



The Springfield Project
Impact Report | 2025-26



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1 | Introduction From The CEO

Reading the news around the issues impacting the children and families of Birmingham and beyond, it would be easy to become disheartened. Yet every day we see the strength and creativity of the community of Sparkhill.

Every day the staff and volunteers of the Springfield Project make a positive difference in people's lives. Through pregnancy, early years, childhood, the teenage years and continuing throughout people's lives, we are here to support the community of Sparkhill. The continuing challenges of cost-of-living pressures, inequality, housing insecurity, poor health, child poverty and social isolation mean that we see ever increasing need within the community. All of this is impacted by global issues of climate change and political shift.

What The Springfield Project does is more important than ever. Springfield remains a trusted place where people can access support, build relationships and find opportunities to move forward. We don't just respond to immediate need. We help people build confidence, develop skills and take positive next steps. This year we have taken stock on our learning from our innovative Sparkhill Child Friendly Neighbourhood programme and explored how we apply this learning to adults and the wider

community, considering how we contribute to a Thriving Neighbourhood for everyone. The most powerful impact comes when people move from receiving support to contributing to the community themselves.

There is so much that is strong in Sparkhill and our role as a community anchor organisation is as much about supporting what is strong to flourish as it is about providing services.

None of this would happen without an amazing team of staff and volunteers who bring their skills, expertise, experience and passion to everything they do. Our partnership working continues to develop and grow. From national and city-wide partners, to hyper-local, volunteer-led groups and individuals in the community, we are grateful to everyone who has contributed to our work over the past year. It is a pleasure to develop alongside you. As Anne Frank wisely said: 'how wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world'.

Sarah Robbins
CEO

2 | A Word From Our Chair

The Springfield Project is remarkable for many reasons. In a neighbourhood where so many families are simultaneously hit by the cost-of-living crisis, housing insecurity, poor health and social isolation, this Project continually evolves to find new ways of building capacity and acting strategically, while still delivering front line services that make a profound difference to all those we serve.

Whether meeting immediate need or building for the long-term, the Springfield Project is characterised by the credibility that comes from accumulated trust over many years. From its church beginnings through to the present network of partnerships, we are known as a place that can be trusted. Relationships are grown and our proudest pipeline is that of users and recipients becoming volunteers who end up as employees, for us and for others.

Personally, I believe we all benefit from knowing we are part of something bigger than ourselves. I am glad that God “puts me in my place”!

As our Project grows, I also believe it is helped by focusing on how much more it can belong to the whole of Sparkhill. Through stronger local representation in our governance and decision-making, and through the deliberate intention to enable good work that starts with others, we see the added value of our local patchwork of partnerships. This community rootedness both sustains and deepens our impact. I commend this report to you.

Tim Boyes
Chair



3 | Who We Are

The Springfield Project is a charity based in Sparkhill, Birmingham.

Born out of St Christopher's Church, we believe that every child, young person, parent, and adult in our community has the opportunity to reach their full potential and thrive.

However, deprivation, social inequality, and a lack of accessible support often create barriers to opportunity. Many families in Sparkhill face hardship, isolation, and challenges that can prevent them from thriving.

That is why we deliver a programme of community-based activities that empower, enable, and enrich the lives of hundreds of local children, young people, and families.

By removing barriers to opportunity, we help people build brighter futures and lead happier, healthier lives.

From our base at the Springfield Centre, alongside St Christopher's Church, and at our Park Road site, we provide a range of services that tackle poverty, strengthen wellbeing, and support families across the community.

Through this work, we fulfil our mission of demonstrating God's love in our community.



4 | Our Values

We embrace our values and behaviours in our work, as well as in our professional relationships with colleagues, partners and those who use our services. We do this by always:



Being
welcoming
and inclusive



Listening



Serving



Being
professional



Growing



Photos by Pete Homer

5 | Overview of Our Services

Springfield Children's Centre and Family Hub

Delivering Early Years Health and Wellbeing for children aged 0-5 years in Birmingham, Springfield Children's Centre is part of Birmingham Forward Steps (BFS), a pioneering Early Years Health and Wellbeing initiative for all children and their families living in Birmingham. It brings together health visiting and children's centre services so that families can access the help they need from pregnancy until their child starts school. Our Children's Centre is now part of 'Birmingham Family Hubs' which increases the local offer to children aged 5-19 (25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities).

Our Nurseries

Mini Springers Nursery and Park Road Nursery are OFSTED registered nurseries which offer sessional places for children in receipt of Early Educational Entitlement

grants. This includes all 3- and 4-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds. Both are inclusive nurseries and provide places for children with special educational needs.

Most children are grant funded and receive 15 hours of free childcare per week. We also accept children for 30 hour places for those eligible.

Community Services for Adults

Our Community Services for adults comprise a range of free activities for adults living in our community, to improve their health and wellbeing, build meaningful social connections, and develop new skills. These include English language classes, gentle healthy living and fitness groups, arts and crafts, cookery, and our flagship social group, Place of Welcome. All the services offered aim to improve mental health and wellbeing, by reducing loneliness and isolation amongst adults in the Sparkhill community.

Community Services for Children

Our community services for children comprise a range of activities for children and young people of all ages, from 0–18. From Seedlings Stay & Play for pre-schoolers, holiday playschemes and after-school clubs, to family events and youth opportunities, all our services for children are designed to create the best environment to help children and young people thrive through play. These activities are part of our Child Friendly Neighbourhood programme, helping to make Sparkhill a place where children feel seen, heard and proud of where they live.

Volunteering

We have a strong track record of working with volunteers at The Springfield Project. They bring enormous value to our team through their wealth of skills and talents, their energy and enthusiasm and the hard work they contribute by volunteering their time. We are proud of the personal development opportunities our volunteers get through volunteering their time, with many going on to work and training.



6 | Our Impact:

Springfield Children's Centre and Family Hub

In the last 12 months, Springfield Children's Centre and Family Hub supported a total of 1,634 parents and children, comprising of 620 adults and 1,014 children.

Early Years Service

Our Family Hub team continued to deliver high-quality Early Years services across the Hall Green District, supporting families during the critical early years of a child's development. Through a combination of targeted interventions, parent support, and integrated working with health and education partners, families were supported to build confidence, strengthen relationships, and ensure children are healthy, developing well, and ready to learn.



Targeted Stay and Play

Our School Readiness and Startwell Stay and Play sessions support families to prepare children for early education and develop the skills needed for a positive start at school. During the last 12 months, 629 children and families accessed the service.

Sessions promote positive parent-child interaction and provide opportunities for families to learn together through play. Alongside structured activities, families participate in enrichment visits to farms, nature centres, and soft play facilities, providing valuable real-world learning experiences for children.

Health promotion workshops are embedded within the programme and cover topics including oral health, healthy eating, home safety, and weaning. These sessions help parents build confidence in supporting their child's development and contribute to improved school readiness outcomes.

Summer Stay and Play

During the summer holidays, targeted Stay and Play sessions focused on healthy eating, cooking skills, budgeting, and recipe sharing. Through practical, hands-on activities, parents developed confidence in preparing healthy and affordable meals while strengthening positive interactions with their children.

The programme provided additional support for families experiencing financial hardship, including those with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). Families benefitted from sharing ideas, learning cost-effective cooking techniques, and building resilience during a period of continued cost-of-living pressures.

Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with many families requesting additional sessions in the future.

Startwell Award

The Startwell Award was successfully renewed, reflecting the team's continued commitment to high-quality early years provision and early intervention.

Staff completed Startwell training, ensuring a consistent understanding of key messages and approaches across the service. The principles and resources from the programme are now embedded within service delivery, strengthening the quality and consistency of support available to families.



Integrated Mandated Development Review (IMDR) Clinics

Integrated Mandated Development Review Clinics continued to perform above target across the Hall Green District, supporting the early identification of developmental needs and concerns.

To improve accessibility, home-based assessments were introduced, enabling families who face barriers attending appointments to access support more easily.

This flexible approach has strengthened engagement, improved access to services, and ensured that families receive timely support when concerns are identified.

Toddler Talk

During the last 12 months, 223 children and families were supported through Toddler Talk speech and language groups. Increased capacity has reduced waiting times and improved access to early intervention for children experiencing speech, language, and communication difficulties.

By supporting families to understand and encourage communication development



at home, the programme helps children develop the skills needed to engage confidently in learning and everyday life.

Parent Feedback on Early Years Service

"My child is now more confident trying new words and communicating."

"I did not realise how important simple things like routines and play were for school readiness."

"My child has grown in confidence and loves coming to the sessions."

"The sessions have given me practical ideas for supporting learning at home."

"It has really helped me learn how to cook healthy meals on a tight budget."

"I was worried about my child's development, but this group has helped me understand what SEND support really means."*

"I have been given practical strategies that work for my child's specific needs."

"It is the first time I have had clear explanations about possible SEND pathways without feeling overwhelmed."*

"It has helped me get out of the house and meet other parents."

*Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Family Support Services

Family Support Services, delivered through Early Help and Family Hub provision, ensure that families receive the right support at the right time. By providing early intervention, advice, practical assistance, and access to coordinated services, the programme helps prevent difficulties from escalating and improves outcomes for children and young people.

Support is tailored to each family's individual circumstances and focuses on building strengths, improving parenting confidence, strengthening family relationships, and promoting children's health, wellbeing, and development.

During the last 12 months:

- **475 referrals** were received for children and families requiring early intervention and family support.
- **315 new cases** were allocated to Family Support Workers, who delivered tailored packages of support.
- **702 parents** accessed support through drop-in sessions.
- **180 Early Help Assessments** were initiated.
- **248 women** received breastfeeding support.

Family Support Workers provided practical and emotional support to families, helping them address immediate challenges while building resilience and independence for the future. Through partnership working with schools, health services, and other agencies, families were supported to access the services and resources they needed to improve their circumstances.

In addition to targeted family support, many families received assistance with the rising cost of living and access to essential household items.

During the year:

- **164 families** received financial assistance through the Household Support Fund.
- **40 families** received food parcels or food vouchers.
- **50 families** received bus travel codes to improve access to appointments, services, and community activities.
- **50 families** received Christmas gifts through the Toys4Birmingham campaign.
- **50 slow cookers** were distributed to support healthy eating, budgeting, and families living with limited cooking facilities.
- **78 families** received safe sleep equipment, including Moses baskets, cot beds, and bedding, through the Safe Sleep Programme.

Feedback from families highlights the difference this support made in reducing financial pressure, improving wellbeing, and helping parents provide safe and stable environments for their children.

Family Feedback

"The £200 Household Support Fund helped us cover essentials when we were really struggling."

"We were able to focus on our family instead of constant financial worry."

"The bus codes helped us get around the area a lot more, where we could not before."

"Getting out of the house has helped with my wellbeing."

"The toys were lovely and good quality. It made Christmas feel magical for my children."

"I live in temporary accommodation. Receiving the cot bed and baby essentials made a huge difference, easing our financial strain and ensuring my baby has a safe, comfortable place to sleep."

During the year, Baby Shower events were introduced to increase engagement with antenatal and Family Hub services.

These events provide a welcoming and informal environment where expectant parents can access information, advice, and support from a range of professionals, while also connecting with other parents-to-be. By encouraging earlier engagement with support services, the events help families build confidence and access information before their baby arrives.

Feedback from Participants

"It made me feel more prepared for my baby's arrival."

"It was nice to ask questions in a relaxed and friendly setting."

"I didn't feel alone anymore after attending the event."

"The advice I received has really helped me feel more confident."

"It encouraged me to get more involved with antenatal support services."



Family Support Services Case Study: Aliya's Story*

*Name has been changed

Aliya is a mother of three children under the age of 5, who lives with her partner and is currently in the UK on a work Visa.

When Aliya was referred to the Family Support Services, she and her 3 children were sharing one bed each night, with their father sleeping on the sofa or the floor.

Through the intervention of Family Support Services:

- Bunkbeds and bedding were secured for Aliya's children.
- A baby cot and bedding were secured for Aliya's baby.

- School uniform and winter clothes were secured through the Children's Store House.
- Aliya attended Seedlings Stay and Play universal sessions.
- Aliya attended the Promoting Happier Parenting programme. This helped her develop the knowledge and skills to establish good routines with her children. Communication has improved across the family.
- A referral was made for employment support and Aliya is now working part time from home so that she can continue to care for her children.

"[The Family Support Worker]... provided a double pushchair, so it's much safer and easier for me to take them out to Children's Centre and family outings. She also supported me by providing me with stairs safety guard, nappy change for baby, food vouchers, clothing, toys and shoes for kids including school uniform for my son. I was also supported with £200."

"I am beyond happy and extremely satisfied with all these services. Everything was done with great care, consideration and quickly. All staff carried themselves responsibly and treated me with respect. Thank you so much Hasmita for making me and my family happy, relaxed and safe."



Freedom Programme

The Freedom Programme is a 12-week course for women who have experienced, or are currently experiencing, domestic abuse. The programme helps participants to recognise the signs of abusive and unhealthy relationships, understand the impact of domestic abuse on themselves and their children, and develop the knowledge and confidence needed to make informed decisions about their future.

During the last 12 months, the Freedom Programme supported 99 women, reflecting the ongoing demand for domestic abuse support within the local community. The programme provides a safe and supportive environment where women can share experiences, build understanding, and access practical support. Through increased awareness, improved confidence, and connections to specialist services, participants are supported to improve their safety, wellbeing, and independence.

Over the past year, the programme facilitated a range of positive outcomes and onward support opportunities, including:

- **20 women** referred to Parenting Programmes.
- **9 women** supported to attend the Harmony women's wellbeing group.
- **2 women** referred into volunteering opportunities.
- **15 women** referred to Early Years Stay and Play sessions.
- **10 women** referred to the National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV) for support with non-molestation orders.
- **2 women** referred to SEND Parenting Programmes.
- **6 women** supported to flee domestic abuse and access safe refuge accommodation with their children.

These outcomes demonstrate the importance of the programme in supporting recovery, improving safety, reducing isolation, and enabling women and their families to access wider sources of support.

Feedback from Participants

"The Freedom Programme is fantastic, and I am so grateful to have been part of it. It has been a real eye-opener. I will be telling my female friends about it and encouraging them not to suffer in silence, as there is help and support available in the community."

"The Freedom Programme sessions, and the way they are delivered, help you to open up about your emotions and not feel embarrassed about talking about your feelings and experiences of domestic abuse."

"The programme has been invaluable in helping me and my children. I received information about organisations that could support us, food bank vouchers, hardship grants, and advice that helped me understand how to navigate life as a victim of domestic abuse."

Parenting Courses

Through the Children's Centre and Family Hub we run a number of parenting courses aimed at equipping parents with the skills and knowledge to support their families to thrive. The Birmingham Family Hubs and Best Start for Life programme provide face-to-face and online training options for parents at every stage of family life, covering antenatal, postnatal, baby, child and teen life. Each course empowers parents with the practical tools and strategies for approaching each stage of parenthood, alongside the support parents need for building positive family relationships.

In the last 12 months:

- **31 parents** completed the Programme with 155 attendances.
- **5 women** reported that going on wellbeing walks has given them motivation to take their children for walks at the weekend.
- **3 women** identified they needed to contact their GP for counselling sessions.
- **4 women** engaged with attending universal stay and play sessions.
- **5 women** referred to English classes.
- **1 mother** shared that her bond with her children had improved with more understanding. She has now introduced the rewards system.

Promoting Happier Parenting Case Study: Dua's Story*

*Name has been changed

The Promoting Happier Parenting (PHP) programme is a five-week course that helps parents develop a better understanding of routines and boundaries, communication with children, self-care, and positive approaches to managing children's behaviour.

Dua is a single mother of two children who was referred to the PHP programme through the Freedom Programme.

"I was introduced to The Springfield Project through the Refugee and Migrant Centre (RMC). At that time, I was mentally broken. I was constantly afraid, emotional, and unsure about everything around me. I did not understand the system, the area, or how to move forward."

Through The Springfield Project, Dua attended English classes, the Wellbeing Group, the Freedom Programme, and Promoting Happier Parenting sessions.

"There, I met people who truly cared. They guided me, encouraged me, and helped me understand my rights and my worth."

Since engaging with support services, Dua has made significant progress towards rebuilding her life and creating a stable future for her family.

"Today, my life has changed. My mental health has improved, my confidence has grown, and my English has become much better. My child is now attending nursery, and I am living in my own home. I am deeply thankful to RMC and The Springfield Project for supporting me, guiding me, and helping me rebuild my life."



Togetherness

The Togetherness antenatal group, based on the Solihull Approach, supports expectant parents to understand their baby's development and increase their confidence during pregnancy, birth, and early parenting. The programme helps parents develop a sensitive and responsive relationship with their baby, while promoting emotional wellbeing for both parents and baby.

In the last 12 months, the Togetherness group supported 139 individuals: 133 women and 6 men. As a result of attending:

- **4 fathers** reported feeling more included in preparing for their baby's birth.
- **6 women** were referred to Grow Baby Bank.
- **5 parents** were referred to a Parenting Programme.

Feedback from participants demonstrates that the group helped expectant parents feel more informed, confident, and prepared for birth and early parenting.

Feedback from Participants

"I learned how to bath, hold, and check the temperature of my baby."

"I learned how my emotions can impact my baby's brain development."

"I was anxious about labour and what choices to make regarding pain relief. After attending the sessions, I felt calmer and understood more about the process of labour."

"The sessions are brilliant, and I would recommend them to all expecting parents. I was happy that my partner was able to join too."

7 | Our Impact: Our Nurseries

Mini Springers Nursery and Park Road Nursery are OFSTED-registered nurseries offering sessional places for children eligible for Early Education Entitlement funding. This includes all 3- and 4-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds.

Both nurseries provide inclusive early years provision and offer places for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Most children access 15 hours of funded childcare per week, while eligible children of working parents receive up to 30 hours of funded childcare.

Park Road Nursery

Over the past year, Park Road Nursery delivered high-quality early years education in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), supporting 72 children to make progress across all areas of learning and development.

The setting provides holistic care to children in a warm, nurturing environment. Our forest school space and continuous provision ensures that children are able

to spend much of their time outdoors.

Children made measurable progress from their starting points, particularly in communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, and early literacy skills. Progress was monitored through ongoing observation, assessment, and tracking, enabling staff to identify individual needs and provide targeted support where required. High-quality EYFS practice, reflective observation, and strong partnerships with parents and carers contributed to positive outcomes for children.





Park Road Nursery Case Study: Baashir's Story*

*Name has been changed

Baashir joined the nursery with limited communication skills and low confidence in group situations. Through targeted interventions, small-group activities, and consistent adult modelling, Baashir received tailored support to meet their individual needs.

Regular observation and responsive planning helped Baashir develop improved communication skills and increase participation in group activities. By the end of the year, Baashir was able to communicate needs more clearly, engage positively with peers, and participate confidently in daily routines.

Feedback from Parents

97% of parents reported that their child had made progress during their time at the nursery.

Parents consistently described the nursery as welcoming, with friendly and supportive staff who support both children and families effectively.

Parents reported that workshops offered by the nursery improved their understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and how children learn, enabling them to support learning at home.



Mini Springers

This year, Mini Springers provided early years education for 93 children, including:

- 24 children with identified additional needs.
- 10 children with emerging additional needs.
- 48 children who speak English as an additional language.

Over the last year, Mini Springers delivered six parent workshops, including School Readiness and Parent Partnership sessions. The nursery also facilitated a range of family engagement opportunities, including four SEND parent coffee mornings, four parent wellbeing events, and a whole nursery visit to Ash End Farm.





Feedback from Parents

"I would recommend the nursery to other parents."

"Mini Springers has been a great nursery for both my children. It's a very safe, happy and positive environment – thank you!"



Mini Springers Nursery Case Study: Harnail's Story*

*Name has been changed

Harnail is four years old and one of three siblings. Following observations and assessments, Harnail was identified as having significant delays in personal, social and emotional development, communication, and language. Harnail was largely non-verbal and displayed sensory-seeking behaviours.

A SEND Support Plan was introduced, involving regular meetings between nursery staff and parents to ensure a coordinated approach to supporting Harnail's development. As a result of this plan, Inclusion Support in Early Years (ISEY) funding was secured, enabling more focused and individualised support, including additional

one-to-one sessions to support developmental activities.

Harnail was also referred to the Neurodevelopmental Pathway (NDP) to access further specialist support and to assist with future transition planning beyond Mini Springers.

Since joining the nursery, Harnail has attended Bucket Time sessions with Attention Birmingham, designed to develop attention, listening, and communication skills. Harnail began at Stage 1 and has since progressed to Stage 3, with attention and listening skills sustained for more than five minutes. This progress demonstrates a significant improvement in communication, concentration, and engagement.

8 | Our Impact: Sounds of Play

In November 2025, the Springfield Project celebrated six years of the Sounds of Play early years music programme.

Through our role in Birmingham Forward Steps, The Springfield Project has been leading the Birmingham Early Years Music Consortium, which brought together partners from across the Early Years sector with professional music organisations and freelance musicians.

In 2019, the Consortium was thrilled to be awarded a grant from Youth Music to deliver the Sounds of Play project which ended in March 2022. This project brought the Early Years and Music workforces together to learn from each other, to develop high quality Early Years Music practice across the city, and to deliver music activities to children under 5 and their families.

In 2023, Youth Music awarded the Consortium a further £150,000 to continue to develop early years music practice and provision across Birmingham. The project, funded until November 2025, continued to build on the established relationships and offer a range of continuing professional development and music making opportunities for children, families, Early Years educators and musicians across the city.



Between 2019-2025 The Sounds of Play project enabled:

- **2,678 children** to participate in music making activities.
- **314 group sessions** for children and families to have been delivered.
- **123 professional development sessions** for the workforce to have taken place.
- **963 staff or volunteers** (Early Years educators and Musicians) to participate in professional development sessions.

This project provided a wealth of learning for Early Years practitioners and music professionals alike. For those working in these areas, the full evaluation report can be downloaded from The Springfield Project's website, along with supportive guidance materials for musicians and Early Years settings, which were created by the Sounds of Play Champions.

We want to express our sincere thanks to Youth Music, and all the partners and contributors who made this project possible. While our current funding has come to an end, the Birmingham Early Years Music Consortium and partners continue to have passion and enthusiasm for this work, and together we aim to keep the learning and momentum alive into the future.

www.springfieldproject.org.uk/sounds-of-play/



9 | Our Impact: Community Services for Adults

Our adult services provide opportunities for local people to improve their health and wellbeing, build meaningful social connections, and develop new skills.

Through a range of inclusive community activities, participants are supported to reduce isolation, increase confidence, and play an active role in their community. In the last 12 months, 470 individuals attended adult services, with a total of 3,238 attendances across all activities.



Place of Welcome

Place of Welcome provides vital social connection, practical support, and opportunities for community participation for local residents, many of whom are older people, live alone, experience poor health, or are at risk of social isolation.

This year, 243 people participated in Place of Welcome, generating a total of 983 visits. Through regular sessions, participants were able to build relationships, access support, and take part in activities that promote wellbeing, confidence, and community involvement.

A key feature of the programme is the opportunity for participants to share their skills and experiences with others. Activities such as knitting, crochet, cooking, pool, board games, and arts and crafts help foster friendships and create a sense of belonging. Through these activities, participants contribute actively to the group and the wider community. This year, participants created and donated several bags of hand-knitted hats and clothing for

new born babies at Birmingham Women's Hospital, demonstrating the positive impact of shared skills and community action.

Alongside social support, free legal advice drop-in sessions are provided in partnership with the Central England Law Centre. During the year, 173 people accessed advice on benefits and housing, resulting in an annualised income gain of £164,373 for participants - an average of approximately £950 per person. Additional information and advice were also provided through visits from Midlands Mencap, Adult Social Care, and ecobirmingham, helping participants access a wider range of support services.

During the year, a new initiative, Healthy Thursdays, was introduced to promote physical health and wellbeing. The programme offers chair-based exercise sessions, nutrition advice, and a free healthy meal, supporting participants to make positive lifestyle choices and maintain their independence.



9 | Our Impact: Community Services for Adults

The continued delivery and development of Place of Welcome was supported by a number of grants and donations. Funding from the Badger Group and Baron Davenport's Charity enabled the purchase of new activity resources, increasing the range of opportunities available to participants. Donations of food from Essity and Birmingham City Council's Winter Food Support Fund contributed towards the provision of nutritious meals prepared by the group's volunteer cooking team.

The programme also created opportunities for learning and progression. During the year, nine participants achieved Food Hygiene qualifications, enabling them to develop practical skills and contribute to meal preparation. Several participants also improved their English language skills through involvement in the group and subsequently progressed into volunteering opportunities.

A new team of volunteer "Welcomers" was established to help ensure that sessions remain inclusive, welcoming,

and accessible to new participants. Celebrations and community events further strengthened this culture of belonging and inclusion. Highlights included a visits from the Greet Primary School choir, a Christmas quiz, and a community Diwali bring-and-share celebration.

Participant feedback demonstrates the positive impact of the programme on reducing social isolation and strengthening community connections. Many participants reported feeling more connected to others and valued for the skills and experiences they bring to the group.

Feedback from Participants

"I keep coming because my friends here are like a family."

"I like it here, there's so many different people and everyone gets on."

Place of Welcome Case Study: Anna's Story

Anna first attended Place of Welcome as a participant before becoming a volunteer while looking for employment.

"I was new to the country and didn't have a job. I was alone and had no one to support me. Coming to the sessions helped me connect with other people and feel part of a community. It's such a positive experience and much better than being at home on my own."

I recently interviewed for a job and was able to talk about my volunteering at Place of Welcome. Even though I didn't have previous experience for the role, I was offered the job, and I believe my volunteering experience played an important part in that."



Mindful Movement

Mindful Movement supports women to improve their physical and emotional wellbeing through gentle exercise and mindfulness techniques. Sessions equip participants with exercises and techniques they can continue to use at home.

This year, 56 adults participated in Mindful Movement, with a total of 393 attendances.

Participant feedback demonstrates that the sessions supported increased physical activity, improved confidence, and greater wellbeing:

- **4 out of 10** participants had done no exercise before attending.
- **8 out of 10** participants now exercise outside the class, including at home.
- **2 out of 10** participants now attend additional exercise classes.
- **6 out of 10** participants said they would not attend another group if Mindful Movement did not run.



Feedback from Participants

"My knees have improved, my mobility has improved, I'm fitter."

"I've learnt a lot of exercises here I can do at home."

"It's very helpful – for my joints, my breathing – I feel very calm in my mind afterwards."

Creative English for Women's and Infant Health

Creative English for Women's and Infant Health supports adults who are new to the UK, or who have limited English language skills, to develop confidence in speaking and understanding English while improving their knowledge of health, wellbeing, and local services.

Language barriers can make it difficult for people to access healthcare, communicate with professionals, understand important health information, and participate fully in community life. The programme provides a welcoming and inclusive environment where participants can improve both their English language skills and their confidence in navigating everyday situations.

Sessions combine language learning with practical health education through interactive activities, discussions, and role-play exercises. Participants develop the skills needed to communicate effectively in a range of situations, including attending healthcare appointments, speaking with schools, contacting emergency services, and accessing local support services.



Photo by Pete Homer

Topics covered throughout the programme include:

- Healthy lifestyles and nutrition.
- Pregnancy and postnatal health.
- The importance of vaccinations during pregnancy.
- Mental wellbeing and self-care.
- Family planning.
- Accessing healthcare services and support.

Participants also gain valuable knowledge about responding to medical emergencies

and communicating confidently with healthcare professionals.

By improving both English language skills and health literacy, the programme helps individuals become more independent, make informed decisions about their health, and engage more actively within their communities.

During the last 12 months, 148 parents participated in Creative English for Health. Participants reported increased confidence in speaking English, improved understanding of health services, and stronger connections with their local community.

Feedback from Participants

"The traffic light system on food was something new to me. I am diabetic and have high blood pressure, so it was helpful to understand which foods are good and bad for my health."

"Learning how to track my periods using the My Calendar app was extremely helpful."



Photo by Pete Homer

Creative English for Women's and Infant Health Case Study: Robina's Story

Robina moved to England from Spain to care for her mother-in-law, who has a long-term heart condition. Before attending the course, she lacked confidence in her English and found it difficult to communicate in important situations.

During the programme, Robina developed her English language skills and learned how to communicate more effectively with healthcare professionals and emergency services.

When her mother-in-law later experienced severe breathing difficulties, Robina was able to use the knowledge and confidence gained through the course to contact emergency services, communicate clearly with the call handler, and provide the information needed for an ambulance to respond quickly and appropriately.

Robina's experience demonstrates how improved language skills and health literacy can increase confidence, reduce barriers to accessing services, and enable people to respond effectively in emergency situations.



Creative Wednesdays

Creative Wednesdays provides opportunities for adults to connect with others, develop creative skills, and share their own knowledge and talents. This year, 46 adults attended the group, with a total of 323 attendances.

Participants took part in a range of art and heritage activities, including a heritage embroidery and photography project with The Exchange, exploring the history of local bank buildings and banking.



The group also developed a yarn-bombing project, which will be displayed at The Springfield Project during the summer.

The group encourages participants to share their skills with others. During the yarn-bombing project, some participants taught others how to crochet and shared new patterns. One participant is now preparing to share her skills with young people through Girls Club, demonstrating how the programme supports confidence, leadership, and wider community contribution.

Creative Wednesdays Case Study: Noor's Story*

"I used to meet friends and go out for walks, but then when I moved here to look after my mother-in-law, my routine was completely changed. Then one day a neighbour saw my art and told me this is the place to learn."

"I started to come on a Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. This place is amazing - everyone gets encouraged, it's friendly, encouraging and supportive. If you're at home most of the time, you end up cooking, doing jobs or just watching TV. But here you do exercise, you relax, you meet people. You learn different things, you make friends - I've made good friends."

*Name has been changed

IT Skills and Employment Support

The Springfield Project hosted externally delivered IT skills and employment support programmes to help adults build confidence, improve digital skills, and access support with job searching.

Women's Wellbeing delivered a range of IT courses, from basic digital skills to Level 2 digital skills and digital skills for employment. These sessions supported participants to develop practical skills, including creating CVs and applying for jobs. In total, 44 adults attended IT skills provision, with 169 attendances.

Employment support was provided by Trident through the PURE Project. This one-to-one advice included support with CVs, job searching, applications, and interview preparation. During the year, 48 adults accessed employment support, with a total of 96 attendances.

Together, these programmes helped participants improve their confidence, develop employability skills, and take practical steps towards future training, volunteering, and employment opportunities.

Thriving in Sparkhill - Community Consultation

At The Springfield Project we are exploring what it means for Sparkhill to be a great place to grow up, and a place where people of all ages can thrive. We want Sparkhill to be a physical, emotional and social environment that residents can be proud of, and where they know they are cared about. We care about people, the local and global environment and about harnessing the great potential and power of our community.

We are looking at what role our organisation can play in supporting this, using a neighbourhood, place-based approach which is about more than just delivering services - it is about developing a shared vision for Sparkhill and working together towards that vision.

During 2025-26 we conducted some research with local people, exploring the things that contribute to a sense of thriving locally, what currently hinders that sense of thriving, and what would make Sparkhill an even better place to live.

We carried out interviews with people from a variety of backgrounds who live or work locally, and two group discussions. This



qualitative research was part of a wider process which also incorporated: a panel event during our Festival of Sparkhill, inviting local people to help create a vision for Sparkhill 2035; an ongoing informal skills audit among people who participate in our adult groups; an audit of local groups and community organisations; and reference to local statistics.

Based on this research, we are exploring plans to support the further development of a thriving neighbourhood locally in three key areas:

1 | Building on what's strong

For example:

- Recognising and celebrating our community and working to strengthen friendship, neighbourliness and skills sharing.
- Continuing and building on the work we are doing to address social isolation, mental health and access to employment.
- Better communicating what The Springfield Project has to offer everyone.
- Supporting participants to lead activities and initiate ideas.
- Working with St Christopher's church to better use our spaces for a thriving neighbourhood.

2 | Within The Springfield Project

For example:

- Developing further activities that can address social isolation.
- Developing further opportunities that support women and young people into employment and/or local action.
- Continuing to provide help and support for those experiencing low income.
- Developing community-led activities in a variety of local green spaces.
- Seeking funding to support work which enables new community-led initiatives to emerge and flourish.

3 | Working with other local organisations

For example:

- Exploring how to improve local communications and equip people to report and solve local issues.
- Developing a scheme to foster hyperlocal ownership and care of our streets.
- Supporting residents to develop a Springfield litterbusters group.
- Enabling children, young people and women to shape improvements to Sparkhill park and local green spaces.
- Supporting residents to have a greater voice on issues that impact them,
- Supporting campaigns and local action for safer streets, active travel and reduction in car use.

We want to extend our warmest thanks to all the local people who participated in this consultation. Their thoughts and ideas are invaluable to us, and are helping to shape the future of Sparkhill. But this is only the beginning. The conversations with local people and partners will be continuing as we begin to put our plans into action.

10 | Our Impact: Community Services for Children

Sparkhill - A Child Friendly Neighbourhood

The Child Friendly Neighbourhood programme aims to create a neighbourhood where children feel safe, valued, involved, and able to play. Supported by The National Lottery Community Fund through the Reaching Communities programme, the initiative focuses on improving childhood experiences, strengthening child development outcomes, encouraging active citizenship, building organisational capacity, and developing a deeper understanding of the needs of local children and families.

This year marked the third and final year of Phase 1 of the programme. Over the last 12 months, Child Friendly Neighbourhood continued to grow as a trusted neighbourhood approach that places children, young people, and families at the heart of community life.

Across the year, approximately 314 individual children engaged in regular Child Friendly Neighbourhood activities, generating more than 3,600 engagement interactions. An additional 600+ children took part in events, including our annual Creative Families Festival and our Growing Up Green Festival.



Holiday provision reached 116 children eligible for Free School Meals, providing safe, enriching experiences during school holidays.

The programme offered a wide range of opportunities for children and young people, including stay and play sessions, SEND provision, arts activities, a girls' group, environmental projects, youth volunteering, community action days, healthy lifestyle programmes, and youth leadership opportunities.

A significant achievement this year was the continued development of youth voice and participation. Eleven young people became active members of the Youth Advisory Board, helping to shape local projects, influence decision-making, and contribute to positive change within their community.

Youth volunteering continued to grow, creating pathways for young people to develop confidence, leadership skills, and a sense of active citizenship.

Throughout the year, the programme continued to respond to the needs identified by children and families. This included strengthening the SEND offer through Sunshine Club, developing more inclusive environments, increasing opportunities for parent voice, and creating progression pathways from participation into volunteering and leadership roles.

Most importantly, children built confidence, developed friendships, broadened their horizons, and strengthened their connection to Sparkhill. Families reported feeling less isolated, more supported, and better connected to both services and their local community. Child Friendly Neighbourhood is increasingly recognised as a trusted community approach that supports children, young people, and families to thrive.



Child Friendly Neighbourhood

Case Study: Sharnaz's Story*

*Name has been changed

When Sharnaz first attended Child Friendly Neighbourhood, she was new to the UK and spoke very little English. She presented as quiet, lacked confidence, and found it difficult to make friends and connect with other children.

She initially attended Art Club and Girls Group, where staff created a welcoming and supportive environment that helped her feel safe, included, and able to participate at her own pace.

Over time, she began to build friendships, grow in confidence, and engage more actively in sessions. As her confidence increased, she started contributing ideas, supporting younger children, and taking on greater responsibility within activities. Recognising her potential, staff encouraged her to become a Young Volunteer.

Since becoming a Young Volunteer, she completed a range of training,

including safeguarding, wellbeing, and volunteer induction. She supported the delivery of Girls Group and holiday playschemes, developing valuable communication, teamwork, and leadership skills.

She subsequently became a member of the Youth Advisory Board, where she helps shape projects and opportunities for other young people within the community. One of her proudest achievements this year was sharing her journey at the Young Volunteers Celebration Event, where she confidently presented her story and reflected on how far she has come.

Her journey demonstrates the power of trusted relationships, inclusive spaces, and meaningful opportunities for participation. From a quiet young person new to the country and struggling to find her place, she developed into a confident young leader who is helping to shape opportunities for other children and young people in Sparkhill.

Seedlings

Seedlings is a stay and play group for families with children from birth to four years old. The group provides a safe, welcoming, and nurturing environment where parents and carers can play, interact, and build positive relationships with their children.

The sessions support early learning, child development, and school readiness by encouraging positive parent-child interaction, confidence, communication, and social development. Seedlings also provides an important opportunity for parents to build relationships, reduce isolation, and access support within the community.

The group welcomes families from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures. Many families attending Seedlings experience challenges including financial hardship, housing difficulties, unemployment, language barriers, and social isolation. These pressures can affect children's development and wellbeing, making early support increasingly important.

Over the past year, Seedlings has supported several families whose children required additional developmental support. Where needed, children are offered priority access to attend twice a week for a term, with

progress reviewed to assess whether further support would be beneficial. Families are also referred to Family Support Services where additional guidance or practical support is needed.

Seedlings aims to ensure that children and families receive support early, before challenges escalate. Strong relationships with families are central to this work, enabling volunteers to identify needs, build trust, and connect families with wider services. During the year, families were signposted to food banks and other support available through the Children's Centre.

Community celebrations also play an important role in helping families feel connected and included. Throughout the year, Seedlings held Easter, Christmas, and end-of-summer celebrations for each session group. These events gave families opportunities to come together, celebrate, and create positive shared memories with their children.



Photos by Pete Homer

10 | Our Impact: Community Services for Children

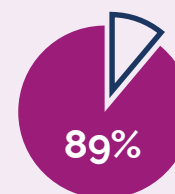
Photos by Pete Homer



Seedlings attendances:



There was a total of **2,556 attendances** across 116 sessions from 549 individuals.



89% of parents reported that they had met other parents and made friends as a result of coming to Seedlings.

Feedback from Seedlings Participants

"Coming to seedlings helps my child grow in confidence."

"My child enjoys the role play and very happy with the activities, healthy snacks and very helpful staff."

Holiday Playschemes

The Springfield Project delivers holiday playschemes at The Springfield Centre and Park Road Nursery during the Easter and Summer school holidays. The playschemes provide children with safe, enriching opportunities to play, learn, and socialise during school breaks, while also helping to reduce holiday pressures on families through the provision of a free nutritious meal.

In the last 12 months , a total of 24 holiday playscheme sessions were delivered, engaging more than 100 children aged 6–11 who were eligible for Free School Meals.

The programme offered a wide range of creative, educational, and play-based activities designed to support children's wellbeing, confidence, and social development.

Alongside organised activities, children benefited from a rich play environment that encouraged imagination, creativity, and friendship-building. Children participated in arts and crafts, outdoor play, board games, imaginative role play, and team activities, creating opportunities to develop communication skills, confidence, resilience, and positive relationships with their peers.



This year we were able to take children on several trips thanks to funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Children participated in visits to The Children's Country House at Sudbury and Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery and worked alongside artists to create their own artwork inspired by local heritage.

Playscheme attendances:

Summer 2025

Springfield:

Children 36

Attendances 138

Park Road:

Children 29

Attendances 104

Easter 2026

Springfield:

Children 32

Attendances 90

Park Road:

Children 32

Attendances 80

Feedback from children and families demonstrated that the playschemes provided enjoyable and meaningful experiences throughout the holidays, helping children remain active, connected, and engaged.



Playschemes Case Study: Samma's Story*

*Name has been changed

Samma attended The Springfield Project's holiday playscheme over several weeks. Prior to attending, she lacked confidence in social situations and found it difficult to manage her emotions during competitive activities and games.

Through participation in team activities, creative sessions, and inclusive play opportunities, Samma was supported to build positive relationships with other children and develop greater emotional resilience. Staff created a nurturing environment that encouraged confidence, cooperation, and positive social interaction.

Over the course of the programme, Samma developed strong friendships, improved her ability to manage feelings of frustration when things did not go her way, and became increasingly confident in participating in activities. By the end of the playscheme, she was engaging enthusiastically each day and contributing positively to group activities.

Her parents expressed gratitude for the support provided and highlighted the positive difference the playscheme had made to her confidence and development. They described the staff as "amazing" and praised the welcoming environment that enabled their child to thrive.



BOOST

The BOOST Healthy Childhood Programme supports children aged 9–11 who are inactive or at risk of obesity to develop healthier lifestyles through increased physical activity, improved nutrition awareness, and positive behaviour change. In the last 12 months 24 children completed the BOOST Healthy Childhood Programme,



generating 104 attendances across 12 weeks of activity and healthy lifestyle learning.

The programme forms part of the Healthy Neighbourhoods initiative and has been developed in partnership with Säheli Hub, local schools, health professionals, and community organisations. During the year, significant work took place to establish referral pathways and delivery partnerships across Sparkhill and the wider Central locality, including collaboration with local primary schools, GP practices, the School Nursing Team, Sparkhill Children's Zone, Säheli Hub, and specialist physical activity providers. Boost is supported by Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System through the Fairer Futures Fund.

The BOOST programme is delivered over 12 weeks and combines:

- **40 minutes** of structured physical activity each week.
- **20 minutes** of interactive nutrition and healthy lifestyle education.
- **Fitness trackers** to encourage activity and support goal setting.
- **Opportunities** for children to develop healthy habits at home and at school.

The programme name, BOOST (Balance, Outdoor Play, Optimal Nutrition, Strength, Teamwork), was chosen by young people from the Child Friendly Neighbourhood Youth Advisory Board, ensuring that youth voice and participation are embedded within the programme.

During the year:

- **24 children** participated in the programme, 11 boys and 13 girls.
- **104 attendances** were recorded across programme sessions.
- **12 sessions** were delivered.
- **24 children** engaged with Child Friendly Neighbourhood activities for the first time.
- Delivery took place across Greet Primary School and Springfield Primary Academy.

Children were referred by school staff based on low activity levels or concerns relating to healthy weight. Weekly physical activity sessions included circuits, team games, dodgeball, breakdancing, yoga, gymnastics, ball skills, and curling. Nutrition activities included food tasting, the Eatwell Plate, food label challenges, growing microgreens, smoothie bike activities, and learning about sugar content in food and drinks.

A key feature of the programme is the emphasis on children's voice and choice. Children are encouraged to suggest activities and music, helping shape the sessions and ensuring they remain engaging and enjoyable. Requests for activities such as dodgeball and football have been incorporated into delivery, helping children feel listened to and valued.

Throughout the programme, children demonstrate increasing confidence, improved understanding of healthy food choices, and greater awareness of how physical activity contributes to overall health and wellbeing. Consistent attendance across both schools reflects the positive engagement achieved during the year.

Parental engagement is also embedded throughout the programme. Parents and carers receive information and resources at the start of the programme and are invited to midpoint and celebration sessions, helping to reinforce learning and encourage healthy lifestyle changes across the whole family.

As the programme develops, learning from participant feedback, parent voice, and outcome data will continue to inform future delivery and support the expansion of BOOST both within schools and the wider community.

BOOST Programme Case Study: Abid's Story

*Name has been changed

Abid, aged 10 and in Year 5, was referred to the BOOST programme by staff at Greet Primary School. He had been identified as being inactive and at risk of obesity. During initial conversations, Abid shared that he wanted to try something new and build his confidence.

Baseline assessments showed that he was physically active for less than one hour per day and spent between two and three hours a day using screens.

From the outset, Abid attended regularly and engaged positively with both the physical activity and nutrition elements of the programme. He demonstrated enthusiasm for trying new activities and remained motivated throughout the 12 weeks.

Over time, noticeable improvements were observed in his stamina and willingness to participate in physical activity. Despite the additional challenges of taking part during Ramadan, he continued to demonstrate resilience, commitment, and a positive attitude.

His parent reported that he looked forward to attending each week and was enjoying being more active.

"Abid is very happy with this BOOST Club. He is enjoying it a lot, feeling active and fresh. I am also happy to see his interest and enjoyment. Thank you for providing such a great opportunity."



Girls Group

Girls Group provides a safe, inclusive, and culturally sensitive space for girls to build confidence, develop friendships, and strengthen their social and emotional wellbeing.

The programme offers a range of structured activities shaped by the interests of participants, including sports, creative projects, discussions, and social activities. These opportunities encourage girls to develop new skills, express themselves, and build positive relationships with their peers.

During the last 12 months, 19 sessions were delivered, supporting 22 girls. In response to participant feedback and attendance patterns, the age range was refined to focus on younger girls aged 10–13, resulting in increased engagement and more consistent participation.

The group provides an important space for girls to socialise, access positive role models, and develop a sense of belonging within their community. Through regular attendance, participants build confidence, develop communication skills, and are encouraged to take on leadership opportunities.





Girls Group Case Study: Vaneeza's Story

*Name has been changed

Vaneeza moved to the UK from Pakistan and first attended The Springfield Project through the holiday playscheme. Initially, she was quiet and unsure of herself as she adjusted to a new environment, culture, and community.

Over time, she began attending Art Club and Girls Group, where she was able to express herself creatively, build friendships, and develop a sense of belonging. Through positive peer relationships and consistent support from staff, her confidence steadily increased, and she became more comfortable sharing her ideas and participating in group activities.

Recognising her enthusiasm and growing confidence, staff supported Vaneeza to become a Young Volunteer. She now assists with both Art Club and Girls Group, helping to create positive experiences for younger participants.

More recently, Vaneeza has joined the Youth Advisory Board, providing further opportunities to develop her confidence, leadership skills, and ability to contribute to decision-making within the community.

Her journey demonstrates how inclusive and nurturing environments can help young people build confidence, develop leadership skills, and progress from participants to positive role models for others.



Sunshine Club

Sunshine Club is a monthly stay-and-play session for primary-aged children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families. The club provides opportunities for children to play, learn, and socialise outside school, while parents and carers can access peer support, information, and specialist advice.

In the last 12 months Sunshine Club continued to provide a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for children with SEND and their families. Through play, sensory activities, creative sessions, and social opportunities, children are supported to participate at their own pace and enjoy positive experiences within a setting where they feel accepted and understood.

The club supports children with a wide range of needs, many of whom face barriers to accessing mainstream activities. Through regular attendance and trusted relationships with staff, children build confidence, develop friendships, and strengthen their sense of belonging within their community. For many families, Sunshine Club remains one of the few local opportunities where their child can participate comfortably and consistently.

As well as supporting children, Sunshine Club provides an important source of support for parents and carers. Families develop friendships, share experiences, and reduce feelings of isolation by connecting with others who understand the challenges and joys of raising a child with additional needs. Staff also provide informal early help support, information, and signposting, helping families access services and support at the right time.

Throughout the year, feedback from families and observations of children's experiences have informed improvements to the provision. This has included adapting the environment to improve accessibility for children using wheelchairs and mobility aids, introducing additional age-appropriate sensory resources, and developing opportunities for increased parent voice and participation in shaping the service.

These improvements help ensure that Sunshine Club remains responsive to the needs of local families and continues to provide an inclusive space where children with SEND can play, learn, and thrive, while families feel supported, connected, and valued.



Sunshine Club Case Study

During the early stages of Sunshine Club, staff noticed that one family regularly arrived late to sessions and often appeared overwhelmed when they arrived. Staff spoke to the parent in confidence, who explained that attending the club required a significant change to their child's usual weekend routine. The pressure of trying to arrive on time was creating stress for both the child and parent before the session had even begun.

Rather than viewing this as an isolated issue, staff spoke with other families attending Sunshine Club. Many parents shared similar experiences and agreed that a slightly later start time would make sessions more accessible and less stressful for their families.

In response to this feedback, the start time of Sunshine Club was moved later in the morning. The change had a positive impact on participation and accessibility. Families reported feeling less rushed and more able to prepare their children for the session,

resulting in a calmer start to the day. Attendance became more consistent, and the club became accessible to additional families who had previously struggled to attend.

This example demonstrates the importance of listening to families and involving them in shaping services. By responding directly to parent feedback, Sunshine Club was able to remove barriers to participation and create a more inclusive experience for the families it serves.

Sparkhill: A Child's Eye View

Sparkhill: A Child's Eye View was a child-led heritage project that explored the history of growing up in Sparkhill through the perspectives of local children. Through heritage walks, creative workshops, visits, oral histories and community events, children connected with local stories, people, places, and traditions while developing a stronger sense of belonging, pride, and ownership within their neighbourhood.

The project brought together children, families, artists, local historians, and community members in a year-long exploration of Sparkhill's heritage. Through local history walks, family conversations, and visits to Birmingham Museums Collection Centre, Thinktank, and The Children's Country House at Sudbury, children discovered that heritage is not only about the past but also about their own experiences, communities, and family stories.

A key achievement of the project was helping children recognise their place within Sparkhill's story. Through creative workshops, children identified places that are important to them, including local shops, parks, roads, schools, places of worship, and the River Cole. These places became



the inspiration for a series of collaborative artworks, including murals, sculptures, textiles, and creative installations developed alongside local artists.

More than 100 children and family members participated in heritage visits, with family engagement increasing throughout the project. The creative process encouraged

intergenerational conversations about local history, identity, and belonging, enabling children and families to share stories and experiences across generations.

The project culminated in a Festival of Sparkhill and a series of public exhibitions attended by local residents. Children's artwork was subsequently displayed



at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, providing many children and families with their first experience of seeing their own stories and achievements celebrated in a major cultural venue.

The project created a lasting legacy through permanent artworks, educational resources,

and heritage materials that continue to be used by schools and community groups. Most importantly, children developed a greater sense of pride in where they live and a stronger understanding that their voices, experiences, and stories are an important part of Sparkhill's heritage.

At the start of the project, many children viewed history as something that happens elsewhere or to other people. Through local history walks, heritage visits, and conversations with family members, they began to understand that their own experiences and communities form part of the area's history.

As their confidence grew, children became increasingly proud of sharing their ideas and identifying their contributions within the artwork. One child, pointing to the final exhibition, proudly said:



"I made those jalebi, and I think the road is mine too!"

For many children and families, the exhibition at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery was a significant moment. It reinforced that their stories, experiences, and neighbourhood matter and deserve to be recognised as part of Birmingham's heritage.

Sparkhill - A Child's Eye View was made possible with The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Thanks to National Lottery players, we were able to run this year-long programme of community heritage activities celebrating the many experiences of childhood in Sparkhill through history."

11 | Volunteering

Volunteers make a significant contribution to The Springfield Project, bringing a wide range of skills, experience, and enthusiasm that enhance the delivery of services across the organisation.

Volunteering also provides opportunities for personal and professional development, supporting individuals to build confidence, develop skills, and progress towards employment, education, and training.

In the last 12 months:



62 people
volunteered with
The Springfield
Project, including
52 adult volunteers
and 10 active youth
volunteers.



This equated to
2,554 hours
of volunteer time,
worth a median
annual value of
£44,107*.



50
new volunteers
completed a
volunteering induction.



20
volunteers
progressed into
employment.



4
volunteers moved into
further education, training,
or apprenticeships.

*Based on the median hourly earnings 2024 of £17.52 for those over 23 years of age as of 2025. Figures obtained from the ASHE.

Volunteer engagement remained strong throughout the year, with feedback indicating high levels of satisfaction and positive volunteering experiences. Volunteers reported feeling supported in their roles and confident in their ability to contribute effectively to activities and services.

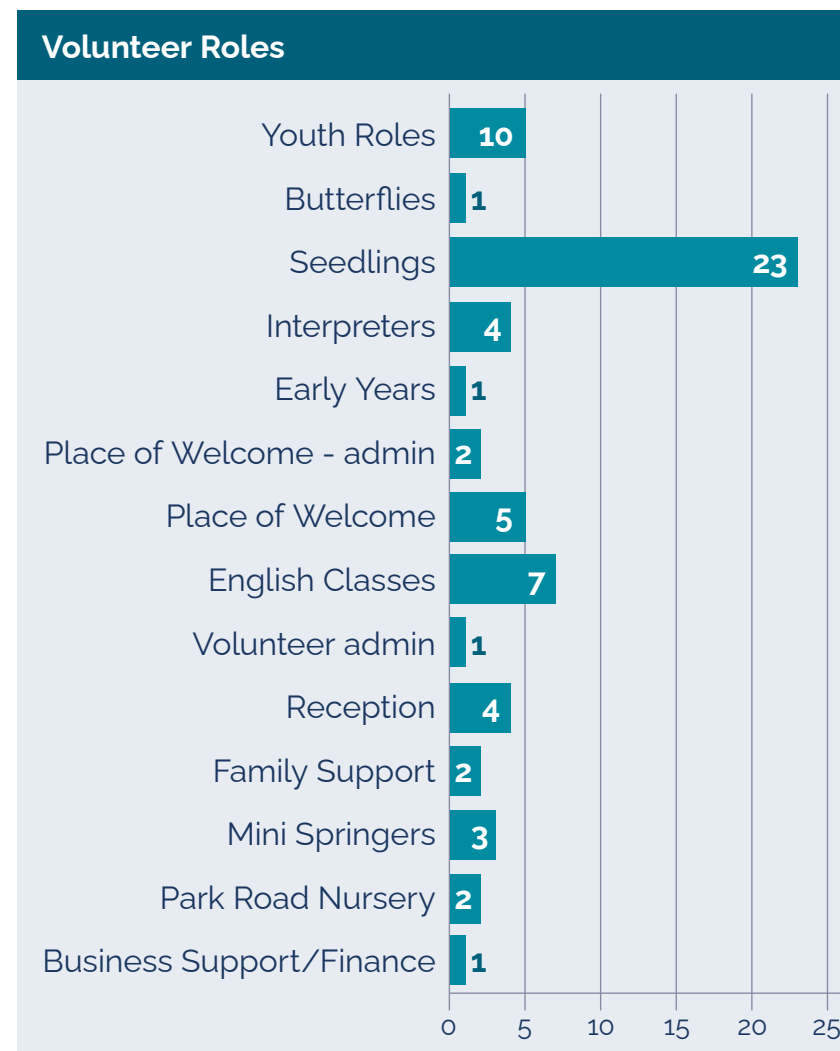
A range of training opportunities, employability workshops, social events, and volunteer recognition activities were delivered to support volunteer development. These opportunities helped volunteers strengthen practical skills, increase confidence, and develop a greater sense of connection to the local community.

The impact of volunteering extended beyond service delivery. Many volunteers reported increased readiness for employment, enhanced transferable skills, and greater confidence in pursuing future opportunities. The progression of volunteers into employment, education, and training demonstrates the role volunteering can play in supporting positive outcomes for individuals and strengthening community capacity.

Breakdown of individual volunteers including inactive from different groups as of 31 March 2026:

Characteristic	Number	%
Female volunteers	56	95%
Jobseekers (minimum)	27	61%
Hall Green District	45	76%
Sparkhill Ward	26	59%
Parents of children under 5 in Hall Green	10	17%
Parents of children under 5	12	27%
Previous service users	25	57%
SOA 0-10%	10	23%
St Christopher's Church members	4	7%

Breakdown of different active volunteer roles as of 31 March 2026: (Some volunteers have more than one role)



Volunteering Case Study: Aqsa's Story

Before joining The Springfield Project in October 2025, Aqsa was at the beginning of her professional journey and eager to gain practical experience, particularly in administration. She took on a variety of responsibilities that helped her gain hands-on experience and develop new skills, from day-to-day tasks to more advanced administrative duties.

Guidance from staff played a key role in Aqsa's development, helping her feel supported and providing opportunities for collaboration and mentorship. Alongside this, she completed a range of training opportunities that strengthened her skills and confidence in a professional environment.

Over time, Aqsa became more self-assured in her role. Tasks that once felt unfamiliar became second nature, and her communication skills improved

significantly. With a solid foundation of skills and experience, she is focused on continuing her development and building on her achievements. Her journey demonstrates how volunteering can support both personal and professional growth.

"I would absolutely recommend volunteering to others. It is a great way to gain practical skills, receive professional training, and build the confidence needed for the workplace. I am much more confident now than when I started. Alongside my administrative role, dealing with parents and visitors and managing the reception desk, I took part in Safeguarding and First Aid training. I also had the opportunity to attend Digital Skills and Employability workshops, which helped me build practical skills, boost my confidence, and prepare for future professional opportunities."



Feedback from Volunteers

"Volunteering here in The Springfield Project has really helped with skills and confidence honestly, I feel confident now when I talk to other people. Now I'm looking for a job because I know I can do it."

"I have been volunteering with The Springfield Project for a few years, I have really enjoyed my time volunteering and feel proud to be supporting the local community."

"It's been a wonderful experience to work with The Springfield Project, I feel more confident, and I've gained new skills and knowledge along meeting some beautiful people."



12 | Environmental Sustainability

During the year 2025-26 we have continued our work with ecobirmingham through the Building Greener Communities project to help us embed sustainability into our core services, deliver practical environmental activities, and support community-led responses to the climate crisis. Our goal is to reach 25% household adoption of at least one sustainability action in Sparkhill.

As part of this project we have developed a sustainable action plan for the Springfield Centre to help decrease our carbon footprint. With advice from an external energy expert, we have:

- Installed infrared taps, to save water.
- Converted all lighting to LED sensor lights to save energy.
- Installed thermal blinds which help to prevent overheating in the summer.
- Increased composting and recycling points.
- Installed a destratification fan in the Springfield Centre to improve heat efficiency by keeping the atrium area cool in summer and warm in winter.
- Updated our environmental policy and introduced an ethical purchasing policy to ensure we make sustainable choices both at strategic and practical levels.

We have run campaigns to encourage staff and service users to be more environmentally focused. These have included:

- Meat-free Mondays because reducing meat consumption is one of the most impactful changes an individual can make.
- Encouraging car sharing and introducing a car sharing mileage payment.
- Introducing a cycling mileage payment.
- Buy nothing this January and encouraging reusing items.

Community Engagement

During 2025-26, through Building Greener Communities:

- **70 people** participated in energy advice sessions and learnt how they can lower their heating bills and reduce their carbon footprint.

- **53 people** participated in active travel sessions and learnt the benefits of walking, cycling and public transport for health and the environment.
- **23 people** attended air fryer courses learning how to create healthy meals and save energy in the home.
- **40 people** attended Bikeability sessions, some pedalling for the first time and others improving their cycling skills. Participants learnt about the benefits of cycling over car use to their health and the environment.
- **81 people** created their own sustainability plans.
- **452 people** participated in environmental awareness sessions.
- A total of **5,625 people** engaged with the online environmental content from The Springfield Project and ecobirmingham.

Case Study: Swap & Play

The Swap & Play event was a highly successful community-led clothes swap, bringing together families to reduce waste, share resources and connect socially in a welcoming environment.

A total of 29 adults and 23 children attended the event. Participants collectively exchanged 185 clothing items, demonstrating strong engagement with reuse practices. Attendees brought their own clothes to swap and were issued with a token card system, allowing a fair and transparent exchange based on the number of items contributed.

There was a particularly strong selection of children's clothing, alongside a wide range of women's clothing and good-quality men's items. This variety ensured high levels of satisfaction and successful swaps.

In addition to clothing swaps, 15 attendees accessed free energy advice, extending the event's sustainability impact beyond textiles. In feedback, 80% of respondents

reported improved environmental awareness, particularly around reducing waste and reusing items.

Free, healthy refreshments were provided, including plastic-free fruit-infused water. Following the swap, families made full use of the stay-and-play areas. Parents socialised while children played together, contributing to a strong sense of community and wellbeing.



Participant Feedback

"This was a great event and I would love to attend more swaps. The quality of the items were to a good standard."

Swap & Play successfully combined waste reduction, environmental learning, family-friendly activity and social connection. It created a positive, inclusive community atmosphere with clear environmental and wellbeing outcomes.

At the end of the second year, The Springfield Project has seen a culture shift. Sustainability is now embedded into our culture. The ecobirmingham team have supported us through practical, simple steps always delivered with care and warmth, and an understanding of what is realistically achievable.

We are very grateful to ecobirmingham for inviting us on this journey and supporting us towards improving our practice in becoming environmental stewards both of our organisation and of our neighbourhood.





13 | Our Supporters

We would like to say a big thank you to all our funders, donors, friends, volunteers and supporters who have given so much to our community this year. Thanks to your generosity we have been able to keep providing vital support to the Sparkhill community throughout the year, helping us have a positive impact on the lives of people in Sparkhill, and reflecting our mission to show God's love in the community.

- Badger Group
- Baron Davenport's Charity
- BBC Children in Need
- Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System
- Birmingham City Council Household Support Fund, funded by the Department for Work and Pensions
- Birmingham City Council Warm Welcome Grant
- Bring it on Brum
- Central England Law Centre
- ecobirmingham
- Essity
- Faith Action
- THE GRIMMITT TRUST
- Knowle Parish Church
- Moseley Community Development Trust
- National Lottery Community Fund
- Säheli Hub
- Sport England
- The National Lottery Heritage Fund
- TK Maxx & Homesense Foundation
- West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner – My Community Fund
- Youth Music

The Springfield Project is enormously grateful to Mitel and Baynel for generously donating time and expertise to support the production of this Impact Report.

13 | Our Supporters



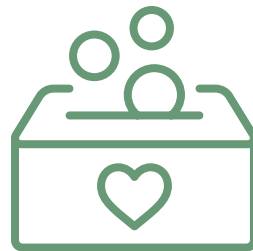
14 | How You Can Support Us

If this report has inspired you there are several ways you can support The Springfield Project and the vital work we do. We always welcome people who want to get involved as volunteers, donors and supporters. You will be helping to make a difference for hundreds of local families each year and truly showing God's love in our community.

Make a donation

You can donate online and help us to support those who need us most. A one-off donation of any size will be greatly appreciated. If you can afford it, a regular gift will help give long-term security to our organisation, which in turn will protect our ability to continue to support our Sparkhill community. Your generosity will make a big difference.

Visit www.springfieldproject.org.uk/support-us/make-a-donation



Volunteer

Anyone can apply to become a volunteer. We embrace inclusivity and diversity and value the skills, enthusiasm and commitment brought by staff and volunteers of different faiths and none.

Visit www.springfieldproject.org.uk/support-us/volunteer to find out how you can get involved.



The Springfield Project

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Park Road Nursery

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Tel: 0121 759 0090

Registered charity no. 1134977

Company Registration no. 06582318

