

MAYOR OF LONDON

TOMORROW'S MARKET

**GOOD
PRACTICE
GUIDE**

**IN COLLABORATION WITH THE
LONDON MARKETS SECTOR**

**A
HOW**

**TO
GUIDE**

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	PAGE 9
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE	PAGE 11
DEVELOPING A MARKET STRATEGY	PAGE 15
9 KEY COMPONENTS	PAGE 43
LEARNING FROM LONDON: CASE STUDIES	PAGE 169



INTRODUCTION

London is a market city – home to a strong network of markets that bring health, wealth and opportunities into the heart of its communities. They are an essential part of the everyday life of Londoners and part of what makes the city so recognisable to visitors.

Markets also play a key role in the wider success of London's high streets and town centres – offering routes into local employment, attracting footfall, distributing healthy and affordable produce and operating as community hubs that deliver significant social value.

Despite this, London's markets face complex challenges to their long-term sustainability. Budget and resource constraints, a complex regulatory environment, alongside reducing trader numbers and footfall are realities faced by most public markets.

This guide sets out an approach for market operators to develop and deliver local market strategies and action plans. It provides practical tools, resources and inspiration to help market operators identify and address short, medium and long-term challenges faced by their markets, informed by the good practice that is already happening across London.

Successful markets are always evolving, alongside the communities and economies that underpin them. London's network of markets must collaborate, innovate and adapt. The development of street market strategies can support this by bringing together the shared priorities of local government, operators, traders and customers to demonstrate how targeted action and innovation can support London's markets to thrive and remain a vital part of local life.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

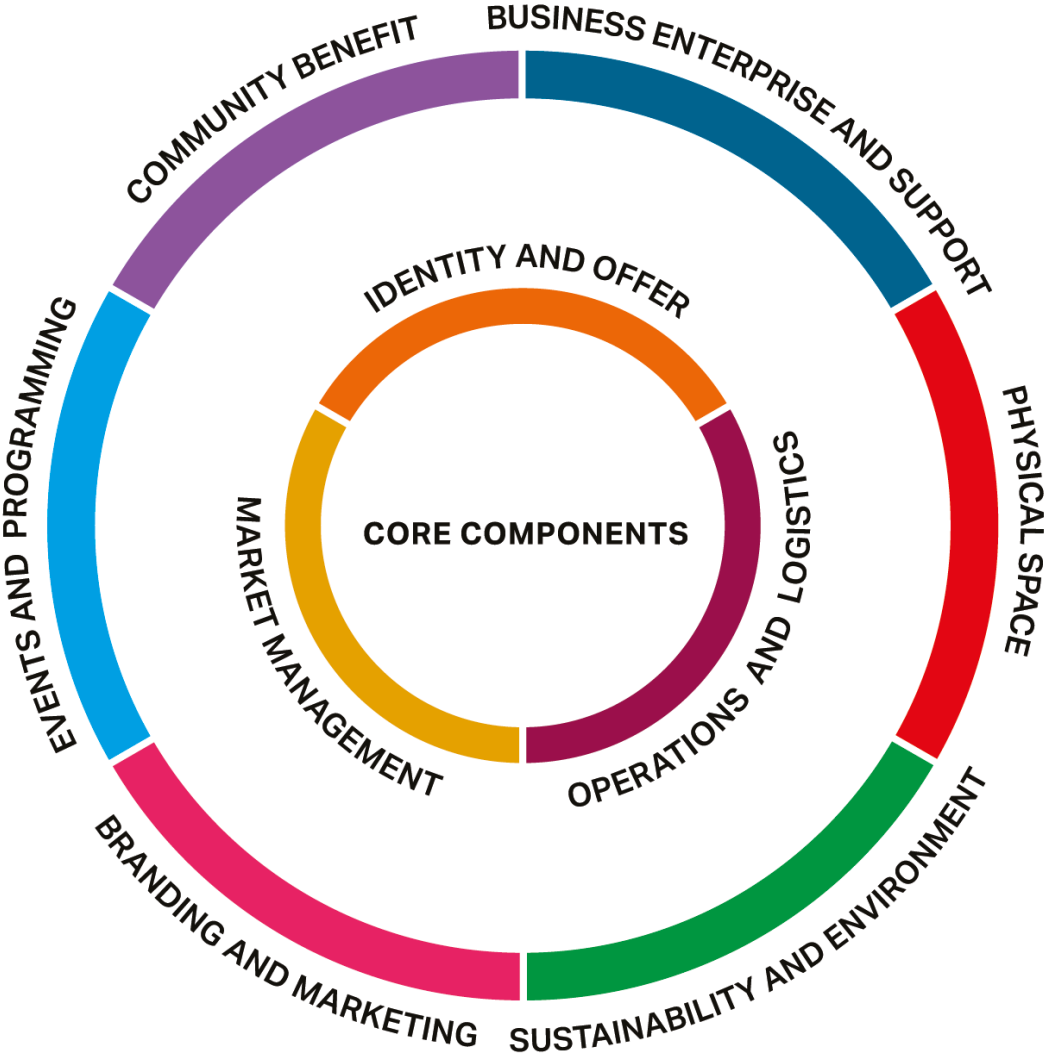
This guide outlines what a market strategy is and how to deliver it. It explains how to understand your market through research and engagement to create a targeted strategy informed by 9 key components. It is illustrated by practical tools, resources, and best practice case studies from across London's markets and the dedicated managers, traders and customers that shape them.

Core components

- Identity and offer
- Market management
- Operations and logistics

Supporting components

- Physical space
- Sustainability and environment
- Branding and marketing
- Events and programming
- Community benefit
- Business enterprise and support





In dedication to Russell Dryden, 1959-2024: The Blue Fishmonger, community champion and a force to be reckoned with.



DEVELOPING A MARKET STRATEGY



WHY HAVE A MARKET STRATEGY?

A dedicated market strategy brings together the ambitions of local authorities, market operators and traders. It should set a vision for the market for a specific period, identify the market's 'unique selling point' (USP) and the wants and needs of customers and traders.

A market strategy should be delivery focused. It should provide a comprehensive framework through which to test and develop approaches that respond to challenges and opportunities, short, medium and long term. It makes efficient use of time, money and resources, ensuring that priorities are balanced and respond to local needs and interests. It should reflect local policy and reference available resources with the view to being integrated with a business plan. This will ensure that the market can be promoted as an attractive and supportive place for trading or starting a business. As such, it will be seen as somewhere investment will be good for both traders and the local community.

A market strategy should be proactively managed and approached as an iterative and interactive process. This should be underpinned by long-term planning, continuous review and flexible responses.

Visionary - A market strategy is an aspirational document used to promote your market as an attractive and supportive place for trading or starting a business. It sets a vision for the long-term aspirations for the market from an operational lens whilst helping to focus short- and medium-term actions.

Collaborative - A strategy developed in collaboration draws together the requirements and aspirations of stakeholders and nurtures conversations around challenges, opportunities, goals and projects.

Evidence based - A strategy identifies the market's 'unique selling point' (USP) and set out the quantitative and qualitative evidence base that underpins it. This creates, a clear link between data, engagement and the practical vision for the market.

Monitored - A strategy sets out the baseline conditions for your markets alongside targets for inclusive growth. It allows the effective monitoring of progress, demonstrating impact and supports a flexible, iterative approach that responds to the daily management of markets.

Unifying - A market strategy can be a complex entity. Setting everything out in a single, accessible document outlining local policy, available resources and an integrated business plan helps to ensure coordinated delivery and action planning are achievable.

Delivery focused - A strategy nurtures partnerships and identifies responsibility for its proactive, flexible management. It makes ambitions more tangible and realisable within the scope of market operators.

TOOLS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MARKET STRATEGY

Developing a market strategy is a key tool in helping your market work better and all types of markets will benefit from having one. You may already know which components you want to focus on, you may be refreshing an existing market strategy, or you may be starting from scratch, but wherever you begin you should consider:

- Understanding your market
- Good engagement
- Creating a shared vision and objectives
- Developing a strategy and action plan

The following process is designed to help prompt and guide the development of a markets strategy.

PROCESS





UNDERSTANDING YOUR MARKET

The first step in developing a market strategy is to gather information to better understand your market. Through research and engagement, you can find out what is important to the local community and use this information to better understand your market: It will reveal how it functions, what works, what doesn't and the opportunities for change. This will enable you to track and refine your strategy in the future. It can help build an accurate record of the performance of your market and provide a strong evidence base to support change and investment.

Market managers are well placed to collect a broad range of markets data. You should also consider how collaborating with others can help.

This research stage may seem to be an optional extra, but better understanding across your market's baseline can help you to:

- Grow stronger ties with stakeholders through engagement with traders, customers and local communities
- Clarify short, medium and long term challenges the market faces
- Identify immediate and future priorities for action
- Define a vision for the market to share with stakeholders
- Build evidence to make the case for your market with potential partners in the council and other organisations
- Ensure continued monitoring of threats and opportunities into the future

How to start your research

To get started consider carrying out a needs assessment to establish what is working and what is not, with a view to defining goals and your market's USP. To evidence this, you will likely need to collect additional data to your baseline information. This can come from a variety of sources, some for free while others will need to be planned and budgeted for.

How your market operates

Market managers should take the lead on assembling baseline information which should include the following as a minimum:

- The total number of pitches
- The total number of market stalls and what is being sold
- Pitch vacancy rate
- Pitch price and any variation in price
- Regulatory framework that the market operates within
- Servicing strategy including frequency and timings of refuse collections, market cleaning, trader deliveries in and out and utilities
- Trader facilities - parking, storage, equipment
- The markets rhythm during day, week and year, peak and off-peak

Carry out a needs assessment

Carry out a needs assessment to see how your market is running, who sells and shops there, its main competitors and what customers and traders value and would like to change.

- What is your market's context (physical, social, economic, commercial and political) including any change?
- How does the market currently operate?
- Who trades at your market?
- Who shops at your market?
- Who doesn't use the market and why?
- What is the market's offer?
- Is there a unique selling point for your market (for example, specific product(s), price /affordability, the place, or location)?
- Who are the market's main competitors (for example other markets and shops)?
- What do traders want the market to be?
- What do its current and potential new customers want the market to be?

Your market's traders and customers

Traders are the life of the market and their success is essential to its longevity. To support existing traders, attract new traders and build community wealth it is essential to know them and their customers.

Key questions for your traders

- What do they sell and why?
- How long have they been trading?
- Do they trade full or part time?
- How do they travel to the market?
- Do they trade at other markets too?
- What do they need to support them to continue trading and grow their business?

Key questions for your customers

- How often do they visit? On which days?
- Why do they visit the market?
- What do they buy?
- What kinds of goods and services would they like to see on the market?
- How do they travel to the market?
- Do they live or work nearby?
- What is their perception of the market?

Carry out a SWOT analysis

Identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats will identify and record what is working, what is not, and the challenges and opportunities for improvement. Alongside research and engagement, a SWOT analysis will help you think about your market's assets – what to keep, enhance, prioritise, or change.

List your market's top qualities under each category. The SWOT can also be used as a focus for engagement conversations and to provoke fresh perspectives.

STRENGTHS

What does your market do well?

- Established, strong traders
- Diverse trader offer
- Loyal customers
- Integral to the community
- Proximity to high street/transport
- High footfall
- Green space and/or trees

WEAKNESSES

What keeps it from being its best?

- Poor pedestrian access
- Poor surfaces and infrastructure
- Weak management
- Chaotic servicing and refuse collection
- Poor trader offer
- High trader vacancy
- Competing retail offer

OPPORTUNITIES

What external factors could help?

- New developments in the area
- New transport connections
- Political support from borough
- Scope for new customers and investment

THREATS

What external factors endanger it?

- Long term financial position of market
- Lack of investment
- Lack of active management
- Lack of new traders and offer
- Lack of infrastructure inhibits growth

Collecting data

For reasons of cost and ease, metrics - essentially numbers that can be collected regularly will be key. Relevant, robust and repeatable data can be collected from a variety of sources. When sourcing your data, you should consider:

What data are you already collecting on your market?

- Consider data collected through trader interviews and surveys or collected through previous markets improvement projects
- Wifi data can also provide a rich source of information around footfall and visit time for markets
- Check what data is held by other teams in the local authority, or for subscriptions held by your local business improvement Districts (BIDs) or sector specific groups such as the National Association of British Markets (NABMA)
- Check if your borough is signed up to the GLA's High Street Data Service which has access to footfall, spend and dwell data

Demonstrating impact

Collecting data can help you build a clear and accurate record of the performance of your market, and provide a robust evidence base to support change and investment. The **street market toolkit** which can be found online, provides guidance on using data to record and demonstrate the impact of markets and the benefits of this approach.

How can you collect data?

- Market managers are well placed to collect a broad range of markets data. You should also consider how collaborating with others can help: Traders can collect information about the market and its customers. Local business and residents forums can provide information around the perception of the markets. BIDs, town centre managers and planning and regeneration teams can also help, for example by situating your market's performance in the wider context of the economic and social success of the local high street and town centre
- Develop and deliver an engagement strategy: Speak to and survey your traders, customers, nearby businesses, BIDs and wider outreach to understand why some potential customers don't use the market
- Run a market stall or shadow a market trader for a day (at your market and/or a competitors) and record any lessons learned
- Produce a drawn map and survey information in Pdf or CAD. An Ordnance Survey (OS) Plan, topographic survey, utilities survey, footfall data and traffic and parking survey, are all useful tools for recording important information, such as stall layouts, delivery and servicing routes
- Make a map of the assets in your area (Google maps can be used for this). This will help you identify gaps in goods or services, competitors, potential new market traders or customers, and local institutions/organisations that you could partner with to deliver themed events or business support

GOOD ENGAGEMENT

To understand your market and its potential, good engagement is important. It will also build transparency and trust across key stakeholder groups, including traders, adjacent businesses, customers, and the local community. Long-term and meaningful stakeholder engagement is vital to achieve buy-in and build confidence to make changes to the market. Understanding the views of those who currently use and value the market and those currently not using the market is key.

Being open as well as flexible with your time, language and location for these conversations will help get people involved.

What is good engagement?

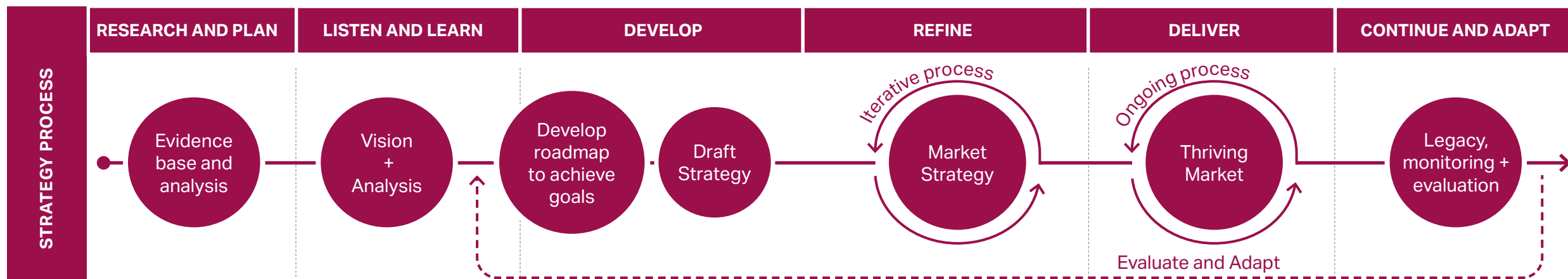
- Use your SWOT as a focus for engagement to open up conversations with more structured interviews and, if resources allow, focus groups
- Develop relationships with stakeholders, engaging with them before and after the strategy is created. It is important that stakeholders are aware of the impact they had and, where not possible, inform them why
- Avoid fatigue with other engagement processes and link up with existing initiatives where possible
- Develop specific and innovative methods of engagement, communicating with clear, accessible, and legible materials
- Consider events, workshops or social events which incorporate food, drink, music or craft as means of bringing people together

Consider who you are not reaching and why

- Establish who currently uses the market and compare this with socioeconomic and demographic data for the area. This will help you to identify members of the community you are not engaging with
- Once you know who is and who is not using the market, think about the needs of different groups and how best to engage with them. For larger projects consider paid participation, or employing community champions
- Have open and honest conversations about different users experiences of the space – including groups that face particular barriers

Consideration of groups that face barriers (such as, language, participation, or safety) will ensure your market offer is inclusive, accessible, and attractive to both customers and traders alike. Engaging with people from different backgrounds will enrich the vision for your market and ensure that it reflects the needs and aspirations of local communities.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



CONSULTATION MATERIAL

Make it visual, use clear analytical drawings and models. **A good level of baseline information includes:**

- Plan drawings showing the existing market conditions and constraints: market stall layout, services (electricity, water, drainage), storage, parking, refuse and delivery arrangements.
- Plan drawings / visualisations showing the proposed alterations and the options trialled with accompanied pros and cons explanation.
- Physical models

This diagram sets out how to deliver engagement as part of developing and delivering a market strategy. It details key engagement actions and suggests useful consultation activities



Hackney Markets and Street Trading Strategy
2023-2028



2.2 Map of Hackney Council's street markets



2.4 Markets Action Plan

Activating space

We want our markets to attract more local people to shop, spend time there and to make it easier to move around for those with mobility issues. We also want to consider how we share the space between the market and footpaths with pavement seating. We want it to be easier to hold market style events in the borough safely and successfully.

Key Themes	No.	Action	2022	2023	2024-2028
1	Increase the number of isolated trading sites in the borough by identifying potential new isolated trading sites to improve the mix of products available across the borough and consult with residents at each location before licensing new sites			✓	
2	Increase the number of markets around the borough in consultation with residents and retailers in the potential locations			✓	
3	In consultation with traders, local residents and shops, identify spaces in the markets to encourage increased dwell time by introducing seating in some market patches and general seating in the area before space allows. To accommodate this in specific locations only where it is practical, explore the possible relocation of individual trader's vehicles off Portobello Road			✓	
4	Consider the implications of pavement seating being reintroduced at markets in relation to their operation			✓	
5	Improve the markets accessibility for all users via provision of tables, benches, suiters, and other public realm elements by seeking external funding to make improvements in consultation with traders and local residents			✓	

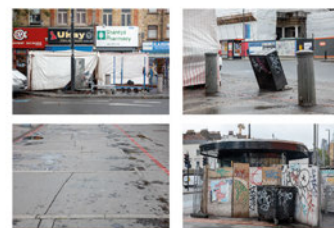
16 Kensington and Chelsea Markets Plan 2022-2027

Whitechapel Market Action Plan

3.4 Challenges

The historical challenges of the market were set out in the Whitechapel Market Feasibility Study Report by Greg and Stephenson Architects in 2020⁹ and unfortunately, since then little has changed. The key challenges highlighted were:

- Unattractive and dated market appearance
- Lack of suitable storage for the stalls and/or goods
- Lack of protection from the weather for traders and customers
- Excess waste and market structures left on-site during and after trading hours
- Lack of through-ways between and behind stalls for trader and pedestrian safety
- Inadequate pedestrian and stall lighting
- Congestion in delivery bays preventing efficient stall replenishment process
- Suitering
- Limited access to toilets for traders those being in the 'kiss Store'
- Inefficient floor pavement and drainage system



9 Whitechapel Market Feasibility Study Report, Greg and Stephenson Architects for benefit of London Borough of Tower Hamlets, 2020, page 4

CREATING A SHARED VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The insights collected through research and engagement will help define the aims and priority actions for the market. Based both on the challenges and opportunities identified, and the goals and ambitions of the market's stakeholders, your vision may aim to:

- Increase market income through increased footfall and attracting more customers
- Attract more traders and reduce barriers for their recruitment, retention and business growth
- Promote a diverse and inclusive market offer that reflects local need and local identity
- Promote innovation in market management and operations to allow for curation, and a safe shopping environment for customers
- Explore ways in which markets can be a model for community wealth building, sustainability, and the circular economy

The vision is likely to include a set of objectives and principles which balance economic, social, and physical ambitions. These should be aspirational, but also informed by the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified. Each principle and objective should be explained further with examples and actions showing how they can be delivered.

Your final market strategy should be holistic, concise and measurable - and clearly linked to your evidence base.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Once your vision and objectives are agreed the next step is to build partnerships with others around it, to mobilise action. Your market strategy should outline actions, initiatives, and processes, either borough-wide or in specific places to achieve the vision's objectives.

How and when you progress key actions will very much depend on local context and wider considerations. These include resources, budget and whether actions are focused on policy development, ways of working or physical improvements to the market.

Publish the strategy and identify projects in an action plan. Set out what the action is, who is responsible for delivering it, whether budget is required and secured, and the target date for delivery. Some actions may be specific to an area, borough or place.

Define your projects

Projects briefs should align with the market strategy vision and should demonstrate delivery of identified actions. Projects should be assessed against and deliver on the vision ambitions and be prioritised according to their need and usefulness. Consider framing your action plan as a series of delivery focused short, medium, and long term projects. Where budgets are limited consider piloting projects or a phased approach. You could also mobilise projects around non-physical improvements that build on existing resources and partnerships and support case making for future change and investment.

Build a partnership

Ensuring a healthy future for your markets is ultimately not just up to you, but rather a team of like-minded people. As well as your immediate stakeholders – traders and customers – seek the support of a broad range of stakeholders. The more people who have an interest in the future of the market, the more likely your market strategy is to succeed.

If you are a local authority operator, collaborate with colleagues in other teams (health, regeneration, environment, or economic development are some suggestions). This will help strengthen the market as a key community asset that has the potential to deliver local priorities agreed by the council.

- Assemble a market strategy steering and delivery group
- Work with existing organisations such as a BID, or set-up participatory structures to enable long-term community stewardship of the strategy
- Appoint a market champion to promote the strategy and a department to lead its co-ordination
- Establish a clear governance structure, which maps key stakeholders, sets out existing policy and draws on existing research and data

THE HEART OF ISLINGTON
CHAPEL MARKET
 SINCE 1879

SUMMER SPECIALS
 SUN, FUN AND GREAT SHOPPING

This summer, our regular Saturday market, and our Sunday farmers' market, will host special events to celebrate the heart of the Angel – Chapel Market

Music festival
 Saturday 6 August
 11AM – 7PM

Featuring:

- ★ Stalls selling street food and drink into the early evening
- ★ Musicians and buskers throughout the day
- ★ Festival face painting, glitter tattoos and hair braiding
- ★ Family craft stalls and free festival activities

Enter our dog show on Saturday 6 August



Scan the QR code for details



The power of a pilot

Markets are often historic community assets which people care deeply for. It is useful to test ideas by piloting temporary projects or a management strategy (such as a timed pedestrianisation) first. That way you can be sure market traders, customers, operators, and service providers are on board before investing significant sums of money. It is a light-touch approach which allows for review and refinement of proposals – building community trust, support, and momentum along the way. You can also get public funding for pilots.

Be sure to gather baseline data at the outset to the benchmark the pilot against. Local authorities could run pilot projects at one of their markets as a testbed for the rest of the borough.

Chapel Market - a season of themed markets

Islington Council and the Mayor of London invested in a community-led redesign of Chapel Market which considered the physical environment on the street market, alongside its offer and how to attract more traders and customers. Retail Revival led a programme of engagement with the Chapel Market traders to identify their needs and issues and gather their ideas for improvements to the market. A series of themed market days were delivered to test and demonstrate how a more diverse offer, events and activities could attract new customers, traders and secure a better income for all traders. This engagement informed the development of plans for the market, which were developed by architects CarverHaggard.



PRECEDENT

Queen's Market - Talking shop

As part of a programme of improvements to Queen's Market, JA Projects delivered Talking Shop - a series of creative engagement activities co-designed with local residents, traders and shoppers. Funded by Newham Council and the Mayor of London, the programme used a pop-up market stall as a base for informal meetings, workshops and events. This approach enabled meaningful dialogue between the designers, community members and market traders, building trust and surfacing shared challenges and priorities. The result was a more inclusive and responsive vision for Queen's Market and Square, shaped by those who use it most, and aligned with Newham's ambitions for equitable local development.



PRECEDENT

North End Road Market- A catalogue of interventions

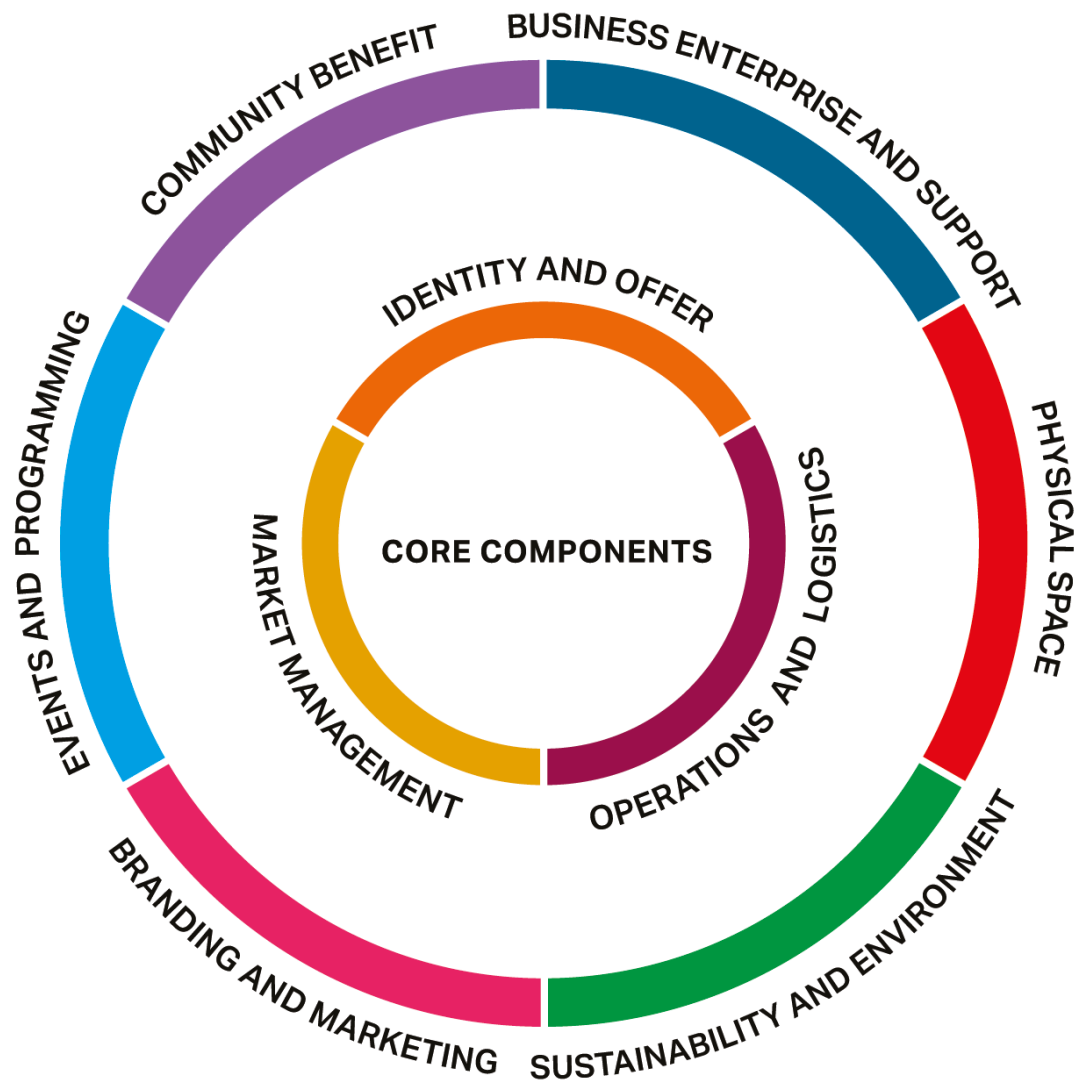
A strong foundation of engagement with traders, shoppers, and residents underpinned the development of the Catalogue of Interventions for North End Road Market in Hammersmith & Fulham. Led by CarverHaggard, the initiative invited those who trade at, use and rely on the market to help co-design a vision for its future.

The work was the basis of a successful funding bid to the Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund towards a series of public realm and community infrastructure projects. One of these projects was a package of market improvements designed to enhance both the trader experience and visitor footfall. These included level surface pitches with access to electricity, water and storage, and new dwell spaces, widened pavements, planting, and traffic-calming measures.



9 KEY

COMPONENTS



9 KEY COMPONENTS

The following guidance, precedents and case studies are organised across 9 key components you need to consider as part of a targeted market strategy.

Each component is organised throughout the guidance within two areas: Core components and supporting components. It is suggested that when considering the longevity and sustainability of your market that you address the core components first. Use the additional components to make your market more rounded. Each component will share precedents to illustrate innovation and best practice.

Your market may require a greater focus on some components than others. However, all should be considered and work together. This will allow your market to deliver the best commercial, economic, and social value for traders, shops, the surrounding community, and customers.

9 COMPONENTS

Identity and offer

Defining and developing you market's offer can increase footfall and customer spend, attract and retain traders, complement local high streets and build a healthy network of markets

Physical space

Focussing on actions that are practical, accessible and adaptable can meet the demanding day-to-day and future requirements of the market.

Events and programming

Hosting events and activities in the market can help to reach beyond its usual customers, broaden its appeal and generate wider benefits locally

Market management

Investment in active market management - whether by local authorities, private operators or in partnership with community or business groups - is widely acknowledged as being key to a market's success

Sustainability and environment

As well as their social value, markets can offer opportunities to deliver change that meets wider commitments around environment and the climate crisis

Community benefit

As well as being significant local employers and low-cost business incubation spaces for traders, markets make significant contributions to local economies and communities

Operations and logistics

Careful management of the often overlapping operations that are vital to the functioning of a market can have significant physical and financial benefits

Branding and marketing

A clear market identity that underpins branding and is integrated into way-finding, merchandise and online presence will make your market distinctive and recognisable

Business enterprise and support

A focus on supporting traders throughout their trading lives brings opportunities to affect how successfully they trade, and in turn how they support your market



1

IDENTITY AND OFFER

IDENTITY AND OFFER

Defining and developing your market's identity and offer can increase footfall and customer spend, attract and retain traders, complement local high streets and build a healthy network of markets.

Every market has a story to tell, a style that sets it apart, the thing which makes it a unique product in its own right. Finding your market's identity and voice can be a complex and exciting process, which requires a holistic, inclusive approach working closely with the stakeholders of your market – a thought-provoking opportunity to draw in and engage the ideas and ultimately loyalty of many different market stakeholders

Thinking of your market as a 'product' means you have two main sets of 'customers' to consider – shoppers and traders. The needs of each should be considered, informed by the market's unique identity. As well as helping to support current traders, this can help set clear aims to target both traders and customers you are not currently reaching and avoid creating a more stereotypical market offer.

To truly put your market on the map, the individual market's identity should be incorporated into all aspects of the market – physical interventions, temporary furniture, online presence, communications, and merchandise.

What to consider:

- Defining your market's offer
- Enhancing your market's offer
- Defining your market's offer to traders



Defining your market's offer

The research and engagement process, including the SWOT analysis, should have helped you to identify your market's current offer and set clear aims for your target traders and customers.

A market's offer is a strong part of its distinctive identity or USP (Unique Selling Point). This may be multiple things: A local market with affordable goods for residents, support for young entrepreneurs, a great place to meet friends and enjoy a changing programme of events.

What is the USP of your market?

Your market's USP is the unique quality that sets your market apart from its competition and you should be able to define it in a sentence or two. Things that you might consider include:

- **Purpose:** Why is your customer here and what would make them come back again? The answer might be quality, affordability, uniqueness or experience. What are the other features of your market that address potential customer's needs and habits?
- **Price:** How does price influence the perception of your market and effect the audience it attracts? What is the average spend of your market's customers and why? Does the offer match what customers want to buy? Identify gaps in the offer
- **Place:** Where and how is your market positioned in the community it serves? Is your market relevant to the local community and customers? Consider the offer of adjacent shops. What is the price point of their products? What customers are they serving? How can your market offer work with and enhance that?
- **Promotion:** How and where can you use your USP to promote your market? Is your messaging clear across all your channels? Is it clear and consistent within local authority policy documents?

Enhancing your market's offer

Once you have defined your market's USP the next step is to enhance the offer, rather than create a more generic one. The aim is to ensure that individually all markets are reaching their potential. For a group of markets, it means that they operate collectively as a wider market ecosystem.

Once you have a plan for your current offer you can begin to curate opportunities at different times the day, week and year, with traders and the market identity at the core of the offer.

Marketing mix

Analyse your 'marketing mix': What is being sold, by whom, at what price? Analyse whether the marketing mix is congruent. This means do the products being sold, the price that they are being sold at, where they are being sold and how they are being promoted work together to be a clear holistic offer to the customer?

Customer spend

What is the average spend of your market's customers and why? Does the offer match what customers want to buy? Identify the gaps and curate an accessible offer that is relevant to the local community and attracts a diverse range of visitors.

Customer experience

Consider what people would like to see and engage with at your market to increase dwell time. Could experiences like night markets, cooking demonstrations or repair workshops attract new customers? Is greening and seating required? Curate an offer to attract a diverse range of customers.

Broaden the offer

Curate the offer throughout the day, week, and year. Look for opportunities to maximise trading hours, establish if there is scope to trade into the evening. Consider an online presence and delivery service for your market to support traders to reach more customers.

Make it inclusive

Consider the safety concerns with the larger community of your market. Does the layout and feel of your market create an inviting and safe environment? Is better lighting needed to allow the market to stay open in the evening? Are there places for customers to stop and rest?

Trader benefits

Ensure that your enhanced market offer builds on the skill and expertise of your established traders as well as new traders. Move traders who are interested, to a different market as they develop to find the best trading environment for them. Consider locating anchor traders with a popular offer in the prime locations to drive footfall and benefit all traders.

Local and connected

Consider the offer of adjacent shops. What is the price point of their products and who are their customers? Consider creating a borough-wide offer, building on each individual market's USP that can help enable shared learning with your traders.



Defining the offer to traders

Why trade at your market?

Outlining the value of trading at your market is important for recruiting new traders as well as identifying improvements that can better support existing traders. Conduct regular market surveys to engage with your traders and creating a culture where traders' opinions and needs are valued and actioned. Research competitors, trends and private markets to understand what makes their markets work.

Different traders will respond to different incentives such as:

- **Offer:** Footfall, customers, diversity of goods, business support
- **Operations:** Trading times, electricity and water, WiFi, affordable pitches, gazebos and stalls, storage, parking
- **Events and programming:** Night markets, complementary events programme, specialist markets
- **Public realm:** Street furniture and seating, attractions/landmarks/public art, wayfinding
- **Place:** Location, history, cultural identity, community, proximity to target consumers
- **Branding and identity:** Strong online presence, marketing team
- **Market management:** Proactive market management staff, effective recruitment and terms and conditions which support traders needs for flexible management of legislation

Use your identified incentives to promote your traders and attract new ones through print and web-based promotional materials. See brand and marketing for suggested approaches.

Trader facilities

The market's core facilities will determine the traders you attract, their offer and successful business operations, and their delivery of an excellent customer experience.

- Consult with your traders on the requirements needed in each market to support trading and prioritise key issues
- Are core facilities equally available across all your markets? Is this impacting trader retention at some of your smaller markets? Lack of access to wifi, water, toilets, electricity, and storage may impact trader retention on those sites and in particular the retention of traders offering affordable, perishable fruit and veg





PRECEDENT

Black-owned Hackney Market - Celebrating black excellence

The Black-owned Hackney Market was a monthly street market and cultural event series that operated at Bohemia Place in Hackney from 2020 to 2023. Founded as a partnership between Jackson McLarty through his platform Black Eats LDN and Bohemia Market Place, the market was established with a clear purpose: to create a visible, vibrant space that celebrated and supported Black-owned businesses across food, retail, lifestyle, and wellness.

Set in a previously underused courtyard owned by Hackney Council near Hackney Central station, the market ran monthly and became a key destination in London's cultural calendar. Over three years, it hosted more than 170 Black-owned businesses and welcomed over 90,000 visitors. From vegan street food and Afro-Caribbean cuisine to handmade homeware and beauty products, the market offered a curated, high-quality trading experience, showcasing the depth and creativity of black enterprise in London.

The vision for the market extended beyond commerce. The approach was rooted in community building, representation, and cultural pride. Drawing on digital media and content marketing, Black Eats LDN used Instagram and storytelling to spotlight individual traders, attract diverse audiences, and amplify the stories behind the brands. Through this, the market built a strong and loyal following, both online and on the ground, bringing greater visibility to Black-owned businesses that are often underrepresented in mainstream retail and food scenes.

Events such as "Meet the Producer," live DJ sets, and family workshops brought vibrancy to the market, making it an inclusive space for all ages. The market was intentionally welcoming—pet and family-friendly, accessible, and designed to foster community connection through food and culture.



PRECEDENT

How the market offer can reflect community identity

London's street markets have long been mirrors of the communities they serve - shaped by local culture, migration, and economic shifts. **Ridley Road Market** in Dalston, for example, has historically catered to Hackney's Caribbean, West African, and Turkish communities. Its vibrant offer of fresh produce, halal meats, and imported spices continues to reflect its multicultural base. While gentrification has reshaped parts of the area, Ridley Road retains its distinct identity, resisting full commercial homogenisation and remaining a key source of affordable food and cultural expression for long-standing residents.

Portobello and Golborne Road Markets in Notting Hill has evolved from a humble fruit and veg market into a world-famous destination known for antiques, vintage clothing, and street food. Yet beneath the global appeal, it still offers goods and services relevant to the local Afro-Caribbean community - reflecting the enduring influence of West Indian migration to the area post-Windrush. Its Carnival roots and community-led initiatives ensure that the market remains a site of both heritage and modern-day relevance.



2

MARKET MANAGEMENT

MARKET MANAGEMENT

Investment in active market management – whether by local authorities, private operators or in partnership with communities or business groups – is widely acknowledged as being key to a market's success.

Market management teams should strive to be as dynamic as a market itself. That means being enterprising, knowledgeable, personable and accessible, to support traders day-to-day with their business needs and to ensure customers have a positive experience.

Markets do not operate in isolation and as places in the city, the markets manager often needs to negotiate and respond to complex issues to provide an effective market service and deliver improvement projects. The advice, support, and services available from wider local authority teams is often essential to delivering a successful market.

It is also important to promote the market to political stakeholders. This will ensure the market remains on the political agenda and benefits from city or borough-wide initiatives, development projects and funding opportunities.

What to consider:

- Building a professional markets team
- Streamlining trader licensing and policy
- Shared services
- Markets regulation



Building a professional markets team

The management team 'makes' the market and ensures its success through proactive engagement with both the local community and the market traders. The pace of markets can be fast. Having people in the right roles with the right skills is essential to responding quickly and effectively to issues, as well as maintaining quality.

- Benchmark your market service resource and capacity against similar council run markets. Consider which policy function the market team sits within and the connections it enables with other key services within the council. How can your organisational structure best support key outcomes for the markets, perhaps around economic development, skills and employment and training?
- Map the key roles and responsibilities in your team and look for ways to improve and expand your offer. Think local – recruiting staff that are knowledgeable and passionate about the local area and have transferable or complementary skills can help you build a multi-faceted and diverse team
- Support your team's development and professionalisation. NABMA's work in professionalising markets includes its Diploma in Market Administration, a six-day course formally recognised as equivalent to the national framework HNC/D or NVQ. The level 4 qualification is accredited by the Institute of Place Management, part of the Manchester Metropolitan University
- Participate in learning networks, including the Street Trading Benchmarking Group and the Association of London Markets. This will help you to stay abreast of good practice and support a shared approach to resolving shared challenges
- Consider succession planning to manage the impact of key team members leaving and the potential loss of institutional knowledge

Streamlining licensing and policy

Trader applications

Booking space on local authority markets is sometimes a slow process and the information required can vary from one authority to another. This friction can put many applicants off applying to public markets. It can also create particular challenges to traders with language or literacy barriers.

OpenMarkets.London

Hackney markets team in collaboration with tabled.io and a consortium of council run markets, has developed OpenMarkets.London - a single portal for trader registration and pitch booking across London's boroughs.

Technological advances mean that the development of digital platforms can help market teams to offer a seamless and professional registration and stall booking process. This approach can also provide added benefits around data, identification verification and market curation and promotion.

Beyond digitising your application and licensing processes there are several ways you can support traders to apply and trade on your market more easily:

- Support easy wayfinding and clear information on your website about the application systems and the documents required
- Provide market licensing help through classes or information sessions. Consider translating key information into the languages local to your area
- Create a temporary licence for new traders to test trading, or dedicated open days when they can work without licences

- Consider other digital platforms that can offer broader benefits, such as online booking platforms for traders

Review and update your market service policy

Your market service policy is a vital resource for anyone who engages in street trading – including on individual pitches, spaces adjacent to fixed premises, or inside a privately-run street market. Your policy should outline the approach and standards for all licences that are issued by the council.

- Review and update your market service policy regularly – and make it easily accessible across your media channels
- When your market strategy is finalised, evaluate and update your policy to ensure that it is fit for purpose
- Set out your stakeholder engagement approach within the policy – via trader associations or other means – to ensure trader, stakeholder and community voices are heard across each of your markets
- **Create a market service equality, diversity and inclusion and social value strategy** and action plan to ensure that your markets are diverse, inclusive and integrated places. Align with wider council EDI objectives and report on how your market meets local targets and what it could do to improve

Shared services

A good relationship with the local BID or local community groups can enable an effective integration of the various functions of your high street. It can also support some of the under-resourced market functions that you identify through your research. Across London a number of BIDs and community groups are engaged in market management and markets related activities.

Markets regulation

For most London local authorities, markets are legislated under the **London Local Authorities Act 1990 (as amended)** or its equivalent **City of Westminster Act 1999**. Specific to London, this legislation can be seen as restricting opportunities to invest in markets and maximise their economic and social value. However, it should be noted that many local authorities have found ways to efficiently work within the LLAA framework.

For example, there are opportunities for local authorities operating under LLAA to make a surplus, including carrying it forward as a reserve for a year, and charging for services not covered by the act, such as storage. There are also ways to reinvest the money back into markets during the financial year, by reducing fees for a period for example. Any surplus that is unspent beyond the one year carry forward must be returned to traders.

Unlike the LLAA 1990 (as amended) , the **Food Act 1984** does not designate 'licensed streets' and therefore requires both the Highways Act and planning consent to close highways and enable markets to be operated. Part III of the Act grants local authorities the right to establish and manage markets and run them in a way that generates a surplus.

In contrast, many privately-operated markets can be managed under individual arrangements with landowners. However, if they operate for more than 14 days a year they will require planning permission from the local authority for change of use of public open space. If the land falls under the LLAA by being on a road or footway, then a street licence will also be required.

Promoting investment and entrepreneurialism within the LLAA 1990 (as amended)

Despite the challenges, a number of market operators are demonstrating how to promote investment and entrepreneurialism within the remit of the LLAA 1990 (as amended).

- Consider ways of working flexibly within the current framework to support traders to expand and grow their business
- Consider opportunities for new licence types and other charges not covered by the legislation to increase income
- Aim to create a reinvestable surplus that strengthens the market. Walthamstow Market has developed a market management board approach which enables traders to inform how any surplus is reinvested into the market
- Review the pros and cons of alternative options that offer a more flexible approach
- Engage with other markets to share best practice approaches and challenges to working within an existing framework
- Always seek legal advice when making changes to how you market is operated under the relevant regulation

PRECEDENT

Hackney Markets service - Flexible licensing

Hackney markets service takes a flexible and proactive approach to market management, creating opportunities for traders to grow their businesses within the borough. This includes putting in place licensing changes to allow long-term assistants to succeed market licences when no family member wishes to take on the licence. The right of succession clause allows succession by family, but it is silent on employees, placing experienced staff at risk of losing their livelihoods when a licence holder retired or died.

By using alternative part of the legislation, the Market Service permitted assistants with over seven years' service to succeed licenses where there is no direct successor. This safeguards the jobs of longstanding, committed traders, supports continuity for established businesses, and ensures Hackney's markets remain rooted in the community.



PRECEDENT

Walthamstow Market - Market management board

The market manager at Walthamstow Market has put in place a Walthamstow 'Market Management Board' including representatives from the market's Trader's Association who meet regularly and formally with council representatives to discuss challenges and opportunities on the market. This approach ensures that the market is recognised as an asset across multiple council policy teams, and that any issues are resolved quickly. Trader representatives on the board take a key role in agreeing how to reinvest any profit back into the market during the financial year – an innovative way of ensuring that profit is dealt with in line with the LLAA 1990 (as amended), and that traders have a voice and decision-making power in the future of their market.



PRECEDENT

Lower Marsh Market - A collaborative management model

Lower Marsh Market is managed through a partnership between WeAreWaterloo BID and Lambeth Council, delivering shared priorities for the local economy and sustainability. The BID leads the day-to-day market management, enabling responsive, on-the-ground decision-making that supports both traders and neighbouring businesses. This collaborative model has delivered public realm improvements and embedded environmental practises such as compostable packaging, cooking oil recycling, and the use of renewable electricity. By working closely with the council, the BID ensures the market continues to thrive, demonstrating how joint working can deliver community-responsive solutions in a busy urban setting.



PRECEDENT

The Blue Market - A community led market

The Big Local Works, a Southwark based charity, has taken over market management at the Blue in Bermondsey, supported by the Blue Bermondsey BID, with guidance from Southwark Council's markets team. They deliver a roster of markets and events to supplement the Monday to Saturday all-day trading, with themed markets on Thursday (Lunch Market with hot food traders), Friday (Flea Market, offering stalls at £10 per pitch), and the Saturday Community Market. Subsidised stalls and business support is offered to new traders from the Big Local Works hub which is located on the market.





3

OPERATIONS AND LOGISTICS

OPERATIONS AND LOGISTICS

Deliveries, servicing and refuse collections are essential to the functioning of a market. All these operations overlap throughout the day and week and need careful management and collaboration across multiple high street stakeholders.

Managing infrastructure, servicing arrangements and storage facilities effectively can improve how the market operates day-to-day and potentially reduce operational costs. Collaborating with wider high street stakeholders around utilities, wifi, market cleaning and storage, for example, will also improve traders' ability to sell.

For the market manager, the challenge is how best to manage those services essential to the functioning of a market. These include deliveries and refuse collections that overlap throughout the day and week.

Getting the buy-in of traders and other local businesses is crucial to support operational behavioural change. Any proposed alterations will require in-depth engagement and may need a pilot or temporary project to demonstrate the benefits.

What to consider:

- Mapping current operations and logistics
- Streamlining operations
- Parking and storage
- Hidden infrastructure



Mapping current operations and logistics

Markets are living ecosystems. As such, market staff and traders will have found the most efficient or easiest way to do things working around existing constraints. To make impactful changes and deliver behavioural change, you should first gather baseline information about how the market currently operates:

- Consider the market's rhythm of activity, for the day, week, month, and year
- Record the frequency and timings of all activities on the market. These include opening hours, stall set-up timings, refuse collections for the market and refuse collections for shops, deliveries in, deliveries out, trips to storage facilities, stall knock-down timings and street cleaning times
- Map locations and number of storage facilities and parking bays
- Record the regular number of vans, electric vehicles, e-cargo bikes, and bicycles

Hours of operation

Markets have a natural ebb and flow, driven by the market's offer. Tracking this can help identify opportunities. For example, it may be possible to consider late night trial opening times to build or enhance a night-time economy or timings for refuse collection and deliveries.

Streamlining operations

Streamlining operations can help to reduce street traffic and congestion; this is especially true for refuse collections where refuse from street traders and shops is collected separately.

Streamlining deliveries of produce is more challenging as it might seem to go against how individual traders choose to operate and maintain their business edge (for example, being first at the wholesale market to get the best produce, opening their market stall early for specific clientele). However, there may also be opportunities to explore a more holistic logistics strategy, such as whether couriers can deliver to shops and traders simultaneously.

- LB Waltham Forest identified 40 separate refuse collection movements a day and decided to consolidate with their own service.
- Hackney Council adopted a 'little and often' collection strategy through a continuous refuse collection via electric vehicles at Ridley Road

Parking and storage

Parking is an intrinsic part of how a trader operates, including how they get goods to site and where they store them. It needs to be available, accessible, and safe but also not impede on the day-to-day functions of the market.

Consider how local traffic control measures, such as motor free traffic zones impact loading and unloading; understand local issues, such as the best approach for market operations, and potentially make the case for exemption for traders.

The availability of storage, including cold storage facilities can shape how traders operate and in some circumstances preclude the need for a van on-site.

Review your storage offer and look at how it can be improved.

Consider using vacant pitches or back of street/ meanwhile spaces for on street storage. If local regeneration projects are in the pipeline, advocate that market storage is considered as part of developing plans.

Hidden infrastructure

Consider 'hidden' infrastructure that will support the flexible operation of the market, such as fixed anchor points, the provision of gazebos and storage solutions.

Provide access to a broad range of utilities and facilities, including wifi, electricity, access to water and toilet facilities and electric vehicle charging. These are all part of creating a holistic offer that attracts a diverse range of trades and traders to your market.

Consider how partnerships with local businesses or the local BID can help with operations and logistics, including street cleaning, stall set up and storage. Ensure that your trader handbook outlines how traders can access these facilities and any associated cost.



PRECEDENT

Chapel Market - Upgrading vital market infrastructure

A key aim of Chapel Market improvements in Islington in 2023 was to improve the day to day offer and experience for traders. Electric bollards and a toilet block adjacent to the market was upgraded to include a wash-up area and water point for traders. This approach aims to facilitate a broader market offer including events with a hot food offer. A future phase of the project will deliver improved storage facilities for traders in Warren Court.

PRECEDENT

LB Hackney - Sustainable waste management

Hackney Markets Service has replaced multiple petrol and diesel waste collection trips with mobile electric waste carts, significantly cutting emissions. Operatives use these carts to collect, sort and separate cardboard, plastics, glass and metals, which are passed to recycling partners. Cardboard is baled on-site and sold to local businesses that reuse it as packaging, contributing to a circular economy.

This initiative builds on Hackney's 2013 Waste Minimisation Strategy, which has reduced trader waste and increased recycling, generating notable savings in disposal and resource costs. The strategy was delivered through a partnership involving Parking, Markets, Environmental Operations and the Ridley Road Market Traders' Association (RRMTA).





4

PHYSICAL SPACE

PHYSICAL SPACE

Focusing on actions that are practical, accessible and adaptable can meet the demanding day-to-day and future requirements of the market. Following principles of good design can have social as well as environmental value for local communities.

Markets should have good visibility throughout, be well-lit, clean, regularly maintained, easy to navigate and accessible for everyone. Physical constraints such as poor stall layout and clutter can create significant challenges. Dealing with these, as well as taking positive steps to add seats and greening, can unlock multiple challenges, as well as increasing dwell time.

New interventions should be flexible, adaptable and sensitive to day-to-day operations of the market, including set up and set down requirements and waste collection. To support engagement and build trader buy-in, consider incremental changes or a pilot first.

What to consider:

- Stall layout
- Flexible infrastructure
- Decluttering
- Greening
- Wayfinding

Stall layout

Stall layout options can often be limited and determined by the width of the road and fixed features such as lighting columns. However, there are still opportunities to optimise stall layouts in constrained conditions. Illustrated here are the issues common to a traditional street market stall layout together with how it could be optimised.

Crucially, providing more dwell space often depends on pitch occupancy levels. If your market is not at full capacity this could be an opportunity to reduce the stall numbers to the occupied number and create more breathing space between stalls. This will improve consumer dwell time and trade for the shops.

Traditional layout issues

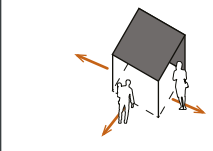
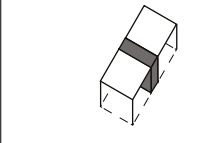
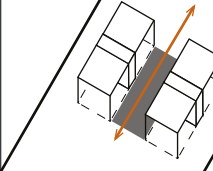
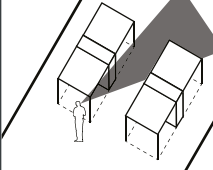
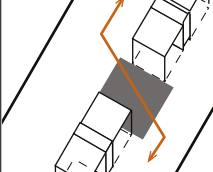
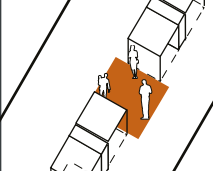

- Stall backs create solid edge to the pavement reducing opportunity for trade and visibility generally
- Poor visibility to and from shops
- Pavement can feel congested
- Reduced or limited choice for customers to move through the market, being funnelled through the centre

Optimised stall layout

- Reduce stall numbers to a maximum of three stalls in a run improving visibility across the market and to shops
- Opportunity to create dwell space along the entire market
- Opportunity for some stalls to front in two directions

Principles of stall layout

The market's stall layout is essential to delivering the key principles of a market's design:

Diagram	Principle
	Stalls should have the maximum amount of trading faces but do need a back (for products and waste etc)
	A back-to-back arrangement has three trading faces and concealed storage
	The stall arrangement creates active stall and shop frontages with no unsafe feeling 'back' areas
	There should be clear views across the market
	A variety of routes for customers will ensure a good flow across the market
	Integrate pause or dwell spaces into the market layout
	Layout should allow timed trader vehicle movements to happen safely and simultaneously with trading without disrupting customers

Physical space



Flexible infrastructure

Prioritise flexibility in the public realm: Seating, trees and greening, barriers and lighting might be required to improve appearance, dwell time and inclusivity. However, carefully consider every permanent action to allow for day-to-day operations, open space for events and future change.

- Consider what permanent furniture is absolutely required. For example, would branded temporary seating and shading improve dwell-time while being able to be removed for events? If temporary furniture is included ensure someone is in charge of managing it
- Improve usefulness, deliver value for money and reduce the number of fixed elements in the public realm by combining with another function where possible. For example, bollards as wayfinding and seating or lighting columns with integrated trader power supply. If covered areas are to be included, ensure these are designed to maximise flexibility
- Use robust, repairable, affordable, storable and attractive products. Select practical and user-friendly stalls, tables, and gazebos for traders: off-the-shelf solutions tend to work better and are more cost effective than bespoke stalls
- Carefully locate permanent interventions which allow market operations

Decluttering

Kerbs, bollards, bins, redundant street signs can all clutter the market, making it inaccessible and unwelcoming.

- Promote inclusivity – remove clutter and unnecessary physical barriers to improve accessibility
- Lower kerbs and remove bollards and extraneous signage to increase the width of the market and improve accessibility
- Highways elements can be difficult to change – look for people within your organisation or the council to work with, such as a supportive senior highways officer, as making changes to fixed items requires joined-up thinking and the authority to act
- While decluttering, be mindful of circular economy principles and consider what can be re-used
- Power, lighting, drainage, smart city devices including wifi, and electric charging provision can all be critical but difficult to deliver and expensive to maintain. Consider opportunities for rationalising services, for example sharing power between stalls or connect to buildings



Greening

The challenges and benefits of delivering sustainability and addressing climate change resilience is explored in the 'sustainability and environment' component. When it comes to the public realm, think about:

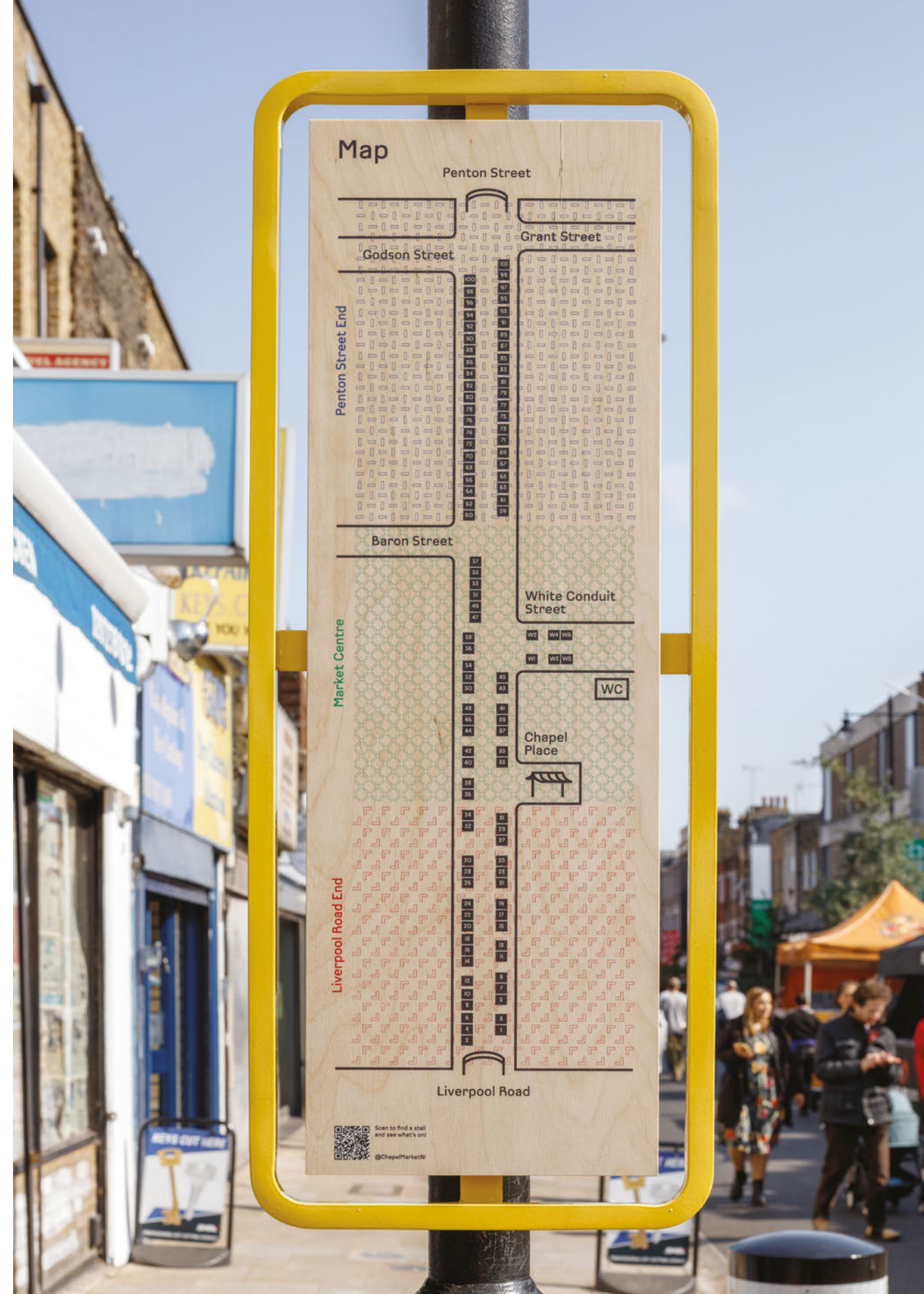
- Cooling the city with more planting. Trees with a higher canopy are preferred to ensure businesses, market stalls and signage are not obscured and the space below trees can be used
- Locating trees carefully, considering utilities below, and ideally combine with another use, for example in lieu of a bollard to stop traffic
- Integrating sustainable urban drainage (SUDs) into paving or planting
- Confirming at the start who will maintain any greenery in the long term



Wayfinding

Wayfinding should be clear, impactful, and support the identity of the market. Consider how you can incorporate wayfinding without limiting the flexibility of the market:

- Key to driving footfall is making the market easy to find. Entrances should be obvious and welcoming, and wayfinding should be unobstructed, clear and integrated into the design proposals (for example Brixton Electric Avenue sign, Southall market floor tile, East Street bench and signage integrated into a fence, The Blue cycle bollards)
- Use your brand identity to support impactful wayfinding as part of a comprehensive strategy. Use signage and physical elements to help customers orientate themselves. Consider both permanent and temporary features such as paving 'welcome mats' or branded temporary furniture.



PRECEDENT

Brixton Market - Creating dwell space

In partnership with Lambeth Highways, Gort Scott developed a detailed understanding of the servicing and logistical challenges facing Brixton Market. Electric Avenue's narrow layout had previously restricted both pedestrian flow and delivery access, with stalls blocking pavements and creating tensions between traders and shop owners.

Through close engagement with stakeholder a new centralised stall layout that allowed traders to use vans for deliveries, set up simultaneously, and vacate the area before peak trading hours was proposed. The redesigned layout has decluttered the street, improved pedestrian access, and made the market more accessible. Backed by robust evidence and collaboration, these improvements have enhanced the trading environment and strengthened relationships between businesses.



PRECEDENT

East Street Market - Integrating branding and wayfinding

As part of a wider markets strategy, East Street Market in Southwark considered how it could attract footfall and improve wayfinding to support movement through the multiple entrances to the improved market layout and connections to the surrounding open spaces and community assets. Graphic designers Maddison Graphic, developed a branding and wayfinding scheme which considered a broad range of tactics, including shop frontage improvements, integrating signage into seating and fencing, alongside a clear integrated brand identity for the market visible across all wayfinding, signage and merchandise.



PRECEDENT

The Blue, Bermondsey – A flexible hub

One of the aims for this holistic market regeneration project was to transform the look and feel of the marketplace by decluttering the existing space and conceiving an easily accessible and aesthetically pleasing new layout for the market stalls, whilst providing a vibrant, welcoming and flexible public space. Improvements for traders included improved market structure, new electrical power points and adaptable fixed stalls to provide cover for other uses such as events and festivals. Read more about the Blue in the case study on page 182.





5

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Markets are well-positioned to be a vital part of our response to the climate crisis. They can help us explore how to feed our cities sustainably and lead the way in rolling out circular economy principles to create self-sufficient ecosystems. A rising consumer interest in sustainability could help support a shift to shorter supply chains and locally and ethically sourced goods.

London's climate is changing. We are having hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters. The effects of climate change are already being felt across the markets sector, threatening the supply of produce impacting the quality, price and availability of goods. Changing weather conditions will require adjustments to markets infrastructure and operations and also has potential to impact on customer spending.

It is likely that market operators will increasingly be compelled to act to meet changing regional and national rules to address greenhouse emissions, air quality and climate change. We must adapt and think creatively about how to support traders to navigate this change.

However, retail and wholesale markets are well-positioned to be a vital part of London's response to the climate crisis. They can innovate to reduce emissions and differentiate their offer to attract new customers, and meet local climate resilience targets. They can support a shift to locally, sustainably and ethically sourced produce where there is customer demand.

While individual markets and boroughs can make progress in reducing the operational impact of markets, systemic change will take coordinated action, investment and innovation.

What to consider:

- Waste minimisation and recycling
- Sustainable operations
- Green and ethical supply chains
- Targets and incentives for change

Waste minimisation and recycling

Wherever possible emphasis should be placed on preventing excess waste – something that can be challenging in wholesale and retail markets.

- Carry out a benchmarking activity to understand the market's environmental impact, current recycling rates and how much waste disposal currently costs
- Consider consolidating waste and recycling collections (see Operations and Logistics) and work with the local authority waste team to introduce recycling collections and separate food waste collections for traders if they do not already exist. This needs to be supported by improved education and infrastructure that enables the easy separation of waste
- Review and consider the cost, space and practicality of waste compacting and disposal systems or onsite composting on your market. The minimisation of third-party disposal fees may prove more cost-effective than current operations. It can support a more innovative approach that complies with upcoming legislative changes in this area
- Making donations of surplus and unused food to charities and food banks – for example Plan Zhereos collect and redistribute surplus food from Borough Market or The Felix Project which operates out of several London markets as a logistics network for food redistribution.
- Develop a no food-surplus strategy

Sustainable operations

Consider measures that support more sustainable operations on your market and incentivise traders and customers to lead the change. This could include:

- Incentivising traders to be more sustainable – for example by implementing a 'no plastic' policy complemented by a collective buy offer for reusable and recyclable packaging
- Collective buying of reusable bags or sustainable packing could be managed by the local authority, BID or trader's association to create a purchasing framework that meets the sustainable vision for the market
- Installing water fountains, or work with businesses who are willing to re-fill bottles and remove the sale and supply of plastic bottles from your market
- Creating infrastructure to support sustainable operations and movement for example electric cargo bike delivery hub, adequate cycle parking, pre-packed fruit and veg boxes for collection
- Promoting public transport and its green benefits – most markets in London are within walking distance of multiple public transport routes
- Consider where third-party partnerships can drive innovation and support sustainability objectives

Green supply chains

Consider the wider infrastructure needed to support the circular economy, such as biodigesters to make fertiliser from food waste, card and paper re-use and recycling, re-use of collected greywater for cleaning.

Ensure any procurement is effective and sustainable and underpinned by quality commissioning. Employ best practice from across the council to secure environmental, social and local economy objectives.

Map and build links between local businesses to shorten the supply chain. For example, if the area around your market has a considerable food offer this presents a good opportunity to connect market produce with local restaurants.

Ethical supply chains

Promote trader's businesses who are prioritising green and/or ethical supply chains. Syed Usman Shah (pictured opposite) trades as The Date Sultan at Borough Market and through a series of small contracts and audits with individual suppliers, ensures that everyone in his supply chain is paid fairly and isn't a victim of modern slavery.





Targets and incentives for change

Set clear environmental targets for your market and agreed action for change. Many private markets, (Borough Market and POP Brixton for example) currently ensure that 0% of waste goes to landfill – council-run markets can seek to emulate a similar local benchmark.

- Use 'green leases' and rates relief to attract businesses with a sustainable agenda / zero-waste manifesto or incentivise traders to employ more sustainable practices
- Integrate sustainable practices as part of the market identity and brand for example, locally sourced products, connecting with local city farms that teach people about food growing
- Celebrate and promote sustainable business practices. Demonstrate to traders the economic value of change – for example, keeping pitch fees low or attracting more trade
- Consider how a trading policy, or 'traders charter' has the potential to underpin a change in behaviours and practices. Support existing traders through change management, sign posting to support, education and case-making

Legislative context

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005

Local Authorities can issue Fixed Penalty Notices to traders for littering or failure to contain waste.

The Environment Act 2021

The Environment Act 2021 introduces new duties that affect market traders and operators, particularly in relation to packaging, recycling and waste separation. From 2025, businesses must separate key recyclables for collection, and those producing packaging may face Extended Producer Responsibility charges. The Act also supports deposit return schemes, low-emission transport, and stricter litter enforcement. These measures will require markets to upgrade waste facilities and enforce better environmental practices.

Environmental Protection (Plastic Plates etc.) (England) Regulations 2023

Businesses must no longer supply, sell or offer certain single use plastic items in England. The ban includes all types of single-use plastic including biodegradable, compostable and recycled, and items wholly or partly made from plastic including coating or lining. Market operators should make their traders aware of the legislation, although compliance will be the responsibility of individual businesses and those in breach could be fined.

Ultra Low Emission Zone

The ULEZ scheme affects market traders using older diesel or petrol vehicles to transport goods. Non-compliant vehicles are subject to a daily charge of £12.50. The scheme has significantly improved air quality in London with substantial reductions in NO₂ and PM2.5 levels across the city.



PRECEDENT

Maltby Street- Pioneering a future model for public markets

Pioneering a future model for public markets, Cleaner Air Markets was an innovative study that explored how traders at Maltby Street Market transitioned from polluting internal combustion engine vehicles to zero-emission transport options, such as cargo bikes and electric vehicles. A report based on a 12-month pilot study, highlights efforts to improve trader sustainability and increase market accessibility. It also offers insights on how other markets can adopt similar initiatives to create Cleaner Air Markets, empowering them to reduce emissions and enhance their environmental impact while maintaining market functionality.

PRECEDENT

Westminster Markets - Reusable bag trial

To support Westminster's net-zero vision, the market development team introduced innovative solutions to reduce emissions and single-use plastics. Partnering with Raze, they distributed 15,000 reusable, carbon-neutral, eco-friendly paper bags to market traders and customers. The bags, capable of holding up to 10kg of shopping, offset a total of 871,275 gCO₂e. In the next phase, the council will offer local businesses and council departments advertising space on the bags, which is estimated to be 11 times more effective than magazine ads and 1.3 times more effective than TfL tube ads at the same price.





6

BRANDING AND MARKETING

BRANDING AND MARKETING

A clear approach to branding that underpins all marketing and communication about your market offers multiple opportunities to support and attract new customers and traders. This can help increase footfall and ultimately improve spend on the market.

Investing in a strong brand may seem to be more closely associated with private markets – and there is much to learn from their approach – yet, where resource allows, many council-run markets are also now seeing the value.

A brand strategy should become a guide not only for verbal and written communications and marketing but can also be reinforced through physical wayfinding improvements such as murals, seating, lighting and merchandise. Flexibility is key – your approach should be able to flex as the market adapts and grows. Importantly, it should provide a framework to promote individual traders and their unique offer.

Traders will have varying levels of social media literacy. Providing learning support on how to use social media as a tool to promote and grow their businesses and access to marketing materials will drive multiple benefits, both for traders and market services alike.

What to consider:

- Developing a brand identity
- Delivering a digital marketing strategy
- Promoting your market
- Recruitment, resources and partnerships



Developing a brand identity

Contemporary branding doesn't sell products it sells opportunities, lifestyles and experiences. A brand for a market is more than a logo, a set of fonts and colours. It is the public programme, street furniture, landscaping, lighting, sound, smell and imagery associated with your market.

- Based on your understanding of your market through research and engagement, create a value statement or manifesto that accurately reflects its nature and offer
- Benchmark the channels, content, and resources available to you. Consider approaches by similar markets and how they have demonstrated value
- Create a mood board, including images of the market and traders, stories and the market's history. Create customer profiles and consider your target demographic
- Whether working with your corporate communications team, or procuring outside help, think local: reach out to local illustrators for re-branding / marketing material and develop an appropriate graphic identity
- Consider any barriers – is extra resource needed through procurement? Is your proposed approach supported corporately? Trader participation is important to get buy-in and actively engaged traders will support your brand outreach via their own communications
- Create brand guidelines – a set of rules to be used throughout all designed materials. As minimum they should include a colour, font and logo guidance and suggested layouts. They should also include guidance around accessibility, tone of voice, photography and other forms of media
- Ensure that media material used to promote the market is aspirational and representative of the market and its community

Deliver a digital marketing strategy

Review and update your social media and marketing strategy, including the tools, platforms, resources and partnerships to deliver it. Set clear, measurable objectives so that you can demonstrate success. Consider a prioritised and incremental approach if funding and resource is limited.

Explore a multi-channel approach where different approaches might attract new customers and increase footfall to markets. As a starting point, consider creating a website and social media outlet for each individual market. Search online for tools that support you to post across multiple channels at the same time.

A well-designed and up to date website can be an excellent way to signpost customers and potential traders to markets. It can provide a single point of reference, offer important market information including an updatable trader directory in one place.

Promoting your market

Use your brand identity and marketing materials to increase physical promotions in the public realm to increase footfall and raise awareness of your market.

If your market is undergoing significant improvements to its physical space and layout, consider how your brand identity can be woven into the street furniture, landscaping, lighting approach.

Consider light touch, low-cost approaches that can flex and adapt with the market. For example, floor and wall stencilling, murals and artwork commissions can be successful capturing the life of the market and the wider community. Market infrastructure, such as gazebos, lamp-post banners and street signs can all be adapted using the market's logo.

While an in person / live events programme is a vital tool to promote your market, drive footfall and build customer loyalty, consider your online offer too: collaborate with wider campaigns and celebrations to promote your market and traders (such as International Women's Day) and consider platforms and emerging technologies that attract customers when the market is not usually open.



Recruitment, resources and partnerships

Consider whose role it is to manage and maintain a website and update social media. Some markets teams have been successful building capacity into their market team, recruiting local officers who are knowledgeable about their area and literate in social media. Others work with market stakeholders and external organisations to deliver their strategy.

Can you draw on resource from the local BID, traders' association or other partners for support? If the market and its surrounding area is being redeveloped, perhaps the developer could contribute as part of their commitment to local social value.

Consider:

- Benchmarking the success of your social media marketing approach – for example by number of followers and engagement
- Sourcing additional funding for social media marketing and activities, including for your weekend markets
- Identifying which platforms engage your existing and target audiences and additional benefits: some of the fastest growing platforms, to attract more diverse younger audiences, and encourage users to self-generate content
- Demonstrating impact and justifying investment by monitoring engagement and evidencing any uplift in footfall and income generation. Use the inbuilt monitoring tool on social platforms for this purpose
- Delivering social media workshops for traders – traders who post online will significantly add value and outreach to any marketing campaign



PRECEDENT

Portobello and Golborne Markets - Visit Portobello

Visit Portobello is a collaborative initiative between the Westway Trust, Kensington and Chelsea Council, and the Portobello Golborne Management Committee. The project aims to enhance the visibility and appeal of Portobello and Golborne Markets through strategic branding, marketing, and community engagement. Since its launch, Visit Portobello has revitalised the area's digital presence, rebranding social media channels and launching a website with a business directory, event listings, and digital tours. Through campaigns like 'Christmas Stocking Stuffers' and 'Hidden Gems,' local traders are highlighted, fostering stronger connections with visitors.

The initiative also collaborates with traders, artists, and residents to curate events, bringing the community closer together. The success of Visit Portobello is evident in its 10,000 Instagram followers and growing online engagement.



PRECEDENT

Borough Market - A globally recognised brand

Borough Market has established itself as a globally recognised London landmark, celebrated for its high-quality, sustainable, and culturally diverse food offer. Its branding blends heritage with contemporary appeal, using compelling trader stories, seasonal campaigns, and engaging digital content. The market's vibrant visuals and atmosphere invite visitors to capture and share their experiences online, amplifying the brand organically across social media.

This user-generated content plays a key role in extending its reach and appeal. Regular events, tastings, and educational initiatives reinforce its identity as both a local community hub and international food destination, keeping the brand visible, authentic, and trusted.





7

EVENTS AND PROGRAMMING

EVENTS AND PROGRAMMING

Hosting events and activities in the market can help to reach beyond its usual customers, broaden its appeal and generate wider benefits locally.

Creating a vibrant public events programme can bring life and character to a market, extending the hours when the space is animated. Trialling events and festivals can test potential and assess demand with the local community as well as drawing people from a wider area. Events in the market can attract people to the surrounding high street as well as the market itself. It can allow other people to promote what the market offers, helping to build its identity and social media presence, and create a loyal customer base.

What to consider:

- Imaginative programming
- Consider the night
- Flexible events infrastructure
- Events and partnerships



Imaginative programming

Most markets are only open for limited hours of the day and week, and most focus on trading the expected products. However this is a space in the heart of your community where people can be entertained, enjoy themselves and relax – and potentially spend money and tell their friends. Be more creative!

Beyond providing the necessary safe and appropriate space for events (for example a performance area, a demonstration kitchen) programming doesn't need to cost much. Offer underused space within the market as a venue for local organisations and in turn they can become partners who share in or take on wider public programming.

Events can highlight individual market traders, chefs and restaurants, as well encouraging different communities to come together and celebrate. Summer events might seem most obvious. However, all major religious holidays as well as Christmas events, are a chance to introduce lights, music, and celebratory activity throughout the day and year. For example, Ramadan is an opportunity to invite people to break iftar collectively and shop in the market after sundown.

- Consider continuous programming alongside one off events – for example monthly trading events alongside targeted training for young people
- Promote markets that test new uses to attract new customers or traders. For example, Chapel Market worked with Retail Revival on a series of summer markets including a dog show and veterinary stall, events for children and the local community
- Ensure you embed any key messaging from your vision (for example environmental sustainability) throughout all aspects of the delivery and promotion of your programming

Consider the night

Council-run markets are often closed by 6pm – the very time when many Londoners are travelling home, active or going out. This leaves a vast vacant space for you to consider as part of your night-time economy and offer. Through mapping the market's rhythm of activity, you will have some evidence of the opportunities and value of increasing hours of operation.

- Run temporary trials, events and festivals on the market to test potential and assess demand. Identify where temporary uses could transform your market and surrounding underused spaces during the evening
- Identifying underused public spaces that might host night markets could provide revenue opportunities for local authorities, and meanwhile opportunities for businesses to test and grow their business. Night-time is a space for innovation and experimentation - capitalise on it!
- Explore the use of pop-up night markets, food kiosks and busking pitches to activate your market space in the night-time, test new uses and attract new customers



Flexible events infrastructure

- Support markets wanting to experiment with different activities during the day and night by adopting a more flexible approach to planning and licensing approvals. Explore ways to streamline the processes for allowing new uses
- Consider specific events infrastructure into new public realm schemes which specifically also consider the night-time context. For example, providing power for events and flexible, sensitive lighting designs, and fixed anchor points
- Consider how ancillary businesses and organisations can allow their activities and programmes to spill out onto the street
- Consider the needs of different groups – how do young people currently use the street? Consider offering free covered space for them to dwell. Is there enough seating?
- Use events licensing for one-off markets that for example have an alcohol or late licence. Make sure that existing traders are included as part of the offer



Events and partnerships

Working with other local organisations will ensure your programme fits with and complements other activities being planned.

Consider:

- Collaborating with cultural partners local arts and cultural groups who may be looking for a venue at the heart of the community and bring a ready-made audience. For example, sports clubs could schedule events or use the space for fitness events and classes in off-peak market time
- Working with BIDs and town centre partnerships to share investment in the infrastructure needed to deliver successful events, including people, such as street wardens, or access to toilets
- Forming partnerships within the local authority and local organisations and provide space to deliver outreach activities – such as library services, or bike repair services
- Identifying high profile ambassadors to create content and partnering with local organisations that bring people to the area



PRECEDENT

LB Bexley - Bexleyheath night market

The Bexleyheath Night Market was a key part of the High Streets for All programme, delivered in partnership between Bexley Council, Bexleyheath BID, and local stakeholders, with support from the Mayor of London. Running from June to October 2022, the market animated the town centre on the last Friday of each month with up to 40 traders, street food, entertainment, and artisan goods. It boosted footfall, supported local enterprise, and engaged young people through a Youth Enterprise Programme and the 'Bexley's Got Light' talent show, showcasing how collaborative events can reimagine and revitalise public spaces.



PRECEDENT

Chrip Street - Eid extravaganza

Chrip Street Market in Poplar, East London, is not only the UK's first purpose-built pedestrian shopping area but also a vibrant public space that fosters community engagement and cultural celebration. Events like the Eid Extravaganza have transformed the market into a gathering place where residents from diverse backgrounds come together to share traditional dishes, participate in arts and crafts, and celebrate the area's rich heritage. These activities provide accessible opportunities for families, especially those from lower-income households, to engage in communal festivities.

Beyond market hours, the square serves as a flexible venue for various events, including open-air cinemas, live concerts, and seasonal festivals. This adaptability underscores the market's role as a central hub for social interaction and cultural expression in the community.





PRECEDENT

Westminster night markets - Boosting evening footfall

Between 2021 and 2023, Westminster markets service hosted a series of themed night markets to support local businesses and reanimate the West End's evening economy. Events in locations such as Rupert Street and Newport Place featured up to 15 stalls alongside entertainment like live music and lion dancing during Chinese New Year. Designed to increase footfall and visibility for SMEs, the markets saw up to 38% increased mobility at nearby Tube stations. Feedback showed 93% of traders saw more customers, and 97% of visitors felt safer.





8

COMMUNITY BENEFIT

COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Markets generate multiple and diverse benefits for Londoners which can sometimes be taken for granted. Through the centuries they have long have operated as welcoming centres to entrepreneurs including immigrants and those often marginalised from other forms of employment.

London's street markets not only offer value to individuals, for example as places to establish low-cost business start-ups, they also make significant contributions to their local economies and communities. Markets provide a high quality, fresh and affordable offer, often to low-income Londoners. They build community wealth and health – both in terms of the social and cultural interactions they provide, and economically.

A clear understanding of the social and economic value your market offers is one of the best ways to realise its full potential. Where you have several markets, consider each market's ecosystem and how it serves different income groups. Is a market's catchment mostly local, or does it attract people from across London and beyond?

What to consider:

- Demonstrating your market's value
- Maintaining a diverse and affordable offer
- Your market as a community hub



Demonstrating your market's value

Having a good understanding of the **social value** that your market offers to Londoners is an effective way to realise the full potential of your market and the street markets toolkit provides lots of guidance to get you started. But what else can you consider when it comes to boosting the community benefit of your market?



Maintaining a diverse and affordable offer

Be creative in how you let people know about your affordable offer. Build this messaging into your brand, identity and marketing approach:

- Benchmark your market's pricing against others
- For street food markets, consider how traders can increase the choice and affordability of their offer, for example encouraging stallholders to offer a healthier option, or a smaller, more affordable portion size. For higher income markets, consider how traders can increase the affordability of their offer and encourage traders to move between your markets if feasible
- Trader mix policies can help ensure that traders and their offer reflect the diversity mix of the area and continue to serve the local population. For example, Hackney Markets conduct regular trader surveys to assess that the trader mix is broadly representative of the diverse population
- Consider linking healthy food vouchers to your market: The Alexander Rose voucher scheme already operates at several markets across London. Boroughs such as Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest accept NHS issued Healthy Start vouchers at some of their markets
- Promote your affordable and competitive offer to customers. For example, during the cost-of-living crisis Hackney Market services created video animations comparing Ridley Road prices to the local supermarket offer - supporting traders to offer a competitive price through trading fee incentives



Your market as a community hub

Partner with schools and colleges to engage students in markets. An initiative of School Food Matters, Know Your Onions gives secondary school students a chance to learn about growing fruit and vegetables in their school gardens. They can then sell the produce at their local street market, supported by local traders.

Consider providing council and other outreach services such as libraries or enterprise support from the market. The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea has access on their markets for mental health charities, doctor surgeries, HIV and STD testing.

Collaborate with community associations, charities or local employment and training providers to promote and support job seekers to consider trading as their future career. The Big Local Works provides various services to improve the lives of local people in Southwark. This includes enterprise support and training for local entrepreneurs looking to start a market stall business or trader on the market.

Acknowledge the importance of the mental health and wellbeing of your traders and consider measures to support them. This could be through workshops, mental health ambassadors and wider borough support. As part of their 2023-2028 Markets Strategy, Hackney Markets Service has committed to being the first borough to offer a trader assistance programme replicating the council's existing employee support programme.



PRECEDENT

London's street markets as community hubs

London's street markets have operated as community hubs through the centuries - as welcoming centres to entrepreneurs including immigrants and those often marginalised from other forms of employment and vibrant centres where Londoners come together to shop and interact. Today's markets are evolving into vital community hubs, spaces that blend commerce with public services, education, sustainability, and social inclusion. At Crisp Street Market in Poplar, the Idea Store provides library services, digital literacy classes, and community workshops in a welcoming market setting. The Blue Market in Bermondsey regularly hosts bike repair days with Peddle My Wheels, public health pop-ups, and seasonal cultural events alongside the Blue Anchor Library, reinforcing its role as a neighbourhood anchor.

Queen's Crescent Market in Camden hosts the Camden Fixing Factory, a community-run electrical repair centre offering free repairs and skills training to reduce waste and promote sustainability. Brixton Market partners with Haircuts4Homeless to offer free grooming services to those experiencing homelessness creating dignity and connection in public space.

Markets are also used for outreach and fundraising. Westminster's Youth Enterprise Markets, led by the Westminster Markets Service, give SEN students, youth groups, and adult learners the chance to trade with a £100 start-up fund. All proceeds go to local charities such as the Cardinal Hume Centre, supporting families facing poverty and homelessness raising over £1,700 in 2023 alone. Complementing this, Westminster also delivers a Community Pitch Scheme, offering free market stalls to charities, Council departments, and non-profit organisations. These pitches are used for fundraising, advice provision, and public consultation, helping bring services closer to residents in informal, trusted spaces.





9

**BUSINESS
ENTERPRISE AND
SUPPORT**



BUSINESS ENTERPRISE AND SUPPORT

Markets are London's original business incubators, providing low threshold access to traders to start-up, develop and grow their business.

A market's growth is dependent on a successful collaboration between its operator, its traders, its customers and its impact on the surrounding community. All the components considered so far – from marketing and physical space to operations and investment in market management – will encourage customers to shop locally. They will also help to ensure that your market offers commercially viable trading opportunities for a diverse range of traders and trades.

Attracting and retaining traders is a critical consideration for all markets. Giving traders the tools, knowledge and environment within which to grow their enterprise will incentivise them to expand and stay loyal to your market. It will generate market income and create more opportunities for residents and traders. This in turn will support the wider local inclusive economy and the success of your high street and town centre.

What to consider:

- Trader facilities
- Enterprise incubation
- Supporting business growth

Trader facilities

Beyond the trader incentives outlined in the identity and offer component, market operators can offer a range of facilities and support services that actively promote entrepreneurialism among traders, helping them to start, sustain and scale their business. These interventions not only benefit traders but contribute to the long-term success and vibrancy of the market.

Access to power, storage and digital payment systems helps traders operate professionally and at lower cost. Operators can further enable growth through training, mentoring and joint marketing, while facilitating progression from casual trading to permanent opportunities. Market operators can actively support entrepreneurialism by offering affordable, flexible pitches, shared facilities and targeted business support.

Enterprise incubation

The tomorrow's market pilot demonstrated the value a comprehensive package of business support including flexible onboarding, new trader incentives, help with infrastructure and marketing. This not only benefits traders, both new and existing, but the market overall.

- As with your wider market strategy, keep any incubation programme simple: targeted, flexible, and where possible collaborating over shared resources
- Not all types of support will, or should, come directly from the market manager: it can be more effective to be aware of existing business start-up support available elsewhere in the borough, or online - and to clearly sign post those opportunities.
- Think about reducing the barriers for new starters - flexible licensing, a gazebo and some marketing support could help.
- Create a single reference point for the resources you already have - the trader application pack, trader handbook, and market strategy shared in a clearly navigable website will be beneficial to new and existing traders
- Establish what resources exist elsewhere and create a single place to share information and access wider resources from organisations such as the National Market Traders Federation (NMTF), London Street Trading Benchmarking Group (LSTBG) and the Association of London Markets (AoLM)
- Identify gaps in the resources that could benefit new traders. Although this guide is written with operators in mind, the principles apply to traders establishing and growing their business too.

Supporting business growth

After the initial incubation, you can turn new traders into successful regulars by making it clear support will continue:

- Holding new trader focus groups can help find out concerns and interests. Inviting recent starters in their first year will encourage a mix of very new and slightly more experienced traders so they can also meet and talk with one another
- Ensure high and consistent standards by identifying and offering training where it is needed. Recognise high quality through awards and bring all up to a required standard with a national or local scheme
- Knowing what resources are available elsewhere can be key. The Blue case study shows how the BID offers into-work training, run from a hub run on the market
- Publishing a market handbook that can be shared internally and with stakeholders. This will let everyone know what standards are expected and give a clear picture of aims and standards in the market strategy
- Regular meetings and workshops for more established traders can help embed the idea that help is available, and their investment is being returned to them
- Even established traders may welcome a training refresher on new business opportunities such as electronic payment or using social media but might not ask. If not delivering through the market team directly, let all traders know about business training available online or elsewhere in the borough
- Help traders raise standards by requiring them to display quality marks and food hygiene awards – again offering training where they might struggle to access it
- Mentoring new traders can help with retention of established ones – while supporting succession planning to ensure the business is not lost to the market



PRECEDENT

NMTF - Young Traders Market

The National Market Traders Federation (NMTF) launched the Young Traders Market (YTM) initiative in 2012 to encourage individuals aged 16–30 to explore market trading as a viable and accessible route into entrepreneurship.

This UK-wide programme offers aspiring traders a cost-effective, low-risk environment to test and develop their business ideas. Participants benefit from free pitches, gazebos, and insurance, allowing them to focus on honing their products and customer engagement skills.

The YTM campaign unfolds in three stages: local heats, regional finals, and the national final. Local markets across the UK host initial events where young traders showcase their goods and services. Winners from these heats advance to regional finals, held in prominent locations - in 2024, the London and South East regional final at Portobello Road featured over 70 traders and attracted thousands of visitors.

The culmination of the campaign is the national final, traditionally held in Stratford-upon-Avon over the August bank holiday weekend. In 2024, approximately 90 young traders competed for the prestigious title of Young Trader of the Year. Participants are evaluated on product quality, customer service, professionalism, and interaction with fellow traders.



PRECEDENT

Tower Hamlets - Business support for market traders

Tower Hamlets Council is delivering a robust programme of business support aimed at nurturing both new and established market traders across its diverse street markets, including Roman Road, Whitechapel, and Crisp Street.

For new entrepreneurs, the council has partnered with The Rebel School to offer free training courses that guide residents in launching market stalls without accruing debt. These practical workshops cover essentials such as business planning, marketing, sales, and finance. Participants are also offered free pitches at selected markets, giving them a risk-free opportunity to test their business ideas in a live trading environment. The borough also actively participates in the Young Traders Market initiative, offering traders aged 16–30 valuable experience and national recognition opportunities.

For existing traders, the council has launched a £700,000 package of support programmes to promote sustainable business growth. These include the Lean Start-Up Support Programme and Supported Access to Finance, helping traders refine their operations, access funding, and improve long-term viability. Grant opportunities are also available to support scaling or diversification. These programmes are further supported by broader regeneration projects, including investment in Roman Road East and Brick Lane, designed to improve infrastructure, increase footfall, and strengthen the competitiveness of key markets.

Through a combination of training, funding, infrastructure and promotional activity, Tower Hamlets is working to ensure its markets remain accessible, resilient and reflective of its entrepreneurial communities.





**LEARNING FROM
LONDON:**

CASE STUDIES

TOMORROW'S MARKET PILOT

Launched by the Mayor of London in January 2019, the Tomorrow's Market (TM) pilot was designed to explore how London's street markets could better attract and support a new generation of entrepreneurs. With a particular focus on inclusion and opportunity, the initiative aimed to nurture young and diverse traders through structured support, accessible infrastructure, and practical experience.

The programme set out to address long-standing barriers to market trading. It focused on increasing representation within market spaces, offering high-quality business support, and helping new traders overcome structural challenges to entry. It demonstrated that with the right infrastructure and support, London's markets can be accessible, inclusive spaces for entrepreneurship.

Three markets across London were selected to host the pilot, chosen for their trading potential, diversity, and active commitment to market innovation. These included **Leather Lane Market in Camden, Lower Marsh Market working with WeAreWaterloo BID, and Brixton Station Road Market**, operated by the Brixton Traders Federation.

Over two six-month trading cohorts, **the programme supported 30 new traders, providing them with subsidised market pitches, reduced trading fees, and a £500 bursary to help with start-up costs.** Traders also received access to gazebos, tables, and on-site storage facilities, creating a low-barrier entry point for setting up a stall. Beyond infrastructure, TM delivered intensive support including 779 hours of one-to-one business advice, mentoring, and tailored development plans, alongside 663 hours of workshops, technical training and peer learning.

Participants were **expected to trade at least once a week for 14 weeks and benefited from consistent on-site support and weekly check-ins from the delivery team.** This hands-on approach proved essential in helping many participants transition from informal selling to formal trading and business development.

Diversity and inclusion were central to the programme's vision. Through a targeted recruitment strategy, TM achieved participation from a wide range of aspiring entrepreneurs. Of the 30 traders supported, 78% identified as Black, Asian or from other minority ethnic backgrounds, while 25 identified as women. The programme also welcomed parents, freelancers, and part-time workers seeking flexible, self-directed employment through market trading.

Most participants were in the early stages of developing their businesses, testing new product ideas and navigating the realities of self-employment. TM addressed these needs by providing "turnkey" infrastructure, accessible equipment, and practical training tailored to each trader's circumstances.

The pilot yielded strong results: **28 of the 30 participants continued trading after completing the programme**, whether in street markets, online platforms, or through retail outlets. In doing so, TM demonstrated the potential of public markets to serve as real-world launchpads for sustainable small businesses.

Several key lessons emerged from the programme. One of the most significant barriers identified was the administrative burden associated with licensing and compliance - highlighting the need for streamlined, digital processes. Shared infrastructure such as gazebos and storage was found to play a critical role in lowering start-up costs, while personalised mentoring and consistent guidance significantly boosted participants' confidence, business understanding and commitment.

Kim & Chi

Mi Eun Kim launched Kim & Chi to share her family's traditional Korean kimchi recipes with a wider audience.

After struggling to grow online sales, she joined TM to access a physical trading space. Through merchandising workshops and real-time feedback from customers at Leather Lane Market, she refined her product and stall setup.

Mi Eun went on to trade at Chatsworth Road, Canopy Market and Partridges, and began running kimchi-making workshops and supper clubs. TM helped her elevate her brand and turn a family recipe into a high-demand product.



MI\$EMI

Mistura Yusuf is the founder of Mi\$emi, a fashion brand focused on culture, identity and bold design.

Despite strong grassroots support, she juggled her business with freelance jobs. TM helped her move toward full-time trading, provided guidance on business planning, and supported her through a legal dispute over a pop-up rental.

She gained access to new opportunities through introductions to networks such as Circle Collective and UAL's Social Responsibility programme. TM enabled her to expand her audience and build the infrastructure for long-term growth.



Lamb's World

Lamide Olusegun created Lamb's World, a collectible figurine brand inspired by his work as a stop-motion animator.

TM gave him a platform to engage directly with his audience and refine his product. While trading, he was approached by a creative director at Disney UK who became his mentor - ultimately leading to a paid internship at Cartoon Network.

He now combines market trading with teaching sculpting and animation to young people, demonstrating how markets can launch creative careers.



HACKNEY MARKETS SERVICE

London Borough of Hackney

“Markets are like living organisms. They will survive if you’ve got the three Ps – people paying for pitches, but we need to remember the main reason for doing this is about helping local people. Changing with the times does not have to mean gentrification.”

Dan O’Sullivan, Markets Manager

Question	Description
What	Investment in Dalston’s local market is expanding its offer and reasserting its place in a fast-changing neighbourhood.
How	Hackney’s approach to its network of distinctive markets is both strategic and integrated, meaning each plays to its strengths to meet the needs of different shoppers. Dalston’s Ridley Road might be more traditional, but that same management is bringing targeted investment in facilities, branding and an expanded offer with a new indoor market.
Who	Markets manager Dan O’Sullivan has received national recognition for outstanding achievement yet firmly believes everyone can do what Hackney does: This includes making it easier for new traders to set up, advocating for markets to be connected into wider council decision-making, investing in their identity and reputation, making the most of intelligence such as the High Street Data Service and keeping social as well as economic value front and centre. From 11 officers when he started he now manages a team of 52. Over the years, the focus has shifted from ‘compliance’ to building business relationships with traders.

Case study: Hackney Markets Service



Component	Description
Market management	<p>Adjusting to economic reality To understand the economic and social context of each market as well as tracking footfall and using the GLA's High Street Data Service, Hackney Markets Service (HMS) tracks indices such as CPI and inflation. When prices rose, they reduced fees for fruit and veg traders by 25 percent so they didn't pass price rises on to shoppers. HMS recognises Dalston is changing but the market is still one of the biggest local employers, with huge footfall, which they intend to grow, not lose.</p>
	<p>Working with traders Ridley Road has an active traders' association and in line with the social value mission, all fruit and veg traders have to sign up to the Alexander Rose voucher scheme. As a traditional six-day market, the age profile here is the oldest of all Hackney's markets. The aim is to bring that down, while working with existing traders to help them improve their offer. To encourage new traders, HMS promotes the use of 'the OpenMarkets platform'. This online portal helps streamline the application process and make it easier for prospective traders to explore opportunities across London.</p>
	<p>Advocating for the importance of markets The social and economic value of the borough's markets is a strong case for integrating them closely with other council functions - even making licensing and planning part of the markets team. To emphasise their value, there is a markets AGM each July attended by the Mayor - a chance to share and celebrate performance and progress. Making the rules and governance transparent and widely available online is key to this.</p>

Component	Description
Branding and marketing	<p>Hackney supports each market as a separate brand within the overall ecosystem and as for any business online brand management is key. For younger traders – especially those coming via the OpenMarkets platform – a strong social media presence is already established - whether for engaging audiences or online sales. However, many older traders are not interested in it, or do not have the literacy skills needed to engage with it. HMS is now working to help them become more social media savvy.</p> <p>With support from the Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund, Ridley Road Market was actively rebranded through updated signage, branded paper bags, and a striking new mural at the market entrance. These improvements aim to enhance visibility and create "Instagrammable" moments that attract younger audiences while building local pride.</p>
Community benefit	<p>Hackney's markets are not only centres for commerce but serve as vital social infrastructure within the borough. Ridley Road Market continues to be one of Hackney's biggest local employers, providing accessible work opportunities in a high-footfall area. By supporting established traders through subsidy and mentoring, and lowering barriers for new entrants, Hackney ensures that economic opportunity is retained within the community. The Alexander Rose voucher scheme, for example, enables low-income residents to access fresh produce, reinforcing the market's role in food accessibility and social value.</p>

Component	Description
<p>Business enterprise and support</p>	<p>Hackney Market Service actively supports trader development and inclusive enterprise through a multi-layered approach. New traders are encouraged to apply via the OpenMarkets platform, which simplifies access to pitch opportunities across London. Markets officers work directly with applicants, offering informal mentoring and guidance on compliance, setup, and business planning.</p> <p>In addition, Hackney is exploring tailored support for underrepresented traders, including women and younger entrepreneurs. The team provides practical assistance to help traders navigate licensing and insurance requirements, and is developing resources to support digital literacy and social media marketing for those less familiar with online tools.</p> <p>Traders are also encouraged to operate across multiple markets in the borough - such as Ridley Road, Hoxton Street, and Broadway Market - giving them access to diverse customer bases. Initiatives such as additional Sunday trading days at Broadway Market and the use of digital application platforms help maximise these opportunities.</p> <p>The Trading Places scheme offers aspiring entrepreneurs subsidised pitches, business mentoring and training on pricing, merchandising, and social media. This has enabled many to transition into long-term trading, particularly those facing barriers to entry into traditional retail environments.</p>



THE BLUE MARKET

London Borough of Southwark

“Bringing all local stakeholders together not only raises the profile of the area, but helps businesses prosper and helps makes the area an even greater place to be.”

Russell Dryden, Market operator

Question Description

What

Bermondsey’s once-thriving historic heart has been reimaged to show the transformative power of a marketplace truly embedded in the community.

How

A passionate community campaign, ‘Made in Bermondsey’, aimed to rebuild identity and opportunity through a transformed market at The Blue. It won £2m of capital funding from the Mayor of London’s Good Growth Fund with multiple benefits: people helping shape regeneration, support for start-ups and local stalls and a revitalised hub for community and businesses.

Who

Russell Dryden, a fishmonger who lived in Bermondsey all his life with a stall in the market for 40 years, has also led the local Business Improvement District Blue Bermondsey for the past eight. He sadly passed away in 2024. With fellow businesses he saw that revitalising the market as the heart of Bermondsey could achieve an inclusive meeting place that will also support local opportunities for start-ups and community market stalls. His vision realised, in October 2022, a new chapter began when Big Local Works took over market management supported by Blue Bermondsey BID, with guidance from Southwark Council’s markets team.

Case study: The Blue Market



Component	Description
Identity and offer	<p>Bermondsey's once-thriving historic heart has been reimagined to show the transformative power of a marketplace truly embedded in the community. A sophisticated roster of markets supplements the Monday to Saturday all-day trading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday – Lunch Market (featuring hot food traders) • Friday – Flea Market (offering stalls at £10 per pitch) • Saturday – Community Market (with subsidised stalls for start-ups) <p>A dedicated website lists traders and provides guidance, such as how to take out public liability insurance. Opportunities are promoted to the local creative community via platforms like Southwark Creates.</p>
Market management	<p>In October 2022, Big Local Works took over market management, supported by Blue Bermondsey BID and guided by Southwark Council's markets team.</p> <p>Long-time local fishmonger Russell Dryden, who operated in the market for 40 years and led the BID for eight years, played a key leadership role. His vision to make the market a community-driven space was central to its transformation into a hub for inclusion, small businesses, and civic pride.</p>

Component	Description
Physical space	<p>The physical transformation of the market was led by architects Hayatsu in collaboration with local residents, businesses and traders.</p> <p>The redesigned market square includes a clock tower, clad in hand-embossed tin tiles made from tin can lids, referencing Bermondsey's industrial heritage as the birthplace of the tin can. The tower includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical infrastructure • Secure storage • A visual focal point for the market <p>A new 'village green' area introduces landscaping and informal seating, enhancing the space for rest and community use.</p>
Events and programming	<p>The improved market infrastructure supports a vibrant programme of events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community markets and flea trading • Live music performances and festivals • Campaign-led engagement stalls <p>The space connects to surrounding civic assets, such as the local library, enabling collaborative events and deeper neighbourhood engagement.</p>

Component	Description
Branding and marketing	<p>The Blue Market maintains an active Facebook page, serving as the central hub for updates, announcements and engagement.</p> <p>Campaigns include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out Of The Blue: Unheard Voices, Different Stories – a digital storytelling project funded by Historic England • Revitalisation efforts, such as a park campaign and ongoing Friday Flea Market promotions
	<p>The BID also hosts a market stall used to engage locals on broader campaigns, enhancing visibility and connection to place.</p>

Component	Description
Business enterprise and support	<p>Big Local Works offers comprehensive support to traders at The Blue Market in Bermondsey, focusing on fostering local enterprise and community development. Their services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start-Up Support: Providing training, seed funding, and coaching to help entrepreneurs launch their businesses. • Market Opportunities: Offering low-cost, low-risk trading spaces at The Blue Market, allowing traders to test and grow their businesses in a supportive environment. • 'Made in Bermondsey' initiative: A programme that enables local businesses to showcase and sell their products at a dedicated market barrow, enhancing visibility and community engagement. • Employability Training: Conducting workshops and one-on-one mentoring to build skills such as confidence, resilience, and effective communication, aiding traders in their professional development. • Welfare and Benefits Advice: Providing confidential support on welfare benefits, including assistance with Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payments (PIP), and attendance at assessment centres and tribunal hearings.



BRIXTON MARKET

London Borough of Lambeth

Question

Description

What

Investment in improvements to trader facilities, the public realm and adjoining shopfronts to secure the long-term sustainable future of this iconic market in a fast changing neighbourhood.

How

Lambeth took an integrated approach to the street market triangle with a comprehensive engagement strategy to understand and deliver what existing and potential shoppers, traders and shop-owners wanted and needed to improve the market for all.

Who

The project was led by the borough's regeneration team, who recognised the complexity of the site and allowed the design and delivery approach to adapt in response to community and trader feedback. A specialist consultancy provided project management support, ensuring coordination between all partners. Gort Scott led on both the architectural vision and engagement strategy, acting as design guardian throughout the build. They worked closely with the contractor to ensure the original design intent was maintained through to delivery.



Component	Description
Market strategy	<p>Defining a vision for the market</p> <p>Brixton's market strategy was key to developing a robust design specific to Electric Avenue, that understood consumers and economics and focused on council priorities, such as rearrangement of stalls, improving the stalls themselves, future trends, trade timescales, and the potential of private market operators. A clear project vision was established early on so that project enhanced the existing strengths, character and ecosystem of the market.</p>
Identity and offer	<p>Context driven branding approach</p> <p>Electric Avenue was so called as it was first electrified street market in London. Gort Scott worked with graphic designer Polimekanos to create a new large-scale celebratory LED sign, situated where historical signage was located at the high street entrance to the market. This reinforces the market's identity and acts as a wayfinding device especially helping to build upon the neighbouring Indoor Market's burgeoning night-time economy.</p>

Component	Description
Market management	<p>Building consent for a change to the market</p> <p>Co-production and extensive trader engagement underpinned the market improvement project. Gort Scott undertook a range of activities tailored to different stakeholders to gain a better understanding of the market, how it is used and their experience of it. This included meetings with traders, shop owners, customers and site walks with disability groups. As well as an ongoing dialogue with council's highways team, waste contractor and Brixton BID. A market stall was dedicated to consultation with visual material including a physical 3D model of market options, which was. The resulting design balanced numerous and complex practical requirements with the desire for an attractive pedestrian-priority public realm.</p>
Operations and logistics	<p>Coordination of refuse</p> <p>The build-up of refuse and food waste from traders and shops was a real deterrent to customers; furthermore, the irregular timings of waste collections were a safety issue for pedestrians. Through tenacious engagement with the refuse contractors, the waste collection for the shop units was incorporated within their scope and the time of collection was moved to 5:30pm, after core trading hours and before night time activity, which improved the safety and appearance of the market.</p>

Component	Description
<p>Physical space</p>	<p>Ground surface informed by function</p> <p>Electric Avenue suffered from a surface water drainage issues, a poor ground surface and abundant redundant street furniture - limiting the amount of usable space for the market. Working with the decisive and proactive Highways team, superfluous items were removed to declutter the street and make it wider for vehicular movements and remove places for refuse to proliferate. One attractive, hard-wearing and easy to clean surface treatment was installed which can take vehicular load. This finish went from shop forecourt to forecourt with no pavements or level changes, opening-up the space to allow for greater flexibility and alternative market layouts.</p>
<p>Business enterprise and support</p>	<p>Supporting traders and improving the market's appearance</p> <p>Some of the existing stalls were in a state of disrepair and there was considerable trading outside of permitted pitches. As part of the agreement to move stalls, traders were offered larger pitches and new stalls with ground anchor points. The offer of new stalls lowered barriers to entry, enabling new traders to come onto the market. Although, the offer was not taken up by all traders, it was enough to create a noticeable improvement to the markets general appearance.</p>





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND THANKS

This work has been delivered with support, guidance and expertise from London's market sector and reflects the hard work and commitment of market teams across the city.

Project Team

Greater London Authority:

Megan Dean

Tina Jadav

Jennifer Oguguo

Matt Ruddy

Ajay Larr

Consultant team

Abdullah Elias

Susie Hyden, Gort Scott

Pamela Snow, Gort Scott

Copy-editor

Sarah Jarvis

Image credits

Abdullah Elias (p65, 154, 156), LB Bexley (p124), Black Eats LDN (p53, 117, 120), LB Hackney (p85,110, 159, 165), LB Hammersmith and Fulham (37,111,122), Hannah Thual courtesy of Hayatsu Architects (p167), JA Projects (p36, 129), Jakob Priestersbach courtesy of Gort Scott (p100), , LB Tower Hamlets (p125, 149), Luke O'Donovan courtesy of CarverHaggard (p51, 83, 87), MI\$EMI (p155), RBKC (114,147), Sonny Malhotra (p15,16, 22, 45,52, 57,60, 66,77,80, 90, 93, 99, 100,103,107,113,122,129,133,139,142-3, 145,155,180, 200), LB Westminster (p127)

With thanks to all those who gave their time and contribution to this guide:

Shanaaz Carroll - Director, Make the Link, LMB alumni (co-chair)

Joe Harrison – Chief Executive, National Market Traders Federation (NMTF), LMB alumni

Abdul Komor – Market Development Manager, LB Waltham Forest, LMB alumni

Alexander Jan – Chair, Hatton Garden BID, LMB alumni

Catherine Brice – Markets Manager, LB Greenwich, LMB alumni

Dan O'Sullivan – Head of Markets, LB Hackney, LMB alumni

Graham Wilson – Policy Advisor, National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA), LMB alumni

Hazel Durrant – Regeneration and Youth Culture Specialist, LMB alumni

Ian Dodds – KERB, LMB alumni

Kate Howell – Market specialist, LMB alumni

Lamide Olusegun – Trader and Tomorrow's Market alumni, LMB alumni

Paige Palmer – Market and Town Centre Programme Officer, LB Newham, LMB alumni

Cllr Rachel Tripp – Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Jobs, LB Newham, LMB alumni

Rasha Obaid – Community and market development specialist, LMB alumni

Roger Austin – Senior Regeneration Officer, LBorough Greenwich, LMB alumni

Sarah Lang – Director – London & South East, Key Cities, LMB alumni

Nicholas Kasic - Market Manager, Kensington and Chelsea

Helen Evans - former London Market Board co-chair

John Burton – Director, Reimagine Management Ltd., Urban

Regeneration and Markets Consultant, LMB alumni

Debbie Carpenter – Market Development Manager, LB Camden, LMB alumni

Stuart Horwood – Chief Executive Officer, Brixton Market Traders' Federation, LMB alumni

Damian Patchell, Markets and street trading manager, Tower Hamlets



FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Regeneration Team:
Greater London Authority,
City Hall, Kamal Chunchie Way,
London
E16 1ZE**

For a large print, Braille, disc, sign language video or audio-tape version of this document, please contact us at the address below:

Public Liaison Unit
Greater London Authority
City Hall, London SE1 2AA

Telephone 020 7983 4000
Minicom 020 7983 4458
www.london.gov.uk

You will need to supply your name, your postal address and state the format and title of the publication you require.

If you would like a summary of this document in your language, please phone the number or contact us at the address above.

