

**TOWNS
ARE THE
NEW CITIES**

**ASPULL,
ASHTON-IN-MAKERFIELD,
ATHERTON, GOLBORNE,
HINDLEY, INCE-IN-MAKERFIELD,
LEIGH, LOWTON, ORRELL,
PEMBERTON, PLATT BRIDGE,
SHEVINGTON, STANDISH,
TYLDESLEY, WIGAN.**



**IN 2030, THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TOWNS AND
CITIES HAS TRANSFORMED. WIGAN IS KNOWN FOR
LEADING THIS CHANGE BY CAPITALISING ON THE
STRENGTHS AND DIFFERENCES CREATED BY BEING
A WELL-FORMED, WELL-CONNECTED BOROUGH.**



WE ARE DIFFERENT



WE'RE A BOROUGH MADE UP OF STRONG, PROUD TOWNS, HISTORIC VILLAGES AND A WEALTH OF GREEN AND BLUE SPACES.

In this borough, we like to think we do things differently. Our economic vision is part response and part challenge to that belief.

In everything we do, we need to be our own critic as well as our biggest champion. Are we really stretching ourselves as hard as possible? Is each plan, each action going to make Wigan a really great place to live, work, invest and visit?

In 2030 the relationship between towns and cities has transformed. Wigan is known for leading this change by capitalising on the strengths and differences created by being a well-formed, well-connected borough.

We have a clear plan. We are not trying to be a city because we are a town and we have something different to offer, so we don't apologise for this difference. We celebrate it. We maximise it.

Our town centres are leisure and cultural destinations. Whether day or night, arts, culture and creativity is embedded in the experience and the mindset of our residents, businesses and visitors.

We've grown, we've regenerated but we've also developed and protected our green spaces, waterways and heritage.

THE CENTRE OF EVERYTHING

IN 2030



IN 2030, WIGAN IS KNOWN FOR THE WHOLESAL REINVENTION OF THE WIGAN WALLGATE AREA – THE WIGAN EXCHANGE PROJECT. IT WILL OFFER A NORTH/SOUTH CONNECTION ON THE WEST COAST MAINLINE WITH SWIFT AND EFFICIENT LOCAL CONNECTIONS. COMBINED WITH THE ARRIVAL OF HS2, IT WILL CREATE A CENTREPIECE FOR OUR ECONOMIC FUTURE.

Our great connections mean that our residents and businesses enjoy the convenience of being located close to London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and Preston. But we have pushed the understanding of connectivity, now businesses locate here because of Wigan's global reach; easy logistics to and from China are just as important as distribution to Birmingham and Manchester.

The way business works and how goods are moved has been transformed. Workforces are flexible, remote, automated, office based, local, national and international. Wigan is a place that responds to all of these needs.

Our connectivity and holistic approach to business development and our wide offer of locations has allowed us to respond and continue to adapt to a changing business environment.

HS2 is a reality. By 2033, we'll travel to London in 83 minutes and Birmingham in 35 minutes. Roads have been built, but walking, cycling and public transport have been prioritised as a way to move across our borough.

Better transport means better health, both mentally and physically. In all new transport developments, sustainability is a focus. We no longer create environments defined as in town and out of town but consider movement as a whole.

Strong connections, emotional journeys and putting our borough at the heart of the North: this is our future.

INNOVATION ISN'T WHAT WE DO, IT'S HOW WE DO IT.



IN 2030, WE ARE KNOWN AS A PLACE WHERE INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY UNDERPINS WHAT WE DO HERE, WHETHER IT'S OUR APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE OR THE TYPES OF PEOPLE AND BUSINESSES WE ATTRACT. INNOVATION STARTS AT THE BEGINNING AND WE'LL EMBED AND ENCOURAGE INNOVATIVE THINKING AND DOING TO TAKE OUR WORKFORCE FROM THE NURSERY TO THE WORKPLACE.

In 2030 enterprise across all sectors in the borough of Wigan is innovative and creative, that's just how we do things here.

And innovation isn't a separate sector or something only certain individuals or businesses do. Innovation and creativity go hand in hand with successful business – they are robust in the face of social and environmental change. Innovators across all sectors are better employers; and, whether logistics, manufacturing, retail, coffee or film making, innovation and creativity are key to the success of our borough.

Innovation is also about creating flexible approaches and tactics to our working lives, after all it's unlikely that many people will do the same job from the beginning to the end of their working lives as our relationship with work and retirement continues to evolve.

Jobs in all sectors have moved rapidly up the scale in both skills and salaries. And we have raised the aspirations and skills of our residents, both old and new, to meet this challenge.

We offer mentoring support and skills development to help recognise and build skills around innovation and creativity. Our education system fosters innovation and creativity through learning and experiences, developing people who can continually adapt to the needs of the future.

The borough is constantly embracing the future. Whether it's automation, social value, the sharing economy, zero carbon, we have always worked in partnership to be ahead of key trends.



Kate Hulley, Belmont Packaging

BELMONT PACKAGING

**"WE ARE REALLY KEEN TO DEVELOP THE
E-COMMERCE SIDE OF OUR BUSINESS - BOXED
UP PACKAGING - AND ALSO SEE THAT AS A
REALLY GOOD OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH."**

KATE HULLEY

Belmont Packaging, located at Hindley Green and originally set up in 1978, manufactures high quality printed and plain corrugated cardboard packaging solutions for a range of industry sectors.

With 90% of customers re-ordering, it has a loyal customer base including New Balance, Hallmark, Nandos and Taylors of Harrogate and they specialise in retail ready, shelf ready and transit packaging.

Owner Kate Hulley bought Belmont Packaging five years ago and, with the help of Wigan Council and The Business Growth Hub, has invested in the business since then.

Kate, who has a background in manufacturing, says: "We've received funding to improve various aspects of the business. We've bought new machinery to assist in operations and have invested in a lot of green technology such as fitting solar panels on the roof and LED sensor lights inside which switch off automatically when they're not being used. We've also got a new staff canteen and office space.

"It's important to us that we are sustainable and we've also received help applying for our certifications such as FSC standard, BRC and ISO.

Kate added: "We are really keen to develop the e-commerce side of our business, Boxed Up Packaging and also see that as a really good opportunity for growth."

The e-commerce business, www.boxed-up.co.uk offers a variety of lines of corrugated cardboard boxes, which the public can buy online. Orders can be as small as 25 boxes upwards with next day delivery available.

Kate said: "Both Belmont Packaging and Boxed Up sell nationally, so the road network is important to us. The location at Hindley Green is great for logistics, being close to the M6 and M61 so we can get the products out quickly. We think this side of the business is really going to take off."

The company is also committed to supporting the community and has donated funding to Westleigh High School so that the pupils there could participate in a STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) project.

With a team of 25 staff who have a strong work ethic, Kate says that being based in Wigan works well for them and that together they all make Belmont a success and are looking forward to growing the business further.



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"I'M KEEN  
TO SUPPORT  
LOCAL PEOPLE  
AND THE  
LOCAL  
ECONOMY."  
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RED, GREEN AND BLUE ALL OVER.



IN 2030, THE BOROUGH OF WIGAN IS KNOWN FOR BEAUTIFUL GREEN AND BLUE SPACES, BOTH NATURAL AND MANMADE. WE ARE KNOWN FOR OUR CUTTING EDGE ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION OF HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS. THROUGH AN INTELLIGENT AND WIDELY SUPPORTED BOROUGH-WIDE PLAN, THESE GREAT ASSETS HAVE BEEN CONNECTED AND TURNED INTO AN ICONIC AND WELL KNOWN MAGNET FOR NEW RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES.

Our environment has been shaped from our history, the red brick of our heritage buildings, the blue of our canal network and the green of our open countryside, parks and flashes.

But we don't live in the past, and our environment is shaping our future. We have protected what makes us different, we have adapted to the needs of our future – cleaner air, safer and cleaner transportation and quality housing.

Our space is reinvented but not unrecognisable; waterways are now places people want to live alongside, enjoy leisure time and use to get around.

Empty heritage buildings are now home to new business, culture and leisure activities.

We have not created linear communities. Housing has been developed that responds to need and quality. The mix is vital too. We have created balanced communities where young people, older people, single households and families can all live together.

Our quality of life is defined by our surroundings; beauty, air, space and connection will always be central to our success.



Colette Alexander, Luisco Chocolate

LUISCO CHOCOLATE

"IT'S A FANTASTIC LOCATION AND PEOPLE KNOW THAT YOU ARE A CREDIBLE BUSINESS OFFERING A QUALITY PRODUCT. WE HAVE A LITTLE COMMUNITY WITH THE FLORISTS, BUTCHERS AND BAKERS TOO."

COLETTE ALEXANDER

Colette Alexander was on maternity leave in 2014 when she began getting serious about chocolate. Her love of crafting chocolates began as a hobby, but demand for her fine confectionery started to increase through word of mouth and her Facebook page.

Colette was at home, with her two young sons, making bespoke chocolate all week, which she would sell at artisan markets and events at the weekend. As time went on, her business outgrew her kitchen and she converted a room in her house to make the bespoke confectionery.

Four years later, Luisco Chocolate is based in the food courtyard at Haigh Hall. Luisco is a mash-up of Colette and her sons' names. It is a family affair with her mother helping out a couple of days a week and a team of staff on hand for the busier events and bank holidays.

Colette says: "It's a fantastic location and people know that you are a credible business offering a quality product. We have a little community with the florists, butchers and bakers too."

"As a child I used to walk up here with my mum. I now bring my boys here – it's such a nice place to work with 350 acres of woodland."

Originally from Wigan, Colette lives around ten minutes drive from her shop.



She added: "It's really convenient but importantly, it's also the right place for me. There are a number of events here such as Foodie Friday, which we participate in and my main business comes through the shop, although I do have a couple of stockists and take some online orders as well."

"As a start-up I have received lots of support. Wigan Council signposted me to the Business Growth Hub and through them I did a number of courses at the University of Bolton in subjects like branding. I learnt a lot from people who have worked for brands like Selfridges and Brewdog."

Colette was selected as one of the Small Business 100 in 2016 to attend the Blue Tie Ball in London. From that she was shortlisted as one of 20 businesses to go to Downing Street to meet with MP Margot James, who was Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Looking to the future Colette says she would like to expand.

"I can imagine if the right opportunity presents itself I would take it. Location is really important for me, but if another space like the one here presented itself then I think I would go for it."



"AS A START-UP I HAVE RECEIVED LOTS OF SUPPORT."



GENERATION 'W'.



IN 2030, WIGAN IS KNOWN FOR BEING A MAGNET FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, WHERE THEY CAN EXPERIMENT AND INNOVATE AND WHERE THEIR NEXT STEPS WILL BE ENCOURAGED AND NURTURED. FROM THE TOWN CENTRE STRATEGIES AND TRANSPORT PLANNING, TO GREEN SPACES AND HERITAGE TRANSFORMATIONS, YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF WHAT WILL BECOME OF THEIR PLACE.

Young people are not attracted to Wigan just because it ticks the liveability boxes of affordable housing, good network links and great outdoor spaces. They are attracted because young people are welcome here. In fact they are more than welcome, they have made this place and they can grow here.

Our borough is a place where people live and work, hubs have been created for businesses to support, feed and grow together, sharing their skills and increasing their business.

The influx of a younger demographic looking for a peri-urban experience has boosted levels of diversity in terms of age, ethnicity and demographics.

From Leigh to Ashton, Standish to Atherton, skills have been enhanced, through quality schooling and access to Further and Higher Education, Gold standard apprenticeships, access to employers and training. Adaptability and change is at the core of young people who choose to live in Wigan.

Age is not a barrier, innovation and amazing ideas can achieve reality here because we always have an eye on the next sector, the next invention, the next big thing.

The health of the next generation is vital, we've created spaces where people can come together to network, to enjoy and to relax. Each new generation will be our generation 'W'.





Martin Heaton, TMP College

TMP COLLEGE

"I THINK IT REALLY ADDS TO THE AREA AND IT GIVES YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS OPTIONS FOR THEIR FUTURE. WE'VE RECENTLY EXTENDED AND IF NEED TO, WE WILL EXPAND AGAIN."

MARTIN + JACKIE



Jackie Manning, Project Manager

TMP College on Ormskirk Road in Pemberton, Wigan is home to around 300 students and 20 staff. It offers a variety of courses and qualifications in everything from music performance and technology to creative media, computer science, photography and special FX make up.

Started in 2013 by Martin Heaton, TMP College began offering one to one tuition to students learning to play musical instruments such as the guitar, drums, piano and vocals.

Demand grew and a change in premises was needed. TMP College is now located in a building, which has recently been extended and is specifically set up for students to gain industry-led experience.

Martin explains: "Our staff are people with real life experience of working in the industry. John Kettle, who is known for his folk band Merry Hell, teaches sound recording here in our professional recording studio.

"He has worked with bands as a studio producer for more than 20 years and has recently relocated his business to the college, giving our students the opportunity to work in industry standard facilities, which is great experience for them."

"He is currently working with Warrington band Slydigs who have recently toured America and Europe with The Who. Established music artists and band managers come in to talk to our students about their experience and our students also get to see how John works with them – which is invaluable."

Martin was formerly a lecturer in a large FE college and realised his dream six years ago when he began offering tuition on a part time basis at a smaller venue, whilst teaching alongside this to develop the business.

As interest grew, Martin took on several apprentices who have completed various qualifications and some now work at the College, continuing their studies at Level 4 at TMP. Since the opportunity came up to take a larger venue Martin hasn't looked back.

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**"WE'VE HAD STUDENTS PROGRESS TO UNIVERSITY AND SOME OF THEM HAVE STARTED WORKING FOR US."**  
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"We're on a busy high street with schools nearby. The venue is in a good location but there was a need for a community hub here. I think it really adds to the area and it gives young people and adults options for their future. We've recently extended and if need to, we will expand again."

Working with project manager Jackie Manning the college is now offering over 14 qualifications to 16-18 year olds and adult learners. The funding comes through streams including Wigan Council, a partnership with Salford City College and initiatives such as Access to Music.

Alongside the qualifications Martin and his team also deliver workshops, which have been funded by Wigan Council and Youth Music.

Project Manager Jackie Manning says; "We've had students progress to university and some of them have started working for us, which is brilliant. It's still very early days, but we are proving ourselves as a successful training provider with outstanding results and progressions and the next 12 months looks like a great time ahead for the business."



John Kettle, Tutor



Romix Foods

ROMIX FOODS

**"WE SAW AN OPPORTUNITY TO
CHANGE THE BUSINESS MODEL."**

MICK MCGOWAN



Romix Foods, supplier of home baking mixes in Leigh, employs 40 staff with nine aged 26 or younger. Romix believes in supporting and investing in the future of young people by ensuring that they are trained and educated to do their job to the best of their ability.

Partner, Mick McGowan of Romix, says: "A few years ago we got a couple of young lads aged about 17 knocking on the door of our factory. They wanted to know if we had any jobs.

"I asked them about their experience – which was limited, but told them to drop in their CVs and that something would probably come up. One of them, Adam Rimmer was interested in IT.

"We started getting very busy and we needed a website so I called them back. I asked Adam to come in. Now, four years later he has built and developed two websites for us whilst working through his NVQ level two and three in business admin, and is now studying for a degree in IT through the Open University."

Romix is also invested in Wigan. The company, located on Bright Street in Leigh, was established in 2013 when its previous occupier Victoria Foods, which supplied baking mixes to retailers, was sold and subsequently relocated.

Mick who had worked at Victoria Foods, with the then owner Dan Ross, could see an opportunity to change the business model.

Mick and Dan met up to discuss the possibility of setting up a new business, still supplying dry ingredients, but this time in bulk to bakeries and manufacturers and together they established Romix.

Mick says: "The location is really important for a number of reasons. Firstly the logistics are good. We're close to the M6 and the M61 and in Greater Manchester – so our suppliers can access us easily, bringing in the raw materials and we can supply the finished products to our clients through the close network links.

"Secondly, there is a talent pool here of people who were made redundant when Victoria Foods relocated. We have re-employed a good number of excellent operational staff with a wealth of experience.

"It's a great place to do business. The support network is here. For example, we have engineers and corrugated manufacturers that we use just down the road in Hindley."

Mick has also been supported through Wigan Council and the Business Growth Hub with a place on their mentoring programme.

He said: "I have contact with people from global entities like GlaxoSmithKline who can offer support and advice. It's been great to have the reassurance that what you're doing is right. It has also opened up my mind to new opportunities and ways of working smarter.

"There is a good support network in Wigan and it all helps to grow and develop your business."

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**"THERE IS  
 A TALENT  
 POOL HERE."**  
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SECTORS ARE DEAD. LONG LIVE SECTORS.



IN 2030, WIGAN IS KNOWN FOR BEING A LOCATION WHERE ENTERPRISES GROW BY BEING CONNECTED TO EACH OTHER. WE ARE A MAGNET FOR NEW BUSINESSES AND RELOCATIONS BECAUSE THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECOLOGY FOR SUCCESS MEANS THAT ALL SECTORS CAN FLOURISH HERE.

We know that in 2030 Wigan is a great place to do business. This hasn't been defined by sectors, because sectors will always change. That's why we're continually adapting and creating great places where people want to work.

Our business offer focuses on connectivity and growth, we know that all companies have the potential to be technologically and digitally advanced.

Our borough is a campus where enterprises can feed off each other, where successes breed successes.

Out of town does not exist. We have physically connected our existing business places and our new businesses places so they can work better, more efficiently together.

Businesses are attracted here because they know they can offer their team an outstanding quality of life, the potential to relocate and great connectivity. Scientist, designer, entrepreneur, artist, teacher, doctor... our business community reflects our residential community.

Once individuals and companies are here they stay because it's a better way of doing business.



Matt Bretherton & David Johnson, Stonebakers

STONEBAKERS

“WE’RE KEEN TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY. WE’RE FROM WIGAN AND IT’S IMPORTANT TO US TO SUPPORT THE PEOPLE HERE, TOO. WE’RE INVOLVED WITH THE COMMUNITY CAFÉ FUR CLEMT, WHICH INTERCEPTS FOOD GOING TO WASTE AND USES IT TO PROVIDE MEALS.”

MATT BRETHERTON



If you’ve been into Wigan town centre over the last year you may have seen Stonebakers, Matt Bretherton and David Johnson who sell their artisan pizza from a trailer.

It has been a busy year for the business partners who met watching their children play rugby. It was chatting on the touchline that led them both to change their careers and set up a new business in street food.

Matt explains: “We’ve known each other for nearly seven years. We always used to chat at the rugby and one day at the end of the season, David invited us all back to his for pizza.

“I was expecting him to order a takeaway but he had a wood fire oven in his garden and made us all great pizza.

“I’ve always been interested in catering, so we got talking and we had a lightbulb moment. Within a matter of weeks we’d bought another wood fire oven and put it on trailer.”

At first they kept the business to weekends only, catering at weddings and markets and building up their profile through Facebook, word of mouth and events.

Matt worked for Barclays Bank and David was in construction so they carried on with their regular work Monday to Friday, for the first four years.

“It was a very busy time,” says Matt. “We’d be doing a wedding on a Saturday and a market on a Sunday and then back into work on Monday.

“It then got to a point where we were turning opportunities down, because of our jobs and

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**“WE REALISED WE NEEDED TO MAKE THE LEAP.”**  
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that’s when we realised we needed to make the leap.”

For the past 12 months Stonebakers has been touring the North West of England catering for weddings, parties, corporate events and selling pizza at markets and in town centres, from their trailer and gazebo.

They also support local charities offering parties to Wigan and Leigh Hospice, and Alder Hey Hospital and have done events with schools where they teach children how to make pizza as well as talking about careers.

“We’re keen to give back to the community. We’re from Wigan and it’s important to us to support the people here too. We’re involved with the community café Fur Clemt, which intercepts food going to waste and uses it to provide meals. It’s part of the Real Junk Food Project. We also donate any left over food or dough to them too.”

Wigan Council and the Business Growth Hub are supporting Stonebakers.

Matt added: “They’ve been great. I’ve just completed a couple of courses on making sure we’re digitally aware, which has been really useful. The council has allowed us to trade in the town centre, which helps us promote what we do and we’re always open to networking opportunities.

“We’re from Wigan and it’s a great location for us to get around quickly. We’re close to Manchester and Liverpool and one day we may even open permanent premises here.

“For now, we’ve just invested in a state of the art van and we’re looking forward to a busy year ahead.”

SHEDDING THE PAST.



IN 2030, WIGAN IS KNOWN FOR ENSURING INVESTMENT HAS REAL BENEFITS FOR PEOPLE AND PLACES. WHILE LARGE SCALE AUTOMATED 'SHEDS' HAVE A BIG VISUAL AND EMOTIONAL IMPACT, IT'S NOT ALWAYS FELT ON THE GROUND. THAT'S WHY WIGAN HAS BEEN BOLD ENOUGH TO SAY SIZE IS NOT EVERYTHING.

Recognising early on the need to attract businesses where negative environmental impact did not outweigh economic benefit was key to our success. We respected our land value and assets, creating new forms of ownership that focus on jobs and skills creation first.

Large scale operations do not always have a knock on effect to our residents, so we've remained keenly and unashamedly focused on supporting and welcoming businesses of all sizes.

We know that smaller and medium sized businesses have a big part to play in our road to 2030, building skills, developing people and employing directly from our own local talent. But of course we remain open, proud and confident to continue to attract big brand names and international businesses, like Nicepak and Heinz, as our potential continues to grow.

That's why Wigan has been bold enough to say size is not everything.

Our connectivity can be much a problem as a selling point. We recognised early on that we needed to attract businesses where negative environmental impact did not outweigh economic benefit.

We have created new forms of ownership and joint ventures, learning from places like Preston and Airport City Manchester. We look at jobs and skills creation first.

Across the borough, we respect our land value and the assets it brings, assets which once lost, are gone forever.



INA4

"WHEN I TAKE ON AN APPRENTICE, I ENVISAGE THAT THEY WILL BECOME PART OF THE BUSINESS AND I'M INVESTING IN THAT PERSON AND DEVELOPING THEIR ROLE AND SKILLS."

ANDY MARSHALL

Digital company ina4 specialises in web design and development, software development marketing and SEO and e-commerce. Director Andy Marshall joined the business seven years ago after looking for a change from the corporate world where he had been sales director at Virgin Media Business.

He explains: "Our customers come to us when they want to generate results from their website or maybe they want to sell something. They know that we provide a quality experience, value for money and good customer service."

Andy managed the merger of two companies in 2016, which saw the successful growth of the business. The team, which is based predominantly in Wigan with a small office in Leeds, has now gone from seven to twelve staff and turnover has more than doubled from £450k to over £900k.

Wigan may not be the obvious choice for a digital company but Andy knows it has advantages.

"If we were based in a city, then we would have more competition. Our company is our staff. We have a great team, who are local to Wigan and are very loyal to us.

"We've made this a good place to work and we are continuing to grow. We're looking at relocating in the next 12 months as we expand, but we will stay in Wigan."

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**"WE'VE MADE THIS A GOOD PLACE TO WORK AND WE ARE CONTINUING TO GROW."**



Recently ina4 has worked with Wigan Council to find an apprentice in digital marketing. Having recruited an apprentice Connor Britton three years ago, who is now trained and runs the service desk, they wanted to recruit another candidate.

Andy added: "We struggled to find the right person for the role. When I take on an apprentice, I envisage that they will become part of the business and I'm investing in that person and developing their role and skills. We reward them with a good salary and they do a day at college per week.

"It was Wigan Council that helped us to find an exceptional candidate in Mia Mather and we're really looking forward to developing her role."

The company has a variety of customers with around thirty per cent of the revenue coming through property clients such as Countrywide. They have also completed a project for Michael Bublé perfume, developing a multi-currency, global e-commerce platform to launch the singer's new perfume.

"We were referred from one of our existing clients. They recommended us saying that we were good value and provided an excellent service. We beat off strong competition from London agencies and are delighted with the results.

"It's great for our portfolio and hopefully it will have leverage with other global brands."



# FROM START UP, TO SCALE UP.



**IN 2030, WIGAN IS KNOWN NOT JUST FOR ATTRACTING BIG BRANDS AND NEW START-UPS BUT FOR REALISING THE POTENTIAL OF OUR EXISTING BUSINESSES, PARTICULARLY THOSE THAT HAVE INCREASINGLY BECOME KNOWN AS THE 'FOUNDATIONAL ECONOMY'.**

Wigan is home to over 8,600 family owned and other SME businesses. Some had never thought of growing, others didn't know it was possible.

We've actively built aspirations with local business owners, given them access to training and development, supported business planning, encouraged networking, helped build the skills of their workforce and created a supportive business ecosystem that means businesses of all sizes can grow and adapt to change. And this focus on business has attracted people with the skills and ambition to contribute to this continued growth.

This approach helped as part of our Brexit preparations, to ensure we were not just reliant on international businesses and brands to make our borough successful and sustainable.

We have valued – and built – the everyday economy in our borough, and have recognised that skill, craft and great service are as critical as breakthrough concepts and radical innovation.

All businesses, large and small, can be embraced on our journey to growth.



Mick Rennie, MG Fabrications

## MG FABRICATIONS

**“WIGAN COUNCIL HAS BEEN SO HELPFUL. I CAN’T PRAISE THEM ENOUGH. WE’VE RECEIVED £10K FROM THEM TOWARDS THE INVESTMENT AND THEY HAVE ALSO COME OUT TO HELP US ASSESS THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF OUR APPLIANCES.”**

**MICK RENNIE**



MG Fabrications relocated to Ince in Wigan at the end of 2018 and the steel fabrication and welding company has invested in their new premises with a total refurbishment of the site.

Mick Rennie, managing director, explains: "We were previously based in Horwich but the premises was bought for housing redevelopment. We looked hard to find a suitable location and this site, although smaller is proving to be a good choice.

"We've had an office block built and new toilets. All the cranes have been re-serviced and we've had the electrics rewired.

"Wigan Council has been so helpful. I can't praise them enough. We've received £10k from them towards the investment and they have also come out to help us assess the energy efficiency of our appliances, which in turn will help keep the cost of power down.

"They're also helping us with the marketing side of our business as we need to upgrade the website."

Mick set up MG Fabrications when he got made redundant in April 2000. He decided to take the leap and within a month was working for himself.

The company started out in a container in Bolton, carrying out steel fabrications and welding for a small client base. Now with a workforce of 25 they work on-site and travel around the North West to carry out jobs on location as well.

"Location is important, as we need to get around easily and I wanted a site that was easy for my team to get to work. Some of them live in Wigan and the ones that travel further are finding it OK. Most of us have an early start so that we can avoid the rush hour."

Mick added: "I'm really positive about our future working in Wigan."



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"THEY'RE ALSO
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**HERE IN WIGAN WE SEE THE POTENTIAL, THE POSSIBILITIES,  
THE PROMISE OF A DIVERSE AND RESILIENT ECONOMY.**

**WE KNOW THAT PARTNERSHIP IS KEY TO SUCCESS.  
WHETHER YOUR BUSINESS IS ALREADY HERE, OR  
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO GROW AND INVEST,  
YOU CAN BE PART OF OUR VISION FOR WIGAN.**

