Registered Charity No. 1166483

Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2025

The King's Award
for Voluntary Service

The MBE for volunteer groups awarded 2024

ASHTON UNITED IN THE COMMUNITY

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Report of the trustees for the year ended 31st December 2025

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the period ended 31st December 2025. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charity's trust deed, the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Reference and administrative information

Charitable Incorporated Organisation Name: Ashton United in the Community
Charitable Incorporated Organisation Number: 1166483
Date Registered: 12th April 2016

Trustees

The trustees serving during the year to 31st December 2025 were as follows:

Michael George Brown	
Andrew Clayton	Secretary
Julie Wilson	
David Burke	
Jill Tichborne	
Pete O'Brien	Treasurer
Eric Clegg	

Secretary Contact Details

Mr Andrew Clayton
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Project Manager Contact Details

Stephen Hobson
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Bankers

Trustee Savings Bank
Po Box 373
Leeds
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Objectives and activities

The purposes of the charity are:

1. The promotion of community participation in healthy recreation in particular by the provision of facilities for the playing of football and other sports.

2. To act as a resource for young people up to the age of 25 living in Tameside, Greater Manchester, and the surrounding areas by providing advice and assistance and organising programmes of physical, educational and other activities as a means of:

(a) advancing in life and helping young people by developing their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals;
(b) advancing education;
(c) relieving unemployment

3. Providing recreational and leisure time activity in the interests of social welfare for people living in the area of benefit who have need by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, poverty or social and economic circumstances, with a view to improving the conditions of life of such persons.

Appointment of trustees

As set out in the constitution trustees are elected by the members of the charitable organisation attending the Annual General meeting. Trustees are appointed for a period of three years and shall retire from office by rotation based on their length of service and may offer themselves for re-election.

Trustee induction and training

Trustees are given information about their role and responsibilities on first being appointed

They are also given a copy of the constitution, information about staffing and the charity management, and are shown copies of policy documents.

Organisation

The trustees administer the charity and meet approximately every 6 weeks. A volunteer Project Manager has been appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity and he is supported by a paid Community Development Officer, originally operating on a freelance basis, but following a pilot scheme appointed in April 2021 as a member of Ashton United in the Community staff, on an annual contract, subject to funding. Sadly this post was made redundant in July 2024 due to lack of funding.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of our trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee or senior manager with any service providers must be disclosed to the full board of trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. Trustees must declare any conflict of interest as a standard agenda item at each meeting.

Structure, governance and management

Ashton United in the Community is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by its constitution dated 3rd March 2015 and registration as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Foundation) number 1166483 with the Charity Commission on 12th April 2016.

The current Board of Trustees number 7 people. There is no Chair Person, the Chair Person being elected at each meeting for the duration of the meeting and to have the casting vote in the circumstances of a need to make a decision. The trustees recognise there is room for additional members and will actively seek to recruit the right people for the role.

The Trustees and volunteers

The Trustees of Ashton United in the Community CIO have the necessary skills and experience to govern the charity. In addition, we have access to several advisors including capacity builders, fundraisers, accountants, IT, PR & marketing consultancy's. As well as qualities such as concern for the community, Trustees and Advisors have a range of skills between them including HR, financial management, legal, project planning, senior public and private sector management, retail, public relations/media and marketing, and fundraising.

Smallshaw Hurst Profile – A United Community

Smallshaw Hurst and District encompassing Hurst Cross and the home to AUITC and Ashton United Football Club (AUFC), where all our events and activities take place—is among the top 2% most deprived neighbourhoods in England. Over the past year, we have engaged with approximately 3,000 individuals, the vast majority of whom are local residents.

We address key local issues identified through consultations with our current and potential users. Our work has been entirely delivered by local volunteers, supported by our Community Development Officer (until July 2024). Our events and activities are designed specifically for members of the local community, reflecting the challenges they face, such as limited or no disposable income, and widespread poor mental and physical health and wellbeing. Where children are involved, most come from disadvantaged backgrounds, including living in poverty, having parents who are unemployed, not in education or training, or being part of single-parent families or the care system.

The outlook for our community remains tough, with high inflation, rising fuel costs, reductions in benefits, and significant national insurance costs further straining household finances.

Throughout the year, AUITC has collaborated with partners to deliver coordinated efforts aimed at systemic change for the benefit of the entire community. A special thanks goes to Smallshaw Hurst Children's Community, with whom we have closely worked to align strategies, organise events, and run activities.



This highly effective partnership structure functions like a jigsaw puzzle, with each organisation contributing its unique piece. This collaboration has facilitated joint consultations to identify needs,

common issues, and a shared pool of skills and specialist knowledge, bringing significant benefits such as:

- Economies of scale
- Shared learning
- Resource sharing among staff and volunteers
- Joint initiatives
- Consistent and compatible monitoring and evaluation systems
- Comprehensive impact measurement

Over the past five years, the partnership has flourished, growing stronger as joint initiatives are launched and trust, confidence, and mutual understanding among partners deepen providing local people with services and activities delivered within a sphere of trust and openness.



As AUITC continues to gain recognition as a key player in the community and an "anchor charity," we've seen a notable outcome: local individuals and groups increasingly turn to us for assistance, viewing us as a reliable resource in times of need. While maintaining our core operations, we are fortunate to have the support of trustees and funding partners who value our ability to adapt and address emerging needs, no matter how diverse.

Our capacity to connect with others and guide them toward solutions has allowed us to expand the range of services we offer or influence. However, our greatest challenge—shared by our partners—remains meeting the growing demand for support with ever-diminishing resources.

A Review of Achievements and Performance

Ashton United in the Community (AUITC) continued to support residents of Smallshaw, Hurst, Hazelhurst and Broadoak through activities addressing social isolation, financial hardship, health inequalities and barriers to participation. The charity's purposes include promoting healthy recreation, supporting young people's education and personal development, and providing recreational and leisure opportunities to improve the lives of people experiencing disadvantage.

During 2025, the charity engaged with approximately 3,000 individuals, predominantly from the local community. Activities were shaped by consultation with residents, volunteers and partner organisations, ensuring that provision reflected local needs. Most services remained free at the point of access.

The Luncheon Club continued to provide older residents with meals, companionship and access to advice in a welcoming setting. Weekly provision running from November 2024 to May 2025 attracted up to 50 people per session, with more than 90 registered members. Additional activities during 2025 included a summer tea party, a seaside trip for 50 attendees and volunteers, and two Christmas lunches. The club helped participants build friendships, reduce isolation and access information from health, housing and welfare services.

In partnership with Andy's Man Club, AUITC supported regular peer-led sessions for men experiencing mental health difficulties. The Hurst Cross group recorded 1,094 attendances during 2025, including 124 new attendees. Participants also accessed volunteering opportunities, helping them develop confidence, social connections and a sense of purpose.

Weekly Digi Drop-In sessions, delivered with PCrefurb and volunteer Digital Champions, provided practical support with smartphones, computers and online services. Participants reported increased confidence and

independence, improved access to information and reduced digital exclusion. Collaboration with local public health partners also enabled health awareness activities, talks, vaccinations and screening opportunities in a familiar community setting.

AUITC continued to support Cedar Park Pantry through volunteer assistance, shared capacity and use of its community van. The pantry, now operating as a separate charitable organisation, had a membership exceeding 400 families. The van also supported partner activities, food collections and the Action Together Tameside Toy Appeal. Joint working with Ashton United Football Club and its Supporters Association enabled Christmas gifts to be provided to children at Tameside Hospital.

Community events remained an important means of bringing residents together and providing accessible cultural and recreational opportunities. HurstFest, delivered with Smallshaw Hurst Children's Community and other partners, welcomed approximately 2,000 people to a free day of food, entertainment and activities. The 33rd Hurst Village Brass Band Contest attracted 31 bands and approximately 400 spectators, supported by 20 volunteers.

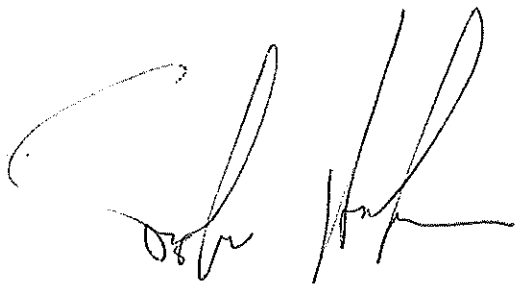
Volunteers remained central to the charity's work, supported by sessional workers and the trustees. Opportunities included event delivery, catering, administration and grounds maintenance, alongside training and practical experience to build skills and employability. Partnerships with schools and education providers also supported young people through practical learning at Hurst Cross. Consultation with volunteers informed work on induction, training and a volunteer handbook.

The charity operated in a challenging environment, with growing demand and limited staffing capacity. Trustees prioritised core activities while maintaining service quality and safeguarding standards. The regular Skillz and Drillz holiday programme could not be delivered because a suitable, affordable venue was unavailable, although activities were provided at HurstFest.

Grant income increased from £39,423 in 2024 to £63,931 in 2025, an increase of more than 62%. This support, together with donations, partnership contributions and volunteer time, enabled the charity to maintain its principal services. Nevertheless, securing sustainable funding for operational staffing remained a priority, as reliance on trustees, volunteers and sessional workers placed continuing pressure on capacity.

Looking ahead, the charity intends to maintain its core provision, strengthen partnerships and secure resources for a more sustainable operating model. Local consultation will continue to guide its work, with a focus on improving wellbeing, reducing isolation and helping residents participate more fully in community life.

Further details of our activities, projects and volunteer case studies are available in our Annual Impact Report for 2025 available on request and on our Charities Commission listing.



Steve Hobson
Ashton United in the Community
Project Manager

Investment powers and policy

The trustees, having regard to the liquidity requirements of operating the charity, have kept available funds in a 'Treasurers Account'.

Reserves policy and going concern

The balance held in unrestricted reserves at 31st December 2025 was £18,901 of which all are free reserves, after allowing for funds tied up in tangible fixed assets.

The Charity's main source of income is grants and charitable donations. The Trustees consider that it is appropriate to prepare the accounts on a going concern basis and, consequently, the accounts do not include any adjustments that would be necessary if these sources of income should cease.

The trustees aim to establish and maintain free reserves in unrestricted funds at a level which equates to approximately three months of unrestricted charitable expenditure. The trustees consider that this level will provide sufficient funds to respond to applications for grants and ensure that support and governance costs are covered.

The trustees consider that the charity is a going concern. Any reliance on grant funding is managed through a flexible approach to activities and project delivery.

Risk management

As the charity continues to establish itself the trustees will conduct regular reviews of the major risks to which the charity may be exposed and systems will be established to mitigate those risks.

Financial Review

During the year Ashton United in the Community were successful in a number of grant applications. We are extremely thankful for the support of the organisations providing grant support.

Trustees responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure for that period.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees will be required to:

- Select suitable accounting principles and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP;
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures that must be disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is appropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with legal requirements. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

By order of the trustees

Peter O'Brien
Treasurer

Date: 27th October 2026

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF ASHTON UNITED IN THE COMMUNITY REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1166483

I report on the accounts of the charity, for the year ended 31st December 2025 which are set out on pages 10 to 21.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner
The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed. The charity is preparing accrued accounts and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiners Report
My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out below.

Independent Examiner's Statement
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records have in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act,

have not been met; or
(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: .....

Jim Hilton Jones FCCA

Date: 27th October 2026

Hilton Jones t/a Community Accountancy Service
Hollinwood Business Centre, Albert Street, Oldham OL8 3QL

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025
(INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)

	Further Details	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds Year Ended 31 December 2025 £	Total Funds Year Ended 31 December 2024 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	(3)	648	-	648	15,400
Charitable Activities	(4)	5,000	41,835	46,835	30,500
Other Trading Activities	(5)	2,827	-	2,827	8,101
Other Income		-	-	-	-
Total		8,475	41,835	50,310	54,001
Expenditure on:					
Raising Funds	(6)	1,200		1,200	1,277
Charitable Activities	(6)	11,080	23,890	34,970	64,047
Total		12,280	23,890	36,170	65,324
Net income/(expenditure)		(3,805)	17,945	14,140	(11,323)
Transfers between funds	(17)	(169)	169	-	-
Net movement in funds		(3,974)	18,114	14,140	(11,323)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	(17)	22,875	9,203	32,078	43,401
Total funds carried forward	(17)	18,901	27,317	46,218	32,078

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 13 to 21 form part of these accounts.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets:			
Tangible assets	(11)	-	-
Total fixed assets		-	-
Current assets:			
Stocks	(12)	-	-
Debtors	(13)	702	494
Cash at Bank & in Hand		46,424	32,755
Total current assets		47,126	33,249
Liabilities:			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(14)	908	1,171
Net current assets or liabilities		46,218	32,078
Total assets less current liabilities		46,218	32,078
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	(16)		
Provisions for liabilities		-	-
Total net assets or liabilities		46,218	32,078
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	(17)	27,317	9,203
Unrestricted income funds	(17)	18,901	22,875
Total charity funds		46,218	32,078

Approved on behalf of the Trustees Management Committee

Peter O'Brien

Andrew Clayton

Date: 27th October 2026

The notes on pages 13 to 21 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 December 2025

Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	Year Ended 31 December 2025	Year Ended 31 December 2024
	£	£
Net movement in funds	14,140	(11,323)
Add back depreciation	-	4,149
Deduct investment income	-	-
Decrease/(increase) in stocks	-	-
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(208)	941
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(263)	(169)
Net cash used in operating activities	13,669	(6,402)
Cash flows from investment activities:		
Interest	-	-
Purchase of fixed assets	-	-
Net cash provided by investing activities	-	-
Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents during the year	13,669	(6,402)
Cash and cash equivalents brought forward	32,755	39,157
Cash and cash equivalents carried forward	**46,424**	**32,755**

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2025

1. Accounting policies

(a) Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The accounts (financial statements) have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities 2019 preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 1st January 2019 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

(b) Funds structure

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donor or trust deed. There are 18 restricted funds.

Unrestricted income funds comprise those funds which the trustees are free to use for any purpose in furtherance of the charitable objects. Unrestricted funds include designated funds where the trustees, at their discretion, have created a fund for a specific purpose.

Further details of each fund are disclosed in note 17.

(c) Income recognition

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donations are recognised when the charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank. Dividends are recognised once the dividend has been declared and notification has been received of the dividend due.

(d) Expenditure Recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. All expenses including support costs and governance costs are allocated or apportioned to the applicable expenditure headings. For more information on this attribution refer to note (f) below.

(e) Irrecoverable VAT

Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the expenditure heading for which it was incurred.

(f) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support costs. Governance costs comprise all costs involving the public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice. These costs include costs related to independent examination and legal fees together with an apportionment of overhead and support costs.

Governance costs and support costs relating to charitable activities have been apportioned based on type of expense. The allocation of support and governance costs is analysed in note 8.

(g) Costs of raising funds

The costs of raising funds consists of advertising.

(h) Charitable Activities

Costs of charitable activities include governance costs and an apportionment of support costs as shown in note 7.

(i) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation
All assets costing more than £500 are capitalised and valued at historical cost. Depreciation is charged on the following basis:

Equipment	33.33% on cost
Motor Vehicles	25% on cost

(j) Realised gains and losses
All gains and losses are taken to the Statement of Financial Activities as they arise. Realised gains and losses on investments are calculated as the difference between sales proceeds and their opening carrying value or their purchase value if acquired subsequent to the first day of the financial year. Unrealised gains and losses are calculated as the difference between the fair value at the year end and their varying value. Realised and unrealised investment gains and losses are combined in the Statement of Financial Activities.

(k) Pensions
The charity currently does not administer contributions to a pension scheme on behalf of individuals.

(l) Debtors
Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

(m) Creditors and provisions
Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

2. Related party transactions and trustees' expenses and remuneration
The trustees all give freely their time and expertise without any form of remuneration or other benefit in cash or kind

Expenses paid to the trustees in the year totalled £304 (2024: £nil). This related to travel expenses for one trustee and a volunteer.

3. Donations and Legacies

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	Total Funds Year Ended 31
	Year Ended 31 December 2025	Year Ended 31 December 2025	Year Ended 31 December 2025	December 2024
	£	£	£	£
Donations	648	-	648	15,400
	648	-	648	15,400

Previous reporting period:

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds
	Year Ended 31 December 2024	Year Ended 31 December 2024	Year Ended 31 December 2024
	£	£	£
Donations	15,400	-	15,400
	15,400	-	15,400

4. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	Total Funds Year Ended 31 December 2024
	Year Ended 31 December 2025	Year Ended 31 December 2025	Year Ended 31 December 2025	
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted and Restricted grants:				
Action Together - Andy's Man Club	-	-	-	1,000
Anton Jurgens Trust	-	-	-	3,000
Garfield Weston	5,000	-	5,000	-
CRH Charitable Trust	-	7,253	7,253	6,000
The National Lottery Fund	-	19,757	19,757	-
Duchy of Lancaster	-	-	-	2,000
The Charity Service	-	3,000	3,000	-
Granada Foundation	-	-	-	2,000
Jigsaw Foundation		4,525	4,525	-
Jigsaw Housing	-	-	-	6,000
Manchester Guardian Society	-	-	-	2,000
Barclays Community "Sported" Foundation	-	-	-	2,000
Trident Challenge Hub Foundation	-	-	-	4,000
FM DES Voicecap Charity	-	-	-	1,000
Tameside MBC - Digital Inclusion	-	5,000	5,000	-
Tameside MBC - Let's Talk Cancer	-	2,300	2,300	-
Tameside MBC - Luncheon Club	-	-	-	1,500
	5,000	41,835	46,835	30,500

Previous reporting period:

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds
	Year Ended 31 December 2024	Year Ended 31 December 2024	Year Ended 31 December 2024
	£	£	£
Restricted grants:			
Action Together - Andy's Man Club	-	1,000	1,000
Anton Jurgens Trust	-	3,000	3,000
CRH Charitable Trust	-	6,000	6,000
Duchy of Lancaster	-	2,000	2,000
Granada Foundation	-	2,000	2,000
Jigsaw Housing	-	6,000	6,000
Manchester Guardian Society	-	2,000	2,000
Barclays Community "Sported" Foundation	-	2,000	2,000
Trident Challenge Hub Foundation	-	4,000	4,000
FM DES Voicecap Charity	-	1,000	1,000
Tameside MBC - Luncheon Club	-	1,500	1,500
	-	30,500	30,500

5. Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted Year Ended 31 December 2025	Restricted Year Ended 31 December 2025	Total Funds Year Ended 31 December 2025	Total Funds Year Ended 31 December 2024
	£	£	£	£
Income from Van Rental & Other Recharges	2,367	-	2,367	4,462
Fundraising Income	460	-	460	3,639
	2,827	-	2,827	8,101

Previous reporting period:

	Unrestricted Year Ended 31 December 2024	Restricted Year Ended 31 December 2024	Total Funds Year Ended 31 December 2024
	£	£	£
Income from Van Rental & Other Recharges	4,462	-	4,462
Fundraising Income	3,639	-	3,639
	8,101	-	8,101

6. Expenditure

	Community Engagement in Tameside	Year Ended 31 December 2025	Year Ended 31 December 2024
	£	£	£
Expenditure on raising funds:			
Advertising	1,200	1,200	-
Fundraising costs	-	-	-
Event costs	-	-	1,277
	1,200	1,200	1,277
Expenditure on charitable activities:			
Employment Costs	(306)	(306)	13,197
DBS Costs	-	-	64
Volunteer Expenses	1,345	1,345	3,747
Licences	-	-	51
Grounds Expenses	-	-	50
Donations Paid	825	825	-
Refreshments	510	510	189
Project Costs	11,022	11,022	14,811
Motor Expenses	843	843	1,738
Room & Facility Hire	10,468	10,468	15,085
Subscriptions	61	61	1,085
Computer & Internet Costs	1,296	1,296	561
Insurance	1,002	1,002	1,029
Governance	7,812	7,812	8,135
Post, Printing & Stationery	92	92	156
Depreciation	-	-	4,149
	34,970	34,970	64,047
	36,170	36,170	65,324
Unrestricted funds		12,280	4,801
Restricted funds		23,890	60,523
		36,170	65,324

7. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

As per note 6.

8. Allocation of governance and support costs

The breakdown of support costs and how these were allocated between governance and other support costs is shown below:

	General Support	Governance	Total 2025	Basis of apportionment
Accountancy Fees	-	908	908	type of expense
Trustee Expenses	-	304	304	type of expense
Other Professional Services	6,600	-	6,600	type of expense
	6,600	1,212	7,812	

Previous reporting period;

	General Support	Governance	Total 2024	Basis of apportionment
Accountancy Fees	-	895	895	type of expense
Room Hire for Trustee Meeting	-	90	90	type of expense
Other Professional Services	7,150	-	7,150	type of expense
	7,150	985	8,135	

9. Analysis of staff costs

	Year Ended 31 December 2025	Year Ended 31 December 2024
	£	£
Wages and Salaries	(306)	10,729
Redundancy	-	2,146
Social Security Costs	-	-
Pension Costs	-	322
	(306)	13,197
Charitable activities	(306)	13,197
Support costs	-	-
	(306)	13,197

The average number of employees during the year was 0 (2024: 1).

The charity considers its key management personnel comprises the trustees and consultant project manager. The total employment benefits, including employer pension contributions of the key management personnel were £nil (2024: £nil).

No employee has benefits in excess of £60,000.

10. Independent Examiner Fees

	Year Ended 31 December 2025	Year Ended 31 December 2024
	£	£
Independent examination fees	908	895
	908	895

11. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Motor Vehicles	Equipment	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 01 January 2025	14,388	12,473	26,861
Additions	-	-	-
At 31 December 2025	14,388	12,473	26,861
Depreciation			
At 01 January 2025	14,388	12,473	26,861
Charge for Year			-
At 31 December 2025	14,388	12,473	26,861
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 December 2025	-	-	-
At 31 December 2024	-	-	-

12. Stocks

The charity does not hold stocks of any items.

13. Analysis of debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Prepayments	702	494
	702	494

Debtors and prepayments relate to restricted funds £nil (2024: £nil) and unrestricted funds £702 (2024: £494).

14. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Accruals	908	865
Taxation and social security	-	306
	908	1,171

15. Deferred income

The CIO did not have any deferred income at the period end.

16. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Provisions for liabilities	-	-
	-	-

17. Analysis of charitable funds

Analysis of movements in unrestricted funds

	Balance at 01 January 2025	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 December 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
General Fund	22,875	8,475	(12,280)	(169)	18,901
	22,875	8,475	(12,280)	(169)	18,901

Previous reporting period:

	Balance at 01 January 2024	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 December 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
General Fund	4,806	23,501	(4,801)	(631)	22,875
	4,806	23,501	(4,801)	(631)	22,875

Name of unrestricted fund:	Description, nature and purpose of the fund
General Fund	The "free reserves" after allowing for all designated funds

Analysis of movements in restricted funds

	Balance at 01 January 2025	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 December 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
Charities Trust	2	-	(2)	-	-
CRH Charitable Trust	1,050	7,253	(6,480)	-	1,823
The National Lottery Fund	-	19,757	(3,001)	-	16,756
Duchy of Lancaster	283	-	-	-	283
The Charity Service	-	3,000	(975)	-	2,025
Granada Foundation	150	-	(150)	-	-
Jigsaw Foundation	-	4,525	(3,663)	-	862
Jigsaw Housing	3,605	-	(1,694)	-	1,911
Manchester Guardian Society	1,387	-	(1,410)	23	-
Tameside MBC - Digital Inclusion	-	5,000	(1,501)	-	3,499
Tameside MBC - Let's Talk Cancer	-	2,300	(2,229)	-	71
High Sheriff's Trust	21	-	(21)	-	-
Community Fund	59	-	(59)	-	-
Community Fund - Picking up the Pieces	3	-	(3)	-	-
Community Fund - Happy Hurst	11	-	(11)	-	-
Tameside MBC	1,131	-	(1,044)	-	87
Trident Challenge Hub Foundation	645	-	(784)	139	-
Tameside MBC - Luncheon Club	856	-	(863)	7	-
	9,203	41,835	(23,890)	169	27,317

17. Analysis of charitable funds

Analysis of movements in restricted funds

Previous reporting period:

	Balance at 01 January 2024	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 December 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Action Together - We're in this Together	3,986	-	(3,986)	-	-
Action Together	4,027	-	(4,319)	292	-
Action Together - Andy's Man Club	-	1,000	(1,025)	25	-
Anton Jurgens Trust	-	3,000	(3,000)	-	-
Action Together - Volunteer Recognition	8,209	-	(8,207)	-	2
Charities Trust	1,000	-	(1,014)	14	-
CRH Charitable Trust	-	6,000	(4,950)	-	1,050
Duchy of Lancaster	-	2,000	(1,817)	100	283
Granada Foundation	-	2,000	(1,850)	-	150
Jigsaw Housing	580	6,000	(2,975)	-	3,605
Manchester Guardian Society	-	2,000	(613)	-	1,387
Barclays Community "Sported" Foundation	-	2,000	(2,000)	-	-
High Sheriff's Trust	2,475	-	(2,454)	-	21
Community Fund	516	-	(457)	-	59
Community Fund - Picking up the Pieces	5,797	-	(5,794)	-	3
Community Fund - Happy Hurst	5,090	-	(5,079)		11
Tameside MBC	1,756	-	(625)	-	1,131
Trident Challenge Hub Foundation	-	4,000	(3,355)	-	645
FM DES Voicecap Charity	-	1,000	(1,200)	200	-
Tameside MBC - Luncheon Club	5,159	1,500	(5,803)	-	856
	38,595	30,500	(60,523)	631	9,203

Name of restricted fund:	Description, nature and purpose of the fund
Charities Trust	for volunteer support
CRH Charitable Trust	to support Andy's Man Club Men's Mental Health support group
The National Lottery Fund	for volunteer Co-ordination, equipment , recognition and training
Duchy of Lancaster	for a digital drop in ICT support club and for a luncheon club
The Charity Service	for a luncheon club
Granada Foundation	for a community band festival
Jigsaw Foundation	for a food and friends project - luncheon club
Jigsaw Housing	towards running costs of Hurstfest community event
Manchester Guardian Society	for a luncheon club
Tameside MBC - Digital Inclusion	for the digital drop in project
Tameside MBC - Let's Talk Cancer	for health promotion and cancer awareness
High Sheriff's Trust	towards general running costs of Hurstfest community event
Community Fund	for a volunteer project
Community Fund - Picking up the Pieces	to set up a food pantry
Community Fund - Happy Hurst	for volunteer engagement, Hurstfest, Hurst Band Contest, Gardening Group, marketing and communications
Tameside MBC	for the purchase of a van
Trident Challenge Hub Foundation	for a volunteer support programme
Tameside MBC - Luncheon Club	for a luncheon club

18. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Total 2025
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand	19,107	-	27,317	46,424
Other net current assets/(liabilities)	(206)	-	-	(206)
Creditors of more than one year	-	-	-	-
Total	18,901	-	27,317	46,218

	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£
Previous reporting period:				
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand	24,202	-	8,553	32,755
Other net current assets/(liabilities)	(1,327)	-	650	(677)
Creditors of more than one year	-	-	-	-
Total	22,875	-	9,203	32,078

19. Financial Instruments

The charity only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised on a transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at an amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Registered Charity No. 1166483

Annual Impact Report 2025

The King's Award
for Voluntary Service

The MBE for volunteer groups awarded in 2024

Patron: Jonathan Sayer

Impact Report of the trustees for the period 1st January 2025 to 31st December 2025

The trustees present their annual impact report for the period ended 31st December 2025.

Reference and administrative information

Charitable Incorporated Organisation Name: Ashton United in the Community
Charitable Incorporated Organisation Number: 1166483
Date Registered: 12th April 2016

Trustees

The trustees serving during the year to 31st December 2025 were as follows:
Michael George Brown
Andrew Clayton (Secretary)
Julie Wilson
David Burke
Jill Tichborne
Pete O'Brien (Treasurer)
Eric Clegg

Secretary Contact Details

Mr Andrew Clayton
4 Constantine Street
Oldham OL4 3HB
Tel: 07801 351046
Email: info@auitc.co.uk

Project Manager Contact Details

Stephen Hobson
6 Parkwood Drive
Rawtenstall
BB4 6RP
Tel: 07868 849184
Email: stevehobsonaufc@live.co.uk

Bankers

Trustee Savings Bank, Sort Code: 77-76-18 - TSB Bank Po Box 373, Leeds, LS14 9GQ

Objectives and activities

The purposes of the charity are:
1. The promotion of community participation in healthy recreation in particular by the provision of
facilities for the playing of football and other sports.
2. To act as a resource for young people up to the age of 25 living in Tameside, Greater Manchester, and the surrounding areas by providing advice and assistance and organising programmes of physical, educational and other activities as a means of:

(a) advancing in life and helping young people by developing their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals;
(b) advancing education;
(c) relieving unemployment

3. Providing recreational and leisure time activity in the interests of social welfare for people living in the area of benefit who have need by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, poverty or social and economic circumstances, with a view to improving the conditions of life of such persons.

Structure, governance and management

Ashton United in the Community is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by its constitution dated 3rd March 2015 and registration as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Foundation) number 1166483 with the Charity Commission on 12th April 2016.
The current Board of Trustees number 7 people. There is no Chair Person, the Chair Person being elected at each meeting for the duration of the meeting and to have the casting vote in the circumstances of a need to make a decision. The trustees recognise there is room for additional members and will actively seek to recruit the right people for the role.

Appointment of trustees

As set out in the constitution trustees are elected by the members of the charitable organisation attending the Annual General meeting. Trustees are appointed for a period of three years and shall retire from office by rotation based on their length of service and may offer themselves for re-election.

Trustee induction and training

Trustees are given information about their role and responsibilities on first being appointed. They are also given a copy of the constitution, information about staffing and the charity management, and are shown copies of policy documents.

Organisation

The trustees administer the charity and meet formally approximately every 8 weeks although there is regular contact with trustees on a daily/weekly basis. A volunteer Project Manager has been appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity and he is supported by trustees, sessional workers and volunteers where appropriate.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of our trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee or senior manager with any service providers must be disclosed to the full board of trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. Trustees must declare any conflict of interest as a standard agenda item at each meeting.

The Trustees and volunteers

The Trustees of Ashton United in the Community CIO have the necessary skills and experience to govern the charity. In addition, we have access to several advisors including capacity builders, fundraisers, accountants, IT, PR & marketing consultancy's. As well as qualities such as concern for the community, Trustees and Advisors have a range of skills between them including HR, financial management, legal, project planning, senior public and private sector management, retail, public relations/media and marketing, and fundraising. All trustees are local people either living or working in the area of benefit.

Smallshaw Hurst Profile – A Community Connected

Smallshaw Hurst and District, including Hurst Cross, is home to Ashton United in the Community (AUITC) and Ashton United Football Club (AUFC), where all of our events and activities are delivered. The area falls within the top 2% most deprived neighbourhoods in England. During the past year, we engaged with approximately 3,000 individuals, the vast majority of whom live within the local community.

Our work is shaped directly by the priorities identified through ongoing consultation with current and prospective service users. All delivery has been led by local volunteers, supported by trustees and sessional deliverers. Activities and events are specifically designed for local residents and take account of the significant challenges they face, including little or no disposable income and widespread issues relating to mental and physical health and wellbeing. Where children and young people are involved, many come from disadvantaged circumstances, including poverty, parental unemployment or economic inactivity, single-parent households, or experience of the care system.

The wider context for our community remains extremely challenging. Persistently high inflation, rising fuel costs, reductions in welfare support, and increased national insurance contributions continue to place considerable pressure on already stretched household budgets.

Throughout the year, AUITC has worked collaboratively with a range of partners to deliver coordinated activity aimed at achieving longer-term, systemic change for the benefit of the whole community. In particular, we would like to recognise the strength of our partnership with Smallshaw Hurst Children's Community. Together, we have aligned strategies, jointly organised events, and delivered shared activities. A standout example was HurstFest, led by Lydia Wright. Her commitment and determination in successfully managing the event during her pregnancy demonstrated extraordinary dedication to the community, for which we are deeply grateful.

Our partnership approach operates much like a jigsaw, with each organisation contributing its own distinct strengths and expertise. This collaborative model has enabled joint consultation to identify shared needs and challenges, alongside pooling skills and specialist knowledge. As a result, the partnership has delivered clear benefits, including:

- Economies of scale
- Shared learning and good practice
- More effective use of staff and volunteer resources

- Joint initiatives and co-delivery
- Consistent and compatible monitoring and evaluation
- More robust and comprehensive measurement of impact

Over the past ten years, community partnerships have continued to strengthen, underpinned by growing trust, confidence, and mutual understanding. This has ensured that local people can access services and activities within a supportive environment characterised by openness and reliability.

As AUITC's profile has grown, we are increasingly recognised as a key local organisation and an "anchor charity" within the community. Consequently, individuals and community groups are more frequently turning to us for support, viewing AUITC as a trusted and dependable point of contact in times of need. While remaining focused on our core work, we are fortunate to be supported by trustees and funders who recognise and value our ability to respond flexibly to emerging and diverse needs.

Our strength lies in our ability to connect people, organisations, and services, helping to identify solutions and, where possible, extend or influence provision. However, our most significant challenge, shared with our partners, continues to be meeting rising levels of demand against a backdrop of reducing resources.

A review of achievements and performance

By Project Manager Steve Hobson

In 2025, AUITC continued to demonstrate its role as a positive and trusted presence, delivering vital support across the communities of Smallshaw, Hurst, Hazelhurst, and Broadoak, areas among the most economically deprived in Tameside and nationally.

The year was marked by significant challenges, particularly in responding to increased demand generated by the success and reach of our previous service delivery. At the same time, a reduction in available funding severely constrained our capacity. This required careful management of service delivery to ensure that quality and safeguarding standards were maintained. Trustees therefore agreed to prioritise our core provision, including HurstFest, the Hurst Band Contest, Luncheon Club, Digi Drop In and Andy's Man's Club, while continuing to offer as many volunteering opportunities as possible through partnerships with other third-sector organisations and Ashton United Football Club.

Despite these pressures, the dedication and resilience of our trustees, staff, and volunteers enabled us to secure both financial and in-kind support, allowing the majority of our services to continue. Our work remains firmly underpinned by strong partnerships, which are central to our ability to deliver meaningful and sustainable impact.

By working collaboratively rather than in isolation, we are able to maximise limited resources, share skills and expertise, and achieve outcomes that would not otherwise be possible. The support we receive, whether strategic guidance, funding, or practical in-kind contributions, reinforces our belief in the strength of collective action. Together with local partners, we strive to address the complex challenges faced by individuals and families living in deprivation, challenges that are structural and beyond individual control.

The funding landscape in 2025 has been especially challenging for the third sector, with many organisations experiencing a downturn in grant income compared with previous years. Local statutory bodies and charitable trusts, whose support enables us to keep the majority of our services

free at the point of access, are themselves contending with shrinking budgets and growing demand, adding pressure to an already stretched system.

Despite this difficult backdrop, AUITC has successfully bucked the trend thanks to sustained and proactive efforts to secure external funding. In 2024 we received £39,423 in grant income; in 2025 this rose to £63,931, representing an increase of more than 62%.

It is often said that we are all weathering the same storm; however, the lived experiences of those we support demonstrate that not everyone has access to the same means of navigating these difficult conditions. At AUITC, we remain resolute in our commitment to advocating for and supporting those who are most marginalised. This commitment is deeply embedded in the 148-year tradition of community and charitable work associated with our football partner, Ashton United FC, and is wholeheartedly shared by our current board of trustees.

The stories and photographs that follow highlight just a selection of the activities delivered during 2025. Reflecting on these achievements brings a deep sense of pride, not only in the positive difference made to the lives of those we support, but also in the journeys of our volunteers. Many joined AUITC while facing significant personal challenges, and seeing their growth into confident, fulfilled individuals and valued members of our team has been one of the most rewarding aspects of the year for everyone involved.

Cedar Park Pantry

Our ongoing commitment to Cedar Park Pantry, a key project of the Smallshaw Hurst Community Action Group (SSHCAG), remains strong.



AUITC continues to work closely with the pantry, providing shared staff capacity and volunteer support to help ensure its ongoing success. A significant development during 2024 was the progression of an AUITC volunteer into the paid role of Pantry Manager, with the post funded directly by the pantry itself. This marked an important step in the pantry's growing independence and sustainability whereupon capacity continues to grow.

Volunteers from both organisations have demonstrated exceptional dedication, supporting a steadily increasing number of pantry users each month. Demand has risen particularly sharply towards the end of the year, as families and individuals have faced the compounded pressures of winter fuel poverty, the removal of the winter fuel allowance, and rising food prices in local shops. With membership now exceeding 400 families, demand continues to grow.

AUITC is immensely proud of the achievements of the local people who now lead and run the pantry. What began as a joint initiative between AUITC and Smallshaw Hurst Children's Community has evolved into a formally constituted organisation with local trustees and Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) status. The success of Cedar Park Pantry stands as a powerful example of what can be achieved through strong partnership working and community-led action.

Digi Drop-In

Throughout the year, Ashton United in the Community worked in partnership with the PCrefurb Digital Wellbeing Project Tameside and Glossop to deliver weekly digital drop-in sessions at Hurst Cross. With generous financial support from Voicescape, Tameside Rotary, and the Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund, and operational support from our volunteer Digital Champions, these sessions provided a free, accessible, and welcoming space for local residents to improve their digital skills.

The sessions were designed to support people at all levels of confidence and experience, including those who had previously felt anxious, excluded, or fearful of using digital technology. Delivered by experienced trainers, support was tailored to individual needs, enabling participants to build practical skills at their own pace, ranging from basic smartphone use and email setup to online job applications, internet banking, and staying connected with friends and family. Participants consistently reported increased confidence, independence, and a renewed sense of inclusion as a result of attending.



Creating a warm and inclusive environment was central to the success of the sessions. Everyone was welcomed on arrival, offered refreshments, and supported in a relaxed, non-judgemental setting where no question was considered too small or embarrassing. For many, the sessions became as much about social connection as digital learning, with attendees valuing the opportunity to meet others, reduce isolation, and build supportive peer relationships.

Feedback highlighted the importance of the Crossbar at Ashton United FC as a venue. Its convenient location, comfortable and modern facilities, reliable WiFi, and ample space allowed people to learn without pressure or disruption, reinforcing the sense that the sessions were safe, accessible, and respectful of individual needs.

In addition to developing digital skills, the drop-in format enabled participants to learn more about other AUITC services, encouraging further engagement and signposting into wider support. The popularity and impact of the sessions have demonstrated their value as an essential community asset, and plans are in place to deliver similar provision again in 2026.

Joanna said: ***'Learning digital skills with PC Refurb has transformed my life and opened up a whole new World of information. The Crossbar at Ashton United FC is a safe and comfortable environment where I can meet and interact with other people. Situated in a convenient location, it is a clean, tidy and welcoming place to learn with good facilities and plenty of space to work without disrupting other students. After having a genuine fear/phobia of new tech, I have found that my confidence has been boosted. I am becoming more independent since I now use my own laptop and have recently obtained a smartphone. I feel less isolated and am no longer digitally excluded. There is still plenty to learn and it is very reassuring to have this point of contact. So ...thank you PC Refurb and Ashton United.'***

Dave said: '***Cannot praise highly enough the computer course at Ashton United. The tutors create a very relaxed atmosphere which in turn creates a great learning environment. This course, for me and others on it, has enabled us to embrace modern technology, whether it is unleashing the power***

of smart phones, to becoming competent and confident on laptops/tablets. No question is ever too embarrassing to ask, which is thanks to the tutors who fully understand the fears novices have. Everything is covered, from creating email accounts, applying for jobs, internet banking to booking holidays and keeping in touch with friends and family. There is also the pastoral side. People on the course have bonded and we now help each other! The course is an essential community asset. Praise must also go the venue. The Crossbar is a very comfortable, modern, venue with easy parking, fast WiFi and plenty of sockets for plugs and USB leads.'

Public Health Collaboration

During 2025, Ashton United in the Community engaged on several occasions with the Tameside Public Health team, part of the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership to support the delivery of targeted health awareness and prevention activity. This collaboration has included the promotion of bowel cancer awareness through coordinated marketing and advertising in partnership with Ashton United FC, as well as the delivery of health-focused talks to Luncheon Club and Andy's Man's Club members. Topics addressed have included men's health, access to GP services, seasonal flu vaccinations, and health screening for men aged over 55. These activities have helped to raise awareness, encourage early intervention, and reduce barriers to accessing healthcare.





We remain committed to maintaining and further developing this strand of our work. Our public health partners have highlighted that the Hurst area, and the demographic groups AUITC engages with, are particularly hard to reach. As such, our trusted community presence provides a vital opportunity to engage individuals who may otherwise have limited contact with health services.

Community Van

The Community Van continues to be a vital operational asset for Ashton United in the Community and our partner organisations. It provides essential flexibility to support a wide range of activities, including the collection of food donations, delivery of supplies, and transportation of equipment to community events and pop-up activities. The van is owned, managed, and maintained by AUITC and is made available to partner organisations including the Smallshaw Hurst Community Action Group, Smallshaw Hurst Children's Community, the local Pantry, and Ashton United Football Club. It plays a key role in supporting project delivery across the neighbourhood and, through its branded livery, regularly promotes both AUITC and our partners as it operates throughout Smallshaw, Hurst, and surrounding areas.

The van is particularly critical to the operation of the food pantry, where it is used on a weekly basis to collect donated food for redistribution to community members.

For many families within our communities, financial hardship and poverty remain daily challenges. The Christmas period places additional pressure on households, particularly for parents striving to provide gifts for their children. Recent data indicates that more than one third of children in Tameside are living in poverty, and for many families the ongoing cost-of-living crisis has resulted in difficult choices between essential needs such as heating and food, leaving little or no capacity to meet additional seasonal costs.

In the lead-up to Christmas 2025, the Community Van, operated by AUITC volunteers, played an important role in supporting the Action Together Tameside Toy Appeal. It was regularly used to collect and transport large toy donations, helping to ensure that gifts reached families in need and contributing to a sense of festive inclusion within the community.



Reflecting on this seasonal work, Trustee Andy Clayton commented, ***'Whilst the Christmas period is often busy and demanding, supporting the Toy Appeal remains one of the most rewarding activities undertaken by AUITC. We are delighted to once again play a part in bringing festive support to local families'.***

In addition, during the year AUITC worked in partnership with the Ashton United Supporters Club to provide toys directly to children on the paediatric ward at Tameside Hospital, extending the reach of our seasonal support to those facing additional challenges during the holiday period.

Hurst Village Band Contest

The 2025 Annual Hurst Village Brass Band Contest took place on Friday 13 June at Ashton United Football Club, Hurst Cross. Organised by Ashton United in the Community (AUITC), in partnership with Ashton United Football Club, Save the Children, and with generous support from grant-giving trusts and local sponsors, the event marked the 33rd year of this much-loved community tradition. The weather provided the perfect backdrop, with warm sunshine encouraging a strong turnout. Throughout the evening, approximately 400 spectators gathered to enjoy performances from 31 amateur and semi-professional brass bands from across the country, all competing for more than £2,000 in prize money.

The contest opened in impressive fashion with a polished performance of 'The President', which ultimately secured the First Prize of the night. The high standard continued throughout the event, with several bands pushing Foden's close for the top award. At the conclusion of the evening, adjudicator Jack Capstick, remarked on the difficulty of ranking the bands due to the consistently high quality describing it as a far more challenging task than in previous years.



The Hurst Village Brass Band Contest forms part of the wider Saddleworth and Tameside Brass Band Contest, often described as "The Greatest Free Show on Earth." With origins dating back to 1884, the tradition attracts bands from across the UK and beyond, maintaining its place as a significant fixture in the national brass band calendar. Its longevity and success are rooted in the dedication of volunteers and the enthusiasm of the local community.



As a free-to-attend event, the contest offers a valuable cultural experience for residents and visitors alike. In the context of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, it provides families, particularly those affected by food and fuel poverty, with a rare opportunity to enjoy a high-quality evening out at no cost. For many, similar events would be inaccessible due to travel or financial barriers. By bringing the festival directly into the heart of Hurst, AUITC and its partners ensure that local people can enjoy live music, develop new interests, and even take part as volunteers.

A dedicated team of 20 volunteers played a vital role in delivering the event. Their responsibilities

included catering, marshalling, band announcements, coach parking, and general coordination. Their commitment ensured the smooth running of the contest and contributed significantly to its success. AUITC extends heartfelt thanks to all participating bands, the local community for their enthusiastic support, and the volunteers whose hard work makes the event possible year after year.

Planning is already underway for next year's contest, which will take place on Friday 29 May 2026. With ambitions to make the event even bigger and better, AUITC welcomes anyone interested in getting involved.
For further information or to volunteer, please contact:
Andy Clayton – andyc@ashtonunited.co.uk
Catherine Tomlisson – cat.tomlisson@hotmail.co.uk

HurstFest 2025– What a Day!

HurstFest 2025 was an absolute belter of a day and a brilliant reminder of just how special our community is. Building on the positive momentum we've seen since events returned after COVID in 2020, this year's festival showed once again that HurstFest is something people genuinely look forward to.

Thanks to the amazing support of Smallshaw Hurst Children's Community (SSHCC) and their sponsors through associates of the Save the Children Fund, we were thrilled to be a part of HurstFest held once again in Cedar Park; especially keeping it completely free for everyone, with a strong focus on families living in the OL6 area.

Sunshine, Smiles and Seriously Good Vibes



This year the weather was on our side (always a win!) and the park quickly filled with laughter, music, and colour. Over the course of the day, we welcomed around 2,000 people, all coming together to enjoy a 'right good' community celebration. Bigger and better than ever, with loads going on for all ages, we were able to include:



Free burgers, hot dogs and ice creams (no one went hungry!)

- Face painting and festival make-up
- Circus skills, performers and inflatables
- Football Skillz & Drillz sessions
- Hair braiding, crafts and creative activities
- A huge hit petting zoo
- Bucking broncos (and plenty of laughs!)
- A stage with live performers
- A brilliant Bhangra band bringing the energy

To put it into perspective:

550 burgers and hot dogs handed out. 500 ice creams happily devoured, countless bounces, loads of laughter, and smiles absolutely everywhere

Powered by People

Events like this don't just happen by magic. A massive part of HurstFest 2025's success was down to the dedication and hard work of Lydia Wright from SSHCC, who played a huge role in pulling everything together and keeping things running smoothly.

Huge thanks also go to:

Smallshaw Hurst Children's Community, Jigsaw Rewards and Ashton United in the Community for funding and supporting activities. All the local partners and agencies who came along with advice, activities and goodie bags. Our performers, stallholders and activity providers and of course, our incredible volunteers – we honestly couldn't do it without you!

What People Said
The feedback from the day was just lovely:

"Always a great day! Thanks for everyone's hard work!" – Roisin

"Huge shout out to our amazing volunteers, sponsors, stallholders and performers for bringing it all together."



"Thanks to everyone who came along and made the day unforgettable."

Families told us how much it meant to enjoy a full day of fun, food and activities without worrying about cost; and that's exactly what HurstFest is all about.

Onwards to HurstFest 2026

We've already had our debrief and guess what… planning has started for HurstFest 2026. We're aiming for the last Thursday in August 2026 and looking to make it even bigger, with ideas including:

Street dancers, a magician and balloon artist, more stalls and community partners, 3-a-side football, even more activities for all ages. Why not join us. All are welcome to share in our event.

Final Word

HurstFest 2025 was full of excitement, connection, and community spirit. From the food and fun to the teamwork behind the scenes, it showed what can happen when people come together with a shared goal.

Thank you to everyone who helped, performed, volunteered, supported, sponsored and turned up. We can't wait to do it all again next year!

Skillz & Drillz – Holiday Hunger

In 2025 we have been unable to deliver the popular Skillz and Drillz programme largely due to the lack of an affordable or suitable venue. We did maintain a provision at HurstFest 2025 which was well received by the children and community present. We will continue to seek an appropriate local venue and the resources required to deliver the programme in the future.

Luncheon Club – Bringing People Together, One Meal at a Time

Our Luncheon Club continues to be one of Ashton United in the Community's most valued and well-loved activities. Since January 2023, the club has run throughout the winter months, offering older residents a warm meal, friendly faces and a reason to get out of the house.

Thanks to grant funding from several trusts, Luncheon Club became a regular weekly fixture from November 2024 through to May 2025, welcoming up to 50 people per session and registering over 90 members in total. Over the summer months, the club paused to allow volunteers to support the community-led "Wednesday's Together" group, before returning with a Summer Tea Party in August 2025 to reconnect with attendees and remind them that Luncheon Club would be back for the winter.

Who It's For and How It Works

Luncheon Club is open to anyone aged 60+, with a strong focus on supporting older people in the Smallshaw Hurst (OL6) area who may be experiencing loneliness, isolation, or financial hardship.

Many of the people who attend:

- Are affected by food and fuel poverty
- Feel lonely or socially isolated
- Are nervous about leaving home or lack confidence to socialise

Each week, attendees enjoy a free two-course meal, drinks, and plenty of opportunities to chat, laugh and connect. Sessions also include bingo, raffles, and entertainment, making Wednesdays something to really look forward to.



The club also acts as a gateway to wider support, with guest speakers from housing services, the NHS, and welfare organisations offering helpful advice in a relaxed, trusted environment.

Volunteers at the Heart



Luncheon Club is powered by a core eight dedicated volunteers, with others offering occasional support, and a sessional cook, who together make everything happen; from buying provisions and cooking meals to setting up, serving, washing up and cleaning afterwards.

Over a 22-week period, volunteers contributed an incredible 750 hours of their time. Valued at a median rate of £15 per hour, this represents £11,250 of in-kind support to the community.

As well as making a huge difference to attendees, volunteering has helped individuals build skills, confidence and experience, with some going on to gain qualifications or move into full-time employment.

What Difference Did It Make?

The impact of Luncheon Club has been clear and wide-reaching:

- Reduced loneliness and isolation
- Improved mental and physical wellbeing
- Increased confidence and independence among attendees
- Stronger friendships and community connections
- Greater trust and sense of belonging
- Improved knowledge and resilience through guest speakers
- Meaningful, rewarding volunteering opportunities



In March 2025, thanks to a generous donation from major clothing brand, Matalan, attendees were also given free spring and summer clothing, which was very warmly received and helped people feel comfortable, confident and cared for.

Special Events and Extras

Alongside the weekly sessions, Luncheon Club also delivered some memorable extras:

Summer Tea Party – August 2025



36 attendees enjoyed a traditional afternoon tea complete with sandwiches, cakes, scones and a glass of fizz. Entertainment came from Tony the Crooner, with nostalgic songs, bingo and games. Food was prepared by Angela Gratton and her brilliant team of volunteers, whose hard work made the day extra special.

Coach Trip to Lytham St Annes – July 2025



With the help of one of our luncheon club members we organised our first ever Luncheon Club coach trip, taking 50 attendees and volunteers for a full day out at the seaside. It was a fantastic opportunity for people to enjoy fresh air, new surroundings and quality time together. In some cases this trip was the only 'holiday' break that they would have. We learnt lessons from the trip and will be planning to hold another trip in the Spring of 2026

Christmas Lunches – December 2025

Due to high demand, we hosted two Christmas lunches, ensuring even more local older people could enjoy a festive meal, companionship and seasonal cheer.



Thank You



Week in, week out, our Luncheon Club volunteers give at least four hours every Wednesday to support around 40 older people from the OL6 area. Nothing is ever too much trouble, and their kindness and commitment sit at the very heart of the project.

To say thank you, at the end of the luncheon club project we treated the volunteers to a carvery lunch, giving us the chance to spoil them in the same generous spirit they show others all year round.

With Thanks To

We would like to thank:

- **Jigsaw Rewards**

- **Duchy of Lancaster**
- **The Charity Service**
- **Tameside MBC**
- **Matalan** (via Charlotte Hobson) for clothing donations

Their support has helped make Luncheon Club a warm, welcoming and life-enhancing space for older people in our community.

Andy's Man's Club
Men's Mental Health & Suicide Prevention – Talking Saves Lives



With the generous financial support of the CRH Charitable Trust, we deliver a weekly men's suicide prevention and mental health support session, offering a safe, welcoming space where men can talk openly and support one another. The focus is simple but powerful: breaking the stigma around men's mental health through conversation.

The sessions are delivered in partnership with Andy's Man Club (Registered Charity No. 1179647) and supported by Ashton United in the Community (AUITC) volunteers. They run for 40 weeks of the year and are open to all men aged 18+, with a particular focus on local men who may be struggling but unsure where to turn.

How the Sessions Work

Sessions take place weekly and last three hours, with the capacity to support over 40 men each week. The atmosphere is relaxed, non-judgemental and peer-led, helping men feel comfortable sharing their experiences at their own pace.

The very first session attracted an incredible 71 men, and since then attendance has remained consistently high, with up to 45 men attending every Monday. Each week we also welcome around 5–6 men attending for the first time, showing just how important and needed this support is.

Some men attend every week, others dip in when they need support, and some come just once – all are welcome, and all are valued.

A snapshot across the Tameside Andy's Man Club groups on 14 October 2025 showed:

- 104 men attending in total
- 16 men attending for the first time

At Hurst Cross over 2025 the numbers are:

Total Number of attendees for 2025 - 1094 Men

Total New attendees for 2025 - 124 Men

Growing Demand and Wider Impact

The success of the sessions at Hurst Cross has been so significant that Andy's Man Club has expanded its presence locally. What began as one group has now grown to three groups across Tameside, with new branches opened in Stalybridge and Denton, and plans underway for further sessions in Hyde and/or Audenshaw.

This growth highlights both the impact of the work and the urgent need for accessible men's mental health support in the area.

Volunteering, Purpose and Confidence

Alongside emotional support, AUITC and Ashton United FC offer volunteering opportunities to men attending the sessions, helping support their ongoing mental and physical wellbeing while building confidence and routine.



Participants have the opportunity to volunteer at:

- Ashton Hurst Band Contest, acting as stewards and helping promote Andy's Man Club to visitors
- HurstFest, AUITC's free community festival delivered with Smallshaw Hurst Children's Community (part of Save the Children Fund), where volunteers support as stewards, litter pickers and general helpers
- Ashton United FC Thursday Crew learning about football stadium care and maintenance, meeting with others to share banter and chat about their lives whilst engaging in light physical activity

All volunteers have reported enjoying their roles, feeling more connected, and gaining a stronger sense of purpose. Many expressed interest in getting involved in future activities. Some have moved on to part and/or full time employment.

Why It Matters

These sessions have created more than just a weekly group; they've built a supportive community where men feel heard, understood and less alone. By combining peer support, volunteering opportunities and strong partnerships, the project is helping men improve their mental health, build resilience and reconnect with their community.

Put simply, talking saves lives, and this work is making that happen every week.

'Since January 2024, Ashton Under-Lyne has been a massive success for Andys Man Club. This year has seen our biggest growth in the Tameside area due to the demand for this club, and has prompted us to open two more clubs, Denton and Stalybridge. These two clubs have gone on and had 1865 men and 235 men new to the club, all on the back of opening this club in Ashton United FC back in 2024. We would like to thank the staff, chairmen, and owners of Ashton United for helping us open the door for these men to speak.' Luke Tetlow-Cross - Regional Support Lead, Andy's Man's Club

With respect to personal successes there are many. The following comments, publicly available via Facebook, encapsulate just some of the impact made; identifying the quick success we have achieved, and why we want to continue with Andy's Man's Club at Ashton United in the Community for as long as we can:

Sylvia: ***'You're doing amazing work here! It's incredible to see so many men finding the courage to open up and share their stories. Keep shining a light on mental health!*** 💕'

Sandra: ***'…this initiative is a lifeline for many men struggling with mental health issues, providing a safe space to talk and connect with others who understand what they're going through, and I think it's fantastic that it's free and open to all*** 😳 👍 🌹 🌟'

Robert: ***'I'm struggling need to get myself back to the clean path again, I really wanna attend the meetings you guys put on but my head goes playing and wonky it's difficult but I will be strong and get to them in time*** 💪 🙏 🙏 🙏 🙏'

Case Study – Client Turned facilitator



Jon is a lifelong Ashton United supporter who first attended Andy's Man's Club in February 2024. He was pleased to share his story publicly through an interview with Andy's Man's Club:

'**Client turned facilitator – Jon:** It gives us great pleasure to introduce you to one of our newest facilitators Jonathan. Along with our first facilitator by proxy, the wonderful Georgia. Pop down this evening to meet them both in person.

What is your name and how long have you been attending AMC ❓

My name is Jon (Jonathan) and I have been attending AMC since February 2024.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time and how do these help clear your head ❓

I have been studying for a degree in history with the Open University. It has been a challenge but one I have found fulfilling and helped with my confidence.

When I feel stressed I take my Canine Partner Assistance Dog for a walk and it helps me to unwind and clear my head.

Why do you attend AMC ❓

For me it is a great way to clear the decks and helps set me up for whatever life throws at me the next week.

I also know that when things are a bit rough I have the support of my AMC brothers to rely on.

It is also great to be able to support other members.

I have made so many friends.

Why did you become a facilitator ❓

I became a facilitator because AMC has helped me so much and I wanted to give something back to those who have been there for me and be there for other men who need to talk.

What is your favourite part of AMC ❓

My favourite part of AMC is the camaraderie and catching up with folks before the session whether it be at the coffee station or around the club and getting to know new guys.

What would you say to anyone who is thinking about coming along for an evening ❓

I would say come on in.

You will not regret it.

You will meet a great bunch of guys who will listen and support you with no judgement.

There is absolutely no pressure to talk until you feel ready and when you are ready you will find everyone will be there to support you.

Ashton United in the Community - The King's Award for Voluntary Service 2024

In 2024, Ashton United in the Community (AUITC) was incredibly proud to receive The King's Award for Voluntary Service (KAVS) – the highest honour a local voluntary group can receive in the UK, and widely recognised as the voluntary sector equivalent of an MBE.

AUITC acts as a bridge between AUFC and the local community, creating opportunities for volunteers to make a real difference through projects, events and community activities. Volunteers are at the heart of everything we do – giving their time, skills and energy to support others, build stronger connections and tackle local issues head-on.

As a key part of the Hurst community, AUITC responds directly to local needs identified through ongoing consultation with residents and service users. Through volunteering, individuals gain confidence, improve their physical and mental wellbeing, develop new skills and, in many cases, move closer to education or employment.

Celebrating at Gorton Monastery



In May 2025 the award was formally presented at a special ceremony held at Gorton Monastery, a fitting and memorable setting to celebrate the contribution of volunteers across Greater Manchester. AUITC was proudly represented on the day by Steve Hobson, Jackie Tierney and Andy Finnigan, who attended on behalf of our volunteers and wider community.

The ceremony was a chance to reflect on the huge collective effort behind AUITC's work – from matchday support at Hurst Cross to projects tackling poverty, loneliness, isolation, poor health, community safety concerns, lack of opportunity and unemployment. It was also an opportunity to stand alongside other outstanding voluntary organisations, all recognised for the difference they make in their communities.

A Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace

As part of the King's Award recognition, AUITC was also invited to attend a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. We were delighted that Trustee Eric Clegg represented the organisation, joined by volunteer Jenifer Castle, who was selected through a draw amongst our volunteers to attend this once-in-a-lifetime experience.



The visit was a wonderful way to recognise the commitment and dedication of AUITC volunteers and to celebrate their impact on a national stage. It was a proud moment for everyone connected to the organisation and a reminder that local community action can have truly far-reaching significance.



Why This Award Matters
AUITC was one of just 281 voluntary groups across the UK to receive the King's Award in 2024. The award recognises not only the organisation itself, but every volunteer who has given their time to support others and strengthen the community.

Established in 2002 to mark the late Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee, the King's Award for Voluntary Service continues under His Majesty King Charles III. 2024 marked only the second year of the award under the new reign, making this recognition even more special.

A Thank You to Our Volunteers
This award belongs to our volunteers, past and present. Whether supporting events, running projects, offering peer support or simply being there for others, their commitment has changed lives and helped make the Hurst community a stronger, kinder place.

We couldn't be prouder.

Volunteers – The Heartbeat of AUITC
At Ashton United in the Community, volunteering isn't a box we tick, it's what makes everything we do possible. Our volunteers bring energy, compassion, skills and community spirit to every project, event and initiative we engage in. They are the folks who turn ideas into action, and strangers into friends.

A Year of Commitment and Change
In 2025 we welcomed 60 volunteers, who between them gave an incredible 7,006 hours of their time. That's the equivalent of hundreds of cups of tea shared, hundreds of smiles given and countless moments of help offered to people across Smallshaw Hurst and beyond.

When we apply a nominal value of £15 per hour to that time, it represents a social value contribution of £105,090, a remarkable achievement for a small charity like ours. It's not about turning volunteering into a numbers game, but it *does* help show just how much good work is being done and what an impact our volunteers make.

This figure is lower than our 2024 total, but that's not because people care less, it's because AUITC has shifted how we work. We're now more of a facilitator than a direct deliverer of activity, which means we support others to lead projects, rather than run everything ourselves. At the same time, our friends at the Cedar Park Food Pantry have become a charity in their own right, and their volunteers are now recorded separately. And at Ashton United FC, the groundsman role is now a paid position, so volunteer hours in that space naturally went down too with a previous volunteer gaining employment.

So yes, the total hours are smaller, but the *impact and opportunities remain strong*.

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Ashton United in the Community

Work Doesn't Stop, It Evolves
Even though some volunteers moved into paid roles (which is brilliant to see!), we were still able to offer lots of opportunities to get involved and supported those who wanted it. The challenge for 2026 will be to keep recruiting, supporting and engaging volunteers just as well, and possibly even better.

A Community of Difference Makers
Our volunteers are a wonderfully diverse group. They come from all walks of life:

🎗️ people from the LGBTQ+ community,
🎓 students,
📍 people with learning disabilities,
🧠 individuals managing mental or physical health conditions,
🤝 people coping with loneliness or isolation,
🤹 and many more besides.

All of them together form what we proudly call the 'Ashton United Family', a community built around kindness, support and growth.



What They're Doing
Volunteers might turn up in very different ways, but they all make a difference. In 2025 they helped with:

- Ground maintenance at Hurst Cross
- Stewarding and event support
- Coaching
- Media, photography and promotion
- Pop-up community events
- Food Pantry support
- Luncheon Club activities
- Hurst Band Concert
- Toys collection for Action Together and Ashton United Supporters Club appeals
- Coach trip escorts
- Public health ambassadors
- Litter pickers
- Fun characters (mascots, cartoon characters)
- Administrators
- Fundraisers
- HurstFest and so much more

And that's just the *official* side, behind the scenes they make tea, give hugs, lend an ear, keep conversations going and remind us all why community matters.

This year, volunteers again worked with the Tameside Toy Appeal, supporting families in need, with the Ashton United FC Supporters Association joining in by donating toys and chocolates to Tameside Children's Hospital, a perfect example of how volunteers and supporters can work together for even bigger impact.



With support from The Trident Foundation, delivered through our partnership with Ashton United FC, we launched Thursday Crew, a new health and wellbeing programme. The initiative supports people with mental health needs and learning disabilities, as well as those experiencing loneliness and young people, by giving them the opportunity to feel part of a team. Participants are able to volunteer at the club, helping to build a sense of camaraderie for individuals who might not otherwise experience it, while also providing a pathway into volunteering.

Growing Through Volunteering
One of the most powerful things about volunteering with AUITC is how it changes lives from the inside out.

Our approach isn't just about task lists, it's about creating a space where people feel:

- encouraged to be themselves
- supported through challenges
- empowered to grow in confidence
- connected with others

For many volunteers, this supportive environment has helped them develop new skills, grow in confidence, work better in teams, and tackle challenges with real support from their peers.

People Well, Together
Volunteering here isn't just about helping others, it's about feeling better yourself. Whether indoors or outside, in a team or on a one-to-one basis, volunteers consistently tell us these opportunities have boosted their mental and physical wellbeing, reduced feelings of isolation, and helped them build strong friendships.

Always Room for More
Our doors are always open to anyone who wants to join our volunteer community. No matter your background, your experience or how much time you have to give, there's a place for you here.

If you'd like to volunteer, make new friends, learn new skills, or just be part of something bigger, we'd love to hear from you. Contact Trustee and Volunteer Coordinator: Eric Clegg ericcleggauitc@hotmail.com or telephone: 07858 304569

Together, we make this community stronger; one hour, one smile, one person at a time.

Project Manager Steve Hobson expressed his pride in working with the volunteers at Ashton United in the Community, stating, ***"The volunteers at AUITC have helped reshape the Hurst community for the better. Local people supporting local people, encouraged by our charity, the football club and our partners, has led to some truly remarkable outcomes, not only for individuals, but for the community as a whole. I am humbled to be a part of this community network where people, thriving in their volunteer role, choose to give their time and commitment across a number of different settings with several organisations"***

Volunteer Jenny said: ***' I've been with ashton united in the community and Ashton United Football Club for 3 years now. I love getting involved with events and volunteering with my ashton fam, I've made so many new friends through this community and it is just an all-round amazing place to work everyone is great ….. 😂😂😂😂'***

Case Studies

Case Study 1

Woody joined Ashton United in the Community in October 2025, a university student looking to gain valuable experience in media. He was deployed with Ashton United FC and very quickly fitted into the AUITC 'family of volunteers. His confidence grew and he soon established himself as part of the media team. He was so effective that he was 'poached' by a full time professional Football League club. The following is Woody's resignation email:

'Bit of a difficult one for me to tell you. But I've been offered the position as club journalist at Salford City. This is something I can't turn down and for the next season I think it's that step forward for me. I want to say a huge thank you for your help this year as it's made me grow so much not only within the media industry but also as a person. Ultimately the reason I've been provided an opportunity like this, is thanks to the incredible work we have done at Ashton. As much as I don't want to leave or even drop off with my commitment at Ashton, I feel I must continue with this. I do also understand this may not be at the best of times as the season is getting back up and running again, which I can only apologise for, as I applied for this prior to the summer and didn't imagine of getting the position. I'd love to remain in some way connected to the club as I'd hate to lose contact with everyone as I've absolutely loved it. Obviously now my weekends I'm going to have commitments but if there's ever a chance for me to help in other ways throughout the season, feel free to get in touch still as I'd love to help in any way I can still outside of my other commitments. I'll always be back at Ashton plenty of times going forward, it's just an opportunity that unfortunately leaves me in a position where I can't continue with this same workload.

Thanks again for everything, Up the robins!!!'

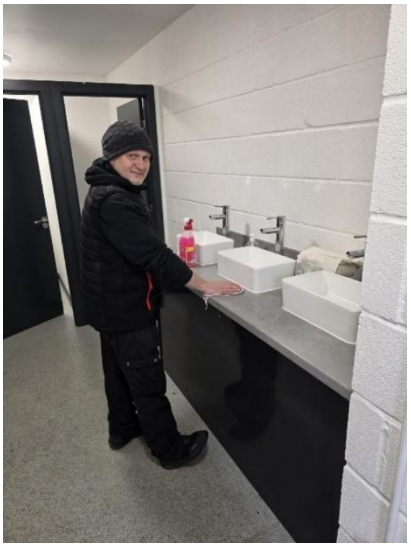
Whilst we were sad to lose Woody we were thrilled to see that AUITC has played such a big part, in such a short time, in lighting the fire of his ambition and giving him the 'leg up' needed to start his media career

Case study 2

David is an AUITC volunteer alumni now carving a future for himself in media and podcasting. Talking about his time volunteering and his deployment to the media team at Ashton United FC David said: ***'My first volunteering experience at the wonderful Ashton United gave me the insight***

into the football industry. I wasn't sure what to expect going into the role, but I knew when I spoke to the (Vice) Chairman Steve Hobson that the club was a great environment to learn. The lessons learnt from Ashton were so important for my future, I think it was the perfect environment to learn, and the club continues to bring through incredible opportunities for young people'

Case study 3



Wayne first came to Hurst Cross following a referral from Action Together Tameside. At the time, he was unemployed and looking, in his own words, to simply "do something with his life." Like all volunteers who join us, Wayne took part in an initial conversation to explore why he wanted to volunteer, what he hoped to gain from the experience, how much time he could commit, and the skills he already had. Just as importantly, it gave us the chance to get to know Wayne as an individual.

Wayne began volunteering as a 'Meet and Greet' volunteer on matchdays and very quickly became a valued and reliable member of the team. He went on to complete steward training and successfully qualified as a matchday steward. This led to paid employment with Ashton United's stewarding company**,** where he joined the qualified stewarding team and supported a range of events.

Since then, Wayne has progressed further, securing additional employment and later returning to Ashton United in a paid supervisory role and also in a voluntary capacity supporting people in our Digi Drop-In**.** He continues to volunteer alongside his paid work and has even introduced his son and grandson to the joys of Ashton United; a wonderful example of how volunteering can create lasting connections across generations.

Case study 4



Jack joined our Thursday Crew and has settled well into his volunteer role, quickly becoming part of the team and experiencing improvements in both his mental and physical health and wellbeing. When we spoke to him the day after his first stint at Hurst Cross, he admitted he was a little stiff, jokingly complaining about his aching muscles. Posting on Facebook he said:

'I'm volunteering at Ashton United Football Club again this week… Brushing, shovelling, cleaning the toilets, just general groundwork of the stadium…
Thank you to Wayne the supervisor, Luke Sayle the groundsman and all the personnel working at the club for this opportunity!..
It's good for my cognition, being somewhat vigilant with set tasks to do, brain activity is what I need given I've had 5 psychotic episodes in the space of 5 years…
I will carry on until the bitter end!💪😌'

Training

We are keen to support the volunteers in our charity, exploring ways to enhance their support and training for more effective role delivery. We aim to offer opportunities for continuous professional development (CPD) to acquire additional skills and knowledge, benefiting both AUITC and their personal life journey.



Case study

Volunteer Luke expressed an interest in grounds maintenance since he had an interest in sports pitch preparation for cricket, football and other grass sports. We were able to enroll him on a 'Sports Turf Management (BHT202)' course at which he is excelling receiving 88%, 90% and 90% all A-grade results in his 3 most recent assignments.

Alongside delivering our own training for volunteers and members of the local community, we successfully hosted a range of training courses at Hurst Cross. The quality of the venue attracted interest from external agencies and trainers keen to use the space and engage with the captive audiences attending our activities. This also allowed us to bring in partners, such as Public Health, to speak directly to groups like the Luncheon Club, sharing information and support in a trusted and familiar setting. While we were able to accommodate some of these opportunities, our capacity became more limited following the loss of a full-time staff member who had previously facilitated these sessions.

Staff

Following the loss of our Community Development Officer in 2024 due to a lack of available funding, and in order to meet continued demand, we adopted a flexible approach by engaging sessional staff as needed. This included coaches, caterers, face painters, artists and partner organisations, all of whom played an important role in supporting our activities. The success of this approach was driven by the commitment and enthusiasm of everyone involved, each contributing their skills and experience to deliver high-quality support for the charity. In addition, Food Pantry duties are now carried out by a sessional manager employed by the pantry's new stand-alone CIO.

The loss of a full-time post reinforced the need for a more sustainable operating model. In line with our 2024–26 business plan, trustees recognised the importance of working within the charity's financial capacity. While there remains a strong desire to appoint an operational staff member, this can only be achieved once sufficient resources are secured to sustain the role. Throughout the year, services were delivered entirely by volunteers and sessional staff. This enabled us to maintain core activity but placed additional pressure on trustees and volunteers who took on extra responsibilities. This is not a model the charity sees as sustainable in the long term.

Grant funding continues to be essential in enabling us to deliver services and activities for the local

community. Encouragingly, 2025 saw an increase in grant income compared with 2024, allowing us to secure sessional workers to lead projects and support volunteers. Despite this progress, rebuilding a stable staff team remains a significant challenge, particularly as we work towards securing the funding needed to offer longer-term contracts and ensure consistency and quality across our workforce.

Partnerships

AUITC works in close partnership with a wide range of local organisations, including:

- Schools and education providers: Our partnership work with schools has successfully supported students involved in alternative education programmes.
- We are also linked to Ashton United FC and learning provider Life Changing Education (LCE). LCE is an educational inclusion service, in which they provide schools direct access to collaborative and inclusive aspirational provision. They work in partnership with mainstream educational settings, providing an extension to their inclusion offer, utilising short-term, part-time placements; enabling pupils to restore a positive relationship with education. Practical, hands-on learning at Hurst Cross helps bring education to life, for example, measuring pitch markings to specific dimensions puts maths into real world context, while writing programme reviews and proofreading supports English skills. Alongside this, the peer support students receive has proven highly beneficial to their learning and confidence.
- HurstFest steering group: AUITC plays an active role on a multi-agency steering group made up of representatives from statutory services, voluntary organisations and faith groups, working together to plan and deliver HurstFest, a free annual community festival.
- Members of Action Together Tameside: As the local third sector umbrella body, Action Together supports volunteering at AUITC by promoting opportunities across the district through its website and social media platforms.
- Ashton United Football Club Supporters Association: The Supporters Association offers practical and financial support and is also a valuable source of volunteers. They have fully embraced the #OneClub partnership between the Supporters Association, Ashton United FC and AUITC, creating a powerful force for good both within the local community and further afield. This partnership is exemplified by the three groups coming together each Christmas to donate toys and chocolates for children and staff on the children's ward at Tameside Hospital.
- Ashton United Football Club: The football club provides year round volunteering opportunities on matchdays and beyond, as well as facilities and matched resources that support both volunteers and the activities they deliver.
- Specialist third sector organisations: Working alongside specialist providers such as Andy's Man Club and PCrefurb allows us to introduce new skills, services and activities to the Hurst community while ensuring best value and high-quality service delivery.

Ashton United in the Community

- AUITC and the AUFC family are strong supporters of the local Willow Wood Hospice which is an adult hospice which provides high-quality specialist palliative and end-of-life care, support and education across Tameside and Glossop free of charge. AUITC volunteers hold bucket collections and raffles at Hurst Cross and support a number of offsite initiatives to help raise the £3.6 million a year to run the Hospice.





- Smallshaw Hurst Children's Community (Save the Children): AUITC is an active member of Smallshaw Hurst Children's Community, part of Save the Children, which brings together local services, community groups and system leaders to deliver an ambitious shared vision for children and families. The aim is to ensure joined up support across all stages of childhood, and where possible, AUITC's work actively supports and contributes to these shared goals.





- In November we joined with BBC Children in Need and hosted Pudsey Bear at Hurst Cross as fundraisers took place in a sponsored walk across Tameside. Pudsey joined forces with AUFC's very own Rockin' Robin to publicise the event.

Case Study 1 – School Partnership

One school wrote to us following a session: ***'Last academic year I contacted Ashton football club regarding a possible visit for my year 2 class. We had been learning about the history of Ashton and Hurst Cross. I thought that Ashton football club would be a great place to visit. Luke was more than happy to arrange a visit for my class. He communicated everything really well ensuring he understood the needs of my class and what I wanted them to get from the trip. He allowed me to pre visit the football club where he showed me the plans for the day. He has made sure to think of every aspect of the visit and what would be the most enjoyable but also educational for the children. He had worked on presenting a power point for the children all about the history of the club. There was many old photography that the children found really interesting. The stand out part for me was when he told us about what it's like to run a football club. This is something that I don't think the children were aware of just how much work goes into it. The children were allowed to play on the score board and even go in the locker rooms. They had a brilliant time and I will defiantly be booking the visit again for my new class. Luke's hard work to make the visit exciting, educational and interesting for the children really showed. Along with his kind and caring nature that he displayed the whole day.'*** Megan Cooper

Case Study 2

In keeping with the #OneClub ethos an Ashton United first team squad member, club volunteers, supporters club members and AUITC project Manager volunteered their time to delivered some Christmas presents, sourced by Ashton United Supporters Association and AUITC, to the Children's Unit at Tameside Hospital. Wayne Scholfield, Ashton United Supporters Association Chairman spoke about our visit, saying, ***"It has been heartwarming to see the joy on the faces of the children and staff at the children's ward upon receiving these gifts. Christmas is a time of sharing and goodwill and I am delighted to represent Ashton United Supporters Club, together with my colleagues from the charity and first team in even this small way"***



Case Study 3

Throughout the year, building upon the positive outcomes achieved in 2024, we once again worked in partnership with Ashton Primary Care Network and Ashton United to deliver a range of health promotion initiatives at Hurst Cross. This collaboration provided a fantastic opportunity to engage with local people in a setting where health and wellbeing would not usually be front of mind. By introducing the health promotion team to supporters, visitors, and volunteers, we were able to raise awareness of bowel cancer, promote smoking cessation, offer flu and COVID vaccinations to elderly visitors, deliver health promotion talks, and provide AAA ultrasound health screening. With home supporters being

predominantly men, this setting enabled us to start meaningful conversations around positive mental health and access to Andy's Man's Club. Older people attending luncheon club had the opportunity to access and benefit from health awareness sessions and nurses in a setting they felt comfortable in. We look forward to continuing to work in partnership with the Public Health team and their associates in the future.

Consultation with Users

AUITC's greatest asset is its conviction that local people are the ones best placed to shape meaningful, positive change for their community. For this reason, local residents are involved in every aspect of our work; as trustees, staff members, volunteers, mentors, and beneficiaries. This way of working builds a strong sense of ownership, strengthens trust, and ensures we remain closely connected to the community's needs and ambitions. Our volunteers, whose lived experience is invaluable, significantly influence how our projects are designed and delivered. We are widely recognised as a trusted organisation that people turn to when facing challenges, knowing we will work with them to find constructive solutions. Every trustee, staff member, and volunteer is local, either living or working in the area, and together they contribute a rich mix of skills, experience, and networks. By collaborating directly with local people, we support and inspire them to take an active role in leading and shaping their community.

Community involvement is embedded in our day-to-day work through events, activities, and regular engagement at the Food Pantry, football matches and Luncheon Club. These interactions help us understand immediate needs and gather insight into future priorities. This includes feedback on what is working well, areas that could be strengthened, preferences for food, ideas for trips, and the training needs of volunteers. Maintaining open communication with volunteers and partners across the voluntary and statutory sectors is essential. It creates a culture where volunteers feel confident to express their needs and ideas for improving their experience, while beneficiaries receive support that reflects their circumstances and aspirations. The insights we collect directly shape the opportunities for learning and skill-building. This empowers individuals to improve their own lives while contributing to the growth and impact of the charity's wider work.

In July we held two events designed to register and consult with volunteers regarding their engagement with AUITC and also welcomed partners from Cedar Park Pantry to share the opportunity for their volunteers (many who volunteer across both settings) to air their views. The purpose of the events was to:

- Define a volunteer handbook
- Determine a volunteer induction which all volunteers will go through
- Ensure everyone has the correct uniform
- Ensure all volunteers have relevant training to their roles

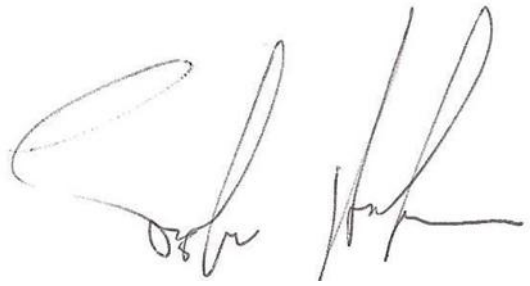
Financial Review

During the year Ashton United in the Community were successful in a number of grant applications. We are extremely thankful for the support of the following organisations providing grant support (predominantly over £500) toward a number of objectives:

- The National Lottery Community Fund
- Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund
- Smallshaw Hurst Children's Community
- The Charity Service

- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Save the Children Fund
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
- Rushworth Trust
- CRH Charitable Trust
- The Burke Family
- Ashton United FC Supporters Association
- Ashton United FC players, management & officials
- The Trident Community Foundation
- Jigsaw Foundation

The grant funding we receive enables AUITC to continue growing as an anchor charity across the Hurst, Smallshaw and Broadoak areas of Ashton-under-Lyne. This support helps us achieve positive, meaningful outcomes for local residents living with the complex realities of deprivation in Tameside, one of the most challenged areas in England. As pressures from low wages, fuel poverty and rising living costs continue to increase, these challenges are only set to deepen. Together, we remain committed to supporting people not just to cope, but to thrive.



Steve Hobson
Ashton United in the Community
Project Manager

Date: 27th January 2026