

Burgess Hill Teddy Bears Picnic

7 July 2025

11.30am - 2.00pm

St John's Park

Budget: £700 from the Lions
£1000 from BHTC

Spent: £1643.62

Money from ice cream sales: £97

Breakdown: £529- x2 Inflatables
£120 - First aider
£300 - Train
£37.50 - Publicity
£8 - Hire of radios

£150 -Facepainter
£285 -Bubblemania
£19.12 -Fruit for attendees
£1.65-Refreshments for volunteers
£195 -Hire of baby change unit

Aim:

The Teddy Bears Picnic was a free event aimed at families with babies and pre-schoolers. For the fourth year in a row, we organized the event alongside The King's Church and Central Sussex Rotary, with funding from Burgess Hill District Lions. Prior to Covid, it was run by West Sussex County Council, but they no longer had the capacity to plan and deliver the event.

Number of pitches providing an activity: 16

Number of attendees: It was difficult to capture data as there was no one entry point, nor did attendees need to collect wrist bands to use the activities (as they do for Wowzer Wednesday), so the data below is only a small snapshot of who attended.

Estimated 500 across the event with 150 registrations, as below;

Adult: 63	Child under two: 39	Child over two: 48
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Attended with:

Parent: 48	Grandparent: 13	Other family member: 3	Childminder: 2
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Where they saw it advertised:

Social media: 33	Noticeboard: 2	Town Council Website: 5	Word of Mouth: 8
Group at The King's Church: 8	Walking past: 1	Nursery: 1	Been before: 8

Publicity:

The event was advertised:

- On all the notice boards across Burgess Hill
- In the Mid Sussex Times, on the Thursday prior to the event
- Correx boards next to the cricket pavilion and on the bandstand on Church Walk
- A banner at the McDonalds roundabout
- The Help Point window
- Across the Town council social media pages with several posts (where possible these tagged those involved and were also shared by other organisations to various pages)
- Several groups attending created organic posts
- On the Town Council website, with a dedicated page including an event rundown of all the available activities
- Via the event mailing list, including to schools and preschools

Event breakdown:

Various groups attended and provided entertainment and activities. All the local businesses attending did so for free but were asked to provide a free or low budget activity in return for advertisement of their business. We allowed them to have paid activities, but they were asked to ensure the costs were low.

Free activities to the public on the day included;

- Soft play, crafts and parachute song time led by The King's Church
- Soft play provided by The Triangle Leisure Centre (the Town Council Maintenance Team assisted with the transport of the items)
- Two inflatables, supplied by Brighton Bouncy Castles
- Story and rhyme time sessions led by Burgess Hill Library
- Storytime area and story sessions by Gobbledy Books
- Face painting with Mrs H Facepainting
- St Edwards' brought along a variety of sensory activities
- 'Guess how many ducks in the jar' game with Crest Swim School
- Colouring sheets from the HAF team and have a chat about their holiday activities and food programme
- Building Hope had sensory trays
- Bubblemania –walkabout entertainment and bubble station
- Mid Sussex Model Engineering Club provided the ride on mini locomotive
- Burgess Hill Nursery (based at Burgess Hill Girls) had sensory trays and their Bumblebee mascot
- Water Babies and Finn's Swim school had a guess the teddy's name
- WSCC Early Help team had sensory trays and toys

We funded the inflatables, face painting, Bubblemania and the train from the budget, so they were free for the public to use. The other activities were provided free by each business/charity, in return for a free pitch at the event.

There were a handful of budget activities too;

- 50p to play 'pick the lucky duck' for a chance to win swimming lessons with Crest Swim School
- Time 4 Children raised funds for the charity with games, 50p-£1 a go
- Book sale from Gobbledy Books with a max price of £2.50
- Park View Kiosk was open and their ice cream truck attended

The Burgess Hill District Lions mascot popped along for photographs during the day too.

Central Sussex Rotary provided marshals for both the start and end of the event and a refreshment table for volunteers and stall holders, with free pastries from The Burgess Hill and District Pantry and drink supplied by BHTC.

There were some groups booked to attend but then didn't. These were West Sussex County Council Early Years team, the Oral Health team and London Meed students, all due to staffing issues. West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service fire engine was on a call out so unable to attend and Falcon Health Chiropractic and Physiotherapy did not turn up on the day.

Feedback:

We created a QR code which is available at the events to scan as well as in notice boards afterwards. The code is linked to a Google form which we can keep adding events to without changing the code itself. The form simply asks what event you have attended, 'what went well' and 'it would be even better if...'
Here are some of the responses received for this event;

What went well?

- Excellent community event. There were lots of free or low-cost activities for young children. It seemed to be well organized, many participants.
- Lots of different things for the children to do. All free and with manageable queues.
- Good selection of stalls and activities, free entry and no need to book.
- Absolutely fantastic event, proud to be a part of the community. Lovely to have something for small children to enjoy for very little money.
- Bubbles, bouncy castle.
- Great event.
- Great stands, great variety for kids all ages.
- Great Stalls.

It would be even better if...

- There was a timetable of events e.g. rhyme time, parachute etc but I am not sure that this was adhered to. Maybe don't publish a timetable just let it happen.
- A few more gazebos for shade, these were occupied very quickly so ended up having a picnic under a tree quite far away from the main event
- Need a loud speaker/microphone to announce when something was happening...i.e. 'rhyme time is starting now'/'head over now for the parachute games'. Hard to keep track
- Longer hours-kids had too much fun at each stall, so did not get to them all.
- n/a
- Nothing - all great
- Food and drink stands
- It was great

We also had lots of lovely verbal feedback on the day from attendees.

On our Facebook post there was also a comment stating;

"Just went to this event this morning. What a fabulous event. Thank you so much Burgess Hill Town Council. Only came away because it was nap time."

I emailed the pitch holders and asked them to provide feedback; I received the following;

- Mid Sussex Model Engineering Club -**We had a good time with full train loads for most of the day. I think that we had a lot of satisfied customers (apart from a few who didn't want to get off!).**

I met with The King's Church (TKC) and Central Sussex Rotary (CS Rotary) for a debrief after the event and the following was discussed;

- Having only 2 parachute times as it is tricky to fit 3 in, and have the first later
- Try and source more gazebos for shade
- Whether we publish a timetable or not
- That running the event for longer would be a challenge

Evaluation:

The wet start to the morning meant that people arrived a little later but it also made them stay later. There was some misinformation shared on social media about the event being cancelled, which wasn't helpful but there was still a good turnout. Obviously, we have no control over the weather, and with the event being on a Monday there will always be the last-minute decision made first thing on the Monday as to whether we

can go ahead, but as with this year this decision will be made and shared around 8.30am, therefore giving stall holders as much notice as possible.

This is the first year we have hired a baby change/disabled toilet for the event, and although I don't know how many people used it, we have an obligation to provide somewhere for people to change their child's nappy. Until the Cricket Pavillion outdoor toilets are made useable, we will continue to need to hire a toilet and this will be factored into our budget.

The train and bouncy castles were as popular as ever and I will hire them both again in 2026, I would also look to hire the Bubblemania act again as this was a great addition.

In terms of making the event longer, I think this would have little value as we find many of the attendees have school aged children and therefore need to do school runs in the morning and afternoon. As well as many of the children attending still needing to nap. Increasing the length of the event would probably only benefit a small number of people but have significant impact on the groups/organisations attending, as well negative affect the volunteers used for many stalls.

The timetabled sessions seemed to go ahead as planned, so I am unsure on the feedback received. We have run the event in the past without a timetable and this didn't work, as well as having also used a PR system in the past but it didn't add much to the event. We could have a 'main entertainment area' but I feel it's better to have more than one thing happening at a time, to limit any one activity being overrun.

Kayleigh Elliott-Davidson
Event, Communications and Administration Officer
July 2025

Middy article pre-event

2 | MID-SUSSEX TIMES sussexworld.co.uk Thursday, July 3, 2025

NEWS

Teddy Bears Picnic returns to park this week

BURGESS HILL TOWN COUNCIL

Julie Holden
Contributor

The Burgess Hill Teddy Bears Picnic, our dedicated pre-school and baby event, returns for 2025 on Monday, July 7.

It'll run 11.30am-2pm in St John's Park, with activities planned specifically for under 5's!

There'll be a host of charities and businesses attending, as well as two free inflatables to enjoy and free train rides with Mid Sussex Model Engineering Club, which has been kindly funded by Burgess Hill District Lions.

Meet the team from Burgess Hill Nursery have a chat about your childcare

needs, get a free spinal or posture check from Falcon Health Chiropractic and Physiotherapy and Play games with students from London Meed.

Create a sand art picture with Tanya from Kids Bee Happy, play the 'Lucky Duck' game with Crest Swim School and check out stalls from Hope Building Confidence, St Edward's and WSCC's HAF Team.

The King's Church will be leading parachute time, as well as running crafts and we will also be joined by Water Babies, WSCC Early Years Team, and Time4Children.

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, subject to emergencies, will be bringing a fire engine



The Burgess Hill Teddy Bears Picnic returns to St John's Park on July 7.

along to the event too.

Why not come along and enjoy a story with Gobble- dy Books, join in rhyme time with West Sussex

Libraries and have a go on the soft play equipment from The Triangle?!

To see a full run down of activities and stall

holders, visit www.burgesshill.gov.uk/teddy-bears-picnic

This event had been kindly sponsored by Bur-

gess Hill District Lions, and co-organised by Burgess Hill Town Council, The King's Church and Central Sussex Rotary.

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Teddy Bears picnic fun

The sun shines for The Burgess Hill

Julie Holden
 Reporter

On Monday 7 July, Burgess Hill Town Council - working with The King's Church and Central Sussex Rotary - delivered the Burgess Hill Teddy Bears Picnic in St John's Park. With a whole range of activities for babies and pre-schoolers to get involved with!

There was a mix of businesses and community groups providing free activities on the day, including Crest Swim School, Burgess Hill Nursery, Hope Building, Confidence and Times4Children. Soft play was provided by the Triangle Leisure Centre and Burgess Hill Library brought their ever-popular Rhyme and Story sessions to the park. Children could have their face painted for free and join in with Bubblemania too!

There was parachute time led by The King's Church, as well as craft activities and story time with Gobblety Books, West Sussex County Council's Early Help and HAF teams attended with information for parents and toys for the children. St Edwards' Church and Water Babies also joined the fun with stalls and activities too!

The Burgess Hill District Lions kindly sponsored the event, allowing the children to use the inflatables free of charge, as well as enjoy free rides on the model railway, provided by Mid Sussex Model Engineering Club. The Lions mascot even popped along and joined in with the fun too!

Christine Coxshaw, President of Burgess Hill District Lions, who sponsored the event said: "The club had great pleasure again to support this community event. Such a great day of fun for all".

Brian Reynolds, The King's Church, Noel's Ark Parent and Toddler Group guitarist said "Such a privilege to be part of the King's Church team supporting the Teddy Bear's picnic. It's a brilliant community event bringing together local families and friends."

Co-organiser and Central Sussex Rotary President, Julie Smyth said: "It is always a pleasure to be part of this event, and despite the heavy rain first thing, everything went to plan and everyone seemed to really enjoy all the activities. We look forward to next year."

We would be grateful on any feedback on the event to help us shape future events, please visit <https://forms.gle/FsW7NVJWTVj6xHe9> to do so. Hopefully we will see you all back again in 2026!

Keep up to date with events organised by Burgess Hill Town Council. Including the date for the Teddy Bears Picnic in 2026 by signing up to the mailing list <https://www.burgesshill.gov.uk/town-community/town-events/emails-mailing-list/>.






Burgess Hill Teddy Bears Picnic







Photos of event



photos of stall holders

