


# GREAT GET TOGETHER 2026

## IMPACT REPORT

**10 years** of bringing communities together

THE GREAT GET TOGETHER
INSPIRED BY JO COX

THE JO COX FOUNDATION

# Foreword



If you turn on the news or scroll through social media, it is easy to feel that division is winning. But working at The Jo Cox Foundation gives me a different view of the world. Beyond the headlines, I am reminded daily that for every act of division, there are hundreds of acts of connection and community.

We believe the true strength of our society lies in the connection between our communities and in the feeling — deep in each of our bones — that we matter, and that someone would notice if we didn't show up tomorrow.

**The desire to connect is still fiercely alive.** This June, marking the 10th anniversary of the Great Get Together and of Jo's murder, thousands of people across the country came together — sharing food, music, stories and moments of connection. **Seeing these stories unfold has filled me with hope.**

A decade after we lost Jo, her belief that "we have far more in common than that which divides us" feels more important than ever.

**The Great Get Together is the living embodiment of this belief. It shows that connection is built in the moments that can seem small but have the power to change how we see one another**: A conversation with a neighbour, a shared activity, a moment of kindness. Through these events, we see these moments happen again and again — people who had never spoken before saying hello, strangers becoming friends, and communities discovering what they share.

At the Foundation, our role is to amplify this message. But **your role is to live it — and this year, you did**. Every organiser who brought people together, every volunteer who helped make an event happen, and every person who stepped forward to connect with someone new helped bring Jo's words to life.

**Thank you** for proving that hope, community and connection will always win.



Olivia Field
CEO, The Jo Cox Foundation



# 2026

## At a glance

From a cuppa and cake between neighbours to festival-style community events with thousands of people, **no two events were the same**. There were potluck meals, cuisine sharing and poetry nights; puppet shows and art workshops; family fun days and allotment gatherings; refugee football matches and litter picks, bringing people together while caring for their local area.

Across the UK, schools, councils, prisons, hospitals, libraries, charities, community groups, sports clubs, places of worship, businesses, MPs and local residents **all found their own ways to bring people together**.

The imagination and diversity of events captured the spirit of the Great Get Together: there is no single way to build community, only countless opportunities to connect.

**700+**

Great Get Togethers took place in local communities across the UK

**1.3 million**

People estimated to have taken part, based on national polling by Month of Community

### Social Media

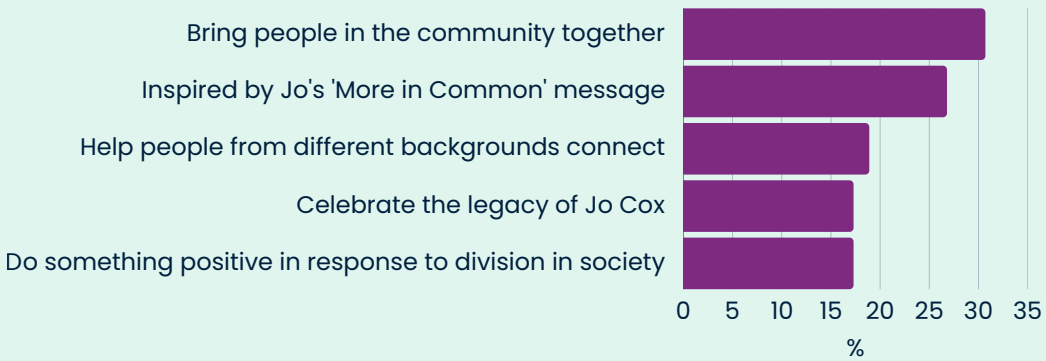
**1.35 million**

Social Media Impressions

**2,000**

New followers

### Top 5 motivations for holding a Great Get Together




### Downloads

**140+**

Schools downloaded our primary and secondary "More in Common" resource packs

# Jo's Legacy: Tributes and Reflections



Public figures, former colleagues, MPs and friends came together throughout June to remember Jo's life, reflect on her contribution to public life and consider how **her values and legacy continue to shape communities, politics and public life today**.

## NUMBER 10 GREAT GET TOGETHER

Jo's message was heard in Downing Street, at a special event hosted by former Prime Minister Keir Starmer. Surrounded by Jo's family, friends and supporters, we were reminded that living by her legacy means choosing connection over division in our communities and in our politics.

"Jo Cox was the best of us and showed us what we could achieve together through unity, kindness and strength.

**Her legacy lives on in a country that chooses unity over division."**

— Sir **Keir Starmer**, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom



## A SNAPSHOT OF TRIBUTES

Former New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern shared a personal video tribute to Jo.

"It is more important than ever to reinforce the message Jo carried with her through her career and political life - the idea there is more that unites us than divides us. **In this increasingly polarised world, I can't imagine a more important message**."

— **Jacinda Ardern**, former Prime Minister of New Zealand

Mayor of London Sir Sadiq Khan reflected on how Jo's message of unity and finding common ground feels more important than ever amid rising division and hostility in public life in an article for the London Standard.

"With every passing year, **the urgent need for greater civility, respect and understanding** in our politics – and across our society – becomes more apparent.
We can't bring Jo back – but we can keep her spirit and sentiment alive.

— **Sadiq Khan**, Mayor of London

## COUNCILLORS COME TOGETHER

Councils marked the tenth anniversary by passing motions to work across party divides, championing respect and civility in public office, and bringing councillors together for cross-party Get Togethers.

Amongst these events, female councillors in Maidstone united to champion safety in public life, and a cross party commemoration event in Aberdeenshire reinforced the message of civility in democracy:

"**The discussions showed how councillors can work collaboratively across party lines to address shared challenge**s. By coming together in the spirit of respect and co-operation, we can help ensure that people from all backgrounds continue to feel able to take part in public life and represent their communities."

— Councillor Claudine Russell, Ward Member for Marden and Yalding at Aberdeenshire event.

## GREAT PARLIAMENTARY GET TOGETHER

MPs from across the House came together at Speaker's House to remember Jo and celebrate her legacy ten years on. The gathering brought together colleagues from across the political spectrum, alongside Jo's family and friends, reflecting her enduring ability to bring people together.

"Jo had a gift and a power in death as well as in life for **uniting people**."

— Lord Neil Kinnock



## HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATE

Cross-party MPs came together to reflect on the importance of Jo's legacy.

Opening the debate, Alison McGovern MP said:

"This is the story of a woman whose life may have been cut short, but **whose contribution will be remembered and will continue always**.

I'll never forget her sense of humour and fun or her unrelenting hope that there was always something we could do. **Much has been achieved in her name and in that spirit in 10 years. Her impact on the people of this country has never weakened**."

Sir Andrew Mitchell MP reflected on Jo's character and approach to politics:

"We would do well to reflect on her words and especially her character—fearless determination, unintimidated by tribal political pressures, **putting the greater good above personal ambition and placing policy above party**."

## HOUSE OF LORDS DEBATE

Peers from **across the political spectrum** debated loneliness, civility in public life and how to bring communities together, reflecting on issues at the heart of Jo's legacy.

"Her legacy is an important one because her work, beliefs and commitments are, 10 years on, still so relevant, **both to strangers to her like me and to those who have the privilege of happy memories of working with her**."

— Lord Pack

"Jo Cox understood that **democracy is strengthened when communities are connected**."

— Baroness O'Neill of Bexley

## SCOTLAND AND WALES

**Scottish Parliament:** Members of the Scottish Parliament came together across party lines to mark the tenth anniversary of Jo's death and reflect on her contribution to public life.

Jenny Young MSP, who led the debate, spoke about the responsibility to continue challenging division and building a more respectful political culture:

"I believe the best way to honour her memory is to stand against hatred, to **reject those who seek to divide us, and to do the hard work of always trying to find what we have in common**."

The Scottish Parliament also hosted a Great Get Together on 23 June, bringing Jo's message of connection and common ground into Scotland's political institutions.

**Senedd Wales:** On 10 June, we took Jo's message to the Senedd in Wales: "Mae gennym fwy yn gyffredin na'r hyn sy'n ein rhannu."

The visit provided an opportunity to share Jo's message of connection, respect and community with people working in Welsh public life.






## WHITE ROSES IN PARLIAMENT

At Prime Minister's Questions , MPs from across the political spectrum paid tribute to Jo Cox and wore white roses in her memory. Former Deputy Prime Minister, David Lammy, reflected on Jo's contribution and the values she represented:

"We remember our beloved colleague Jo Cox and honour her memory in working to bring our communities together, **celebrating the decency and compassion that defines this country**."

## JO COX MEMORIAL LECTURE: CAMBRIDGE

To a standing ovation, Kim Leadbeater MP delivered the eighth Jo Cox Memorial Lecture, reflecting on Jo's life, legacy and the continuing challenges of division and polarisation in public life. Kim reflected on the environment of anger and division surrounding her death and the choices we make in response.

"Perhaps the greatest tribute we can offer to Jo is not merely to repeat her words, **but to live by them** and show that we really are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us".

## PORTCULLIS HOUSE EXHIBITION: JO'S LIFE AND LEGACY

A special exhibition in Portcullis House brought together memories from across her life, from her childhood and family to her humanitarian work and time in Parliament.

The exhibition offered a chance to remember the person behind the politics and the values that continue to inspire so many today.

# Campaign Moments

The 10th anniversary gave the foundation an opportunity to share Jo's message of connection with people across the UK. We received **more than 70 pieces of online and print coverage** across trade, local and national outlets, reflecting on Jo, the Foundation and the Great Get Together. This included coverage from the BBC, Telegraph and the Metro, as well as magazines such as Closer and Bella.

In addition, we made numerous radio and TV appearances, from the Today Programme and Woman's Hour to Sky News, LBC News and ITV.

## MORE IN COMMON RESEARCH LAUNCHED

Our new research with More in Common, *Time Well Shared*, explores what community and connection mean across generations, ten years on from Jo Cox's murder.

While many feel their communities have become more divided, the research shows that the appetite for community remains strong.

Financial hardship, anxiety and digital fatigue are making connection harder, while mutual respect and simple "micro-moments" — a chat with a neighbour, giving directions or helping someone out — can bring us closer.

**Read** the report and see how we're using these insights to sharpen our mission across four vital pillars.





## FOOTBALL BRINGING PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS TOGETHER IN BRISTOL

A football match brought together refugees with players from an area of Bristol that has experienced tensions around migration and integration.

ACH, a charity supporting refugees and migrants in Bristol, worked with Lockleaze Sports Centre to put on a special match between the teams, as part of Bristol's Refugee Week and a wider tournament that brings together grassroots clubs, community organisations and local neighbourhood teams each year.

The match between the refugee team from ACH and Ambition Lawrence Weston ended in a dramatic 2–2 draw, with both teams celebrating together at the final whistle.

The game created a space for people who might not otherwise meet to connect over a shared loved of football, with members of the opposing team going on to attend the Refugee Festival in Bristol the following week.

**Watch** the video




## ACROSS POLITICAL DIFFERENCE

What does it look like to disagree well? In a piece for Centenary Action, Labour's Natasa Pantelic and Conservative Claire Pearsall reflected on Jo's legacy and their experience of working across political difference.

"We are two people who come from different backgrounds, from the Labour and Conservative parties, and disagree on nearly everything, but **we always find a way of working together to achieve common goals**.

It is on all of us, no matter who we are, to show the leadership in our local communities that this moment is calling for. As we reflect on the life and legacy of Jo Cox not just this week but in the weeks and years to come, **let's use her message to build stronger communities, a more compassionate country, and create a future to be proud of**."

**Read** *The Strength of Disagreeing Agreeably*

## GREAT GET TOGETHER BEER

The Jo Cox Foundation teamed up with the pub and brewing industry to **encourage local pubs to bring communities together**, with parliamentarians from **across political divides** coming together to launch the Great Get Together Beer.



## WOMEN OF FAITH

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Baroness Neuberger, Baroness Uddin, Baroness Gill and Baroness Helic came together for a candid conversation about public service, identity, leadership and belonging.

They reflected on the responsibilities that come with representing communities, the scrutiny faced by women in public life, and how we can navigate disagreement without losing respect for one another.

**By the end, they described finding "a kind of sisterhood"** — grounded in shared values, mutual respect and common humanity.

Asked what we owe one another, the answer was simple: **"Respect."**

**Watch** the video here



## BRINGING LONDON TOGETHER AFTER TRAGEDY

Living Bankside has **spent the last decade bringing together** residents, performers, volunteers and community groups across central London through its annual Great Get Together celebrations.

Just weeks before their first event in 2017, **the London Bridge and Borough Market terror attack shook the local area** and left the neighbourhood in shock.

Organisers questioned whether the event should go ahead. Instead, it became a powerful moment of unity, with **4,500 people coming together** on the streets of Bankside in response to division and fear.

Since then, Living Bankside's Great Get Together SE1 has **grown into one of London's largest community celebrations**, built around local people, grassroots partnerships and Jo Cox's message that we have far more in common than that which divides us.

This year marked ten years of the Great Get Together in Bankside. People of all ages and backgrounds came together through music, performance and shared activities, from Irish dancers and samba groups to Catalan human tower builders and local choirs.

Volunteers and performers return year after year, while others have moved from attending to **volunteering, leading projects and building lasting connections**.

What began as a single act of bringing people together in the aftermath of tragedy has **grown into a decade of community, connection and action**.







## FINAL RUN FOR JO

For a decade, More in Common Batley & Spen — made up of Jo's friends — brought people together at Oakwell Hall in Birstall for the annual Run for Jo.

The 6.5km run, family activities and community gathering became a much-loved annual event, with children handing runners handmade **"Love Like Jo"** cards, mascot races and crowds cheering participants on.

**This year marked the tenth and final Run for Jo. Jo's mum, dad and sister Kim Leadbeater joined the community for the final event, as hundreds came together to remember Jo and celebrate the values she championed.**

Reflecting on what the event had come to represent, organiser Clare Black said:

"We've had so many different people come and join us through the years and we've brought people together from different political parties. **It's always been a day of joy and a celebration for us to think about Jo and everything she did in the area**."

# Batley's Schools: A Legacy Lived Out



## HOW THE NEXT GENERATION ARE LIVING JO'S VALUES

For a decade, Batley has turned a tragedy into an enduring movement of hope, connection and community pride. Local schools play a central role in ensuring her legacy is lived out daily by the next generation by bringing people together through creative projects, intergenerational activities and town-wide events — building a vibrant, living tribute to Jo.

### STEP INTO THE FUTURE

Each year, hundreds of Year 6 and Year 7 pupils from different schools across Batley come together before moving to secondary school — to build friendships, celebrate inclusion and the power of working together.

As is a traditional part of the day, pupils create a heart formation on the school field featuring Jo's name — a simple but powerful symbol of unity, hope and community. Sam Vickers, CEO, said:

"Jo believed passionately in the power of a cohesive community, combatting loneliness and bringing people together. **Her values continue to inspire everything we do**.

These events create opportunities for people to connect and remind us that every individual can make a positive difference. **We're telling young people that they belong here**."

A highlight this year was an inspiring address from Jo's sister, Kim Leadbeater MP who shared memories of growing up in Batley and encouraged pupils, particularly girls and young women, to believe in themselves, embrace opportunities and recognise the difference they can make in their communities.

**"Kim's words reminded me that the women in our community carry strength that can perform real change - she inspired me to be the best version of myself."**
- Year 7 pupil






## THE ANNUAL BATLEY BAKE OFF

A much-loved part of the celebrations, the Batley Bake Off brings pupils, families, staff, Jo's family and the wider community together through a shared love of baking. Expanding in scale and ambition every year, bakers create themed cakes — either as birthday tributes celebrating Jo's life or centred on the spirit of connection. More than a competition, the Bake Off creates space for conversation and shows how simple things — a slice of cake and a cup of tea — can bring people together.




## THE GREAT GET TOGETHER PICNICS

Schools across the town host their own unique Great Get Together events every year. At Hyrstmount Junior School, pupils and families came together once again for a massive outdoor community picnic, fostering togetherness in a relaxed setting.

## INTERGENERATIONAL GET TOGETHERS

At Healey School, the focus is on bridging generational divides. As with past years, their event welcomed local residents of all ages into the school to share memories, exchange stories, and forge lasting relationships across different age groups in the neighbourhood.

Batley's schools have created more than an annual commemoration; **they have kept Jo's belief in the power of community alive**. Her legacy lives on in the everyday acts of kindness and **a culture of unity that continues to shape young minds** and strengthen community bonds.



# GoFundMe Mini-Grants

This year our friends at GoFundMe enabled community members across the UK to bring Jo Cox's "more in common" legacy to life **across 56 events**.

GoFundMe's 'mini-grants' covered essential operational expenses, such as venue hire, refreshments, decorations, and event materials - **turning grassroots ideas into inclusive, accessible street parties, picnics, interfaith discussions and poetry readings**.

"...the mini-grant really helped us bring everyone together. It was lovely to see people connecting, enjoying themselves, and strengthening relationships within the community"
-Mussarat, Friends of Ravensthorpe Library

**Preston Park Community Hub** hosted a community breakfast and guided discussion to build trust, mutual understanding, and solidarity amidst local tensions.

**Residents in Brighton Street in Heckmondwike** organised a vibrant neighbourhood street gathering celebrating local community spirit through shared food and interactive games.

**Castleford Tigers Foundation** hosted collaborative gatherings that united local sports enthusiasts and educational communities to encourage integration and long-term connection.

**Stepping Stones** in Beeston Rylands facilitated a thoughtful "Spirit of Oneness" session incorporating guided meditation and philosophical discussions centred on togetherness and shared values.

"(It) made a real difference and helped us bring the event to life"
Nadia







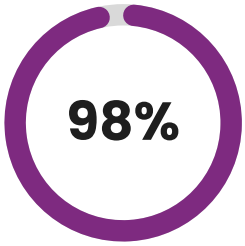
IMPACT: SOCIAL COHESION

# BUILDING CONNECTIONS

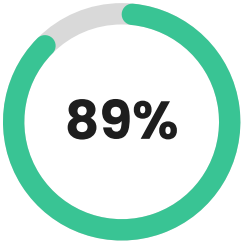
Strong communities are built **one conversation at a time**. More than half of people (56%) say chatting with neighbours is what makes them feel most connected to where they live (*More in Common & The Jo Cox Foundation, Time Well Shared).*

This year, the Great Get Together created opportunities to bring people together in the same space and **for those conversations to begin**. Strangers became familiar faces, new relationships formed and, afterwards, people told us they felt more connected to their neighbours and their wider community.

In Wallington, people made pizzas, created bird feeders and socialised while listening to a steel band and choir. In Shipley, families got creative together in a hands-on workshop making fantastical creatures inspired by Ukrainian folk art. In Batley, an indoor street party at the library created space to meet, chat and catch up.




felt more connected to others in their community




now recognise and say hello to more people in their local area

> I was able to meet new people and **make new friends.**

> It helped me feel more connected to my neighbours. **I now chat with people I used to just walk past.**



> It made me know the people in my area well and I also got a chance to **introduce them to my family and friends in case of any emergency**.

> This event made me feel **more connected with local young people** and neighbours. Watching kids enjoy reading and crafts brought me a strong sense of joy and a deeper love for our community.



# Stronger communities start with individual action

## THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF ONE GREAT GET TOGETHER: ZOE'S STORY




When Zoe decided to host a Great Get Together at her home in Worcester, she kept it simple: tea, cake and invitations through neighbours' letterboxes.

Even before the event took place, neighbours she had never spoken to were **getting involved, offering to bake cakes and bring chairs**.

One older lady who had lived on the street for 50 years stopped by to say how she remembered when the street used to have parties and neighbourhood gatherings, and **hoped to see more of them again**.

At the event, neighbours from the street chatted over a cuppa and cake in Zoe's garden. For some, it was the first time they had really spoken to one another. **And those first conversations led to more.**




A WhatsApp group set up for helpers became **a place where neighbours supported one another**, from sharing cardboard for a child's party to planning future meet-ups.

People who had once only exchanged a quick hello while walking their dogs **began stopping to chat**.

Two people who had arrived at Zoe's on their own discovered **a shared love of live music and became "gig buddies"**.

The conversations also sparked plans for what came next.

Neighbours began talking about **meeting in the local park for a picnic**, where everyone could bring something to share.

For Zoe, the biggest change was knowing she was more connected to the people around her.

"I've always felt positive about where I live, but I feel more confident and a bit more relaxed now, knowing I'm connected and **there are people who know me and will say hello**."

Since then, Zoe has continued building on those connections, including **exploring plans for Public Living Rooms with a local Play Streets organiser**.

"**One small event doesn't create a fundamental shift overnight**, but it shows what's possible.

**You can build on it, and different connections can grow from there."**






IMPACT: SOCIAL COHESION

# STRENGTHENING BELONGING & TRUST

For many people, the connections made through the Great Get Together **changed how they viewed their local area**. They felt more at home, **more trusting** of those around them, and more confident that their community was full of friendly, supportive people.

**97%**

felt a greater sense of belonging to their community

**89%**

felt more trusting of people in their community

**87%**

felt safer in their community

> The event boosted my **sense of belonging** and showed me how supportive and welcoming my community can be.

> It **changed my view** by showing that **people are willing to come together and help each other.**

> I **feel more trusting and open** towards people in my local area now.

> It reaffirms the fact I live in a lovely, caring, empathetic community.

# Different Stories, Same Dreams

## UKRAINIAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN REFLECT ON MAKING NOTTINGHAM HOME

As part of the Great Get Together, **Nottingham More in Common Women's Group** hosted a *Mindful Brew* session with **Ukrainian women and their children**, exploring what they have in common with people in Nottingham since making the city their home.

**The group works year-round** to support marginalised women, reducing isolation, building confidence and creating opportunities for women from different backgrounds to connect, support one another, volunteer and lead activities in their communities.

They created a short film featuring the reflections of the Ukrainian women and children, highlighting the hopes and experiences that connect people in communities, wherever we come from.

The event built on several years of community-led work by the More in Common group, supporting Ukrainian women to build friendships, lead activities and become more involved in community life through a project called 'Unity for Ukrainian Women in Nottingham City'.

This year, new funding for this project has enabled four Ukrainian women to undertake paid freelance work for the first time since arriving in the UK through the group.

**Watch** the video here




> **We have different stories but similar dreams** -Anastasiia, 10

> **Feeling safe and having friends is important to all of us** - Sofia, 10

> Together in Nottingham we are building new friendships.

> **We are learning to understand one another and respect different experiences** -Kateryna, 10

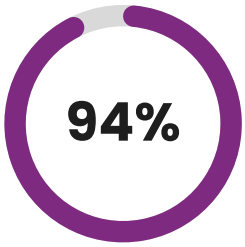


IMPACT: SOCIAL COHESION

# BUILDING UNDERSTANDING ACROSS DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS

Events across the country brought together people from different backgrounds and generations. For many, these moments of connection challenged assumptions, broke down barriers and **changed how they saw the people around them**.

In Mold, North Wales and Horsforth, Leeds, events brought together asylum seekers and refugees to **share food with other local people**, schools, councillors and voluntary sector organisations, with menus inspired by food from around the world. In Cardiff, Friends and Neighbours (FAN) groups came together to discuss **what they have in common**, followed by a shared buffet where people from the city's multicultural community got to know each other better.




said the Great Get Together gave them the opportunity to **meet people from different backgrounds**

> Certain people I saw in a type of way just cus we didn't really talk, but now a lot seems clearer and **I've learnt never to judge anyone**.




> It really **opened my eyes** to how diverse and friendly our local area is. **It broke down a lot of invisible barriers**, as I ended up chatting with people from completely different backgrounds and age groups whom I normally just pass by.

> It confirmed my belief that **very different people can get along** if you give them opportunities.

# A community choosing connection

## LLANELLI'S FIRST GREAT GET TOGETHER



Set within a landscape of coastal paths, beaches and nature reserves, Llanelli has a proud identity shaped by its Welsh-speaking community, rugby heritage and its history as a centre of steel, coal and tinplate production.

Like many post-industrial towns, it has experienced significant change in recent decades. **The decline of traditional industries, combined with high unemployment, low incomes and the decline of the town centre**, has contributed to some parts of the town being among the most deprived areas in Wales.

More recently, plans to temporarily house more than 200 asylum seekers in a local hotel became a focus for wider divisions. **Extremist groups became involved and used the situation to amplify local tensions**.

The situation led to **100 days of protests**, with local residents and community groups organising blockades, and a large police operation taking place before the plans were eventually scrapped.

During this period, Steve Kelshaw, founder and organiser of More in Common Llanelli, **worked alongside other local organisers to calm tensions and support dialogue**, while also facing personal targeting because of his role in the local response.

It was from this experience that Steve and other local organisers began developing the **Llanelli More in Common Partnership**.

Over the past year, they have been working to create a longer-term approach to bringing people and organisations together, **promoting inclusion and community spirit**, and sharing the message that we have more in common than divides us.

For Steve, creating opportunities for people to connect is at the heart of the partnership's work.

## THE LAUNCH

Launched on 19 June 2026 as part of the 10th anniversary Great Get Together weekend, **the Partnership brought together community members, local organisations, council representatives, police and other partners**, including Dame Nia Griffith MP.

The launch was followed by a weekend of Great Get Together events. On Friday evening, **a youth-led live music event in a warehouse unit on the edge of town brought together local musicians, food, family activities and people from different backgrounds and generations**.
The following day, the Great Get Together continued in the town's central green space with a ukulele band and free food for passers-by.

## WHAT'S NEXT

For the Llanelli More In Common Partnership, the Great Get Together was just the beginning — the first step in creating more opportunities for people to come together, build relationships and strengthen community across Llanelli.

## HOW THE COMMUNITY RESPONDED

"**"The response to our launch events gave us real confidence that using the "more in common" message gives people a sense of hope and belonging.** In all our conversations across the community we have heard a strong desire to give people more opportunities to come together around our shared values.

**We know there are more opportunities to meet and listen to each other** and to connect around shared interest such as food, the arts, music, sport and we are ready to go!"
Steve







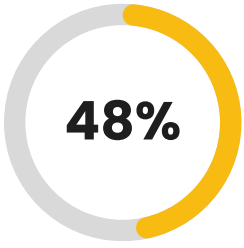

IMPACT: SOCIAL COHESION

# INCREASING PARTICIPATION & COMMUNITY-LED ACTION

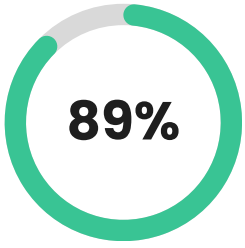
A large number of events focused on bringing people together to make a positive difference, from painting and gardening at a local nursery in London, sorting through donated baby clothes in Wanstead, to litter picks across the country.

For many people, taking part in a Great Get Together was also **a springboard to getting more involved in local life**. They told us they had since joined new clubs and groups, volunteered, supported neighbours and helped to organise community activities. People shared examples such as:

- **Volunteering with local groups** and supporting community initiatives, including litter-picking, volunteering at a food bank, neighbourhood clean-ups, and checking in on older neighbours.
- **Joining new clubs and activities**, including walking and gardening groups, community coffee mornings, Sunday lunch groups, social and tennis clubs, reading clubs, line dancing, and arts, crafts, yoga and meditation groups.
- **Getting involved in local decision-making** and community action, including starting to attend local community meetings and planning with police and charities to raise awareness of violence against women and girls.




of people joined a new activity in their local area




of people said that they are more likely to help neighbours or people in their community

> We have formed a small group of volunteers who will visit the elderly neighbors in our community, checking in on them and helping them feel less lonely.

> Joined a local litterpicking group, a local walking group, and a monthly Sunday lunch group.

> I began volunteering at a nearby food bank a few times a month.




# Young people leading change

## KUMON Y'ALL'S GREAT GET TOGETHER IN DEWSBURY

**For ten years**, Kumon Y'all has used the Great Get Together as an opportunity for young people to bring their community together. Based in Dewsbury, the charity **supports young people to build confidence, develop leadership skills and take an active role in improving their local area**.

Each year, young people help plan and deliver the Great Get Together at Manor Croft Academy, welcoming people from across the community, including schools, faith groups, emergency services and local organisations.

This year, they ran the now-traditional Boccia tournament, delivered speeches and served a three-course meal — simple activities designed to get people talking, laughing and enjoying time together.

The Great Get Together also gives young people the chance to move from participants to organisers.

"They send out invites, figure out the tournament fixtures, decide who serves the food, who gives speeches. I teach basic presentation skills, but they do most of it themselves."

For some, **that experience becomes a stepping stone into wider leadership**.

Young people have gone on to take greater responsibility within Kumon Y'all and contribute to other community initiatives, including a community football tournament that has grown from around 400 participants to more than 5,000.

"It's about getting them to think and do things to help their own community."

*Founder Farook Yunus*

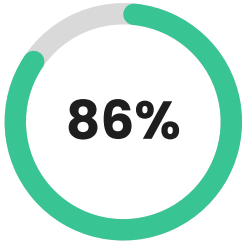


IMPACT:

# IMPROVED WELLBEING

For many people, attending a Great Get Together event had a positive impact on their wellbeing and mental health. People described **feeling happier, less anxious, less isolated, and more confident talking to others** and getting involved in community life after attending an event in their neighbourhood.

Some events specifically focused on health and wellbeing. In Manchester, a Community Health Fair provided **health checks and wellness advice**; in Cardiff, families, volunteers and community members came together for a **picnic and wellbeing event**; and in Beeston, Nottinghamshire, people joined a session of **meditation**, discussion and refreshments.




of people said that taking part in a Great Get Together helped them feel less lonely

> **Experienced some difficulties recently** and it was nice to forget about it for a while.

> Spending time out the house was **helpful for my mental health.**

> The event helped **reduce feelings of isolation** by providing a friendly and inclusive environment to socialise with others.

**FEELING CONNECTED MEANS KNOWING YOU DON'T HAVE TO FACE HARDSHIP ALONE**

**76% of people who feel connected would turn to a neighbour for company when they're lonely**.

Among people who feel disconnected, only 16% would do the same.

**DISCONNECTION ISN'T A CHOICE. PEOPLE WANT STRONGER LOCAL TIES.**

Even though many feel community ties have weakened, **1 in 3 people actively want to improve their local connections**.

*Source: More in Common & The Jo Cox Foundation, Time Well Shared*

# Bridging worlds

## THE GREAT GET TOGETHER AT HMP PRESTON

For the first time, the Great Get Together took place inside a prison, with the University of Lancashire partnering with HMP Preston to host a special event on one of the prison wings.

**Prisoners came together to explore themes of hope, strength and the future.**

Dr Victoria Gregson, Course Leader in Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Lancashire, tells us how:

"As a criminologist, I work closely with a community where the deepest human truths live side by side: hope and loss, grief and resilience, ambition and regret. That community is HMP Preston.

This year, we brought the spirit of the Great Get Together inside those walls. Divided into two transformative sessions — one **exploring hope and strength** with me, and the other igniting minds through the brilliant words of local poet Nathan Parker — the men of Preston spoke with breathtaking honesty.

They reflected on the winding roads that brought them there, and more importantly, what they yearn to give back: becoming the partners, parents and **neighbours they were always meant to be.**

## "It was a profound reminder that transformation begins the moment someone is finally heard".

The event built on Dr Gregson's ongoing work using creativity and storytelling to challenge perceptions and highlight the experiences, ambitions and talents of people in prison.

Since 2023, she has led a series of art exhibitions bringing these stories into public spaces, **creating opportunities for people to be seen beyond labels and recognised for their shared humanity**.

This work will continue with a major exhibition at the University of Lancashire's Burnley Campus, **bringing together artwork from 20 prisons around the theme of community**.

Prisoners have already started exploring this theme through creative projects, from cookbooks celebrating local food to tea parties and maps of places that hold meaning.





# Thank you to our partners

Every individual, group and organisation who helped organise or participate in Great Get Together events in and for their communities are deeply valued partners.

And this year - more than ever - we really felt the love and need to thank some who really went above and beyond to help bring people together across the UK in June...
**thank you**

LUCKY GENERALS

goodgym

More in Common

KEEP BRITAIN TIDY.

University of HUDDERSFIELD

Warm Welcome Spaces

navca
local focus national voice

ACH

DIALOGUE SOCIETY

CAMERADOS

Community Organisers

ROYAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE

ASCL Association of School and College Leaders

#iwill movement

COMMUNITY LIBRARIES NETWORK

FOODCYCLE
NOURISHING COMMUNITIES

BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION

acre ACTION WITH COMMUNITIES IN RURAL ENGLAND

VCS Emergencies Partnership

BBPA
THE VOICE OF BREWERS & PUBS

PUNCH

GOOD BEER Co

ADNAMS SOUTHWOLD

THEAKSTON

TIMOTHY TAYLOR'S
CHAMPIONSHIP BEERS
EST. 1858



# Stay Connected

Jo Cox—and the many, many people we have worked with since our founding—are why we know a more connected world is possible. Jo wasn't defined by her words alone; she had an impact **because she lived them**, choosing connection every single day.

She showed us that **connection is an active choice**—one we can make day in, day out. The more people choose to connect, the stronger, safer, and more resilient our society will be.

## Now, the choice is yours. Join us in bringing Jo's words to life:









### 01 Say hello

Say hello to a neighbour you haven't spoken to before

### 02 Get Together

Organise a Get Together — these don't just have to happen in June!

### 03 Stay connected

Join our More in Common movement