



## Food Cumberland Big Local Lunch 2026

Do you fancy taking part in the Big Lunch - the UK's annual get-together for neighbours and communities, which sees millions of people coming together for a few hours of friendship, food and fun? We're offering some funding to help you get started and run your own Food Cumberland Big Local Lunch.

**In 2025, over 10.5 million people across the UK took part! Fancy joining in? Read on to find out more and how to apply for funding.**

**Dates:** [The Big Lunch 2026 | Eden Project Communities](#) this year is on 5 – 8<sup>th</sup> June 2026 and overlaps with [Great Big Green Week](#) (6<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> June 2026) with a theme this year of 'Together for Good' and [Open Farm Sunday](#) (7<sup>th</sup> June 2026), and runs alongside the [Month of Community - Eden Project Communities](#). Therefore, we invite applications for events throughout the month of June.

**Aims:** to bring together communities and promote:

Local Food

Lower Carbon & healthy food options

Low-waste, single-use-plastic-free events

Food growing, including celebrating local growers, encouraging people to grow their own, and strengthening connections with community gardens, allotments and farms.

These aims support our food partnership priorities and Cumberland's wider waste-reduction and sustainability goals.

**Local food** means food grown or produced within Cumbria.

**Where to shop:** directly from local growers, farm shops, farmers markets, local greengrocer, local butchers, independent food stores, or speak to local community gardens and allotments.

**Low carbon food** refers to food items that have a low carbon footprint. This means they cause less greenhouse gas emissions during production, processing, packaging, transportation and consumption.

E.g. seasonal, locally produced food - small portions of locally produced meat, locally grown vegetables, low/ no packaging etc.

What's seasonal in June? Fruits include currants, berries and rhubarb. Vegetables include beetroot, asparagus, calabrese, carrots, chard, courgettes, green beans, a variety of salad leaves, new potatoes, herbs and so much more!

Some example recipes can be found here: [Low Carbon Eating - E.Mission - Low Carbon Recipes](#)

**Healthy food options** should be at the centre of the menu to ensure attendees have a balanced nutritious meal.



Cumberland Council has Healthy & Sustainable Catering Guidance which may be useful:



Cumberland Council  
Healthy & Sustainable

### **Food Growing**

For the Big Local Lunch 2026, we are placing a stronger emphasis on food growing.

Groups are encouraged to:

- Use produce grown in community gardens, allotments, school gardens or home gardens
- Invite growers to speak or demonstrate
- Run seed or plant swaps
- Offer simple grow-your-own activities
- Link with farms participating in Open Farm Sunday
- Celebrate the role of local growers and growing spaces in the community

The Eden Project Communities have some great resources to guide groups: [Big Lunch Resources Archive - Eden Project Communities](#)

**Funding:** Food Cumberland can provide funding to support community groups in Cumberland to run a Big Lunch. Groups can apply for up to £200 and the final award will be dependent on the merits of the application. To receive funding, groups must demonstrate how they will support the aims listed on page 1 above.

If you are hoping to host a large event in partnership with other organisations, please get in touch before making an application.

### **Some ideas:**

- Showcase local food and drink on menus: locally sourced high-quality meat, a variety of vegetable dishes, highlight healthy and low carbon options.
- Invite farmers, growers or allotment holders to give short talks
- Seed or plant swap table
- Simple grow-your-own activity (e.g., plant a herb or salad pot)
- Tour of a community garden, allotment or school garden
- Link with a farm for Open Farm Sunday
- Showcase produce from local growers or community gardens
- Growing demonstrations (e.g., composting, sowing seeds, container growing)
- To reduce waste: control portion sizes, plan a menu which minimises waste, provide doggy bags & use reusable cups, cutlery and plates.



## **Food Cumberland Big Local Lunch 2026 - Funding Application Form**

Closing date for applications: 4 May 2026. Applicants will be notified by 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026. Applications will be processed in accordance with Cumberland Council's [Data Protection Policy](#).

Please complete and return your form to Food Cumberland Partnership:  
[foodpartnership@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:foodpartnership@cumberland.gov.uk)

<b>Section 1: Contact Information</b>	
<b>Name of Group / Organisation:</b>	
<b>Contact Name:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	
<b>Section 2: About Your Organisation &amp; Event</b>	
<b>Please give a brief overview of your group/ organisation and what it does to support the local community:</b>	
<b>Event date and expected number of attendees?</b> Events must be hosted in June 2026.	
<b>Please provide a brief summary of your event and explain how you will meet each of the grant criteria.</b>  In your response, please include:  Event delivery & use of funds  What do you plan to deliver?  How will you use the funding?  How you will use and showcase healthy and lower carbon Cumbrian produce, where you plan to source your food (local growers, markets, farm shops, community gardens) & how you will highlight provenance to attendees?  How will you ensure there is minimal food waste & will your event be single-use plastic free?	



How will you link your event to food growing?	
<b>Amount Requested (up to £200):</b>	
<b>Section 3: Bank Details</b>	
<b>Account Name:</b>	
<b>Account Number:</b>	
<b>Sort Code:</b>	
<b>Section 4: Grant Criteria</b>	
<p>The criteria attached to this fund is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events must be hosted in June 2026.</li> <li>• Events must be free to attend (voluntary donations are permitted).</li> <li>• Funds are primarily to be used for the purchase of food and/or food growing – we will consider other costs e.g. room hire.</li> <li>• Events must use and showcase Cumbrian produce, provide healthy food to attendees and be low/no waste. Events should include at least one activity or element linking to food growing such as a seed or plant swap, or the event may be held at an allotment or community garden/growing space.</li> <li>• Events must be registered on the <a href="#">Big Lunch Map   Eden Project Communities</a></li> <li>• Food Cumberland and Cumberland Council must be acknowledged in event promotion.</li> </ul> <p>Reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On completion (no later than 12<sup>th</sup> July), please submit a short report about your event, including: the number of attendees, approximate age range, demographic, demonstrate the provenance of the food e.g. where it came from, how you minimised waste and provide some photos (with consent to share).</li> </ul>	
<b>Section 5: Declaration</b>	
I confirm that the information provided is accurate and that our group will deliver the event in line with the criteria above.	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Signature:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	