pass feel for their neighbourhoods. Anyone is welcome to come along and enjoy some light conversation about their local area, tuck into a mini Big Lunch, share food and friendship and even make some nature inspired bunting! With connection at the heart of this event, we hope more people will get involved where they live or embark on their own community activity as part of the Month of Community – and that everyone leaves feeling motivated to take positive steps where they live!”

The event is part of a series of nationwide community-focused events stretching across the UK, from Northern Ireland to Cornwall, with plenty of stops along the way! The roadshow is encouraging more people to become positive community changemakers, during this year’s Month of Community.

The Month of Community in June is all about celebrating local connections and supporting good causes helping to build stronger communities across the UK. The Month of Community calendar in 2024 includes The Big Lunch 1-2 June, Neighbourhood Watch Week (1-7 June), Have a Grow (1-9 June), Volunteers’ Week (3-9 June), The Big Help Out (7-9 June), Great Big Green Week (8-16 June), Loneliness Awareness Week (10-14 June), Carers Week (10-16 June), Refugee Week (17-23 June), Windrush Day (20 June), The Great Get Together (21-23 June), Small Charity Week (24-28 June) and Care Home Open Week (24-30 June).

The Big Lunch, which kicked off the Month of Community on 1-2 June, is the UK’s community get-together that’s good for people and the planet, bringing friendship, food and fun back to neighbourhoods. It’s an idea from the Eden Project, made possible thanks to The National Lottery, and since 2010 it has been bringing people together to create happier and healthier communities thanks to National Lottery players, who raise £30 million each week for good causes across the UK.

*Places are limited and booking is required. To book your place visit:* [*https://events.more-human.co.uk/event/growing-local-community-connections-in-belfast--with-eden-project-communities-events*](https://events.more-human.co.uk/event/growing-local-community-connections-in-belfast--with-eden-project-communities-events)

**Editors Notes**

**About Research\***

Eden Project Communities conducts an annual nationally representative survey, and collects data on attitudes of trust and belonging in communities, feelings of loneliness, and participation and impact of The Big Lunch. In 2023 data collected for this cross-sectional survey (n=4,000).

**About the Month of Community**

The Month of Community in June is all about celebrating local connections and supporting good causes helping to build stronger communities across the UK. It’s partnered with Eden Project Communities, the initiative that delivers The Big Lunch each year, all made possible by The National Lottery. The Month of Community calendar in 2024 includes The Big Lunch 1-2 June, Neighbourhood Watch Week (1-7 June), Have a Grow (1-9 June), Volunteers’ Week (3-9 June), The Big Help Out (7-9 June), Great Big Green Week (8-16 June), Loneliness Awareness Week (10-14 June), Carers Week (10-16 June), Refugee Week (17-23 June), Windrush Day (20 June), The Great Get Together (21-23 June), Small Charity Week (24-28 June) and Care Home Open Week (24-30 June).

**About The Big Lunch**

The Big Lunch is the UK’s annual community celebration for neighbours and communities bringing millions of people together in a nationwide act of community friendship held on the first weekend in June every year since 2009. Her Majesty The Queen has been patron since 2013. It’s an idea from the Eden Project made possible by The National Lottery and is supported by Iceland and The Food Warehouse and Greene King.  To find out more go to [www.TheBigLunch.com](http://www.thebiglunch.com/) or follow us on socials on @edencommunities.

**About The National Lottery Community Fund**

The National Lottery Community Fund is the largest community funder in the UK. It supports activities that create resilient communities that are more inclusive and environmentally sustainable and that will strengthen society and improve lives across the UK. The National Lottery Community Fund invests most in places, people and communities experiencing poverty, disadvantage and discrimination.

 It is proud to award money raised by National Lottery players to communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. As well as responding to what communities say is important to them, its funding is focused on four key missions, supporting communities to:

1. Come together

2. Be environmentally sustainable

3. Help children and young people thrive

4. Enable people to live healthier lives.

Thanks to the support of National Lottery players, it distributes around £500 million a year through 10,000+ grants and plans to invest over £4 billion of funding into communities by 2030. National Lottery players raise over £30 million each week for good causes throughout the UK. Since The National Lottery began in 1994, £47 billion has been raised and more than 670,000 individual grants have been made across the UK - the equivalent of around 240 National Lottery grants in every UK postcode district.

**About Iceland and The Food Warehouse**

Iceland is recognised as the UK’s leader in frozen food and operates over 1,000 stores across the country and it prides itself on being a convenient and friendly place to do the family’s weekly shop. In 2018 it committed to becoming the first major retailer, globally, to eliminate plastic packaging from all of its own label products by the end of 2023, and to remove palm oil as an ingredient from its own label range by the end of 2018.

**About Greene King**

Greene King is the country’s leading pub company and brewer with c.2,600 pubs, restaurants and hotels across England, Wales and Scotland. It’s passionate about delivering their purpose to ‘pour happiness into lives’ - for customers, the Greene King team, pub partners, suppliers and the communities in which Greene King live, operate and serve. Founded in 1799 with offices in Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk and Burton on Trent in Staffordshire they employ around 39,000 people across the group with four divisions: Greene King pubs, Destination Brands, Partnership and Ventures, and Brewing & Brands.