



WELWYN HATFIELD
BOROUGH COUNCIL
2024-25

ANNUAL REPORT



**WELWYN
HATFIELD**



Welcome
to our Annual
Report for
2024-25.

Introduction

from the Leader and Deputy Leader

We hope this provides a clear snapshot of our achievements and how we have managed our budget this year. Our commitment remains strong – to ensure you, the community, remain at the heart of everything we do, from events to changing services.

This year, we have reinforced our dedication to delivering homes to be proud of as well as progressing our Nicer Neighbourhood Task Force. We launched the first engagement of our new local plan and commenced construction on new social housing. We also carried out a full programme of planned works in our role as a landlord, as well as sprucing up some of our shared neighbourhood spaces at our Tenant Community Catch Up Days.

Enabling our economy and delivering on the objectives of our Town Centre Task Force continues to be at the top of our agenda and this year, we have hosted and supported a variety of fantastic town centre events, as well as making a start on the redevelopment of Hatfield town centre's Market Place.

We've continued to act on climate change and lead by example. Over the past year, we ranked highly in electric charging provision and provided free climate change awareness training for the community.

We have also introduced initiatives to enhance service delivery, including a revised approach to grass cutting and the launch of our online chatbot, WelChat.

Your engagement has been invaluable. You've shared your views through various consultations and surveys, as well as participating in a full calendar of events and dedicated tenant and leaseholder involvement activities.

We acknowledge there is always room for improvement, and this report highlights the complaints you've raised with us. We will continue to use your feedback to shape an even better 2025-2026.

Max Holloway
Leader of the council

Jane Quinton
Deputy Leader of the council

Our year in numbers



We have emptied over

4.5 million

bins and recycled over

18,000

tonnes of waste



We have planted
309 new
trees
and given over

10,000

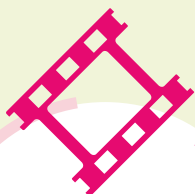
trees to our residents as
part of the *Your Tree,
Our Future* project



We have cleared

4,286

fly tips



We have welcomed

160,639

visitors to Campus West
making use of our
cinema, roller city
and soft play



We have
prevented

331

cases of homelessness
and rehomed

351

new home seekers



We welcomed

10,430

visitors to the Mill
Green Museum and
Roman Baths



We have
inspected
and accredited
landlords and
89
14 letting
agents



We have consulted with

11,627

households about parking
improvements and
introduced new free
parking permits for
registered carers



We received

2,388

planning
applications



More than

13,500

residents and visitors
have attended
community events
organised by us



Our key projects and achievements

In 2024-25 we have delivered new projects and initiatives in line with our HEART priorities.



Homes to be proud of

High-quality social housing

Our commitment to building high-quality social housing saw us rise to the top ranked English local authority for social rented completions outside of London. The rankings published by Inside Housing ranked us 17th in the UK for most new homes built.

In November, work started on the construction of 14 modern, one-bedroom apartments at Ludwick Green in Welwyn Garden City, as part of our pledge to provide high-quality homes for all.

In March 2025, we secured over £6.4 million of Government funding to improve the energy efficiency and sustainability of our housing stock. These works will reduce residents' fuel bills, improving their comfort and wellbeing.

Turn to pages 8-9 for more information about our landlord services.

Local Plan

We launched our early engagement process as the first steps towards developing a new Local Plan for Welwyn Hatfield. We gained valuable feedback from residents about their local priorities, which will help shape the future of our borough.

We have also developed a number of masterplans for major sites with a focus on good design, sustainable places and communities.

Enabling an economy for everyone

Hatfield's Market Place redevelopment

Hatfield Town Centre continued to thrive with weekly markets and events. This year, work started on the redevelopment of the Market Place area of the town centre to create a welcoming, accessible, sustainable public space where people of all ages can relax, socialise and enjoy the surroundings.



Annual Report 2024-25



Action on climate change

Going greener

We were pleased to be ranked by the Department of Transport among the top 20 local authorities in the UK for the availability of electric vehicle charging points, to help promote the adoption of greener transportation options.

We designed a free online climate awareness training for residents. The 20-minute course raises awareness about key climate issues as well as providing ideas on how to live more sustainably.

For the first time ever, we also took part in the national Great Big Green Week campaign in June, hosting 14 activities across the borough.

We rolled out new bins at 18 recycling (bring) bank locations to help increase recycling rates and reduce waste.

Welwyn Garden City in bloom

Over the summer, we welcomed two sets of judges to Welwyn Garden City, winning a Silver Gilt at the prestigious 2024 Britain in Bloom Awards and a gold award and overall best BID award at the 2024 Anglia in Bloom Awards.

The town also earned Tree City of the World status for the sixth year running!



Running an effective council

New online chatbot

This year we launched a new online chatbot called WelChat designed to help customers easily find information on the council's website. Available 24/7, WelChat can be accessed from any page on the council's website.

Grass cutting improvements

Service improvements were agreed this year to enhance grass cutting across the borough. Our contractor, Krinkels, purchased new mowing equipment to more effectively maintain our green spaces from Spring 2025.



Recognition for Oak Hill

Oak Hill Crematorium marked its first year of opening and received several notable recognitions, including Silver Winner at the Hertfordshire Building Awards. Oak Hill Lawn Cemetery also won Silver Winner at the Cemetery of the Year Awards and achieved Green Flag status.





Together, creating opportunities for our communities

Our events

More than 13,500 residents and visitors have attended community events organised by us, including The White Ribbon Football Tournament, This Girl Can, Big Summer events and many more!

ONE Welwyn Hatfield

We celebrated our amazing residents, businesses and charities at the ONE Welwyn Hatfield awards, with 14 awards presented to unsung heroes in our community.



Please use this QR code to view the council's Annual Achievements video on YouTube.



Our engagement

This year, we received over 1,470 responses to key consultations. Thanks to your feedback we have:

- Agreed how we will manage our Trees and Woodlands for the next four years.
- Introduced a Public Spaces Protection Order in High View, Hatfield.
- Agreed our climate change commitments as well as supporting the Government's Climate and Nature Bill.
- Agreed our landscape and management plans for our key nature reserves until 2035.

Our tenant and leaseholder involvement

As your landlord, we are committed to helping our tenants and leaseholders live in a home they can be proud of and create opportunities in our communities.

There are lots of ways tenants can engage with us, from reading the latest news in our newsletter, Community Edit, attending a Community Catch up or joining the Resident's Panel.

However you choose to be involved, we'd like to thank you for your time. Your contribution helps us to shape our housing services and focus on the things that matter to you.

Some highlights from this year include:

Community catch ups

We worked in Partnership with our property contractors Morgan Sindall Property Services and Equans to deliver six Community Catch-Ups across the borough. The Residents Panel, Police, Fire Service, Mind in Mid Herts, Step 2 Skills and Communities 1st were also on hand to give guidance and answer queries from tenants and leaseholders. We also removed around twelve tonnes of bulky waste and litter, reported fly tips, logged repairs and ground maintenance requests.

Consultations

This year, we consulted on proposed changes to our tenancy agreement to make clear both landlord and tenant obligations. Over 12 % of our tenants responded, receiving 1,085 survey responses. We also listened to requests from our tenants, making large print copies of the survey available as well as translating it into Polish.

Over 81 % of tenants who responded are in support of the changes and all tenants will be contacted in 2025-26 to notify them of their updated tenancy agreement.

Training courses and workshops

104 tenants and leaseholders have participated in 16 workshops and courses with the aim of learning a new skill and supporting future employment opportunities. This year, we have arranged a Paediatric First Aid course, an introduction to working in schools and a course aimed at parents to support their child with maths.

Here is some of the participant feedback:

"Thank you for organising this lovely workshop. I found the course to be very helpful and insightful. The strategies shared have already started to make a positive impact on my approach at work."

"I will be more confident to look for a job."

"Fantastic, Amazing. The course has helped me to bond with my children by creating what I have learnt at home."





Update from Anthony Goodwin, Chair of the Residents' Panel

We are a tenant and leaseholder-led panel helping shape housing services. This can be anything from reviewing new and updated policies, having our say about service improvements and making sure key information and updates are clearly communicated to tenants and leaseholders. We have our own logo so if you see it on any council documents you know it has been seen, discussed and reviewed by us.

Our panel meetings take place 11 times a year in person and online. We are proud to be welcoming and accessible to all who want to attend and be involved. We talk about a range of topics relating to housing services and meet with a wide range of officers across the council, including the Chief Executive.

The panel is made up of both Tenants and Leaseholders living in council properties across the borough. This enables us to get wide-ranging views and opinions from those accessing housing services.

To keep up to date with the work we do and the events we will be at, please follow our Facebook page. If you want to get more involved with the panel, we would love to hear from you, please contact residentinvolvement@welhat.gov.uk.

The Residents' Panel's work this year

The Residents' Panel helped shape following:

- Tenant Information Pack
- Compensation and Redress Policy
- Aids and Adaptations Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Unreasonably Persistent Behaviour & Abusive Behaviour Policy
- Vulnerable Customer & Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Additionally, the Residents' Panel attended:

- 11 Resident Panel Meetings
- Six Community Catch Ups
- Purple Tuesday Event
- Hatfield Christmas Light Switch On
- Hatfield Community Fair
- WHBC Community Awards
- Howard Centre Lego Event



Please use this QR code
to visit the Resident's
Panel Facebook page.

Our tenant satisfaction

As your landlord, we want to know where we're doing well and where we can do better. This year, 601 households took part in our Tenant Satisfaction survey.

This year, overall tenant satisfaction with the service provided by us has increased by 5% to

65%



69%

of tenants had WHBC carried out home repairs for in the last 12 months.



68%

of tenants were satisfied that WHBC provides a home that is well-maintained.



77%

of tenants were satisfied that the building WHBC provides as a home is safe.



59%

of tenants were satisfied that WHBC listened to their views and acted upon them.



74%

of tenants were satisfied that WHBC kept them informed about things that mattered to them.



75%

of tenants felt that WHBC treated them fairly and with respect.



21%

of tenants made a complaint to WHBC in the last 12 months.



35%

of tenants were satisfied that WHBC kept communal areas clean and well-maintained.



63%

of tenants were satisfied that WHBC makes a positive contribution to their neighbourhood.



57%

of our tenants were satisfied with WHBC's approach to handling anti-social behaviour.

We have agreed an action plan for 2025-26 to continue to improve our satisfaction scores. You can find out more information on the Tenant Hub pages on our website.



Our tenants in numbers

We manage and maintain 10,153 homes.

Property type	Tenure type				TOTAL
	General needs	Leasehold	Sheltered housing	Temporary accommodation	
Bungalow	109	8	1,040	–	1,157
Bedsit	136	62	–	–	198
Flat	1,699	1,175	622	–	3,496
House	5,072	–	–	–	5,072
Maisonette	130	99	1	–	230
TOTAL	7,146	1,344	1,663	185	10,153

Property type	Number of bedrooms							TOTAL
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Bungalow	4	398	748	7	–	–	–	1,157
Bedsit	198	–	–	–	–	–	–	198
Flat	–	2,081	1,316	99	–	–	–	3,496
House	–	12	1,052	3,691	300	14	3	5,072
Maisonette	–	18	111	101	–	–	–	230
TOTAL	202	2,509	3,227	3,898	300	14	3	10,153

This year, we commenced a new planned works programme which included the replacement of **376** bathrooms, **458** kitchens, **1,834** doors, **213** roofs, and windows in **917** properties.

We have also been making homes more energy efficient and have insulated **101** lofts and **106** cavity walls, and installed extractor fans in **210** properties.

We have completed
620
adaptations at the
request of tenants at
449
properties.

89.4%
of our repairs have
been completed
on time.

We have
inspected
over
6,000
properties as part of
our stock condition
survey.

This will help
us work out the
future works we
need to plan for
in Tenants'
homes.

86.8%
of our tenants told us
they are satisfied with
our repairs service.

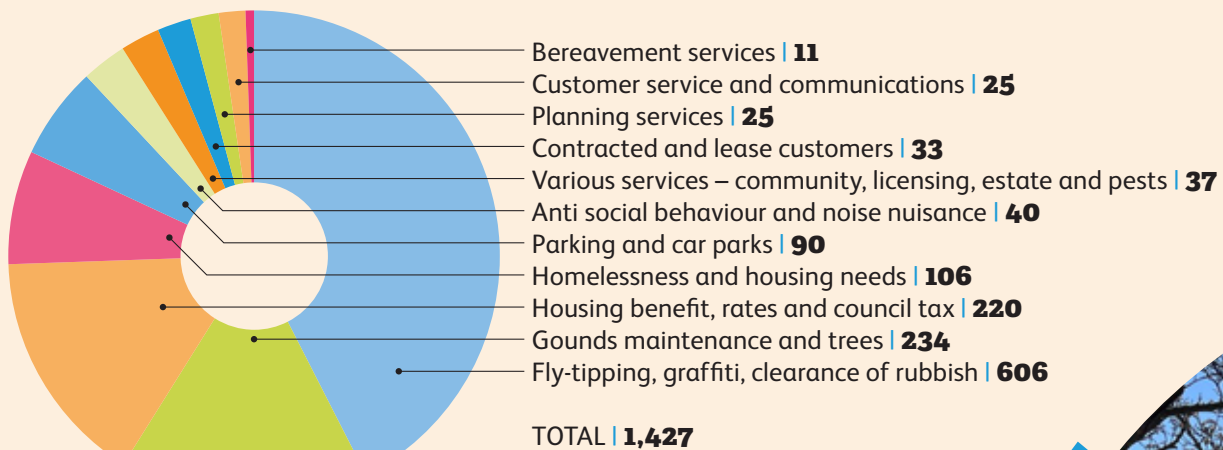
Our customers

Our customers are important to us and we are committed to providing you with high quality services to meet your needs.

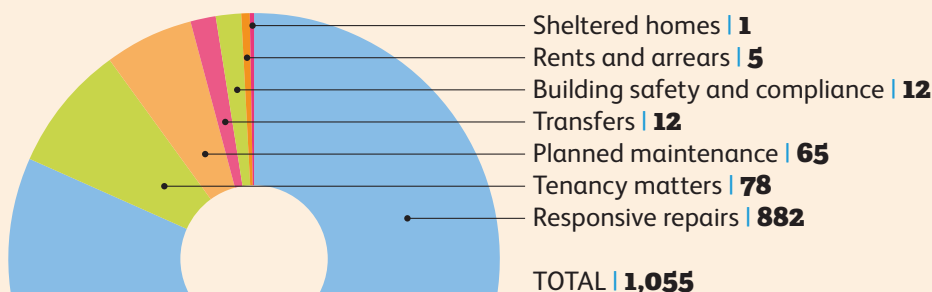
We strive to investigate complaints quickly and effectively. When we get things wrong, we will apologise and take action to put things right.



We received 2,482 complaints this year.
1,427 of these related to the following council services:



A further 1,055 complaints related to our Landlord services:



Compliments

We received 98 compliments this year.

"I want to acknowledge the hard work of the operatives who replaced my fence."

"I would like to thank the bin collectors today. They went above and beyond."

"I would like to compliment your maintenance team on the service I received today. Everyone I spoke to was helpful and friendly and the job was carried out promptly with no fuss."

"Please extend my thanks to the officer I spoke to. They were super helpful."

"Please pass on my thanks to the team who cleared the pedestrian ramp to Campus East Upper Car Park."

"Oak Hill has a very beautiful feel to it and that is in no small part down to the team."

"I just wanted to say a big thank you for being so prompt with dealing with my request. Someone visited my mother this morning and bled the radiators – What a service!"

"I would like to praise the window fitters. They have done such a wonderful job."

"The Officer involved in my case demonstrated commitment and compassion in delivering the council's service while ensuring me and family were not left homeless."

"The street sweeper went way beyond what I expected and did a great job clearing the road and leaves with the sweeper and broom."

"The hedge has been cut today and the crews have done a lovely job."

"I would like to give a big thank you to everyone in the allocations team and how grateful I am for all the work you to get us housed."

"I just want to say a massive thank you for fixing my heating so promptly."

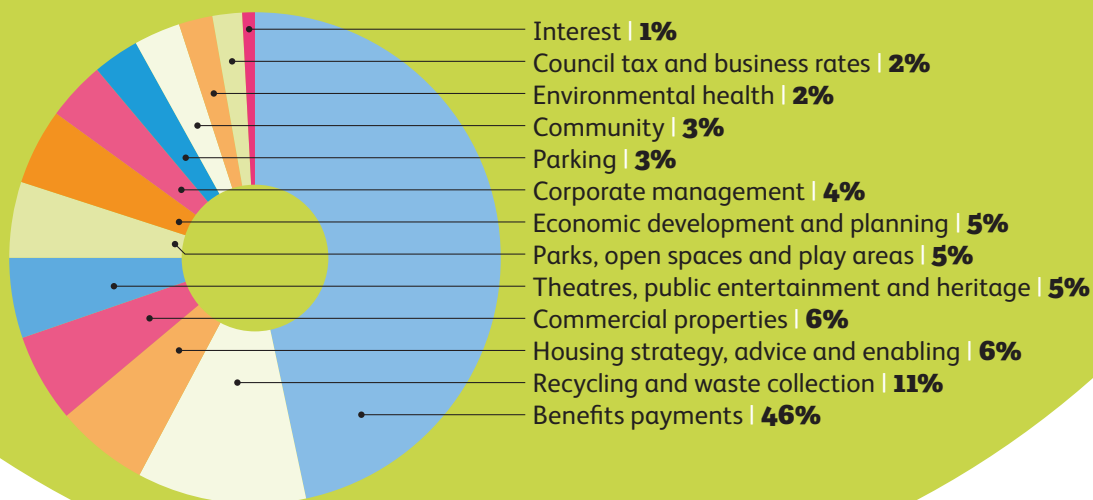
Our finances

Gross expenditure

The council's 2024/25 budget was set to respond to ongoing financial challenges in local government, including rising demand on services and reduced funding. The focus of the council has remained on improving efficiency

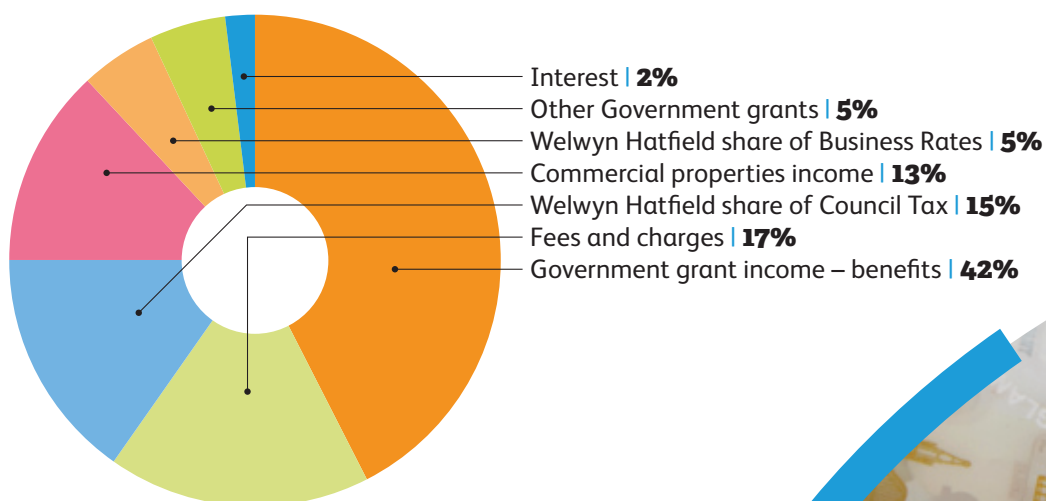
whilst also embracing new technology and ways of working which has allowed us to continue investment in front line services. In 2024/25 we successfully implemented savings whilst also contributing to our reserves.

2024/25 £66m gross expenditure by service area:



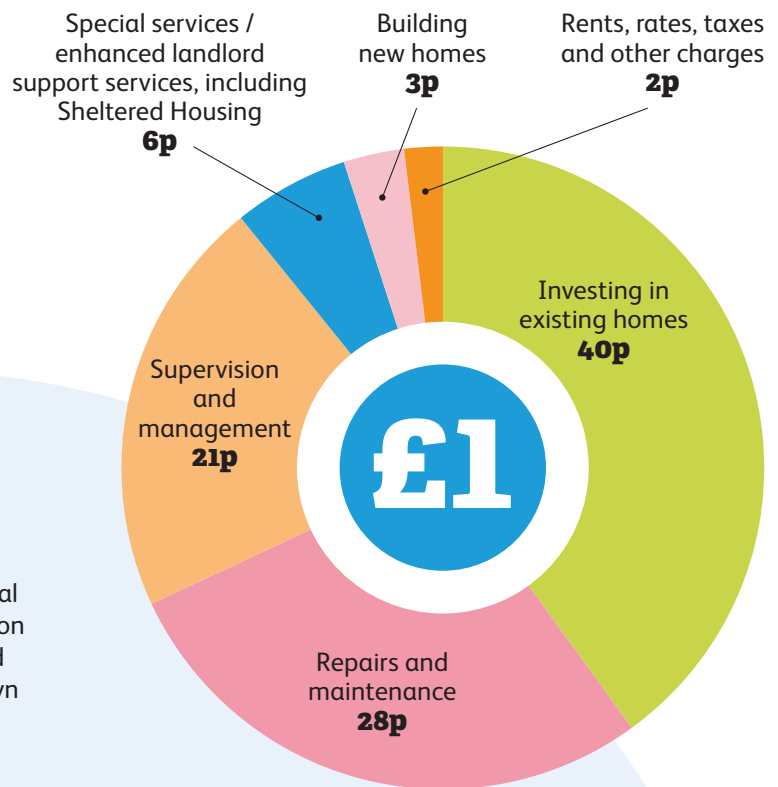
Gross income

2024/25 sources of gross income:



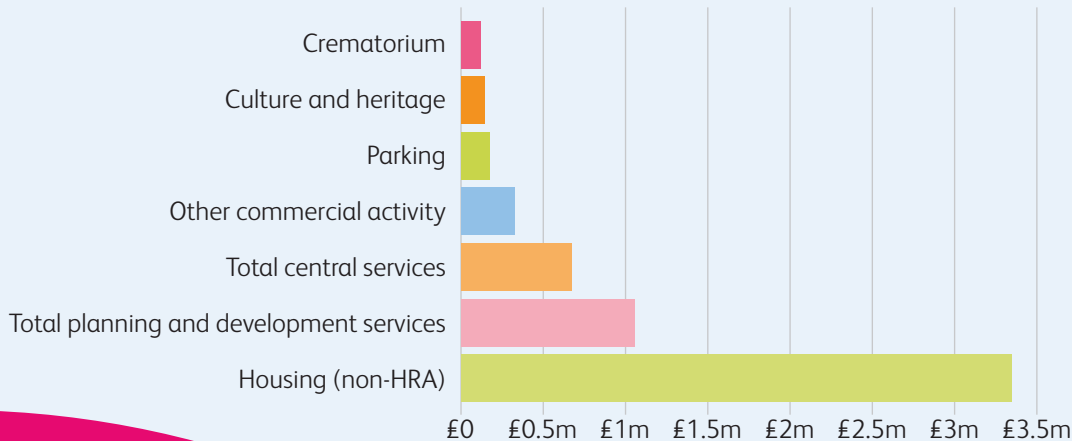
Council homes

The council owns over 9,000 council homes. In 2024/25, the rental income received from our council tenants was £60.04 million. The pie chart to the right illustrates how each £1 of rental income is spent.



Capital expenditure

The council has invested almost £3.4m in capital projects in 2024/25. This includes expenditure on various regeneration projects including Hatfield Town Centre Marketplace, Highview and Welwyn Garden City Town Centre North, as well as implementation of new parking schemes. The council also acquired some land to be used for housing in the future. The council's capital expenditure for 2024/25 is shown below:





For community news and events, please visit our website one.welhat.gov.uk and follow us at:



**WELWYN
HATFIELD**

📍 The Campus,
Welwyn Garden City
AL8 6AE

🌐 welhat.gov.uk
✉ contact-whc@welhat.gov.uk
☎ 01707 357 000