

Watersmeet Annual Review

2025-2026



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Watersmeet today

- Watersmeet opened 1 May 1975 and celebrated its 50th anniversary last year.
- Operated and managed by five permanent members of staff, each with specific areas of responsibility
- 50+ casual staff (Duty Front of House Managers, Technical, Box Office & Front of House) supported by 55 volunteers



Corporate Framework

To be recognised as a vibrant entertainment hub for the local community.

To support and contribute towards the Three Rivers District Council's Corporate Framework objectives:

- **Responsive, Responsible Local Leadership**

- To provide a financially sustainable arts and entertainment for the community
- To deliver outstanding customer experience

- **A Great Place to do Business**

- To develop relationships with external and internal partners and businesses

- **Sustainable Communities**

- To provide an inclusive and accessible theatre experience

- **Net carbon zero & climate resilience**

- To work towards net carbon zero 2030



Core Priorities

To provide a financially sustainable and affordable arts entertainment and hire facility for the residents of Three Rivers and beyond

- To be welcoming, friendly and to provide the community with a venue they can be proud of
- To provide an efficient and reliable service that exceeds expectations
- To improve the energy efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of the facility
- To be accessible to all



Business Plan

The Watersmeet Business plan 2024-27 sets out a clear direction for the theatre. The venue has been implementing the targets and measures detailed in the Document, with preparation beginning for the 2027-30 Business Plan.

So far Watersmeet has:

- Surpassed the KPI of 24,000, selling 28,619 tickets in 2025-26
- An improved understanding of the audience demographic
- Exceeded membership package targets of 100 members with 43% retention rate
- Continued to engage with local businesses to support their event requirements
- Worked with numerous council services to host and support awareness events
- Continued to develop relationships with local amateur dramatic societies

To view the Business Plan, please visit watersmeet.co.uk



Programming

The Watersmeet Business Plan sets out the route for the venue's programming.

For live shows and productions Watersmeet prioritise:

- Annual pantomime
- Commercially successful music acts and children's theatre
- New shows through co-promotion
- Films targeting the audience demographic on a regular programme with inclusion of more diverse titles to attract new audience
- Event cinema with a wide range of genres

In addition, the venue will continue to:

- Develop a well-rounded programme that appeals to a broad demographic
- Embrace the flexibility and a dynamic approach to adapt the programme



Performance 2025-26

Highlights for the 2025/26 financial year include:

- 13,440 tickets sold across 43 co-promoted live theatre shows.
- 5,048 film tickets sold across 52 titles and 24 event cinema screenings.
- 15,179 pantomime tickets sold for Beauty and the Beast starring Eddie the Eagle.
- 67 hires equating to 89 days of venue hire by local theatre groups, schools, commercial organisations and religious celebrations.



Marketing facts & figures

A structured marketing plan, tailored to each genre is in place for every event including promoted shows, film, event cinema and pantomime. In addition to this, themed marketing for children's shows, accessible performances and special screenings are carried out throughout the year. Our digital engagement increases year-on-year (with the exception of X which is declining nationally)

	April 25	April 26
Website visits	261,528	327,360
Instagram	1,987	2,358
X	1,146	1,145
Facebook	2,849	3,182
Email	26,251	26,723



Financial Position

2025/26

- Net turnover of £1,004,657 resulting in a net direct cost to the
- council of £82,820

2024/25

- Net turnover of £1,031,123 resulting in a net direct cost to the
- council of £26,497



Capital Projects

Completed projects in 2025/26:

- 30 fire doors have been replaced and a further 25 have been repaired.
- The electrical intake room has been replaced and now has a prolonged life which will safeguard the reliability and compliance of electrical infrastructure in the venue

Prospective projects in 2027:

- An Outline Business Case is being prepared for a modest and necessary venue-wide refurbishment next year.



Tenants and Partners

Watersmeet Tenants:

- G2Film – occupying a section of office space behind the Watersmeet staff office
 - G2Film produced the pantomime media assets for marketing purposes
- Blooming Tulips – tenant of the venue occupying a large section of the ground floor. Meetings continue to take place to build relationships and to develop collaborative working

Partners and Close Working Groups:

- Paul Holman Associates - the pantomime producer
- Friends of Watersmeet



Community Engagement

- 4 x Artistsmeet exhibitions
- Annual Christmas Fair
 - 50 stalls, made up from 37 stall holders
- Events supported
 - 5 Sept – Croxfest
 - 28 November – Rickmansworth High Street Market
 - 30 Nov – Rickmansworth High Street Market

Tickets donated to school fairs and other community events

- 17 film tickets
- 8 family panto tickets



Participation & Accessibility

Participation

- Over 50 volunteers
- Opportunities to audition and perform in the pantomime for 16 young people

Accessibility

- Modern washroom facility
- Infrared induction hearing system including audio describe facility for up to ten patrons attending cinema
- Touch tours (for specific events including pantomime)
- Relaxed and signed pantomime performances



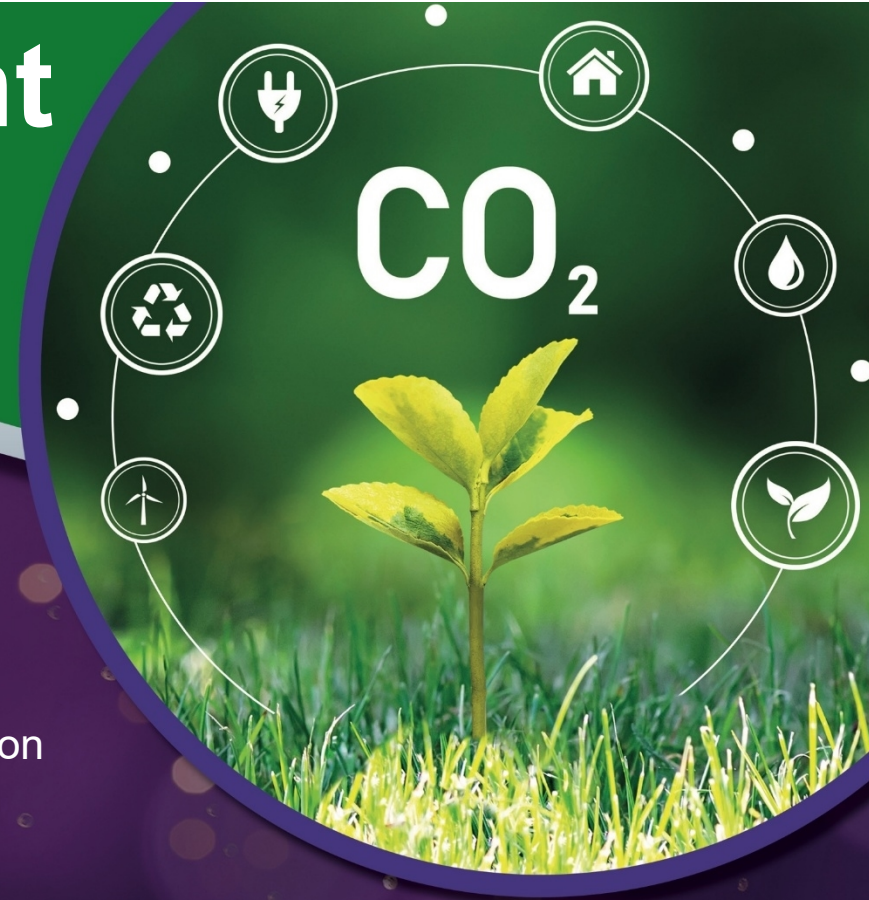
Sustainability & Environment

Watersmeet will continue to take steps to build on the improved energy efficiency and environmental impact of the facility contributing towards the council's Carbon Net Zero target and Corporate Framework objective.

Watersmeet has continued to take a number of steps to improve the energy efficiency and environmental impact including:

- All lighting is now LED and all lesser used rooms e.g. toilets and stores are now on sensors
- Coffee cups are 100% recyclable
- Coffee grounds and tea bags are now recycled through the council's food waste collections
- Cleaning chemicals continue to be switched to more environmentally-friendly products
- Watersmeet had cavity wall insulation installed.

Watersmeet has an energy efficiency rating of '39' (November 2025) which is a category 'B'.



Looking Ahead

- Peter Pan Pantomime 2026, starring Strictly Come Dancing's Nadiya Bychkova
- Drive net cost to council down, with the aim of reaching a maximum surplus of £15,000.
- Introduce revenue enhancement schemes, such as "Sponsor A Seat"
- Transparent "Restoration Levy" addition to tickets, ringfenced for venue improvements as an EMR.
- Move from a 3 brochure, to 6 brochure per year, to maximise yield and taking advantage of venue wide spikes on brochure drops.
- Introduce "Order At Seat" for live shows, adding both a level of VIP experience and revenue opportunity.
- Implementation of Venue Management System, saving valuable hours and streamlining the operation.



Thank you for listening

We welcome any questions.

**We are a local theatre with a big ambition.
Our future is looking bright, exciting and sustainable.**