

# TRADITIONAL MARKETS UNDER THREAT: WHY IT'S HAPPENING AND WHAT TRADERS AND CUSTOMERS CAN DO



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# THE CHANGING FORTUNES OF TRADITIONAL MARKETS

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# 1. Executive Summary



This report is about how traditional retail markets, as public assets with vital social value are under threat and how customers and traders are organising to save, support and promote them. Traditional markets are covered or outdoor, often daily, selling a mixture of food and other items, often large, exceeding 100 stalls. The majority are owned and run by local authorities. They are different from more intermittent farmers', artisanal, or specialist markets. Although markets appeal to and attract a huge range of customers, the traditional markets are most important to middle and lower-class shoppers, older people and those from minority backgrounds because of their affordability, accessibility and variety of produce. Therefore traditional markets play a crucial, and mostly neglected, role in local communities and contribute towards a more inclusive and just society.



The report has two parts.

**Section One** provides an overview of the position of traditional markets in England at the moment, unpacking the existing narrative of the decline of traditional markets and situating it in the wider context of historical underinvestment and marginalisation from other corporate retail options. It then gives an overview of ways in which traditional markets are regenerated and presents our analysis of regeneration as gentrification.

**Section Two** of the report is more practical, and intended to be a stand-alone guide for customers and traders worried about their market. It draws on visits, interviews and our own experiences of campaigning on these issues. Both sections of the report can be read separately or together.

The research that underpins this report was carried in 2015 and was funded by a scholar-activist award from the Antipode Foundation based in the School of Geography, University of Leeds.

## 2. Introduction

### Markets matter, but who do they matter to?

In recent years, threats of large-scale city-centre regeneration schemes have mobilised thousands of people to propose that another market is possible; the market that they want. These traders, customers and campaigners do not wish to claim that markets should not change; rather that alterations have to be in the interests of the market community, the existing traders and customers. This is the claim that campaigning groups make concerning the markets which they so passionately care about.

Much has been written recently about how markets are good for towns and cities. Research on markets tends to use economic and footfall measures used for other forms of retail, describing markets as ‘economic multipliers’ for chain shops. Campaigners argue that markets are fundamentally and increasingly a different form of retail to the rest of the shopping outlets of our towns and cities. Historically and currently, markets cater to middle and lower-class shoppers and increasingly cater to older people and those from minority ethnic backgrounds<sup>1</sup>. Markets ‘play a crucial, and mostly neglected, role in local communities’<sup>2</sup>.

The aim of this report is to present a critical analysis of the narratives of market decline and regeneration, particularly in terms of traditional public markets, and to provide some pointers to those with the most intimate and justified interest in these markets – traders and customers. The report addresses traditional markets in a specific context; Either covered or outdoor, often daily, these markets sell a mixture of food and other items, and are often large, exceeding 100 stalls. They are different from more intermittent farmers’, artisanal, or specialist markets. Often traditional markets are somewhat overlooked by policy research, for example, these markets are referred to as ‘the older format’<sup>3</sup>, implying a less relevant format for today’s consumer. These markets, consultant Julian Dobson argues, ‘are being pushed to the margins, physically, economically and socially’<sup>4</sup>, even while farmers’ and specialist markets are increasingly popular.

This work is led by the concerns and issues of those who campaign on markets. As far as we know, there are no campaigns to save newer types of markets. The other reason is more political. Campaigns on markets come not mainly from issues of profitability and business innovation but from concerns about social justice, exclusion, access to affordable quality food and goods. This piece aims to set these concerns in the context of a decline in traditional markets and the high street retail sector coupled with an interest in speciality markets as a regenerating influence and indeed ‘the future of retail.’

1. New Economics Foundation, (2006), Runnymede Trust (2008). New Economics Foundation (2005) noted increasing numbers of applications for casual trading by BME traders.

2. Runnymede Trust (2008).  
3. IPM/NABMA (2015).

4. Julian Dobson, ‘Saving Our City Centres, One market at a time’, The Guardian, 10/07/15 [www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/jul/10/saving-city-centre-local-market](http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/jul/10/saving-city-centre-local-market)

## 2. Introduction

This report also concentrates on markets in cities (for example London, Birmingham, Peterborough and Leeds) rather than smaller towns. This is because where campaigns on markets currently appear to exist. Two-thirds of markets are controlled by local government<sup>5</sup>. They are unique public retail spaces which are often at the heart of a crisis in local government and accountability.



**Section One** of this report provides an overview of the position of traditional markets in England at the moment, contrasting a narrative of decline with the ways (other) markets are also seen as an opportunity for regeneration. It also touches on the different ways traditional markets are claimed to benefit places and people and how these benefits are framed. It then gives an overview of ways in which traditional markets are regenerated and presents our analysis of regeneration as gentrification.

**Section Two** of the report is more practical, and intended to be a stand-alone guide for customers and traders worried about their market. It draws on visits, interviews and our own experiences of campaigning on these issues.

Both sections of the report can be read separately or together.

# 3. What is going on with traditional markets?

There are 1225 traditional retail markets – both indoor and outdoor – in the UK<sup>6</sup>. By comparison, there are around 750 farmers' markets, 26 wholesale markets and 350 country markets. A traditional retail market can be characterised as one which has a long history in a particular place, low-cost or medium-cost goods, and usually a mixture of food, clothes, and household items.

A good 65% of these traditional markets are public retail spaces; they are owned and managed by local government authorities. 18% are run privately. Only 25 markets are operated by traders<sup>7</sup>. In London alone, there are 162 markets, half of them being street markets. They account for 0,94% of retail spend in the city, providing 7,319 full-time equivalent jobs.

## a) Markets, retail and the discourse of decline

Traditional markets are often described as 'in decline'. Nationally, figures indicate that market trading has dropped by nearly £1bn between 2009 and 2014, average occupancy in England is at 46%, and a third of local authorities have reported a decrease in income from their market<sup>8</sup>. But what does this decline actually mean? And why has it come about?

Various aspects of markets can be said to be in decline: footfall, takings by traders, number of spaces being let, the physical fabric of the building itself. These declines have different causes and solutions but are often conflated generally by local authorities and the media as an inevitable and generalised 'decline'. A 2009 Parliamentary inquiry concluded that the traditional type of market was declining in popularity but that farmers' markets and other specialist and niche markets (food festivals, Christmas and craft makers) were increasingly popular. Research by NABMA<sup>9</sup> comparing 2010 and 2011 figures suggests that the situation of markets is comparable to that of the high streets, but makes a distinction between different types of markets.

Outdoor markets, farmers' markets and those operated by the private sector seem to be doing better than the traditional indoor, local-authority run market. For London, the assessment is similar<sup>10</sup>. At the same time, the total number of markets in London has grown since 2008, but this growth is almost solely in the privately run markets sector; the fastest-growing type is that of farmers and specialist food<sup>11</sup>. These more successful markets tend to serve middle to high income customers. It has been found, for example, that farmers' markets are more "effective at attracting affluent consumers – the AB socio-economic class – who may otherwise be less likely to frequent markets<sup>12</sup>. Therefore, it is important to highlight the "mixed" picture of success and decline depending on type and geographical location of markets<sup>13</sup> but our concern here is with the traditional public market which is now quite consistently framed in a discourse of decline.

6. NABMA/NMTF, Mission for Markets (2015)  
7. RMA (2009)  
8. NABMA/NMTF, Mission for Markets (2015)

9. NABMA (2012)  
10. "In many areas, publicly run retail markets are struggling to survive" (URBACT 2014).  
11. (Regeneris Consulting 2010, URBACT 2014).

12. DCLG (2009)  
13. Research by Smith et al (2014) has particularly shown the diverse situation of markets.

# 3. What is going on with traditional markets?

This reported decline of traditional markets is similar to the decline of other public services or social housing. As many housing campaigners have evaluated, “decline” is the result of many different forces, including the way in which local government and other institutions choose to invest in and talk about a place. An example of this is where council housing is described as ‘sink estates’, and crime levels and social problems exaggerated or emphasised over positive aspects of the housing. As many traders and regular customers have experienced, talk of the market’s decline is often followed by plans to redevelop the market, close it, and/or move it which is when customers and traders often get organised and start campaigns. It is therefore very important for campaigners and those who research retail development to interrogate and understand what is meant by “decline” in their local context. In the following sections we critically trace some key factors in the decline of traditional markets.

## b) Historic underinvestment

Publicly-owned and run markets, unlike other services, generate profit for local government. Despite this, many traditional markets suffer long-term underinvestment. This is of course one obvious way to explain certain kinds of decline. The key 2009 Parliamentary inquiry concluded that “more often than not, market decline can be attributed, at least in part, to a lack of investment and/or operator expertise from the responsible council”<sup>14</sup>. Reviews of London markets say that despite most authorities having strategies on markets, “investment remains hard to detect” and that there has been long-term strategic and local authority under-investment in London’s public markets<sup>15</sup>. Underinvestment results in leaking roofs, deficient sewage, ventilation, substandard toilets, all which make shopping and working in traditional markets a difficult task. Underinvestment means that many market buildings (some with important heritage features) are in substandard conditions, they lack some retail facilities (such as paying with credit cards) and are often not well connected with transport routes. This becomes even a more stark disadvantage against the corporate retailers, pedestrianised shopping streets and the rise of in-town shopping complexes.

Lack of investment is detrimental not only in terms of physical capital but in the appreciation of the importance of the role that traditional markets can play in towns and cities. Often, markets remain a blind spot, without a strategy about how they fit with the rest of the urban and retail fabric. Indeed, many local authorities seem to regard markets as a problem or a liability than an asset. For example a study of retail provision in low income neighbourhoods in London in 2005 did not even mention the role or presence of street markets and instead focused on how create investment opportunities for big retailers<sup>16</sup>.

Markets are not subject to consistent management across local government. For example Leeds Kirkgate Market was for many years managed by the “Asset management” department together with waste disposal, whilst Cardiff Market has also been managed by the asset management team, ‘rather than under officers with retail and marketing experience, who could benefit and anticipate the Market’s needs’<sup>17</sup>. As a report on Cardiff’s public markets points out, this shows a lack of professional concern for markets. At the same time, under-Investment or neglect (not only from local authorities) also comes in the form of a historic lack of training opportunities in online retail, digital payment, etc and also lack of apprenticeships for traders or aspiring traders, although this last point is changing.

14. DCLG (2009).

15. URBACT (2014). See for example Kirklees local authority: also Friends of Peterborough City Market, Friends of Leeds Kirkgate Market and other groups have held local authorities directly to account over underinvestment – in several cases, officials admitted that profit in the market had been spent elsewhere over a long period of time. This has been evidenced widely by the major industry players NMTF and NABMA: Kirklees (2009); Cardiff City Council (2014) North Lincolnshire and others. Leeds City Council consistently made a profit from Leeds Kirkgate Markets of £1-2m a year over a decade, while it was busy laying high quality paving on the shopping district opposite the market. Investment in Kirkgate Market considerably increased from 2012 onwards, but see Gonzalez and Waley (2013) for analysis.

16. GLA (2005).

17. Cardiff City Council (2014).

# 3. What is going on with traditional markets?

## c) The changing face of retail; markets, high streets & the big four

Like markets, city centre retail itself is also spoken of as being in decline, with many empty shops, especially in areas of low income<sup>18</sup>. This form of retail, commonly known as 'the high street', has an intimate and under-researched relationship with markets. In actual fact, city centre spending overall has risen in recent years, but independent businesses have lost out. The UK now has a highly 'consolidated' groceries market, with 80% of spending on groceries and household items occurring in 'big four' corporates<sup>19</sup>. This suggests that independent traders – be they in town centre streets or in markets – have common cause and common challenges.



This story of neglect of markets and the 'high street' has gone in parallel with the expansion of big retailers in the UK first in out of town formats (through the 80s and 90s) and more recently in smaller 'convenience' versions (such as Tesco Metro) and in-town large shopping centres (from the 2000). Online shopping has also increased. Some of these pressures from the expansion of the big corporate retailers are also shared by the small independent retailers on the high street<sup>20</sup>. The view from policy and industry reports is that the public increasingly prefer to shop in the convenience of these corporate retailers over the traditional municipally-run markets. The conclusion drawn by policymakers is that traditional markets need to adapt or die; be regenerated to become more like supermarkets or specialise in a niche consumer sector, or face closure and irrelevance.

However, it can be argued that people want what they get, rather than vice versa. From the supply side, the number of Tesco stores increased from 568 to 2365 between 2000-2005<sup>21</sup>, and although this growth has slowed down in the last few years, it is now concentrated in market towns and city

centres in 'convenience' formats, often in old pubs<sup>22</sup>. Central and local government facilitate this expansion by agreeing to most of the planning applications for the establishment of supermarkets<sup>23</sup> in competition with traditional markets, often under pressure because of the promise of job-creation.

While municipally-run markets have suffered from neglect and disinvestment, corporate retailers have been favoured. Supermarkets are also working on their branding and social responsibility, with 'market-style' areas promoting fresh produce. There is almost no research about why and how people shop in markets, and how this consumption might differ from the rest of the 'high street' or shopping centres (both inner-city and out-of-town), what social and community added value might there be. Given this lack of research, it seems obvious that many of retail planning decisions are based on assumption, assertion and convenience. Recently, the 'big four' share of grocery profits is declining. The public are preferring to shop differently<sup>24</sup>. In this context, new speciality markets are often presented as a way of 'revitalising' high streets<sup>25</sup>.

18. [www.managementtoday.co.uk/news/1338345/decline-britains-high-streets-getting-faster](http://www.managementtoday.co.uk/news/1338345/decline-britains-high-streets-getting-faster)  
19. Sainsburys, Morrisons, Asda, Tesco (Quarterbridge, 2013).  
20. Wrigley and Lambiri (2014)  
21. Corporate Watch (n.d)

22. [www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1230605/camra-details-pub-to-supermarket-conversions](http://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1230605/camra-details-pub-to-supermarket-conversions)  
23. See, for example, Baldock, J. 2013 Retail Planning decisions under the NPPF, Nov 2013. 50 case studies of retail developments were researched and 86% were approved. A BBC investigation in 2010 researching planning applications by the "big 4" supermarkets in the UK also concluded that the majority of the proposed schemes were approved ([www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-12039041](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-12039041)).

24. NABMA/NMTF (2015).  
25. DCLG (2012).

# 3. What is going on with traditional markets?

## d) Austerity, local government & privatisation

Austerity and cuts in government funds have accelerated this critical situation for markets. As already outlined, they are not part of the statutory services that local authorities must provide (such as housing, social services or education). In a context where local authorities are pressed to become more 'business-minded' with less money, the popular solution for municipal markets is to turn them from everyday amenities into "shopping destinations", either through the local authority itself or by selling it to a private company<sup>26</sup>. Redevelopment, regeneration or refurbishment then kicks in to update the infrastructure and change the retail offer to attract potentially wealthier customers. Below we describe different forms in which Markets have been regenerated. This functional shift – from amenity to destination – changes the presentation of the market from a practical, necessary site of affordable goods to a more exclusive, niche and (possibly) temporary place of entertainment and variety. This is when the social and cultural value of markets and their potential to contribute to a more 'just city' is put in danger.

There has been a double trend for the privatisation of municipal markets: on the one hand local authorities are selling off markets to private operators, and on the other the majority of new markets are privately run. A very small proportion of these are community or non-profit, but many are being absorbed or run big companies. From 2008 – 2014 there has been an increase of 9% in private markets in London (from 30 to 39) and a decline of local authority run markets from 70% to 54%<sup>27</sup>. Street markets in London are also limited by legislation so that local authorities cannot make a profit from them<sup>28</sup>. Anecdotally, the trend for privatisation has slowed, but is still a popular model which has an ongoing impact on customers and traders<sup>29</sup>.

Several of these are emerging as leaders in the privatisation or private management of markets.

26. Another option is of course to close and/or demolish but we have not seen so much of this.  
27. URBACT 2014.

28. Regeneris Consulting, 2010 'A profit cannot be made from licensing activities. While this provides an important protection for traders it also prevents, for instance, the building up of funds to invest in market infrastructure or promotion, even though these are typically considered legitimate costs in running businesses in general.

29. Discussion with Joe Anderson, Chief Executive of NMTF, June 2015.

# 3. What is going on with traditional markets?

## Key private sector actors...

### Quarterbridge Plc

Founded in 2000, Quarterbridge is the leading retail market development company, offering consultancy, ownership and management support, redevelopment implementation, promotion. 13 out of the 44 recent market regeneration projects we have identified have involved Quarterbridge as consultants at least; they also have taken on overseeing a few redevelopment schemes to completion, for example in Birmingham.

The role of Quarterbridge as management consultants is to advise on cost and feasibility of different regeneration approaches to markets. They present market owners/managers with a range of finance-based options for management and investment in the market. Quarterbridge's analysis of the Market industry is in line with the "decline discourse" that we have seen above and they have recommended the downsizing or 'retail consolidation' of markets in various cases. Whatever Quarterbridge's approach to a particular market, it is clear they have considerable power in shaping discourse and policy concerning traditional markets. Quarterbridge's influence in the area of municipal traditional markets also demonstrates the difficulty and limitation many local authorities have in understanding or planning their markets.

### Geraud UK

Geraud is a French-originated market management company which started in the UK in 1997. It is made up of four different companies. It is the largest operator of local authority markets in Europe, running markets in Brixton, Glasgow, Stratford-on-Avon, Hulme, as well as a comprehensive Public Private Sector Management Partnership overseeing all Liverpool's markets. They also administer seasonal and speciality markets. Its CEO is Malcolm Veigas, who used to run Bolton Markets. Geraud UK sponsors NABMA (National Association of British Market Authorities, see below).

Other key private sector players in markets are: Town and Country Markets (leading private sector retail market operator in the UK, running 35 markets), Bray Associates (leading outdoor market operator, running 17 markets) and The Retail Group (consultants for Manchester, Spitalfields)

# 3. What is going on with traditional markets?

## Other key actors...

There is no coordinated national policy or oversight of markets. There is a Minister for High Streets, which incorporates markets. There is also an All Party Parliamentary Committee: A group of MPs in Parliament who discusses matters on Markets and makes recommendations to the Minister and other actors.

### Local Authorities

65% of markets are owned and run by Local Authorities. The market manager will therefore be a council officer. In the governance structure of the local authority the market will be located within a department (i.e. economic development, asset management) which will be headed by an elected councillor.

### NABMA: National Association of British Market Authorities

Member based organisation of market operators (local authorities and a few private companies). Provides assistance and training for market managers. Also carries out research.

### NMTF: National Market Traders Federation

A member-based organisation for the promotion and support of market traders in the UK. There are around 100 branches, many of whom are engaged in ongoing negotiations over issues around rents, amendments to markets and in some cases regeneration. NMTF also provides insurance for traders and lobbies central government, carries research and frequent market visits.

Around 55% of traders are members of NMTF<sup>30</sup>.

# 3. What is going on with traditional markets?

## e) Market revival and markets as regeneration opportunity

At the same time as a decline in the traditional municipally-run market has been reported, a revival of markets has been also trumpeted. Government and the different actors in the market industry have produced considerable research and policy statements<sup>31</sup> on the benefit of markets and the need to support them. In 2007 the All Party Parliamentary Markets Group launched a “Markets Policy Framework” highlighting the policy areas relevant to markets, including regeneration/economy, food and health, culture and tourism, community cohesion, and environment. There have been various research reports by government related or industry related bodies. More recently there has been another wave of research and reports as the two main bodies in the industry – NMTF and NABMA have joined forces in a campaign called “Mission for Markets” which is providing a “health check” on Markets across the UK<sup>32</sup>. A parallel interest has been on the decline of the high street in general accelerated by the economic crisis and Markets here have been suggested as key ingredients in its recovery. The Portas Review of high streets (2011) contributed to this view and suggested loosening regulation around markets to facilitate new traders, as well as the celebration of a national Market Day.

One of the main arguments supporting this revival has been that markets contribute economically to the life of cities and town centres, and this argument is made in different ways by investors, local authorities and campaigners. One of the first reports on this issue was commissioned from the New Economics Foundation in 2005 by Friends of Queen’s Market, a campaign group<sup>33</sup>. This report showed that this market in one of the poorest areas in London generated £13m for the local economy and supported twice as many jobs per square metre as the local supermarket. More recently it has been shown that the footfall that markets bring into high streets have a positive effect on town centres<sup>34</sup>.

Markets have been reconfigured as a ‘rejuvenator’ for depressed high streets and town centres. But it is worth noting that within this, only particular types of trading are promoted. A review by the government in July 2013<sup>35</sup> on progress made since the Portas Review shows, for example, that the focus has been on establishing new specialty markets such as vintage, street food or farmers markets which as we have asserted above, tend to serve wealthier consumers. The economic impact reports have treated markets as any other supermarket whose aim is to attract as many wealthy customers as possible. A quote for one of these reports on Plymouth City Market, a large indoor general market, clearly show this:

“The market is over-attracting among the most challenged lifestyle types... who tend have severely limited budgets and to be strongly price-driven. At the other end of the scale there are significant pockets of the wealthiest... but the market is failing to recruit them”<sup>36</sup>.

The implication is that lower-income shoppers are not the most desirable clients for traders; despite traders themselves often claiming otherwise. As one trader in Birmingham puts it:

“The rich can buy anywhere. This is a city of working-class and we’re here for them”<sup>37</sup>.

31. For example, URBACT (2014). The 2009 report by the Retail Markets Alliance, ‘Markets21: A Policy & Research Review of UK Retail and Wholesale Markets in the 21st Century’, coming at the same time as Communities and Local Government department report ‘Market Failure’, undoubtedly catalysed some of this interest.

32. See [www.mission4markets.uk](http://www.mission4markets.uk)

33. NEF (2005).

34. IPM/NABMA (2015).

35. DCLG (2013).

36. NABMA (2015).

37. Discussion with Birmingham Outdoor Market trader, Jan 2015.

# 3. What is going on with traditional markets?

## f) The social justice case for markets

Most policy and industry research related to markets has focused on their economic role and impacts, using the same methodologies and arguments as with other forms of retail. Research has only tangentially touched on the hugely important social role of markets. A rare 2006 study on social impact of markets looked at eight different markets in England, including several traditional street and covered markets. It showed that markets were very important in promoting social inclusion, particularly for single mothers, young adults and pensioners<sup>38</sup>. Typical market customers are those with a low income, the elderly and those dependent upon public transport for getting to the market and other shops<sup>39</sup>.

There is slightly more evidence that traditional markets are key for the poorest in society, providing affordable food and household goods as well as cheap business start-ups. In London, research has found correlation between the most deprived parts of the capital, high proportions of black and minority ethnic residents and concentrations of street markets. There is also evidence that traders in markets are disproportionately from non-white British backgrounds<sup>40</sup>. In Leeds, an analysis of the postcodes from a petition signed by thousands of market customers showed that many lived in areas with higher levels of deprivation<sup>41</sup>. These citizens are precisely those that local authorities have statutory obligation to care for as part of social and childcare services, education and social housing. Markets can be a strategic place for local authorities to reach these people, but currently there seems little impetus to do this.

38. Watson and Studdert (2006)

39. Quarterbridge (2014)

40. GLA (2008); DCLG (2009); Regeneris Consulting (2010), NEF (2006).

41. Gonzalez and Waley (2013)

## 4. Regeneration or gentrification?

So far we have described the complex retail landscape for traditional markets; trumpeted as saviours of the high street whilst simultaneously being denigrated as old-fashioned and in decline, popular in places but subject to changing patterns of consumption, for reasons which are usually unexplored.

This limbo situation creates a potential opportunity area for regeneration, particularly for centrally-located indoor markets run by public authorities. In our research we have identified a recent wave of redevelopment projects for markets, particularly in London and in the great indoor market halls in northern England.

Regeneration and redevelopment is very often what triggers market campaigns. It is therefore important to critically analyse how regeneration manifests itself, what different types there are and effects can it have. Because campaigners oppose or contest regeneration plans they are often accused of not wanting change or improvement of their city or their market.. But what these campaigns are often highlighting is how complex a regeneration or redevelopment project can be and what negative effects can it have for those lower down the chain in the decision making processes.

There are different types and phases of regeneration, but there is plenty of research that shows that it can lead to the change of the social make-up of a place to the extent that residents and consumers are displaced or don't feel welcome anymore<sup>42</sup>.

Concerns over displacement of traders and customers because of the rent rises and cost of goods after regeneration is what moves many campaigns over markets (See Section Two for more detail).

This section first describes the current landscape of regeneration projects in UK markets identifying trends and types. Secondly, it highlights real estate pressures taking place in these redevelopment projects. Finally it touches on whether regeneration can lead to gentrification and how that change can be identified and successfully challenged.

# 4. Regeneration or gentrification?

## a) Types & processes of market redevelopments

At least 25 traditional retail markets in the UK and Ireland have undergone or have started undergoing major regeneration in the last five years<sup>43,44</sup>.

## Markets undergoing regeneration since 2005

- Leeds – Kirkgate
- Birmingham – Bullring
- Sheffield – Castle Market
- Wakefield
- Warrington
- Rochdale
- Bolton
- Leicester
- Southport
- Liverpool – Great Homer
- Radcliffe
- Woking – Market Walk
- Colchester
- Burton on Trent
- Blackburn
- Manchester – Arndale
- York
- Burnley
- London – Brixton Markets
- London – Sheperd's Bush
- Oldham – Shaw Market
- Watford
- Market Harborough
- Accrington

## 4. Regeneration or gentrification?

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There is no single model for traditional market regeneration. However, there are some distinct trends and processes.

The first type is a **demolition and rebuild** of a market, either on the existing site or on a new site (Example: The move in Sheffield from Castle Market to The Moor market which opened in 2013). Another is **refurbishment**, which involves changes and improvements in the physical fabric of the market. Refurbishment is often carried out in phases with parts of markets closed for some periods and traders moved around or temporarily decanted elsewhere. Less common is where a market hall is closed down for good and traders are housed temporarily pending further developments or displaced permanently.

Most traditional retail market regeneration projects appear to be in relation to **wider regeneration projects**, and therefore it is really important not to see these developments in isolation (see Section Two for more detail on how campaigners approach housing, transport and social justice issues). Indeed retail-led regeneration has become a feature in many UK cities and markets are often involved in major redevelopment plans involving other commercial retailers and shopping centres. Examples of markets affected by this type of regeneration are Leeds Kirkgate Market, The new Moor in Sheffield or the Bullring Markets in Birmingham.

These generalisations should not mask the fact that there are often **several different aspects** to a market regeneration project and these different types described above can happen at the same time. An example of this is Leeds, where an adjacent shopping mall development, refurbishment of trading halls, a reduction in permanent trading and the introduction of a daily indoor market all interact in different ways.

Markets also may be subject to **several periods of regeneration** in a relatively short period – for example in Birmingham, where there were new market halls at the Bullring in 2003 and now the markets are part of

the huge ‘Birmingham Smithfield’ redevelopment, which will see new homes and offices, including on the site of the Wholesale Markets, which will be moved some four miles north of the city centre. Leicester Market is an example of a phased regeneration; a new Food Hall opened in 2014, and at the same time the old Indoor Market was demolished. There are proposals to redevelop the whole outdoor market by the end of 2016.

In addition to these general remarks, it is also worth pointing out some ongoing threats and campaigns are occurring **after or in the absence of regeneration schemes**. Examples of this would be in Brixton, South West London, and Queens’ Market, East London.

# 4. Regeneration or gentrification?

## b) The raising real estate value of traditional markets

In the first part of this report we showed that the current analysis from the market industry is that consumer changes are putting pressure on traditional markets to evolve. What we have found in our research, is that another crucial pressure for change comes from real estate pressure. In other words, the redevelopment and regeneration of markets is often part of a wider real estate operation to upgrade retail spaces that can yield more profit.

Markets are often located in central areas. This is because traditionally they were located in easily accessible sites for the exchange of goods. These central locations have now become extremely valuable real estate spaces, particularly in London and big cities. The context that we have explained in the first part of this report shows that traditional markets, particularly those owned by local authorities, are increasingly couched in a discourse of decline, something obsolete. Local authorities become under pressure to intervene to realise the highest value of that asset and land. The market could generate a higher income if it catered for wealthier customers and traders could pay higher rents to the council.



There is therefore huge pressure from a real estate point of view to redevelop and transform traditional markets which are located in valuable locations. It is in London where this situation is most acute. For example, a report on markets in London acknowledges that “appreciating land values and development present a double edge sword of opportunity and threat”<sup>45</sup>. Crucially, the pressure from real estate markets is not a factor that is really highlighted by government or industry when discussing market decline or renewal.

# 4. Regeneration or gentrification?

## c) Are markets gentrifying? And what does this mean?

Gentrification is a concept often used to describe and criticise changes in the social make-up of a neighbourhood. Simply put, it can be seen as the replacement of a working class and/or low income population by middle class as dwellers, consumers, or both. It is a complex process involving changes in the built environment, services (such as education) and the retail mix which shift to accommodate a wealthier population. London is said to have been the birth of the phenomenon and one of the cities in the world which is most rapidly gentrifying, with large areas in central and inner London becoming unaffordable for ordinary residents, and the mass transfer of social affordable housing into private hands or demolition.

There has been less focus on the impact of gentrification in the retail mix of a neighbourhood<sup>46</sup>. We suggest that retail gentrification is the process whereby the commerce that serves (amongst others) a population of low income is transformed/replaced into/by a type of retail targeted at wealthier people. From a different angle, we can also see it as the increase in commercial rents that pushes traders to increase price of their products, change products or change location.

At first sight gentrification can appear as a positive change; underinvested, untidy or “grotty” markets are replaced with new stalls selling new products to a new clientele. There is often a commentary of ‘cleaning up’ or making an area more ‘vibrant’. For example, the transition in an inner London street market, which is located in a gentrifying neighbourhood, was described in an industry magazine as ‘From Sex and Sleaze to Gourmet Cheese’, thus making explicit the replacement of

sex-workers with quality food. However, behind this positive gloss there can often be a process of exclusion and displacement of previous traders and customers.

To illustrate the gentrification process we have summarised in the next table two models of markets: the traditional and the gentrified. These are extremely simplified versions of much more complex situations; often these situations co-exist in a large market while it is undergoing a process of transition. Rather than seeing these as two separate sorts of market, they represent an ongoing move from one kind to the other; rents may rise slowly, different traders and customers appear in patches. It is important to understand gentrification in markets as a complex process. In the table we show how these different models of markets manifest themselves from different angles in terms of traders, products that are sold, types of customers and market operators.

# 4. Regeneration or gentrification?

## The traditional & the gentrified market

	<b>Traditional Market</b>	<b>Gentrified Market</b>
Traders	Affordable rents Monthly or permanent licenses	Higher rents Day licenses or short-term
Products	High volume of goods and low profit margin for traders Essential goods or services Fruit, vegetables, household goods, frozen or convenience food Low/medium cost to customer	Selected produce and high profit Non essential goods More prepared, specialist and hot food Higher cost to customer
Customers	Low/ middle income Local residents Habitual Elderly, female, BME	Middle/high income/tourists Niche / specialty/ occasional
Market operator	Steady surplus / cost neutral Municipal asset / public service	High but risky surplus Commercial venture



## 4. Regeneration or gentrification?

In the **traditional market**, the focus tends to be on high volume of produce which is sold at low profit margin for customers who appreciate the affordability and variety, but not necessarily always high quality (organic, local...). This model works best when traders pay affordable rents. In this model the market can become a public service as it provides affordable fresh produce for vulnerable residents and it also acts as a social meeting point for those for whom other shops are too expensive or not what they are used to (this is especially true for elderly people and some BME and migrant communities).

In the **gentrified market**, the focus is on specialty produce, particularly food (organic, hyper-local, artisanal), vintage clothes and independent fashion designers. The idea of a market as a gastronomic destination is emphasised<sup>47</sup>. Essential goods such as affordable fresh fruit, vegetables, meat and fish become secondary or disappear, or for example rather than sell fresh fruit, stalls sell prepared trays with cut fruit at much higher prices. Customers also change. The market becomes a destination for higher-income shoppers looking for a special produce or tourists who are prepared to pay much higher prices. There is a sense of “distinction” of shopping at a market to differentiate oneself from the standardised supermarkets. The market operator runs the gentrified market solely as a commercial venture. It can charge more rent to traders because they sell more expensive produce.

This model however is riskier and demands higher costs on marketing to compete with supermarkets and other markets and boutiques/delicatessen and keep up to date with food fashions. The focus is on the market as a meeting point for middle and upper class consumers who also have many other consumption choices available to them.

A collection of successful national and international examples are now used as models for what other markets should be like: Borough Market in London, La Boqueria in Barcelona, San Miguel in Madrid, Rotterdam, all of them gastronomic and tourist destinations, not catering to those locally on low incomes.

But just because this model is commonly applied doesn't necessarily mean it draws more people to the market. As one manager comments:

'I've been to some of the grottiest markets possible, but they are the busiest... And I have been to markets which have spent millions of pounds on the flooring, and new escalators and you name it, and it's made no difference.'<sup>48</sup>

47. Borough Market, the gentrified food market in London, is often referred to as a model, for example Sheffield's new Moor market is posited as 'The Borough Market of the North' ([www.independent.co.uk/life-style/food-and-drink/features/grub-street-the-borough-market-of-the-north-8965445.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/food-and-drink/features/grub-street-the-borough-market-of-the-north-8965445.html)), while Kirkgate Market in Leeds has been described as a 'Street Food Destination' [leeds.citymagazine.co.uk/cafes-moor-kirkgate-market](http://leeds.citymagazine.co.uk/cafes-moor-kirkgate-market)

48. Watson and Studdert, 2006.

# 4. Regeneration or gentrification?

## d) Gentrification & the displacement of traders & customers

As we have already suggested, behind the positive façade of a regenerated and gentrified market there often lies a story of exclusion of displacement of the most vulnerable traders and customers, who can no longer afford the new higher rents and prices.

Displacement is a complex phenomenon; one that can take different forms and happen in different stages. It is often difficult to identify or to find evidence for.

This research on redevelopment projects in traditional markets and discussions with campaigners, traders and customers has given some indicators as to how identify when a process of displacement is taking place.

Displacement is not simply rooted in regeneration; it can take place over a long period and it can be related to abandonment and decline. As infrastructure deteriorates and footfall dwindles, some traders cannot make enough money to pay rents. This kind of displacement will happen slowly and inconsistently, feeding the sense of decline. Sometimes there are more sudden changes, for example rent rises which mean some traders cannot afford their stall and have to leave. Other times, as we have seen, a regeneration project displaces traders temporarily or permanently.

If the displacement of traders is easier to see, the displacement of customers is more hidden and even less researched. Customers favourite stalls might close; those where they could only find a particular product, often related to their ethnic origin, or where they had a friendship with a trader. The products sold at the market might start to go up in price, making them unaffordable or bought less often. The atmosphere of the market might be transformed to the extent that they no longer recognise that place as welcoming.

When evaluating the redevelopment and regeneration of markets, a crucial question is: who is being potentially displaced by the changes and who are the new traders and customers?

If redevelopment of markets is predominantly aimed at attracting customers with higher spending power, this is going to change the social and economic make-up of a market. This makes it potentially less accessible for the people for whom the market is most valued and necessary, as indicated before. The retail needs of higher-income consumers are well catered for elsewhere – but when markets are reconfigured to appeal to these consumers, the other market users feel pushed out.

Far more research and collaboration needs to be done in this area, but this outlines some more critical and useful ways of understanding how markets are changed at the present moment. The next section explores what traders and customers can do to take a powerful active role in the future of their markets.

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# CAMPAIGNING TO DEFEND TRADITIONAL MARKETS: A SHORT GUIDE

FRIENDS OF LEEDS  
KIRKGATE  
MARKET

**HANDS  
OFF**

*The* **PEOPLE'S  
MARKET**

This guide is primarily aimed at people who are interested in taking an active role in defending their local market. It provides some signs to look out for in order to notice if your market is under threat, examples of campaigns, strategies and tactics. It draws on ten existing or past campaign groups, a full list of which can be found at the end of this section. This guide is part of a larger piece of scholar-activist research around traditional markets in the UK.

For a fuller picture, see our longer report “[Traditional markets under threat: Why it’s happening and what traders and customers can do](#)”.

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# 1. Introduction

## Markets matter, but who do they matter to?

In recent years, threats of large-scale regeneration schemes, putting in danger the character and sometimes even the existence of markets have mobilised thousands of people to propose that another market is possible; the market that they want. Market campaigns have usually come into being when there are signs that a market is going to undergo regeneration. Traders, customers and campaigners do not wish to claim that markets should not change; rather that alterations have to be in the interests of the market community, the existing traders and customers. This is the claim that campaigning groups make concerning the markets which they so passionately care about.

Not all regeneration is unwelcome; sometimes it can benefit traders and customers, especially if they are meaningfully involved in regeneration plans and their ideas and concerns are genuinely taken on board. However, this has not been the experience of many, and it is good to be aware of how changes to your local area and market may emerge.

It is also true that market managers and owners are not always 'the enemy' in these issues; sometimes a clear, accountable and trusting relationship can be formed between traders, customers and management. But inevitably, many of the conflicts that emerge over markets are due to a lack of shared vision, aims and objectives between the market community and those who own and/or manage the market and usually the surrounding retail area.

Of course, markets are frequently part of larger urban regeneration schemes, which vary in scale. Markets are often seen by local government and large business forums (for example Business Improvement Districts) as part of a wider 'retail offer' which have to be brought up to standard of new and diverse shops and amenities. Many traditional markets are owned and managed by local authorities; they are in some sense public services and public spaces, increasingly unusual in modern city centres. There has been shift in the local authority responsibility for markets from Asset Management (along with car parks and similar amenities) to City Centre or Business Development. There is little interest in considering markets as an essential service or an aspect of health and wellbeing. Along with this, the central position of markets means that they occupy land which is valued highly.

# 1. Introduction

There is no such a thing as a 'typical' campaign or campaigns around markets; market campaigns contain within them many issues about public space, heritage, social exclusion, different business models and so on. The campaigns' particular shape and approach is very much formed by what the issue is and who decides to participate. As time goes on, some campaigns over markets pick up other issues and alliances, changing their focus and strategy. While many traditional/municipal markets are in small to medium-sized towns, all the campaigns this report explores are city-based. Six are in London.

In this report we refer to a series of groups and campaigns that we have identified are mobilising around markets:

1. Friends of Peterborough City Market
2. Friends of Bullring Markets (Birmingham)
3. Friends of Leeds Kirkgate Markets (Leeds)
4. Friends of Queen's Market (E.London)
5. Wards Corner Community Coalition (N. London)
6. Shepherd's Bush Market Traders' Association (W.London).
7. Oxford Market Tenants Association (Oxford Covered Market)
8. Westway 23 Campaign (Portobello/Golborne Road Markets, W.London)
9. Tower Hamlets Renters/Save Chrisp Street (Chrisp Street Market, E. London)
10. Friends of Brixton Market (past campaign).

## 2. Signs your market might be being considered for regeneration

Here are some common indicators that market regeneration could be around the corner:

### Abandonment & decline –

A generally 'tatty' look to the market due to lack of investment and maintenance, a fast turnover of traders, and traders leaving because they can't make a profit and/or feel isolated. Market managers may also express concern about the decline of the market and the need for some kind of intervention/change.

### Consultation on the future of the market/surrounding area –

Often when consultations are announced, it is because there are already other plans in progress to regenerate the area. Pay close attention to this.

### Rent or other rate rises –

Often a market manager (usually a local authority) will suddenly raise rents in order to pay for investment, or to encourage stallholders who aren't making a large profit to leave and make way for new, more profitable businesses. This also includes rates like service charges increasing or a sudden/gradual increase in charges for infringements of market byelaws.

### Regeneration nearby –

Either a refurbishment of existing shops, amenities and maybe housing, or a whole new development, often provides a rationale for regenerating the market.



A lot of campaigning is (necessarily) reactive to changes that are proposed or enacted, but forewarned is forearmed. If your market or local community group exists already, keep your eyes peeled and discuss what you might do. Early strategy might be to take the story of the market for yourselves by promoting the market, doing price comparisons with supermarkets, putting on fun events and exhibitions, etc. A big part of this kind of campaigning involves questioning and changing the story of the market – if it's one of 'decline', why is decline happening? Is it naturally changing?

## 3. Campaign checklist

Here are a few starting points for the start of a campaign or interest group around the market. There is more detailed information about some of these approaches in the 'Tactics' section.

### 1) Control –

Find out who owns and manages your local market.

### 2) Decline –

If there is talk of decline: who is promoting this?  
Where does the story of decline come from?  
Why is the decline happening?  
Talking to traders and customers will help.

### 3) Follow the money –

Find out how much has been invested in your local market in the last ten years and compare this to investment in the shopping district in your town by the local authority. If investment isn't going into the market, what is the local authority spending money on?

### 4) Be visible and authoritative –

Use the knowledge and concerns you have to ask questions and share ideas in public. Generate debate and interest by holding a public meeting – local papers. Ask to meet market manager and councillors in order to show your concerns and ask them questions. Make sure you make a good note of the meetings and publicise what got said and done.

### 5) Other campaigns / groups –

Are there other campaigns or groups locally who might share your interests and concerns? For example, housing or public space campaigns, independent traders beyond the market, older people's and minority ethnic groups, food activists? On specific issues, find out if there have been any campaigns to stop supermarkets or retail development in your area. What tactics have they used? Are they still active? Have new supermarkets near the market been opened?

### 6) Consultation –

If your market is being regenerated, or consultation is taking place, who are the consultants involved? Who and how are they consulting?

# 4. How does campaigning work? A brief outline

## In campaigning:

- Aims are what you want to see change
- Strategy is how you envisage that change happening

Tactics are the concrete actions you take to make that change happen.

■ For example, a strategy would be a plan of what you will do to achieve your aims (for example stop a development which would reduce the size and composition of the market) and your tactics would be the tools you use to carry out the strategy (for example getting a petition with over 1000 signatures). It's important to distinguish between strategy and tactics – it's easy to get very excited about having to have a demonstration, get a petition, get media coverage – but a strategy helps you understand why these tactics might be appropriate and think about how they will bring about the achievement of your aims.



## 5. What do campaigns want? (Aims)

Apart from Peterborough and Oxford, these groups have been opposing (often substantial) regeneration plans that affect not only the market but the wider area. In the case of Birmingham, there has been a cycle of regeneration and displacement for the four city-centre markets since the 1960s. A new round of regeneration, the huge 'Birmingham Smithfield' project, is in early planning stages.

### Some campaign aims:

- To ensure the market survives (usually in a similar state to present, with minor improvements or improvements that preserve rather than alter the market)
- To improve accountability and transparency in the way the market is managed
- To improve trader and usually customer representation in regeneration plans
- To keep rents affordable for traders
- To stop trader displacement due to regeneration/ rent rises
- To keep the market as an inclusive place – both in terms of affordability, what is sold and public space
- To stop development alongside/ on the site of the market
- To get 'like-for-like' compensation and new space in regeneration
- To preserve the unique qualities of the market

However, there is also a broader picture. Some campaigns see the changes to the market as a form of 'social cleansing', pointing to a wider concern about a socially just and inclusive city. In Leeds, for example, Kirkgate Market serves a mixed group but many people with a low income; the market is seen as underperforming and under-utilised because it could attract a wealthier clientele that will be attracted to more expensive products.

## 6. How do campaigns organise? (Strategy)

Of the existing campaigns focused solely on markets, some are traders' associations but the majority are campaign groups. Whilst traders are always involved in campaign groups to some degree, they tend not to lead them or be actively involved in campaigning. Most groups meet regularly. Most also use Facebook and Twitter, as well as blogs, to publicise campaigns and organise. However, not all groups rely on the web and being online isn't always necessary; but it does make it harder for other people outside the area to find out about campaigns. Face-to-face meetings are important, especially given that some older people can be less familiar with technology. Friends of Queens Market and Friends of Peterborough City Markets have a formal structure with Chair, Secretary, Treasurer-type roles, but most organise more informally.

Market campaigns focus their objections and demands towards local government and private developers or other private actors, and their vision and organising toward traders, customers and the wider public. Often a campaign starts from a particular group and then evolves to draw in more people, issues and approaches. For example, a 'friends' of customer group could support traders to organise and create a bigger campaign.

Some campaigning groups have existed for five years or more. It can take time to find out where your power lies as a group and get the information and structures you need. At the same time, you can't always predict what is and isn't going to work. Some campaigning is just trial and error. This section aims to stop campaigners making too many errors!

# 7. What actions do campaigns take? (Tactics)



- Press work – placing articles in local/national press, blogs etc
- Leaflets and newsletters – updating people, publicity, calls to action
- Public meetings
- Holding stalls in the market
- Engaging with local authority/ other owner/manager
- Legal challenges / threats of legal challenges
- Alliances with other groups
- Research
- Alternative plans/ management models
- Formal recognition of market as an asset e.g. through listing and/or 'Asset of Community Value' through Localism Act 2011
- Regular presence at policy and/ or decision-making forums, for example local authority meetings – also includes active engagement with decision making process – or challenges of that process outside judicial review
- Demonstrations – in the market or elsewhere
- Rent strike by traders (or threat of one)
- Direct action (eg occupying market or other strategic buildings)

# 7. What actions do campaigns take? (Tactics)

More information about how some tactics have been successfully used:

## Engagement with planning process:

Most campaigns have got involved with the planning process by challenging and objecting to planning applications that according to them threatened the market. The campaign work here has been both sending an objection letter from the campaign, publicising the issue and encouraging citizens and traders to send their own letters or organising petitions against planning applications. Obviously this often goes hand in hand with legal challenges (see below). Recent legislation has also opened up space for more 'bottom-up' planning initiatives. There is more on this in the 'Alternative Plans' section.

**Read More:** You can find out more about Neighbourhood Planning at [mycommunity.org.uk/programme/neighbourhood-planning](https://mycommunity.org.uk/programme/neighbourhood-planning)

## Engagement with local authority more generally

Campaigners frequently attend public council meetings in order to understand what is going on and if possible, speak up on behalf of the market. Many council meetings are held in public, although members of the public do not frequently attend them. In England, 'community deputations' allow community groups to address all local councillors concerning a specific issue for a short time (usually less than five minutes). The local authority then has to formally respond to the demands or matters/questions raised. It can take time to find out who is the best person to work with or approach and what questions to ask. Support and advice from other campaigners and sympathetic local authority figures can be useful here.

"There should be far more people doing this; there is something wrong with the system. The simple fact is that if people are not here, then the inspector is not going to tackle a subject fully. So it's not democratic, it's a random process of scrutiny of the plans". (Friends of Queen's Market member).

# 7. What actions do campaigns take? (Tactics)

## More information about how some tactics have been successfully used:

Friends of Leeds Kirkgate Market have attended council meetings for many years, to gather as much information as possible about the council's plans for the market and issues affecting the market. Here are some approaches they have used:

- Circulating questions for councillors to ask at meetings
- Triggering a scrutiny enquiry (can be done by making a complaint, by community deputation, getting support of local councillor in relevant committee)
- Putting the campaign group forward as a witness in any ongoing enquiry
- 'Calling in' decisions that they think have not been made based on correct evidence
- Challenging accuracy of minutes – getting their information included in reports and similar.
- Using meetings as focus of demonstrations/stunts/handing in petitions
- Cultivate contacts with local press – journalists do not often have enough staff to cover all council meetings but if they know a popular issue is going to be debated and you are there to give an interview after they are more likely to come.

Friends of Queen's Market (begun in 2006) have successfully contested one development plan for the market and surrounding area. Part of their strategy has been to attend council meetings to really scrutinize what the councilors and officers think, and understand better who they can work with, as well as increase accountability. This works. Both campaigns have also used information gained from publicly held council meetings to turn into press stories and blogs to keep people informed and interested in the campaign.

# 7. What actions do campaigns take? (Tactics)

## Formal & legal approaches

Most campaigns have engaged in some sort of legal challenge. However, it is worth pointing out that many useful actions can be taken without undertaking a potentially expensive and complicated legal action. It is possible for campaigns in the public interest to get legal aid – this is worth trying, though it can be difficult. There is also no legal obligation to consult around changes to markets, so legal approaches can be limited by this. This section is not an exhaustive list and should not be used as a substitute for legal advice.

### 1) Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) or arbitration –

This is a process for the resolution of disputes outside the court system. It is usually related to employment. Oxford Covered Market traders used arbitration to successfully reduce a proposed rent rise in 2014.

### 2) Pre-Judicial review action –

A process whereby a court can review any decision taken by a public administration (including, for example, something as small as rent increases). Judicial review is a challenge to a decision that has been made by a public body. Birmingham, Ward's Corner, Queen's and Shepherd's Bush have all fought wholly or partly-successful legal challenges to development. However, campaigns have discovered that engaging in the process of beginning a judicial review, even if you don't complete it, can be useful. It also only starts to cost money when you actually bring a legal case. The beginning of a judicial review process requires a Pre-action letter. You don't necessarily need legal support to do this.

### 3) Full judicial review –

A full judicial review happens when you have consulted a barrister who considers you have a legitimate case (this costs money). It is a judge who makes the decision as to whether you can actually bring a judicial review case.

### 4) Objections to Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) –

In some regeneration projects, the owner will attempt to buy property so it can be redeveloped. This is known as a CPO. There have been successful objections to CPOs on a number of grounds (for example in Shepherd's Bush Market).

### 5) Challenging a decision using the Public Sector Equality Duty –

All public bodies have a duty to evaluate the possible impact of changes they make under the Equality Act. With markets, this would mainly relate to impacts on elderly, people of BME background, age and those with disabilities. This could be the basis of a judicial review process. In the cases of Wards Corner Community Coalition and Queen's Market, both campaigns successfully used the local authority and developer's failure to consider negative impact on ethnic minorities as an important reason to challenge the decision to demolish their markets.

### 6) Planning Inquiry –

This is potentially a 'last-ditch' action, usually on a listed building. This is at the point where a planning application has been granted, and the campaigners want to 'call in' the decision. It is an appeal to Central Government via the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

## More Information

On Judicial Review:

[www.justice.gov.uk/courts/procedure-rules/civil/protocol/prot\\_jrv](http://www.justice.gov.uk/courts/procedure-rules/civil/protocol/prot_jrv)

Letter as a pre-judicial review action: [wardscorner.wikispaces.com/file/view/Letter%20before%20claim%202012.PDF/381685600/Letter%20before%20claim%202012.PDF](http://wardscorner.wikispaces.com/file/view/Letter%20before%20claim%202012.PDF/381685600/Letter%20before%20claim%202012.PDF)

Letter objecting to redevelopment in reference to Public Sector Equality Duty [kirkgatemarket.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/folkm-comments-to-14-04516-la-kirkgate-market.pdf](http://kirkgatemarket.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/folkm-comments-to-14-04516-la-kirkgate-market.pdf)

# 7. What actions do campaigns take? (Tactics)

## Recognition of market as 'asset of community value' or listing

Having recognition as an asset or listed building is a tactic several campaigns have used. Friends of Brixton Market, Friends of Queen's Market and Wards Corner Community Coalition have also successfully either gained English Heritage Listed Building status or have successfully registered their markets as Assets of Community Value.

Under the Localism Act 2011, groups can apply for buildings or spaces to be registered as an Asset of Community Value by the local authority. Whilst this doesn't give them watertight legal protection, it does mean that if the site is up for sale, the community has six months to buy the asset under a scheme known as Community Right to Bid. In practice, this may not be feasible, especially for larger amenities such as markets.

On top of this, getting a market registered as an asset of community value can be useful in stalling the pace of a development and opening up space for alternative plans to be developed and other strategies pursued. The process is begun by simply filling in a nomination form, which should be available on the local authority website. However, it can take a long time; for Friends of Queen's Market, the process took nearly two years.

Friends of Brixton Market (FoBM) came together in 2008 to oppose Lambeth Council's plans for the Granville Arcade, part of the network of small markets in the area. This market is located in one of London's most rapidly gentrifying neighbourhoods. Brixton Market was traditionally the meeting point of the Caribbean community and also had many empty shops. FoBM campaigned to avoid the demolition of the arcades by (successfully) getting the three arcades Grade II listing as a site of cultural (rather than architectural) heritage in 2010. This was due to their cultural significance to the local African-Caribbean community.

The campaign collaborated with the council and the landlord to promote the market with a scheme to offer free or low rent for artists. The campaign also worked with traders to create an association. Many argue now that the Brixton arcades have been gentrified although some old businesses still persist. FoBM and some members suggest that they might have played an unintended part in this process of gentrification. Other parts of the market and shops around the area are under new threats of demolition and regeneration. (See later discussion Save Brixton Arches).

# 7. What actions do campaigns take? (Tactics)

## Publicity & media work

For campaigning to work, it usually needs publicity, often with the help of the media. Campaign blogs are a good way of keeping people updated on what's going on but also as a record of the history of the campaign – a tool other groups can use. Facebook and Twitter are used to mobilise people for demonstrations, signatures and events. Platforms like [change.org](http://change.org) and [38 Degrees](http://38Degrees.org) can be used to quickly make petitions. Even if petitions have no impact on the way decisions are made, they bring the issue quickly to lots of people's awareness. The mainstream media can amplify this; an article in the Metro newspaper about a planned development near Portobello and Golborne Markets got over 10,000 signatures very quickly.

Friends of Leeds Kirkgate Market have used a basic Wordpress blog as a way of documenting their campaign, as well as reposting articles from other groups or researchers.  
[kirkgatemarket.wordpress.com](http://kirkgatemarket.wordpress.com)

## Alliances with other groups

It makes sense that campaigns over markets form formal or informal alliances with other groups; markets usually encompass issues of access to low-cost food (and related health impacts), poverty, minority ethnic groups and cultural diversity, public space and cultural/architectural history.

Our Tottenham<sup>1</sup> is an umbrella alliance of campaigns and interest groups in Tottenham, North London. It focuses on challenges defending and creating spaces which are of benefit to the different communities of the area, and challenging profit-led planning and development. Ward's Corner Community Coalition is one of the 50+ member groups. This kind of approach works in a densely populated and highly growth-driven city like London, where different local groups have many common issues.

# 7. What actions do campaigns take? (Tactics)

## Gathering information

Campaign groups often carry out their own 'bottom-up' research in order to better understand the situation and achieve their aims. This usually involves lots of internet-based research, looking through publicly-available documents (or if not, using Freedom of Information Act requests - a useful site for this is What Do They Know?). Research can also take the form of surveys or interviews. Research can be used in all sorts of ways – for creating media stories, building the campaign, a way of engaging with people who are or could be part of the campaign's network or a lobbying tool for local government or other actors. Research can feed into creating 'alternative' plans and challenging the selective questioning of many official consultations. Research doesn't have to be done by academics or trained researchers to be valid and useful – it's more important to have an inquiring mind, motivation to persist, understanding of an area, contacts with different people and an ability to talk to people. Some groups do find they need specific support, for example with planning knowledge or statistics, and this is where finding allies or people who can carry out specific tasks is useful.

Two recent research initiatives show ways in which market (and other) campaigns can use research as a tool to do multiple things. Tower Hamlets renters are a private and social tenants' campaign group who have become involved in a campaign to save Chrisp Street Market, a small street market which is part of a large social housing complex which is going to be regenerated, leading to the loss of social tenancies and some shops. As part of the campaign, they have started their own People's Consultation on the future of Chrisp Street (including the market) before planning permission is submitted. The consultation is based around community organising techniques and so is an opportunity to bring people into the campaign or support them to organize around other issues. As part of this they have also talked to traders and customers. For TH Renters this is an ongoing process of gathering information, not a one-off.

### Questions include:

- What do you/don't you like about living here?
- What do you think about the proposed redevelopment?
- How have you been consulted?
- Would you like to have more of a say?

Save Brixton Arches is a campaign to stop the regeneration and rent rise of a group of shops in railway arches. Although this is not a market as such, there are many similarities with market businesses and campaigns. They joined up with Brixton Pound (a group which runs a local currency) to produce an 'I'pact Report'. Interviews were carried out by six people of traders and customers. The report then made recommendations to the landlord (Network Rail) the council and the local community including traders<sup>2</sup>.

# 7. What actions do campaigns take? (Tactics)

## Alternative consultations & plans

A different strategy to using legal challenges to “resist” or “oppose” developments that threaten markets is to create alternative plans. An alternative consultation can be a small exercise, for example an alternative questionnaire or a one-off stall.

An ‘alternative plan’ could be a large piece of work which might need some ‘expert’ input but it doesn’t have to be. There are ways of talking about and presenting alternatives which would also work as a ‘challenge’ focal point for activity, involvement and publicity.

Wards Corner Community Coalition have put a lot of energy into the creation of alternative plans for the development of the market and the area threatened by the private developer. To do that they have run community workshops and engaged with professional architects. In April 2014 Haringey Council gave planning permission to an alternative development plan presented by WCCC for keeping and expanding the indoor market and creating affordable facilities for arts and social enterprise businesses. To do that WCCC has created with other residents from Tottenham the West Green Road/ Seven Sisters Development Trust and at the time of writing are forming their steering committee<sup>3</sup>.

Friends of Queen’s Market also engaged with the idea of alternative plans against the demolition of their market and presented a “People’s Market” alternative in 2008, which showed that with little and simple investment in basic facilities (toilets, signage, structural changes to improve lightening and access to disabled customers) the market would be viable<sup>4</sup>. Opposing a “development” is often difficult and discourses of abandonment and decline of markets make it even more difficult to explain to the general public why a campaign might “oppose” an investment which is framed as an “improvement”. Campaigns that oppose or resist developments are often faced with questions about their own alternatives or plans. Some market campaigns have taken the challenge to create alternatives.

**Further Reading:** London for All! Is a recent report which presents several case studies of alternative plans by groups of small local businesses in London. [justspacelondon.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/workspacehandbook\\_lowres.pdf](http://justspacelondon.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/workspacehandbook_lowres.pdf)

3. For more information see [n15developmenttrust.wordpress.com](http://n15developmenttrust.wordpress.com)  
4. [www.friendsofqueensmarket.org.uk/2078/2427.html](http://www.friendsofqueensmarket.org.uk/2078/2427.html)

# 7. What actions do campaigns take? (Tactics)

## Creating an advocacy framework

In some circumstances, a campaign group can have a positive relationship with the market managers and owners, being a 'critical friend' and providing accountability and advocacy.

Friends of Peterborough Market formed in 2009 due to customer and trader concerns about redevelopment and decline. The group successfully challenged the management (the local authority) over how little investment and upkeep the market had. In 2013 FOPCM helped set up Peterborough City Market Traders Association, an independent group of traders.

Together with the market manager, they set up a monthly Market Forum to bring all people with an interest in the market together. Through this forum, traders and the council in particular can work together and the council and private companies (for example the cleaning contractor) can be held to account.

The group has been successful partly due to campaigners and traders having a good relationship with a market manager, and the market manager being supported to challenge the council. This is closely related to having a clear structure of accountability and genuine consultation and discussion through:

- a) The Trader Association
- b) The Friends
- c) The Market Forum.

# 8. Key actors in markets

## Key private sector actors...

### Quarterbridge Plc

Founded in 2000, Quarterbridge is the leading retail market development company, offering consultancy, ownership and management support, redevelopment implementation, promotion. 13 out of the 44 recent market regeneration projects we have identified have involved Quarterbridge as consultants at least; they also have taken on overseeing a few redevelopment schemes to completion, for example in Birmingham.

The role of Quarterbridge as management consultants is to advise on cost and feasibility of different regeneration approaches to markets. They present market owners/managers with a range of finance-based options for management and investment in the market. Quarterbridge's analysis of the Market industry is in line with the "decline discourse" that we have seen above and they have recommended the downsizing or 'retail consolidation' of markets in various cases. Whatever Quarterbridge's approach to a particular market, it is clear they have considerable power in shaping discourse and policy concerning traditional markets. Quarterbridge's influence in the area of municipal traditional markets also demonstrates the difficulty and limitation many local authorities have in understanding or planning their markets.

### Geraud UK

Geraud is a French-originated market management company which started in the UK in 1997. It is made up of four different companies. It is the largest operator of local authority markets in Europe, running markets in Brixton, Glasgow, Stratford-on-Avon, Hulme, as well as a comprehensive Public Private Sector Management Partnership overseeing all Liverpool's markets. They also administer seasonal and speciality markets. Its CEO is Malcolm Veigas, who used to run Bolton Markets. Geraud UK sponsors NABMA (National Association of British Market Authorities, see below).

Other key private sector players in markets are: Town and Country Markets (leading private sector retail market operator in the UK, running 35 markets), Bray Associates (leading outdoor market operator, running 17 markets) and The Retail Group (consultants for Manchester, Spitalfields)

# 8. Key actors in markets

## Other key actors...

There is no coordinated national policy or oversight of markets. There is a Minister for High Streets, which incorporates markets. There is also an All Party Parliamentary Committee: A group of MPs in Parliament who discusses matters on Markets and makes recommendations to the Minister and other actors.

### Local Authorities

65% of markets are owned and run by Local Authorities. The market manager will therefore be a council officer. In the governance structure of the local authority the market will be located within a department (i.e. economic development, asset management) which will be headed by an elected councillor.

### NABMA: National Association of British Market Authorities

Member based organisation of market operators (local authorities and a few private companies). Provides assistance and training for market managers. Also carries out research.

### NMTF: National Market Traders Federation

A member-based organisation for the promotion and support of market traders in the UK. There are around 100 branches, many of whom are engaged in ongoing negotiations over issues around rents, amendments to markets and in some cases regeneration. NMTF also provides insurance for traders and lobbies central government, carries research and frequent market visits.

Around 55% of traders are members of NMTF.

## 9. Conclusion: market campaigns & wider struggles

Some campaigns have remained relatively local and single-issue focused, particularly those trader-led campaigns that we have looked at (Shepherds Bush and Birmingham). By contrast, citizen-led campaigns, particularly in London have usually linked up to other groups and struggles and connecting their market to wider problems of housing affordability and privatisation, gentrification, displacement and lack of community consultation.



For example, Friends of Queens Market have over twelve years connected up with many groups across the borough and the city. There are many examples of how they have done this. For example in 2011 they joined JustSpace, a group of groups working on planning and community issues, to respond to the Mayor's London plan which they argued would create more inequality and social polarisation in London. FoQM submitted an amendment to the Mayor's plan asking for markets to be reconsidered as important community assets and asked for a change in the existing policy.

More recently, FoQM have been campaigning against a proposed private housing development very near Queens Market and have launched a petition against this development and asking for 100% social housing in the site. In their words: "Queens Market is neighbours with the West Ham ground. Don't let developers price local people out of Green Street".

Of the ten campaigns considered here, three are directly engaged with organising around affordable/social housing. FOQM have made explicit reference to relationship between social housing and low-cost good food – social housing tenants and people receiving welfare benefits need the traders and the traders need them.

In the case of Chrisp St, the group engaged are mainly a grassroots activist group for (social and private) housing tenants. In many markets, public transport links and affordable parking are both critical in bringing in loyal customers; so transport is also often an aspect of market campaigning.

These campaigns show that local amenities, be they retail, housing or leisure, have to be compatible with the needs of the people who live there. Markets matter most to those who use them now – we hope this report is useful for you to you get your voice heard and win!

## 10. Further information

### Current market campaigns:

Friends of Peterborough City Market  
Email: [friendsofpeterboroughcitymarket@live.co.uk](mailto:friendsofpeterboroughcitymarket@live.co.uk)

Friends of Bullring Markets (Birmingham)  
Email: [bullringopenmarket@hotmail.com](mailto:bullringopenmarket@hotmail.com)

Friends of Leeds Kirkgate Markets (Leeds)  
[kirkgatemarket.wordpress.com](http://kirkgatemarket.wordpress.com)  
Email: [friendsofkirkgatemarket@googlemail.com](mailto:friendsofkirkgatemarket@googlemail.com)

Friends of Queen's Market (E.London)  
[www.friendsofqueensmarket.org.uk](http://www.friendsofqueensmarket.org.uk)  
Facebook: Friends of Queen's Market  
Email: [friendsofqueensmaket@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:friendsofqueensmaket@yahoo.co.uk)

Wards Corner Community Coalition (N. London)  
[wardscorner.wikispaces.com](http://wardscorner.wikispaces.com)  
[n15developmenttrust.wordpress.com](http://n15developmenttrust.wordpress.com)  
Facebook: Wards Corner Community Coalition  
Email: [wardscornercommunity@riseup.net](mailto:wardscornercommunity@riseup.net)

Shepherd's Bush Market Traders'  
Association (W.London)  
Facebook: Shepherd's Bush Market  
Tenants' Association - SBMTA  
Email: [jameshorada@mac.com](mailto:jameshorada@mac.com)

### We are also aware of the following three markets that have some independent campaigning around them:

Oxford Covered Market  
(Oxford Market Tenants' Association)  
[oxford-coveredmarket.co.uk](http://oxford-coveredmarket.co.uk)

Portobello/ Golborne Road Markets, W. London  
(Westway23 campaign and others)  
[www.westway23.org](http://www.westway23.org)

Chrip St Market, E.London  
(Tower Hamlets Renters/Save Chrip St)  
[towerhamletsrenters.wordpress.com](http://towerhamletsrenters.wordpress.com)

We have also looked at a past campaign,  
Friends of Brixton Market (SW London).

# 11. Useful further reading

## Mission for Markets (2015)

Industry report into the state of traditional markets

[www.mission4markets.uk/get-involved/publication.html](http://www.mission4markets.uk/get-involved/publication.html)

## Markets 21 (2009)

2009 report into markets in the UK

[www.nabma.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/4dd6419ec9584\\_markets-21-report.pdf](http://www.nabma.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/4dd6419ec9584_markets-21-report.pdf)

## Just Space – London For All! (2015)

Case studies on how different groups can have control over their diverse independent workspaces (including 2 markets)

[justspacelondon.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/workspacehandbook\\_lowres.pdf](http://justspacelondon.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/workspacehandbook_lowres.pdf)

## Save Brixton Arches (2015)

Great example of a small piece of research done by activists as part of the Save Brixton Arches Campaign on The Impact of proposed shop evictions in Brixton's Station and Atlantic Road arches

[savebrixtonarches.com/index.html](http://savebrixtonarches.com/index.html)

## Staying Put: An Anti-gentrification Handbook for Council Estates in London (2014)

Not about markets but a really useful brief guide to understanding gentrification in a housing context, and tips for successfully contesting regeneration plans at a local level:

[southwarknotes.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/staying-put-web-version-low.pdf](http://southwarknotes.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/staying-put-web-version-low.pdf)

## Heygate Was Home

An outstanding timeline of the regeneration/destruction of a large council estate in London. Very good insight into complexities of the planning process

[heygatewashome.org](http://heygatewashome.org)

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