



WELWYN GARDEN CITY BID

BUSINESS PLAN SUMMARY 2027-2032



WONDERFUL
WELWYN GARDEN CITY

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE BUSINESSES OF

wonderfulwgc.co.uk



Message from the co-chairs of WGC BID

As we look ahead to the next five years of Welwyn Garden City BID, it is the perfect opportunity to reflect on what we have achieved together and set out a clear vision for the future of our town centre.

Since the BID was established in 2017, our purpose has remained unchanged: to ensure Welwyn Garden City is a thriving, vibrant and successful place to do business. What began as a collective ambition shared by local businesses has evolved into a powerful partnership that delivers meaningful projects, supports business growth and champions the interests of our town centre.

This Business Plan has been shaped by you. Through surveys, workshops, meetings, consultations and ongoing conversations, businesses have told us what matters most, where the challenges lie, and where the BID can make the greatest impact. The priorities in this plan are a direct response to your feedback and the ambitions of our business community.

Together, over the past decade, businesses have invested more than £3 million through the BID to make Welwyn Garden City a vibrant place to shop, work and visit. From award-winning events and Christmas lights to marketing campaigns, business support, training opportunities, recycling services and representing your interests, the BID has become an integral part of our town's success.

Today, the BID is about far more than the events for which we are widely recognised. We are a trusted voice for businesses, working with local authorities, landlords and key stakeholders to influence decisions,

attract investment and ensure businesses remain at the heart of the town's future.

At a time of economic uncertainty, increasing pressures on businesses and significant changes through Local Government Reorganisation, the BID's role is more important than ever. As the local landscape evolves, businesses need a strong, independent voice championing their interests, influencing policy, securing investment and providing strategic leadership for the town centre.

Looking ahead, we want to build on our successes, strengthen our town centre offer, attract further investment, support business growth and continue enhancing Welwyn Garden City's unique character and appeal.

Welwyn Garden City remains a truly unique place. Its heritage, character and founding principles continue to set it apart from other town centres. Our role is to build on those strengths, helping to create a vibrant destination that is fit for the future while keeping true to the qualities that make our town special.

We believe the BID has an increasingly important role to play in shaping that future. We will continue to work hard on your behalf, providing leadership, support and investment that benefits businesses and contributes to the long-term success of our town centre.

We hope you will agree that this new Business Plan provides a clear vision and a strong foundation for the future. However, none of this can continue without your support. Without a renewed BID, the events, Christmas lights, marketing campaigns, business support services and dedicated voice for the town centre that businesses rely on would come to an end.

We are incredibly proud of what we have achieved

together and grateful for the support businesses have shown over the past decade. With your continued backing, we can deliver even more over the next five years.

Please vote YES in the renewal ballot and help us continue shaping a vibrant, successful and prosperous future for Welwyn Garden City.



MOUNIA LE GAUFEY & MIKE PARALIKI
Co-chairs of Welwyn Garden City BID Ltd

THE WGC BID BOARD MEMBERS

- Mounia Le Gaufey (Co-chair)**, Ewart Price Solicitors
- Mike Paraliki (Co-chair)**, Stonehills Hairdressing
- John Beech**, Landlord representative
- Claire Dolan**, Oaklands College
- Camden Ford**, Pier Pressure Welwyn Escape Rooms
- Terry Mitchinson**, Resident representative
- Sabrina Murphy**, John Lewis
- Ka Ng**, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
- Toma Navickiene**, Kütchenhaus WGC
- Victoria Smith**, The Howard Centre
- Jane Quinton**, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Representative (Non-Director)



Wonderful Welwyn Garden City BID

Welwyn Garden City BID was established in 2017 following a successful ballot in October 2016. In 2021, businesses voted again to support a second five-year term, with over 80% voting YES.

Now, after a successful decade of delivering for businesses in the town centre, we are seeking support for a third five-year term, from 2027–2032.

The Welwyn Garden City BID has achieved so much by bringing businesses together to invest in our town centre. From events and marketing campaigns to business support and initiatives that enhance the visitor experience, we've helped make Welwyn Garden City an even better place to shop, dine, work and visit.

The BID employs a small but dedicated team of three who report to the Board of Directors.

YOUR BID TEAM

NICKY KANE, Manager (Job-share)

✉ nicola@wgcbid.co.uk

MARIANA BITONTE, Manager (Job-share)

✉ mariana@wgcbid.co.uk

LEE ROWARK, Marketing & Events Manager

✉ marketing@welwyngarden.co.uk



“When the idea of creating a BID for Welwyn Garden City was first being discussed, I was pregnant with my first child. Ten years later, I have three children, and the BID is the same age as my youngest, Harrison!

It has been an incredible journey, full of challenges, opportunities and achievements. I've loved watching our business community grow and seeing the BID develop into what it is today. I'm incredibly proud of what we have achieved together and would love to see us continue that journey and build on our success over the next five years.”

NICKY KANE, BID MANAGER



“I first joined the BID in 2017 as maternity cover for Nicky, and somehow I'm still here! What started as a temporary role has become an incredible journey, and over the last ten years we have been through so much together.

From launching the BID and delivering our first projects, through challenges, successes and two renewal ballots, it has been extremely rewarding to see how the BID has grown and the positive impact it has had on Welwyn Garden City and its businesses.

I'm excited about what the next five years could bring and look forward to continuing to work with our businesses to make an even greater impact.”

MARIANA BITONTE, BID MANAGER

Our Vision:

To establish Welwyn Garden City as a place which is innovative, vibrant and sustainable, which builds on the unique Garden City principles and characteristics to make it a wonderful place to visit, work and invest.



What is a BID?



A Business Improvement District (BID) is a defined geographical area within which the businesses have voted to invest collectively to improve their trading environment.



The lifetime of the BID is covered by regulations and is set at no more than five years.



A not-for-profit company is set up and run by the businesses in the area and is responsible for ensuring that the aims and objectives of the BID Proposal are delivered.



BIDs are about additionality. They do not replace local authority or police services but have to provide additional resource and activities to benefit the area.

There are over 340 BIDs successfully operating across the country. BIDs succeed because they are focused, cost-efficient and entrepreneurial.



The BID area

The Business Improvement District (BID) covers businesses within the defined BID area that have a rateable value of £5,000 or more.

The BID area includes smaller business premises and areas located off roads or streets that fall within the BID boundary, as shown by the shaded area on the map. It also includes any other roads or streets within the boundary, whether or not they are specifically listed in **Appendix Three** of the full **Business Plan and Proposal**.

Any new road, street, or business area developed or created within the BID boundary during the lifetime of the BID will automatically be included within the BID area.



Local Government Reorganisation and the role of the BID

Welwyn Garden City is entering a period of change as Hertfordshire's local government is reorganised. While the new structure is designed to provide a more streamlined way of delivering local services, we know that any period of change can bring uncertainty for businesses.

The BID provides continuity and a strong, collective voice for businesses throughout this change.

Whatever happens to local authority structures and responsibilities, the BID remains focused on what matters to the businesses of Welwyn Garden City. We will continue to represent local businesses, keep them informed and make sure their voice is heard.

The BID can also continue to invest directly in the town centre, supporting cleanliness, safety, events, marketing, business engagement, public realm improvements and the promotion of Welwyn Garden City.

As a business-led organisation, we can respond quickly to local needs and work alongside the new council arrangements, helping to make sure that Welwyn Garden City remains a vibrant, attractive and successful place to do business.

The BID will provide stability, continuity and a collective voice for businesses – through the changes and beyond.

The Story So Far... 2022-2027

Objective 1: Celebrate Wonderful Welwyn Garden City

To promote the strengths and develop the profile of Welwyn Garden City and all it has to offer to increase positive perceptions, loyalty and pride in the town centre.

Over the current BID term, we have successfully positioned Welwyn Garden City as a destination of choice for visitors, residents and businesses through a strong, recognisable brand and high-impact marketing activity.

- The **Wonderful Welwyn Garden City brand** is now firmly embedded.
- Our **digital presence has grown** to over 50,000 followers and more than 9 million annual impressions.
- Our **website and business directory** have provided a central platform to promote local businesses, events and opportunities.
- Printed publications such as the **Enjoy WGC Guide** and **Discover WGC magazine** have extended our reach across the region.

- We have delivered **consistent promotional campaigns**, including bus and radio advertising, seasonal campaigns such as **Love Local** and **Giftmas**, and ongoing press and radio engagement.
- **Content creation days** have directly supported businesses to improve their own marketing, helping to increase footfall and visibility.
- Events have been at the heart of our place-making activity, with **flagship events** such as the **World Food Festival**, which has attracted over 30,000 visitors, have drawn footfall and strengthened community pride.
- Events including **Screen on the Green, Vintage Festival, Street Food Heroes, Vegan Markets** and **seasonal celebrations** have added to the town's vibrancy.
- Major moments such as the **Women's World Cup** screenings, **Summer of Sports** and the **Knife Angel** installation have further elevated Welwyn Garden City's profile and social impact.





Objective 2: Enjoy a Vibrant and Sustainable Welwyn Garden City

To provide a vibrant, safe and positive experience for visitors and workers in Welwyn Garden City to enjoy, exploring new sustainable opportunities with businesses and key partners.

Creating an attractive, safe and sustainable town centre has remained a core priority, with significant investment in environmental enhancements, safety initiatives and business support.

- Our **award-winning floral displays** have achieved multiple Gold awards at Anglia in Bloom and national recognition at Britain in Bloom.
- The **Christmas Lights Trail** has become a regional attraction and is recognised as one of the best free displays in Hertfordshire.
- We have delivered **practical sustainability initiatives**, most notably the free recycling scheme in partnership with KP Waste, saving businesses thousands of pounds and diverting significant waste from landfill.
- **Discounted waste services** and continued exploration of greener solutions show our ongoing commitment to sustainability.
- **Safety and security** have been strengthened through **WGCWatch**, retail crime partnerships and new digital tools that improve communication between businesses, police and CCTV networks.
- The BID has also **built community spirit** through networking events, training, fundraising initiatives and regular communication, advice and signposting.



“I believe the BID are responsible for the beautiful flowers in WGC. I just want to thank you again, it just cheers me up when I see them most mornings and I’m sure it does most people.”

JENNIFER WOOLEY, RESIDENT





Objective 3: Invest and grow in Welwyn Garden City

Encourage growth, development and investment of businesses which complement and build on the strengths of Welwyn Garden City.

Over the last five years, the BID has played a key role in supporting economic growth, attracting investment and ensuring businesses have a strong collective voice.

- We have worked closely with landlords, agents, local authorities and stakeholders to **encourage new investment** and **support business expansion**, which has helped maintain a diverse and resilient town centre offer.
- We have worked in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council, delivering **town centre improvements worth £9 million**.
- We have **actively represented business interests** in planning, development and policy discussions, ensuring change reflects the needs of the business community.

- Through sponsorship, grant funding and partnerships, we have **leveraged additional income** to enhance BID delivery and extend activity beyond levy funding alone.
- Our **business support** offer has included recruitment promotion, training opportunities, networking events and regular communication.
- Initiatives such as **Tap to Donate** and **community fundraising** have reinforced the BID's wider social value.

Most importantly, the BID has provided a structured, democratic and business-led platform for collaboration, helping Welwyn Garden City to adapt, grow and thrive in a challenging economic landscape.

“When we work together through the BID, we create more reasons for people to visit, explore and spend in our town, bringing customers through our doors and helping local businesses thrive.”

**TOMA NAVICKIENE,
KÜTCHENHAUS WGC**



Shaped by Business Feedback

The last few months have seen extensive research and engagement undertaken across a wide range of businesses, organisations and stakeholders.

We wanted to ensure that this plan has an in-depth understanding of the views and aspirations of businesses in the BID area, alongside an appreciation of the perceptions of those who visit, work and spend time in Welwyn Garden City.

Research and findings from surveys, interviews and direct engagement with businesses and organisations across the BID area have helped shape our vision, objectives and the activities that will deliver them.



How we engaged

We used a range of methods to make sure businesses had multiple opportunities to share their views, including:

- **Business surveys**

All potential levy-paying businesses in the BID area were invited to complete a survey covering a range of issues. Surveys were promoted through e-bulletins, visits from BID representatives and the BID website. Businesses could also speak directly with a member of the BID team in person, by telephone or via video call.

- **124 personal business visits**

We made 124 visits to businesses, including 79 unique businesses. This means that 36% of the 219 occupied and trading businesses that meet the levy criteria received a visit to discuss the BID and its future.

- **Detailed business survey**

A four-page survey was completed by businesses representing 36% of all hereditaments that met the levy criteria, providing detailed insight into business priorities, challenges and aspirations.

- **Business workshops and meetings**

A number of meetings were held throughout the renewal period, with all businesses invited to discuss their challenges, opportunities and vision for the future of the town centre. This included two sets of workshops held in April and June 2026.

- **Ongoing online engagement**

The BID website and regular e-bulletins were used to invite feedback and provide businesses with opportunities to contact the BID team directly throughout the renewal process.

A plan shaped by YOU!

Together, this engagement has given us a strong understanding of what businesses want from the BID over the next five years and has directly informed the priorities set out in this Business Plan.



The Next Chapter (2027-2032)

Businesses across the town centre identified key priority areas for a new BID term. These fall into three objectives.

Research and findings from the surveys, interviews and interactions of businesses and organisations from across the Welwyn Garden City BID area has been considered in shaping the ultimate vision, objectives and their associated activities.



Objective 1: Proud Place

Celebrate and promote Welwyn Garden City as a distinctive, vibrant and welcoming Garden City destination, enhancing its identity, supporting businesses and delivering exceptional experiences that foster pride amongst residents, businesses and visitors.



Objective 2: Thriving Economy

Support a resilient and prosperous business community by driving investment, strengthening partnerships, championing business interests and enhancing Welwyn Garden City's economic offer for current and future generations.



Objective 3: Welcoming Environment

Create a safe, attractive and welcoming town centre environment where businesses can thrive and people feel confident, comfortable and encouraged to spend time.



Amount the BID will spend:

**A YEARLY
AVERAGE OF
£177,000**

**A TOTAL OVER
FIVE YEARS OF
£885,000**



Objective 1: Proud Place

Celebrate and promote Welwyn Garden City as a distinctive, vibrant and welcoming Garden City destination, enhancing its identity, supporting businesses and delivering exceptional experiences that foster pride amongst residents, businesses and visitors.

When asked what additional support their business needs, Marketing and Promotion was the second most requested area. Businesses called for more marketing and content creation, greater brand awareness across different generations, and continued support to promote local businesses.

When asked what additional projects the BID should consider for the next term, Events received the highest number of comments. Businesses highlighted the need for more frequent events and markets, new events and trails to attract a wider range of customers, and more opportunities that bring the local community together.



86%

of businesses said that 'Major events and footfall-driving activity, including the World Food Festival, Screen on the Green, Christmas Lights celebrations and the popular Christmas Lights Trail' is beneficial to them.



82%

of businesses said that 'Feeling part of Welwyn Garden City BID and its activity' and 'Promotion and awareness of reasons to visit' are important to them.



80%

of businesses said that 'Destination marketing and brand promotion, including developing, protecting and promoting the Wonderful WGC brand' and 'Building a strong business community, through networking and social events that encourage collaboration, connection and shared success' are beneficial to them.



What can be delivered if you vote **YES!**



Place Identity & Brand

Strengthen and promote a distinctive town centre identity that celebrates Welwyn Garden City's heritage, values and ambitions, fostering pride among businesses, residents and visitors.



Destination Development & Promotion

Position and promote Welwyn Garden City as a vibrant destination, increasing visitor numbers, engagement and dwell time through coordinated marketing, campaigns and promotional activity.



Marketing & Communications

Deliver integrated marketing, digital, PR and stakeholder communications that raise awareness of the town centre offer, support businesses and reinforce Welwyn Garden City's brand and reputation.



Events & Place Animation

Develop, support and attract a diverse programme of events, markets and cultural activities that increase footfall, enhance the visitor experience and reflect the Garden City principles.



Business Engagement & Advocacy

Foster strong relationships with and between businesses and stakeholders through effective communication, collaboration and engagement.



Customer Experience & Town Centre Excellence

Champion initiatives that enhance the quality of the visitor experience, celebrate business excellence and encourage high standards of customer service across the town centre.

Measures and results

- Town centre footfall trends (measured annually and against benchmark locations where available).
- Visitor and business perceptions of Welwyn Garden City as an attractive, distinctive and welcoming destination (through regular perception surveys).
- Reach and engagement of BID marketing, communications and promotional activity across digital, social and media channels.
- Number of visitors and participants engaged through BID-supported events, campaigns and town centre initiatives.
- Business participation in BID-led marketing, promotional and place-making initiatives.

“Your fantastic social media support made such a huge difference in promoting our event. We didn't advertise it in branch, so the event was entirely driven by your brilliant promotion.

We saw a 37% increase against the day's target, beating the target by £23k, an absolutely amazing result!

Thank you again for all your support. Your social media promotion really did make a huge difference.”

KARL TOOMBS, JOHN LEWIS



Amount the BID will spend:

**A YEARLY
AVERAGE OF
£91,000**

**A TOTAL OVER
FIVE YEARS OF
£455,000**



Objective 2: Thriving Economy

Support a resilient and prosperous business community by driving investment, strengthening partnerships, championing business interests and enhancing Welwyn Garden City's economic offer for current and future generations.

In the survey, when asked what additional support their business needs, the greatest number of comments were in the 'Commercial Attractiveness' category. Suggestions included improving things for people to do in the town, having more shops and more bars and nightlife.

This was also echoed in both the workshop and the Renewal workshop for the Board, as in both meetings the most discussed topic was around 'Commercial Attractiveness' of the town. Comments included improving the offer and variety of retail, developing a better evening economy, filling empty shops and presenting the case to potential business investors to bring in others.



86%

of businesses said that a 'Range of shops' is important to them.



82%

of businesses said 'Leisure and culture facilities (Museums, Cinemas, Bowling Alleys etc)' are important to them.





What can be delivered if you vote **YES!**



Vision & Partnerships

Lead the development and delivery of a shared vision and strategic plan for the town centre, working collaboratively with businesses, partners and stakeholders to shape its future.



Performance, Insight & Resources

Use market intelligence, visitor data, economic data and performance indicators to inform decision-making, demonstrate impact and maximise the BID's ability to deliver its objectives.



Investment & Place Promotion

Enhance the profile of Welwyn Garden City as a premier location for investment, business growth and development, attracting investors and funding while supporting the delivery of regeneration priorities and the Garden City vision.



Membership & Engagement

Develop and grow a voluntary membership network that strengthens connections between town centre businesses, organisations and surrounding commercial areas, supporting a stronger local economy.



Business Growth & Collaboration

Foster a thriving business community by encouraging collaboration, networking, knowledge sharing and skill development, strengthening connections across Welwyn Garden City and supporting sustainable business growth.



Town Centre Development

Champion initiatives that strengthen the town centre offer, including the development of a vibrant evening and leisure economy, and ensuring businesses are represented in the planning and delivery of public realm and development projects.



Business Resilience & Support

Support businesses through periods of change, challenge and emergency by facilitating effective communication, partnership working and coordinated responses that strengthen confidence and resilience.

“I will be voting YES for the BID because a thriving Welwyn Garden City town centre is essential for our business and their work on our behalf is the biggest driver for that, also without the BID we wouldn't have any of our major calendar highlights including the food festival and the Christmas lights!”

CAMDEN FORD, PIER PRESSURE WGC

Measures and results

- Number of businesses actively engaged in BID programmes, events, consultations and initiatives.
- Value of additional investment, sponsorship, grant funding and partner contributions secured to support BID priorities.
- Town centre occupancy and vacancy trends.
- Business confidence and perceptions of Welwyn Garden City as a place to invest, trade and grow.
- Number of collaborative projects, partnerships and business networking initiatives delivered.



Amount the BID will spend:

**A YEARLY
AVERAGE OF
£76,000**

**A TOTAL OVER
FIVE YEARS OF
£380,000**

Objective 3: Welcoming Environment

Create a safe, attractive and welcoming town centre environment where businesses can thrive and people feel confident, comfortable and encouraged to spend time.

When asked about the town's environment, businesses highlighted the importance of first impressions. Suggestions included introducing more public artwork, making better use of green spaces, enhancing floral displays, and encouraging businesses to take greater pride in the appearance of their own premises.

The survey also highlighted that reducing crime and improving perceptions of safety remain important priorities for businesses in Welwyn Garden City. Police support for your business and street begging and rough sleepers were jointly identified as the most important aspects. However, only 11% rated police support as very poor or quite poor, while 15% gave this rating for street begging and rough sleepers.

These findings reinforce the importance of the BID continuing to work closely with the police, local

authority and partner agencies to maintain business confidence, improve perceptions of safety and respond to emerging issues across the town.



100%

of businesses said that 'Police support for your business' and 'Managing street begging and rough sleepers' are important to them.



83%

of businesses said that 'Availability and cost of customer parking' is important to them.



75%

of businesses said that 'Environmental and public realm enhancements' is beneficial to them.



What can be delivered if you vote **YES!**



Public Realm Infrastructure

Work in partnership to support the development and enhancement of infrastructure that enables the effective, sustainable and flexible use of streets, public spaces and town centre assets.



Engagement Officer

Serving as a primary point of contact for BID businesses to understand their operational needs, collect feedback, and address high-street issues. Work closely with the Police, local authority teams and partner agencies to share intelligence and support initiatives that reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.



Resilience, Community Safety & Crime Reduction

Support a safe and welcoming environment by strengthening business crime reduction partnerships, maintaining initiatives such as Welwyn Garden City Watch, and working closely with the Police, CCTV services and other key stakeholders.



Environmental Enhancements

Enhance the attractiveness and vitality of the town centre through targeted investment in landscaping, floral displays, public art, seasonal installations and creative lighting schemes.



Accessibility

Working with partners encourage and enable ease of access and use of the town centre for vehicles and pedestrians.

Measures and results

- Business and visitor perceptions of safety, cleanliness and overall town centre environment.
- Levels of reported business crime and anti-social behaviour, where partner data is available.
- Number of businesses actively participating in safety and crime reduction initiatives.
- Delivery of agreed public realm, environmental enhancement and accessibility improvement projects.
- Number of business interactions and issues resolved through the BID Engagement Officer and partnership interventions.

“The launch of the ShopSafe ALERT pilot is a really positive step for businesses in Welwyn Garden City. The app gives local businesses a new way to share information and intelligence about retail crime and helps us work more effectively together to keep our town centre safe. It works particularly well alongside our existing WGCWatch Radio Scheme, giving businesses another valuable tool to help prevent and tackle crime. Welwyn Garden City is one of just four towns in Hertfordshire taking part in the pilot, and we’re pleased to be involved.”

VICKY SMITH, HOWARD CENTRE MANAGER

The future of Welwyn Garden City town centre is in your hands

Vote **YES** for:



The Wonderful WGC brand



The stunning, award-winning floral displays.



The town centre's biggest events



The Christmas Lights and festive programme



Continued financial investment in the town centre



Continued raising of the profile of the town centre



A strong, cohesive voice for businesses and the town centre



Creating new opportunities for businesses through networking and training



Access to additional funding and investment of up to £3,000,000 over 5 years



Popular town centre events, increasing town centre footfall



Our retail crime reduction scheme, helping protect businesses, staff and profits

These are just a few examples of how businesses investing together through the BID create a stronger, safer and more vibrant town centre for everyone to enjoy.



“ A YES vote will give us the opportunity to build on these successes and achievements and help keep Welwyn Garden City **WONDERFUL!**”

CAMDEN FORD, PIER PRESSURE WGC

“ I will be voting YES for the BID because a thriving Welwyn town centre is essential for our business and their work on our behalf is the biggest driver for that, also without the BID we wouldn't have any of our major calendar highlights including the food festival and the Christmas lights!”

MARK MERCER, SIXTH CIRCLE

“ I will be voting YES for the Welwyn Garden City BID to continue. The town centre events and marketing support we receive make a real difference. Working with the BID on campaigns and events has significantly increased footfall to our business, and we've seen first-hand the positive impact it brings to the town.”

IRFAN GENC, GRÄS

Don't let this be the final chapter

The WGC BID could cease to exist from April 2027, meaning much could be lost in Welwyn Garden City.

It could mean saying goodbye to:

- ✗ The Wonderful WGC town centre branding and identity.
- ✗ Key town centre events such as the Christmas Lights, World Food Festivals, Markets and much more.
- ✗ Award-winning projects like the business-funded flowers and popular Christmas Lights Trails.
- ✗ Business support and promotion.
- ✗ Financial investment into the town centre
- ✗ WGCWatch Retail Crime Scheme
- ✗ Support with improved safety initiatives
- ✗ Additional funding and opportunities
- ✗ Destination marketing
- ✗ Enjoy WGC Guide and Discover WGC magazine
- ✗ Bus and Radio advertising
- ✗ Gift Card Campaigns
- ✗ A unified voice representing businesses and the town centre
- ✗ £3M investment



Say YES
to keeping Welwyn
Garden City
Wonderful!



WGC BID Budget: 2027-2032


**Average
Annual Levy
Income:
£414,000**


**OBJECTIVE 1
Annual
Average:
£177,000**

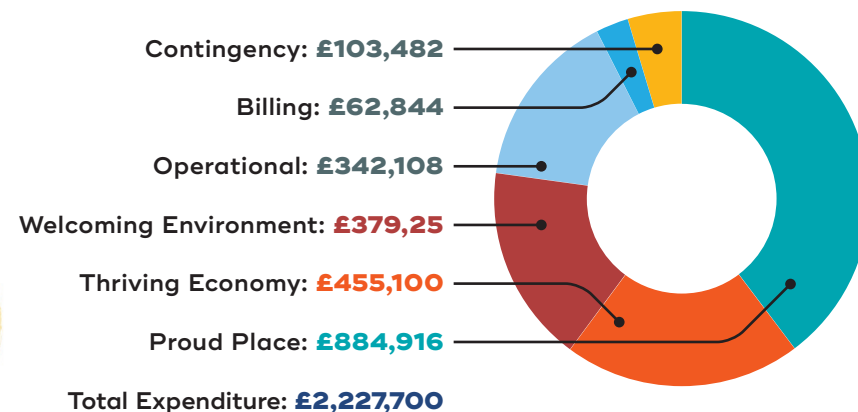

**OBJECTIVE 2
Annual
Average:
£91,000**


**OBJECTIVE 3
Annual
Average:
£76,000**

INCOME	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	TOTAL
BID levy revenue (Note 1)	£397,700	£405,654	£413,767	£422,042	£430,483	£2,069,647
Other Income (Note 2)	£40,000	£40,800	£41,616	£42,448	£43,297	£208,162
Total Income	£437,700	£446,454	£455,383	£464,491	£473,781	£2,277,808
EXPENDITURE	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	TOTAL
Objective 1 – Proud Place	£175,000	£175,972	£176,963	£177,975	£179,006	£884,916
Objective 2 – Thriving Economy	£90,000	£90,500	£91,010	£91,530	£92,060	£455,100
Objective 3 – Welcoming Environment	£75,000	£75,417	£75,841	£76,275	£76,717	£379,250
Central Management Costs, Admin, Office (Note 3)	£65,739	£67,054	£68,395	£69,763	£71,158	£342,108
Levy Collection costs (Billing Authority)	£12,076	£12,318	£12,564	£12,815	£13,071	£62,844
Contingency (Note 4)	£19,885	£20,283	£20,688	£21,102	£21,524	£103,482
Total Expenditure	£437,700	£441,542	£445,462	£449,459	£453,537	£2,227,700
Accrual for Renewal (Note 5)	£0	£4,912	£9,921	£15,031	£20,244	

NOTES:

1. Assumes a 95% collection rate and 2% per annum inflation.
2. Including income from landlords, associate members of the BID, commercial and other sources (including in-kind).
3. Central admin, office and fixed overheads.
4. Calculated as 5% of total levy billed.
5. Accrual retained from levy revenue to provide for costs of renewal of the BID for any additional term, otherwise they will be spent on additional projects in the final year.





What the BID will cost you

The BID levy is based on the rateable value (RV) of each property.

For businesses outside the Howard Centre, with a rateable value of £5,000 or more, the proposed levy is 2.75% of the rateable value.

For businesses **within the Howard Centre**, with a rateable value of £5,000 or more, the proposed levy is **2.41%** of the rateable value.

The investment being sought from businesses in the BID area is modest compared with the benefits and improvements it can help deliver.

For the smallest business in the BID, the cost is **less than the price of a bar of chocolate a day!**



The Benefits

As a business that pays the BID levy, you have the opportunity to help shape what the BID delivers. Through your feedback, ideas and involvement, you can influence the priorities and projects set out in our Business Plan.

Your levy is an investment in your business and in Welwyn Garden City. Our aim is to deliver more value back to businesses than the cost of the levy, through projects, services, events, marketing and initiatives that individual businesses could not deliver on their own.

By working together and having a strong collective voice, we can achieve more for individual businesses and create a stronger, more vibrant and successful Welwyn Garden City for everyone.

Additional funding and inflation

We will continue to look for additional funding and partnership opportunities wherever possible, helping us to increase what we can deliver for businesses through the BID.

Details of the levy rules and criteria can be found in the full BID proposal and business plan available at www.wonderfulwgc.co.uk, or you can request a copy by emailing bid@welwyngarden.co.uk or calling **01707 497930**.

Voluntary Scheme

In response to enthusiastic feedback from businesses, we will continue to operate our voluntary scheme, meaning that businesses below the levy threshold can opt in to contribute financially and access the full benefits of the BID.

**SMALL INVESTMENT.
COLLECTIVE IMPACT.**

£1.51

The average levy contribution from a BID business.

One business alone couldn't deliver what the BID does. Together, we can.

From events and marketing to town centre improvements, business support, safety and sustainability, the collective levy gives us the resources to deliver projects that benefit the whole business community.

£1.51 a day = £400k+ of collective investment every year!

Small investment. Bigger impact.



Monitoring Success

Working with Key Partners

We cannot deliver everything alone, and working with the right partners is an important part of the BID's approach. We will work closely with property owners, local authorities, the Police, community organisations and other key partners to make the most of the opportunities available for Welwyn Garden City.

Where larger projects or investment are being planned, we will use our collective business voice to influence and shape these plans wherever possible, making sure they support the needs of local businesses and the wider town.

Importantly, BID funding will always be used to deliver additional benefits and services – things that would not happen without the BID.



Monitoring Basic Services

The BID will work with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and other relevant partners to monitor the delivery of core services in the town.

Baseline Statements set out the services that the Council is committed to providing. These allow us to monitor what is being delivered and ensure that BID-funded projects are additional to, rather than replacing, existing Council services.

This gives businesses greater transparency and helps ensure that investment and services in Welwyn Garden City are being delivered effectively.

Monitoring BID Delivery

It is important that businesses can see the difference their levy is making. We will regularly monitor and measure the progress and impact of the BID's projects to make sure we are delivering the best possible value from the levy.

Each area of the Business Plan will have relevant measures and targets, which may include business feedback and surveys, footfall, vacancy levels, investment in the town, event attendance and photographic evidence of improvements.

We will use this information to understand what is working, where improvements can be made and how we can continue to deliver the greatest possible benefit for businesses and Welwyn Garden City.



Governance

The preparation and delivery of the BID Proposal is managed by Welwyn Garden City BID Ltd, a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. The company is legally and operationally responsible to the businesses within the BID area for all BID activities and acts on their behalf.

The BID is governed by a Board elected by the members of Welwyn Garden City BID Ltd, predominantly representing levy-paying businesses. The Board includes a representative cross-section of local businesses and stakeholders, together with a Councillor from Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (or Central Hertfordshire Council when formed) and a Senior Council Officer.

The Board's primary role is to safeguard levy payers' interests, ensuring the BID operates in accordance with the approved Business Plan, delivers value for money and achieves its targets. It will oversee the effective and cost-efficient use of BID funds, keeping overheads to a minimum and ensuring investment delivers maximum benefit to businesses.

All businesses are encouraged to participate through the Board and working groups, helping to identify and prioritise projects within the Business Plan. Board and working group roles are voluntary, and members are expected to represent the interests of businesses across the BID area.

The BID Manager will provide dedicated project and contract management, administrative support and day-to-day coordination of BID activity. This includes working with partner organisations, overseeing project delivery, managing contracts and procurement, and ensuring projects are delivered effectively, efficiently and in line with the Business Plan.



Ballot and Voting

Businesses in Welwyn Garden City will be asked to vote on whether the Welwyn Garden City BID should continue to implement this Business Plan for the next five years, from 2027 to 2032.

Ballot papers will be sent on Wednesday 23rd September 2026 to the person identified in the specially prepared register of potential voters held by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. Each rateable property has one vote, and a proxy vote will be available. Completed ballot papers must be returned by 5pm on Thursday 29th October 2026.

The result will be announced on the following day.

Ballot timetable

 **Wednesday 23 September 2026**
Ballot papers issued

 **Thursday 29 October 2026**
Ballot closes at 5pm

 **Friday 30 October 2026**
Ballot results announced

 **Thursday 1 April 2027**
Operations of the new BID start

The ballot has to meet the following two tests to succeed:

- 1** A simple majority of those who vote **must register a YES vote.**
- 2** The aggregate rateable value of those that register a **YES vote must also represent the majority of the vote.**

The importance of voting YES

If you want the BID and its collective influence and all its associated benefits to continue and support your business, you will need to vote for it. If the ballot does not get sufficient votes in favour both by number and rateable value, the BID and all its associated activities will stop as of 31st March 2027 and businesses will be left to face the challenges and uncertainties of the future alone.

Get involved – this is YOUR BID!

Vote YES in the BID Renewal ballot!



“Just wanted to send my congratulations to you all on another fabulous Food Festival. I know organising this is stressful and takes a lot of paperwork etc but it’s so worth it. My little bookshop had an increase in turnover and footfall.

Keep doing what you’re doing because without all of you, this town would be very quiet.”

LUCY LANE, OXFAM BOOKS AND MUSIC





Final thoughts

When Welwyn Garden City BID was established in 2017, businesses came together with a shared ambition to invest in the future of our town centre.

Over the past ten years, that collective investment has delivered real, lasting change and created benefits that no individual business could have achieved alone.

Together, we have invested more than £3 million into Welwyn Garden City, helping to secure £9 million of public realm improvements, promoting the town to millions of people and attracting thousands of visitors through events, campaigns and initiatives. Along the way, we have built strong partnerships, supported businesses through challenging times and ensured the town centre has a dedicated voice representing its interests.



Here are just some of the achievements we are most proud of:

- **Creating the Wonderful Welwyn Garden City brand, giving our town a strong identity and a recognised destination brand.**
- **Building a digital audience of more than 50,000 followers and generating over 9 million annual impressions, promoting local businesses and encouraging people to visit and spend locally.**
- **Delivering award-winning events including the World Food Festival, Screen on the Green, Vintage Festival, Street Food Heroes and a wide programme of seasonal activities that bring life and footfall into the town centre.**
- **Investing in award-winning floral displays, nationally recognised Christmas lights and environmental improvements that enhance the visitor experience.**
- **Improving business safety through initiatives such as WGCWatch, retail crime partnerships and stronger links with the police and CCTV network.**
- **Helping businesses reduce costs and improve sustainability through recycling schemes and discounted waste services.**

- **Providing business support through training, networking, marketing opportunities, recruitment promotion and regular communication.**
- **Working alongside landlords, developers and public sector partners to influence investment and ensure the interests of businesses are represented in decisions affecting the town centre.**

These achievements belong to every business that has supported the BID. They demonstrate what can be accomplished when businesses work together with a shared purpose and a long-term commitment to the success of Welwyn Garden City.

A YES vote will allow us to build on these foundations, continue investing in the town centre, support businesses through the challenges ahead and create an even stronger, more vibrant and prosperous Welwyn Garden City for everyone.

Together, we have achieved so much. And together, we can achieve even more!

Please vote YES and help us continue shaping the future of Welwyn Garden City.

MOUNIA LE GAUFEY & MIKE PARALIKI
Co-chairs of Welwyn Garden City BID Ltd

This prospectus should be read in conjunction with the full **BID Proposal and Business Plan** available at www.wonderfulwgc.co.uk or by contacting the BID team on **01707 497930** or bid@welwyngarden.co.uk



VOTE YES

for five more years
of investment in
Wonderful Welwyn
Garden City



CONTACT: ✉ bid@welwyngarden.co.uk ☎ 01707 497930

wonderfulwgc.co.uk