



Rochdale  
Boroughwide Housing

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **Rochdale hosts really big..... 'Big Lunch'**

They may be officially labelled as some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country but residents living on the Falinge, Freehold and Kirkholt estates in Rochdale also enjoy another distinction – that of having the strongest community spirit. This community camaraderie can be seen at all its glory when hundreds get together to celebrate The Big Lunch.

This week (w/c 19 July) has been designated national Big Lunch week, a time when local populations gather together to meet their neighbours and get to know who lives next door, across the road or around the corner. ALMO Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH) in conjunction with partner agencies is organising Big Lunches around the Rochdale area.

Nicky Morris Priority Areas Manager for RBH said: “Our residents living in these particular areas have really embraced the vision of the day. Last year The Big Lunch was a great success and this year will be even better with residents travelling between estates to share their events.

“These are not only some of the most deprived wards in the UK but are also some of the most diverse, comprised of people from over 40 nations, speaking over 30 languages.

“We think it’s brilliant they are holding some of the biggest Big Lunches in the North West and their community spirit should be something the rest of us aspire to.”

Three separate events have been organised commencing 19 July at Kirkholt when a massive street party for around 300 people will take place between 2pm-5pm. On 21 July around 250 people in Falinge will be celebrating between 3pm-5pm and finally the Freehold estate will be enjoying its party with 250 people on 24 July between 1pm-4pm.

“Each event will be having slightly different entertainment,” said Ruth. “Steel bands, dance groups, children’s entertainers and of course fabulous food and drink will ensure each Big Lunch is a day to remember. Some groups are having a Barbecue, some are having a buffet and some smaller groups are having individual themes, such as a Mad Hatter’s Tea Party table organised by the Over 50s club at Kirkholt. International food tasting will also be encouraged at stalls serving food from all corners of the world.”

The Big Lunch was initiated by The Eden Project who wanted to encourage people to get to know other people in their local community. Last year almost 1 million people joined in The Big Lunch in streets, lanes, parks and schools across the country and this year the event is set to be even bigger.

Gareth Swarbrick, RBH's Chief Executive adds: "We are really proud of everyone who will be helping to make The Big Lunch in Rochdale a massive event that people will remember for the rest of the year."

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Photo Caption – The Johnson family at the big lunch, Kirkholt  
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