



The Rt Hon John Healey MP
Minister for Local Government

**Department for Communities and Local
Government**

Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Tel: 020 7944 3012
Fax: 020 7944 4489
E-Mail: john.healey@communities.gsi.gov.uk

www.communities.gov.uk

To all Local Authority Leaders and Chief
Executives

21 April 2009

Dear colleagues

The BIG LUNCH – Sunday 19 July 2009

As you may know, Sunday 19 July 2009 is the date set for an initiative known as the BIG LUNCH, which aims to encourage millions in the UK to get together and share lunch. The driving force behind the BIG LUNCH project is Tim Smit the founder of the Eden Project and Paul Twivy, a member of the Prime Minister's Council on Social Action and CEO of the BIG LUNCH. The project enjoys support from a range of corporate sponsors and celebrities.

The organisers hope that the BIG LUNCH will become an annual national event when the communities of Britain can sit down together, share food, drink and conversation, explore their differences and join together in a celebration of what unites us. Local people will be able to get an organisers' pack of information, or look at the website <http://www.thebiglunch.com> and organise their own local street lunch. The emphasis will be on locally grown, produced or bought food and drink.

The BIG LUNCH team envisages a wide range of activity around the lunches themselves: growing food and flowers in advance of the occasion; preparing and cooking food to eat; dressing the street; and street entertainment, from street theatre to art and music. Although it will be possible for people to try to convene their lunches in shared spaces – community halls, faith buildings, or parks, for example – it is likely that many will also apply to you, to seek approval for temporary road closures. It will be for relevant officers, in association with other appropriate authorities, to judge whether to grant Traffic Management Orders, and on what terms. Bearing in mind that many residents may be unfamiliar with the procedures for granting TMOs, I hope you will be able to assist them in their endeavours. Residents may ask for your authority's advice in other areas of managing their BIG LUNCH, but you may prefer simply to point them to the official website.

The organisers believe that the BIG LUNCH will contribute to community cohesion. People will be able to walk down their streets after their shared lunches and actually know people, and be able to talk with them. Communities and Local government are supporting the BIG LUNCH because as well as being the opportunity for enhanced community spirit and good fun, the BIG LUNCH will also help deliver one of our cross-government targets (PSA 21 – NI 1 and 4) which is all about encouraging greater community cohesion, based on

meaningful interaction and empowering communities. Please feel free to cascade this letter to officers working to encourage cohesion, belonging and community empowerment in your area, as well as to your colleagues who look after road closures.

The BIG LUNCH promises to be a great event across the UK, with a high level of interest and media attention, and may well in time become an established part of the calendar like Red Nose Day. I hope you agree that this is a worthy project and that you are able to support it.

With good wishes

Yours sincerely



JOHN HEALEY MP

—