



Highlights and Achievements

2025: A RECORD BREAKING YEAR FOR WELWYN GARDEN CITY



BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE BUSINESSES OF

WONDERFUL
WELWYN GARDEN CITY

DIRECTORS' REPORT

As we reflect on 2025, it has been a productive but challenging year. Despite exceptionally tight budgets, we are proud to have delivered a range of impactful projects supporting our businesses.

A key achievement was providing free recycling to businesses throughout the year, saving local firms thousands of pounds during a period of intense cost pressure. We also continued to offer training, advice, and direct support, including innovative initiatives that demonstrated our commitment to the business community.

We were proud to host the Knife Angel in Welwyn Garden City, a powerful installation that generated strong engagement and important conversations around knife crime, community safety, and social responsibility, reinforcing the BID's wider social impact.

Despite losing key sponsorship, we delivered our best World Food Festival yet, welcoming over 30,000 visitors. Screen on the Green also returned by public demand. While well received,

it delivered limited commercial benefit, providing valuable learning for future events.

We're now approaching the end of our five-year BID term and preparing for renewal and a new ballot in October. Over the coming months, we will engage with businesses to shape priorities for the next term.

The BID renewal is essential to the future of Welwyn Garden City town centre, particularly in the context of local government reorganisation. Without the BID, there would be no strategic, business-led mechanism for coordinated investment, nor the valued events, public realm improvements, and vibrancy the town centre currently enjoys – especially at a time of ongoing pressure on public funding.

By renewing the BID, businesses retain a democratic and accountable platform to shape the town centre's future. We hope you will support the renewal and look forward to speaking with you in the months ahead.

Mike Paraliki and Mounia LeGaufey
Co-chairs, Welwyn Garden City BID Team



OBJECTIVE 1: Celebrate Wonderful Welwyn Garden City



DESTINATION MARKETING

We launched a bold **Enjoy Wonderful Welwyn Garden City** campaign, featuring five high-impact bus back designs on Centre buses between Luton, Dunstable and WGC, alongside World Food Festival advertising. Visibility was further boosted with new poster displays on Howardsgate, positioning WGC as a vibrant place to visit, shop and enjoy.



SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES

Our **social media content days** gave businesses access to a professional videographer and photographer, helping them create high-quality content to strengthen their online presence.



PROMOTING THE OFFER

We published the **Enjoy WGC Guide**, featuring 45 local businesses through listings, adverts and offers. Our digital reach continued to grow, with over **9.1 million views and impressions** across all platforms and **34,861 followers** across social channels. Our website attracted **47,865 visitors**, with 31,839 unique users. This all raised the profile of Welwyn Garden City, supported local businesses, and strengthened our town centre community.



GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

We introduced **Tap to Donate** contactless points across the town centre, making it easy for visitors to support trusted local charities helping vulnerable people.



BUSINESS SUPPORT & ADVOCACY

We hosted **business breakfast meetings**, including one with Andrew Lewin MP, **lobbying on key local issues**. Businesses also took part in the **Willow Fire Walk**, raising vital funds for seriously ill young adults, and we delivered **first aid training** to support safer workplaces.

OBJECTIVE 2: Enjoy Vibrant and Sustainable Welwyn Garden City



ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENTS

Welwyn Garden City BID was proud to **win Overall Category Winner** and a **Silver Gilt** in the BID category at the **Anglia in Bloom Awards**. We **enhanced the street scene** and delivered widely-praised Christmas decorations, including the town's **best-ever Christmas tree**.



SAFETY AND SECURITY

We are preparing to launch our **FREE Shop Safe Information Sharing App**, enabling businesses to share updates and incident information quickly and securely. We also joined the **Retail Crime Partnership Board** alongside the Police and Crime Commissioner.



EVENTS AND MARKETS

It was another strong year for events, including our most attended **World Food Festival**, the **Knife Angel** installation, and a highly successful **Christmas lights switch-on**. **Screen on the Green** returned but was less well attended than previous years. **Vegan Market** and **Street Food Heroes** were also well supported and are hoped to return.



GREEN INITIATIVES

We provided **FREE recycling** for businesses throughout the year, saving some businesses over **£1,000** annually. We also secured **discounted rates** for general and food waste collections. While the free scheme ends at the financial year, we are exploring options to extend preferential rates.



OBJECTIVE 3: Invest and Grow in Welwyn Garden City



ATTRACTING INVESTMENT

We worked with **partners, landlords** and **property agents** to attract and support investment into Welwyn Garden City.



NETWORKING AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

We hosted **working group meetings, training sessions, and community fundraising activities**, including a fire walk in support of the Willow Foundation.



SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES

Through **newsletters, a new website, training and Wonderful WGC channels**, we promoted business events, recruitment and advertising. Campaigns included **Small Business Saturday, Love Local** and **12 Days of Giftmas**, alongside multiple **Content Days**.



GENERATING ADDITIONAL INCOME

Through **sponsorship, match funding and grants**, we increased resources available to invest in WGC's growth and development.



PROMOTE INVESTMENT

We continued to work with partners and stakeholders to **attract, engage and support businesses looking to invest, grow and develop** in Welwyn Garden City.

Your BID Levy explained

Every business in the Welwyn Garden City BID area is required to pay a levy which is in addition to Business Rates and needs to be paid separately (regardless of how you pay the Business Rates).

Prompt payment will help ensure the objectives that were voted on in the Business Plan come to fruition.

You can pay the levy in the following ways (please always quote your BID account reference):

- ▶ **Debit or credit card**, by calling **0845 6041064** or going online at **WHBC Home Page** › Pay › View all › Business rates
- ▶ **BACS**, creating a new payee using the following details.
Sort code: **40-46-08**
Account number: **41020900**

If you have any queries regarding payment of your levy please contact the

Business Rates Team on **0203 832 6045** or email **Welhat.NNDR@Liberata.com**

If you have questions about the Business Improvement District or if you are having difficulty paying your BID levy bill, please contact the **BID team** on **01707 497930** or email **bid@welwyngarden.co.uk**

As we move into 2025, the upcoming BID Ballot represents a crucial opportunity for Welwyn Garden City. The BID delivers clear value for money, with levy income ring-fenced and reinvested directly into projects that support businesses, improve the town centre and drive footfall. We will be consulting with levy payers very soon to help shape priorities for the next term, ensuring every pound invested reflects business needs. This continued investment is vital to protecting the town's future and is an opportunity that cannot be missed.

WGC BID Finances – April to December 2025

INCOME	9 months to date	Budget
BID Levy Income	£272,425.49	£279,196
Additional Income	£43,711	£26,530
TOTAL INCOME	£316,136.49	£305,726
EXPENDITURE	9 months to date	Budget
Objective 1 – Celebrate Wonderful WGC	£28,036	£67,275
Objective 2 – Enjoy Vibrant and Sustainable WGC	£90,7477	£117,110
Objective 3 – Invest and Grow in WGC	£16,013	£45,982
Central Admin & Overheads	£23,062	£45,322
Levy Collection Costs	£8,143	£8,596
Contingency	£10,470	£13,960
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£176,471	£298,245

BID Contacts

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