

SUMMER 2025 IMPACT REPORT



Smallshaw-Hurst
Children's Community

www.childrenscommunitynetwork.org.uk

HURST FEST



Where Saying “Yes” is the Rule

Hurst Fest is our completely free family fun day, co-created and delivered by local people & partners. It’s a day where no child has to be told “no” — ice cream, face painting, and even the rodeo bull are all included.

- 1,400 joined us for Hurstfest 2025
- 500 superheroes, butterflies & tigers painted on smiling excited faces (face painting)
- 470 rodeo rides braved some by face painted superheroes, butterflies and tigers. Have you ever seen a tiger at a rodeo – we have!
- 500 free hotdogs and burgers consumed!
- 550 free ice creams and ice lollies consumed by superheroes, princesses and tigers.
- Two out of three children joined in three or more activities, making the most of everything on offer and enjoying even more from the free family day.

Countless smiles

And it wasn't just the numbers that made the day special — the variety was huge. From festival hair and make-up, henna hand-painting, and inflatables to free burger vans (halal and vegan options too), live music, and sports tasters, the whole community could find something to enjoy. Every activity, every laugh, every memory was completely free.



Smallshaw-Hurst
Children's Community



"It's the only day I don't have to say no to my kids - everything is included." - Local Parent

Volunteers (parents, grandparents, neighbours) raised funds, organised stalls, and ran the day — building skills, confidence, and friendships along the way. And we're not stopping there. Our volunteer team are already approaching businesses for sponsorship for Hurst Fest 2026. That's #CommunityPower and #CommunityLeadership in action.





HOLIDAY BITES – COURGETTES, CONFIDENCE & COMMUNITY COOKING

School holidays can stretch families thin. Holiday Bites & Activity makes sure children eat well, have fun, and learn new skills, all led by parents, grandparents, and volunteers.

Through research carried out by SSH Children's Community and our community leaders, we learned that families often don't attend our co-created, now independent Cedar Park Pantry Store in the holidays. Parents told us they didn't want their children to know they were queueing in the park for discounted food.

Holiday Bites was created as a solution by the community, for the community. In partnership with Fare Share, it not only tackles holiday hunger, but also reduces food poverty, stigma, and food waste, while ticking environmental challenges.

- 800 shopping bags shared in 4 weeks (worth over £12,000)
- Fresh veg & cupboard staples rescued from going to waste
- Over 100 families tried new recipes together
- Over 200 children got hands-on with cooking and creating meals and snacks and trying and sharing new recipes with their families.
- Different cultures sharing recipe ideas with one another and veg swapping (courgette currency)

QUOTES FROM THE DAY!

“The food bags meant I could buy my child shoes instead of worrying about meals.” – Parent

The veg bags have made a big difference in our household as they have meant I was able to pick up shopping at the activities whilst the children were having a great time rather than having to take them round the supermarket.

·I can't always afford to try new veg in case the kids don't like it — this gave us the chance to experiment without the worry.” - Parent

“Courgette curry is our family's favourite – my kids even eat seconds!” – Parent volunteer

“We didn't know what to do with it, so we grated it into pasta sauce – it disappeared, and the kids ate it all.” – Parent

“The activities kept my kids busy, happy and learning — and it didn't cost us anything.” – Parent

·“We discovered new recipes we will keep making as a family.” - Parent

·“I made the veg fajita recipe for my family and mum got to have a rest” - Child

·“Thankyou so much as you will never know the difference this has made. Keeping the kids occupied and fed are my biggest worry in the school holidays and this helped with both” - Parent





1,400 ATTENDEES AT HURST FEST 2025

800+ food bags distributed to families and the wider community.

£12,000 of food value given out in 4 weeks, enabling families to stretch their budgets further over the summer.

Dozens of volunteers gaining confidence and skills in planning and running these events in their community for their community.



Smallshaw-Hurst
Children's Community

COMMUNITY VOICES!

- “Best day ever – I loved the rodeo bull!” – Child
- “It felt like a big day out just for us” – Child
- “It was like being on holidays” – Child
- “My favourite bit was seeing my mum fall off the bull” - Child
- “My daughter had the best day and hasn’t stopped talking about meeting Moana and Belle” - Parent
- “With four kids of all different ages, it’s hard to please them all — but Hurstfest did it!” - Parent
- “I liked that we could all do different things but still be together.” - Grandparent
- “It really felt like an event for the whole family — everyone was happy and included.”
- “Holiday Bites has made cooking fun again. My kids eat more veg now.” – Parent
- “My kids have run wild and had the best time in a safe space. They’ve made new friends and met up with old friends at the same time”
- “I never thought I’d be part of planning events like this – it’s given me confidence and friends.” – Volunteer



Smallshaw-Hurst
Children's Community



COMMUNITY POWER IN ACTION

What makes these projects special isn't just the ice creams or the veg bags — it's how they happen:

- **#CommunityPower** – Ideas come from local people.
- **#CommunityLeadership** – Parents, grandparents, and young people plan, deliver, and shape the work.
- **Local Systems Change** – Our neighbourhood is showing how communities can design solutions that fit their needs and inspire others across Tameside and Greater Manchester.

This is “doing the doing”: when communities are trusted and supported, they create joyful, inclusive, and sustainable change.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- Even more 'yes days' like Hurst Fest, powered by new business sponsorships.
- Expanding Holiday Bites so no child spends summer hungry.
- Capturing more stories, recipes and smiles to share with partners and funders.
- Hosting our first-ever Courgette Summit, a celebration of food, culture and creativity!
- Supporting Cedar Park & Hurst Community Group to lead scalable #CommunityPower models peer-to-peer across Tameside and Greater Manchester.



Smallshaw-Hurst
Children's Community