



Street parties are an important part of British culture. I still remember the Silver Jubilee street party in 1977, with bunting, games and every family in the street baking to make it a really grand occasion. I once presented The Queen with a bouquet at the Shrewsbury Flower Show and I've never forgotten how kindly she spoke to me. She's a remarkable lady. **Amanda**

Our church is hosting afternoon tea to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee. I fondly remember attending a street party for the Queen's Silver Jubilee. We played games, laughed lots and talked into the night. **Sandra**

My street had lots of fun on the 75th anniversary of VE Day in 2020. It was during lockdown, but as we all sat on our own doorsteps with our own picnics and wine, it was a real boost. **Gill**

For the Queen's Silver Jubilee, we had a table the length of our road, all the mums brought food and a local knicker factory made the bunting! It was a great community atmosphere. **Karen**

THE BIG JUBILEE LUNCH brings neighbours and communities together to share friendship, food and fun. Get your free street-party pack at thebigjubileelunch.com to join the nation in celebration!



The NATION comes together to CELEBRATE!

As the country commemorates The Queen's 70-year-reign, *Prima* readers share some of their special street-party memories and reveal how they will be celebrating with their communities

This month, The Queen becomes the first British monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, marking an incredible 70 years of service. Across the nation, we'll all come together to honour the occasion with 'thank you' street parties over the special bank holiday from 2-5 June. For many, these community get-togethers will evoke fond memories of joyful royal celebrations over the years: tables piled high with home-made food, Union Jack bunting lining the streets and plenty of smiles and laughter. Now, during challenging times, community spirit is more important than ever. Here are some of your memories and thoughts...



I remember having a Coronation Day street party. My dad set up a committee for our square and spent months collecting money, sorting food and arranging entertainment for the children. I hope that children today will enjoy simple fun and games, just like we did. **Barbara**

We had a street party for Charles and Diana's wedding, where we met lots of new friends. At just 19, Diana wasn't much younger than us, so she was of great interest to me. **Wendy**

I'll put up bunting and bake cakes for the Platinum Jubilee. I have lovely memories of the Silver Jubilee as a child. We had a street party and children were in fancy dress. The sense of community was so strong. **Jacqui**

I was 10 years old when our Queen had her coronation. My family and I watched the ceremony at our neighbours' house on their 9in-console television with a magnifying screen! I wore a red, white and blue striped dress. A street party was planned after the broadcast, but it was raining by the time the party should have begun, so everything was moved into the local cafe across the road. It became a cafe street party instead! **Margaret**

Fancy having your say? Sign up to join our reader panel at hearst-panel.co.uk.



MY MEMORIES...

'Street parties bring people together'



Mum-of-three Laura Harmsworth, 47, from Reading, says: 'I hosted my first street party in 2011 for Prince William

and Kate's wedding as a way to meet neighbours and find local friends for my young daughters. I'd never done anything like that before, but it was a huge success. From then on, street parties have become an annual tradition in our local area.

We love taking part in The Big Lunch, which is the UK's biggest annual get-together for neighbours every June. I've formed close friendships, including a special bond with my 97-year-old neighbour, who shares recipes with me, and I help her with shopping.

When the pandemic hit, we realised just how important it was to stay in touch. Now, we're looking forward to hosting our first street party since Covid in June. Getting together with the community breaks down barriers and brings people together. ➔



Laura at a street party in 1977





How to throw your own STREET PARTY



Royal Jubilees throughout the years have brought people together

Street parties aren't just for royal celebrations – you can hold them any time of year. Here's how to start a trend...

'The whole street came out to play... and began a national movement'



Alice and Amy launching their play scheme in 2010



When Alice Ferguson's young son asked her to drive him over the road so he could call on his friend,

she recognised a problem. Her son saw the road as a barrier to play. It reaffirmed her growing concern that children playing outside was becoming unheard of. 'The main thing that was stopping me let my children play out was my fears about traffic. Also, there were no other children out playing.' Like many of us, Alice had grown up with the freedom to play out and socialise with other kids naturally. She very much wanted the same for her children.

With her friend and neighbour Amy Rose, Alice used a street-party licence to close their road in Bristol for a few hours. 'It wasn't about bunting and food, but about using it to create a safe space.'

Emphasising that playing out should be part of a child's everyday life, they closed their street for a few hours after school one June afternoon in 2009. Residents of all ages came out that

afternoon, seizing the opportunity to meet their neighbours.

'It sparked older residents' memories of playing out as children,' says Alice. 'It was amazing to discover how many children actually lived on our street!' Despite not having all met before, the children played together in a totally natural way. 'Children haven't changed – it's the world around them that has.'

People walking past Alice's closed road took an interest and wanted to know

how to do it themselves. Having seen the positive impact the road closure had on their community, Amy and Alice met their local council to explain

they had found a simple way to enable children to play out safely. The council recognised the value of playing out in aiding children's health and agreed to put a process in place to facilitate it.

The meeting was to be the beginning of an incredible movement for change. The following year, Alice and Amy received funding from their council to support six more play streets. With the model refined, they set up a community interest company, Playing Out, working

'Playing out should be a part of a child's life'

with councils nationwide to expand opportunities for safe play outside. Thirteen years on, there are around 1,400 street-play communities, benefitting an estimated 40,000 children in the UK.

'Using the street as a blank canvas for play helps children to develop social skills, independence and a sense of belonging in the community,' says Ingrid Skeels, co-director at Playing Out.

With The Queen's Jubilee seeing more communities coming together to celebrate, regular street closures could be a wonderful legacy. As Ingrid says, 'There doesn't always need to be a special occasion to do it.'

INTERESTED IN CLOSING YOUR STREET?

Here are four simple steps to organising a play street:

- Speak to your neighbours. Check they support the idea and address any objections.
- Get permission and support. Visit playingout.net for lots of helpful information on how to do this.
- Tell everyone when it's going to be.
- Play out!