

Wowzer Wednesday – Summer 2025

Every Wednesday from 23 July to 27 August

Initial Budget: £4,500

Extra budget added on: £665

Spent: £5165

Income: £168.60 from ice cream sales

Venues:

St John's Park, The Kiln and Church Walk

Breakdown:

Inflatables: £2,476

Crafts: £80

Circus Allstars: £275

Children Theatre: £1,404

Tom Foolery: £200

Jolf: £250

Publicity: £480

Number of Attendees: 1732 throughout the summer

Publicity:

The event was advertised:

- Summer Events Calander
- Press release as part of the 'Summer Holiday Fun in Burgess Hill'
- Article in the Middy
- Banners at McDonalds, Triangle, Keymer Parade
- Graphic in July's About Town plus it was the front cover of the magazine
- Poster in the Help Point
- Event mailer via Mailchimp
- Posts on Town Council social media and website
- Posters at Maple Drive Multisport Court and St John's Park
- Nationwide noticeboard
- Stories on Instagram and Facebook
- Correx boards at the bandstand and St John's Park
- Flyers at the Help Point
- All noticeboards in town

Overview:

This year we delivered six Wowzer Wednesday events, the same number as last year, held at St John's Park, The Kiln and Church Walk.

We started the programme with the inflatables at St John's Park. Usually these take place at the end of the summer, but we wanted to vary the programme this year and also to fit in with our resourcing. For the first time, the inflatables were set up on the cricket field rather than the Old Lido site, giving us more space for the bigger crowds. We increased the number of inflatables, hired extra staff from Brighton Bouncy Castles, and added a Councillor gazebo where families could register so we could keep track of numbers. As with the May inflatable day, we included a quieter SEND session before the main event, kindly sponsored again by Brighton Bouncy Castles.

Other activities over the summer included crafts in partnership with Burgess Hill Creative Community, circus skills, a theatre performance (Alice Through the Looking Glass), Tom Foolery, and JOLF.

Attendance figures

We collected attendance details at each event where possible, noting numbers of children and adults.

23 July - Inflatables

SEND session

Children	Adult	Total
26	12	38

Main Session

Under 8s	Over 8s	Adults
418	239	294
Total 951		
Total numbers including SEND session: 989		

30 July – Crafts

Number of bookings	64
Number of attendees	58
Number of no shows	6

6 August – Circus Allstars

Under 8s	Over 8s	Adults
54	18	41

13 August – Alice Through the Looking Glass – Theatre show

Children	Adults
180	120

20 August – Tom Foolery

Under 8s	Over 8s	Adults
140	17	53

27 August – JOLF

Children	Adults
39	21

We also asked families how they'd heard about the events, and the answers were:

Noticeboard/poster	27	Social media	169	Summer holiday flyer	11
Word of mouth	100	Website	26	Event Mailing list	10
About Town	14	School	5	Drove/Walked past	11
Radio	1	Councillor	1	Council office (HP)	2
Radio	1	WhatsApp	3	Google search	2

Feedback:

We promoted our QR feedback form at sessions and spoke with residents during the events.

Here are some of the responses for the event:

What went well:

- Well organised, not too busy
- Great organisation. Free event.
- We loved the show. Perfect setting. We brought a picnic and the relaxed setting was great for my 2½ and 5½ year olds.
- Great fun and a range of crafts
- Enjoyable show
- A lovely event for the community. And a great performer. My daughter absolutely loved it, she now thinks she is a magician

- Great show, kids entertained and very good magic.
- Events were well organised and excellent for the children.

and won't stop saying 'abracadabra beans on toast'. Thanks for organising.

- The set up was great
- The weather - excellent production great cast

It would be event better if...

- More events. More inflatables sessions. SEN sport
- More sessions!
- Space for blankets and chairs/pushchairs had been separated. It was difficult to see from a blanket towards the back for the little ones.
- As a teacher I personally think the children would enjoy an actual circus skills performance to watch as the guy is really good. Maybe children could be chosen to come up and have a go or all have a little go at the end. This definitely could be re thought!
- It was longer
- Nothing
- I can't think how I'd improve this event. I was happy with everything! Well done on a great event
- The area was far too small for all the circus skills and children! It meant you couldn't do them properly and enjoy the activities.

If the event you attended required you to book in advance, how did you find the process?

- Easy
- For the crafts: I didn't realise I needed to book but fortunately I arrived with a friend who has a place booked for a child who was unwell so I could take that spot! She said she couldn't see how to cancel the spot daily though.
- N/A

Evaluation:

Wowzer Wednesday continues to be one of our most popular summer programmes, with strong attendance and very positive feedback.

The inflatable launch was a huge success, with almost 1,000 people attending – our biggest Wowzer Wednesday to date. Although we had to postpone because of bad weather, the communication went smoothly. Updates went out through Facebook, the website, correx boards, mailers, and direct contact with suppliers and partners. Attendance numbers showed that families were happy with the change and still came along.

Crafts at The Kiln were fully booked on the day bookings opened, which shows the demand for more creative activities. Tom Foolery and Circus Allstars worked well in Church Walk, where we put chairs out to define the event space. The circus skills session was a little too busy, so next time we may need to run it in two sessions or find more space, however we are keen to deliver at the town centre and support the sand pit.

Theatre in the park was enjoyed by those who came, but numbers were lower than last year, likely due to the wet weather in the morning. The sound system was better than last year but still not ideal for an

outdoor setting. We'll need to think about whether it's worth repeating this outdoors, given the cost of a single show.

JOLF at the Stone Garden on Church Walk was well received. The Stone Garden was chosen because it's a nice flat surface, but the space was quite small and a bit tight once families got going. The feedback we had was that it would work even better in a bigger area, so that's something we can look at for next year – but again, we'd want to keep it in the town centre.

Things to think about for next year:

- Keep inflatables as a big feature and decide if we want to start and finish the programme with them.
- For busier sessions like circus skills and Tom Foolery, look at splitting them or finding more space so they don't feel overcrowded.
- Think about whether the theatre works outdoors or if we need to try something different.
- Carry on offering SEND-friendly slots as they're always really well used and appreciated.

Valentina Gaggero
Events, Communication and Administration Officer
2 September 2025

Pictures are below of the events

