



WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

Markets: the next 5 years

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2: Statistics

- More than 1150 retail markets operate in UK
- More than 150,000 stalls available each week;
- More than 46,000 market traders work in UK
- More than 96,000 people employed in market sector
- More than 435 million shopping trips to markets each year
- Market operators turn over more than £125m each year
- More than £1.1 bn spent at market stalls each year



3: Markets and places I

- “...the most direct and transparent form of exchange, the most closely supervised, the least open to deception”
- ...German: selling hand to hand, eyeball to eyeball
- ...evidence of Roman markets in Pompeii and in Britain – and before that: ancient Greece, China, Pharaonic Egypt, Babylon



4: Markets and places II

Defining characteristic of an English market town or a French *bourg*:

The place where people come together to buy and sell – but also to hear the news (and the gossip), to obtain services, to meet friends.



5: Markets and places III

Markets as *social spaces*

Markets “...important sites of social interaction for local communities” (JRF)

Key elements:

- Features to attract visitors to the site;
- Opportunities to linger;
- Good access to the site;
- Active and engaged community of traders.

6: Markets and local government I



Markets one of the most ancient local government functions

British examples:

- Manchester: annual fair from 1227, weekly markets from (at least) 1282
- London Charter from Edward III in 1326 gave market rights within 7 miles of the City



7: Markets and local government II

Markets bring together a number of key aspects of local government:

- Regulation
- Land and property
- Direct management
- Local economy



8: Markets and local government III: Regulation

Roman magistrates had the power to intervene in cases of suspected fraud, and to ensure set prices were observed.

In 15th-18th centuries, markets the bulk of all known trade: "The urban authorities therefore took their organization and supervision firmly in hand: it was a matter of vital necessity." (Braudel)

Sicily: if a trader exceeded the fixed price, he could be sent to the galleys

Chateaudun, France: bakers who were third time offenders would be tipped out of carts, trussed up like sausages

9: Markets and local government IV: Regulation

Origins of the weights and measures
/public protection service





10: Markets and local government

V: Land and property

Many local authorities retain ownership of market site or hall

Risk of a narrow financial focus

- Markets sometimes seen as a “cash cow” for local authorities - like car parking
- “Once you get to a position where they are no longer viable, markets close or get relocated, or sections get sold off.”



11: Markets and local government: VI: Direct management

More than half local authorities provide and manage their market(s) themselves...

But not always *interested*: "Markets are not viewed by local authorities as a front-line service.." (G Wilson)

"The street market is managed well-enough, but in a relatively passive way, and the manager has many others to look after." (URBED, Northcote Road study)

And non-specialist staff: market managers "come from a variety of backgrounds, often unrelated to the needs of market management." (JRF)



12: Markets and local government: VII Local Economy

- Long standing concern of many local authorities with local economic development;
- Contribution to vitality of town centres;
- Significant cultural and tourist attractions;
- Centres of enterprise.



13: Change in local government : I: Resources

Spending Review 2010-14

£bn

2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
28.5	26.1	24.4	24.2	22.9

- Local government relatively hard hit
- Councils encouraged to pool back office costs
- Sweat assets



14: Change in local government II: Localism Bill

- “new freedoms and flexibilities”
- “new rights and powers”
- General power of competence
- Community right to buy
- Community right to challenge
- Elected mayors, changes to planning and housing

But implications of these changes for market service unclear and little discussed.....



15: Wider social change I

Hard to consider future of markets without considering some wider changes...

- Changes in patterns of women's work
- End of the daily shop
- Rise and role of the supermarkets
- E commerce



16: Wider social change II

Implications for markets...

“stall-holders confirmed that there are simply not enough people around during the week to justify opening up. Some of the traders who take units for the Fridays and Saturdays do not bother with Fridays...”

“The weekend traders generally need other jobs to support themselves during the week.”

URBED, Northcote Road study, 2008



17: Markets: the challenges

How can markets renew and reinvent themselves? *Re-imagine* themselves?

- Tight financial climate;
- Less direct service provision by councils;
- New stress on private sector/voluntary/community effort;
- Fewer households shop every day;
- Fewer households can live on only/main income from market trading



18: Clone towns: I

Public revulsion at what has been happening to towns:
NEF work...

Clone towns: “too many of our cities have devoted their imagination and resources to making themselves look the same as each other”;

The tyranny of the ‘strong covenant’

Nature of the investment market

Impact of recession – lack of resilience

Collapse of Woolworths and others – gaps leading to creeping abandonment

Towns losing the spark that makes them different...

19: Clone towns: II





20: Ghost towns

Ghost towns: out of centre supermarkets creating “ ‘Ghost Towns’ with food deserts at their heart;”

Particular problem for low income families

“We built the town up. Now they want to give it to the supermarkets. England is the only town in the EC where we don’t care about what markets have to offer.” - market trader quoted by NEF



21: Markets: the opportunities

Markets “rarely appear either on the political radar or the officer radar” (G Nicholson)

Has to change...

Markets need to be seen not as scruffy anachronisms

Not as liabilities

Not as cash cows

But as assets for the future of towns and communities



22: Action Plans

It's not rocket science..

Plenty of good practice out there...

- Parking
- Toilets
- Marketing
- Investment
- Confidence



23: Place shaping: I

Lyons Report:

- ...the central role and purpose of local government
- ..the creative use of powers and influence to promote the general well being of a community
- Longer term view, emphasizing common interests, future economic prosperity, environmental sustainability and a harmonious, secure community



24: Place shaping: II

People value and cherish what is different, what is *special* about their town; they:

“want to live and invest somewhere with some character and history” (NEF)

But investment should not be allowed to crowd out what is distinctive



25: Place shaping: III

Markets are central to the health and vitality of towns

They represent social capital

Councils should value and nurture their markets

Markets should be at the heart of localism and the big society.



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