

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, CHURCH STREET. LEDBURY
HEREFORDSHIRE HR8 1DH . Tel. (01531) 632306 Fax (01531) 631193
e-mail: admin@ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk website: www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk

4 January 2022

To: All Councillors
Non-Councillors: Caroline Green (Chair)

Dear Member

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **Markets Working Party on Monday, 9 January 2023 at 10.00 am at Ledbury Town Council Offices**, for the purpose of transacting the business below.

Yours faithfully

Angela Price
Town Clerk

FILMING AND RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Members of the public are permitted to film or record meetings to which they are permitted access, in a non-disruptive manner. Whilst those attending meetings are deemed to have consented to the filming, recording or broadcasting of meetings, those exercising the rights to film, record and broadcast must respect the rights of other people attending under the Data Protection Act 1998.

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interests**

To receive any declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations.
(Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Ledbury Town Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011)

(Note: Members seeking advice on this item are asked to contact the Monitoring officer at least 72 hours prior to the meeting)

3. **To elect non-council members to the Markets Working Party**

6. **To approve and sign the minutes of a meeting of the Markets Working Party held on 8 August 2022** (Pages 41-42)

7. **Phase 1 of Charter Markets Strategy Working Document** (Pages 43-47)

8. **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the Markets Working Party is scheduled for Monday, 13 February 2022 at 10.00 am.

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE MARKETS WORKING PARTY MEETING
HELD ON 8 AUGUST 2022**

PRESENT: Councillors Howells, Hughes and Morris
Non-Councillors – Caroline Green (Chair)

ALSO PRESENT: Angela Price – Town Clerk
Emma Jackson – Community Development Officer

MWP38. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Chowns.

MWP39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

MWP40. TO ELECT NON-COUNCIL MEMBERS

None

**MWP41. TO APPROVE AND SIGN, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES
OF THE MARKETS WORKING PARTY MEETING HELD ON 27 JUNE
2022**

RESOLVED:

**That the minutes of the Markets Working Party meeting held on 27
June 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.**

**MWP42. UPATE OF PROGRESS OF CHARTER MARKETS WORKING
DOCUMENT**

Members were provided with a written update on the progress of the Charter Market following a meeting between Councillor Morris, the Clerk and the Community Development Officer.

During the meeting it had been agreed that the Market Strategy should not be rushed, and that time should be taken to ensure the right outcome was reached in respect of the Strategy.

The Community Development Officer had, in her report, suggested a three phase approach to the Strategy as follows:

1. Analysing what's changing
2. Carrying out an audit
3. Reflecting on what is known.

Following considerable discussion it was agreed that this would be a sensible approach to the Strategy, and it was agreed that the Community Development Officer should be afforded ample time to produce a report on phase 1. To this end it was agreed that a realistic timescale for the completion of phase 1 would be 3 months, which would provide the Community Development Officer until November 2022 to draft this phase.

Following the completion of Phase 1, the Working Party will review the work completed to date and agree on a timescale for the completion of Phase 2 and 3 accordingly.

Discussion was held about how traders could be encouraged to attend the Tuesday and Saturday markets, with ideas such as offering reduced prices, not insisting that they attend every week, working with the Farmers Market, and officers to visit other markets.

RESOLVED

That the Community Development Officer be instructed to develop Phase 1 of Market Strategy and that this be submitted to a meeting of the Markets Working Party in November 2022.

MWP43. REPORT ON WEEKDAY MARKETS

The Community Development Officer provided an update on the Weekday Markets.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and noted.

MWP44. REPORT ON CRAFT MARKETS

The Community Development Officer provided an update on the Craft Markets.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and noted.

MWP45. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

To note that the date of the next meeting of the Markets Working Party was scheduled for Monday, 5 September 2022.

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL CHARTER MARKET STRATEGY

PHASE 1 - ANALYSIS OF CHANGING SCENARIO

A. National Context:

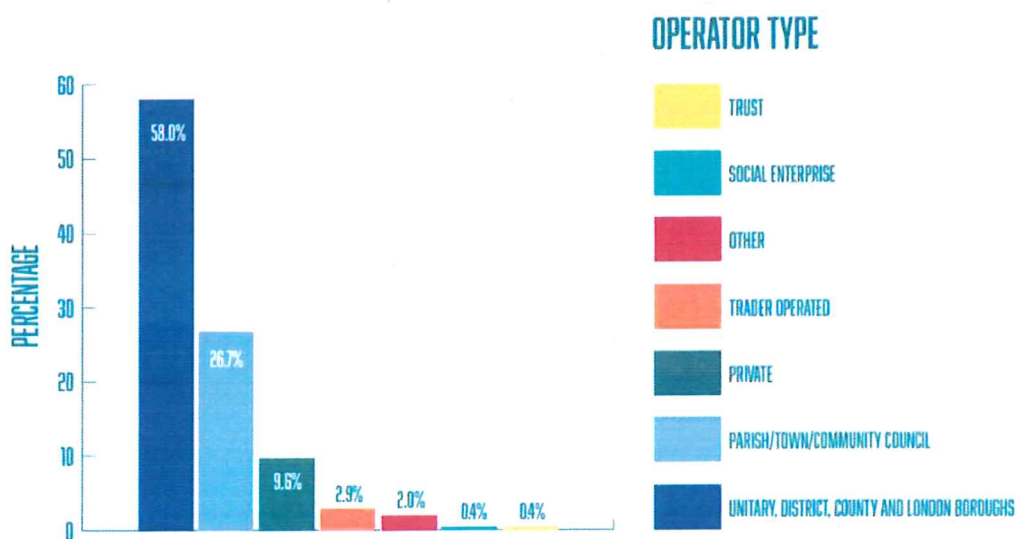
In December 2022, The National Association of British Markets (NABMA) published the findings of its latest, comprehensive National Survey of UK markets. It revealed that the industry faces major challenges in the years ahead. Whilst the overall number of markets (including outdoor street and indoor markets) has remained approximately the same (since these surveys began 15 years ago), the survey reveals some worrying trends:

- **Stall occupancy** has fallen from an average of 77% in 2018 to 72% in 2022
- Estimated **number of market traders** has declined:

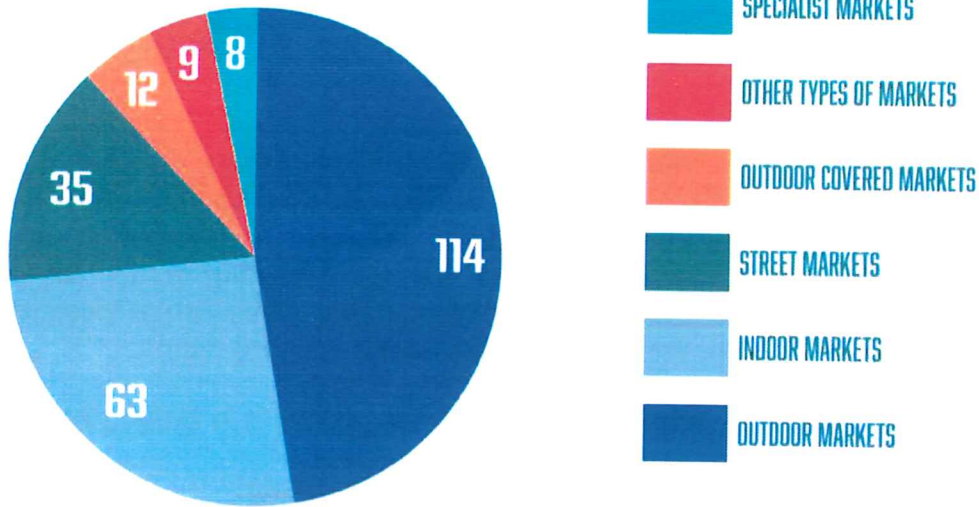
2009	2018	2022
46,000	32,000	17,000

- Only 8% of **traders are aged under 40**, which would suggest that markets may have a problem in terms of occupancy in the coming years, as older & more experienced traders retire from the trade.
- Of great concern to many operators is **the financial sustainability** of their operations with only 40% of markets reporting a financial surplus, a significant decline since 2018. More markets are operating at a loss : 27% of markets reported a deficit – a 6% increase on figures from 2017/2018.

The following data give an insight into the sector generally:



241 MARKETS IN TOTAL



The current **average single stall market charges** are as follows (*current Ledbury Town Council charges are included for comparison*)

	Current	2017/2018	Ledbury
Outdoor Market	£22.97	£19.36	
Street Market	£32.62	£26.00	£18.50
Outdoor Covered Market	£15.95	£18.17	£22.00
Specialist Market	£33.60	Not Available	
Indoor Market	£125	£93.14	

N.B. The research identified many ways of assessing charges meaning that comparison was very difficult.

Only 13% of the Markets who took part in the survey record footfall. The 32 Markets that record footfall provide a combined total of 88.4 million annual visits. Ledbury, like many of the participating markets struggles to provide quantitative footfall data, relying on anecdotal evidence. Technological improvements, including those advocated as part of the Herefordshire BID project, might support better data provision in the future. The full details of the survey findings can be found here: [NABMA-Survey-2022.pdf](#) and Members are recommended to read the details further.

B. Local Context – 3 examples

The CDO undertook site visits to two markets - Abergavenny and Hellens – and had a telephone conversation with Leominster market.

Hellens Farmers' Market

Hellens, situated on the outskirts of Ledbury and near March Marcle, has proved an increasingly popular destination for those living locally seeking a discernible farmer's market experience. On the day, the CDO attended, visitors had travelled from far and wide, including Newent, Ledbury, Ross on Wye, the Cotswolds and south Shropshire. It offers a different experience to that of a market town street market and comparisons are therefore problematic. The high footfall (there was a queue for Peter Cooks' bread of 30 plus at 09:30am) reflects its growing popularity. This market is similar to Ledbury Country Market, held in the Burgage Hall on a Friday morning.

Abergavenny Market

The CDO visited this market on a Tuesday in November, on the recommendation of one of Ledbury's market-based traders. The market is split over 3 sites: 1 indoor market hall, and 2 outdoor areas. Outdoor trader attendance on the day was poor – bad weather had been predicted. It was notable that Tuesday was still market day in Abergavenny with many visitors coming in from outlying villages to do their shopping and banking. However indoor traders noted that this traditional approach to a market day is also on the decline and reflected in the changing nature of the use of town centre.

Leominster Market

Leominster Market, according to the contractor who is employed by Leominster Town Council, has proved very stable since its return to trading post pandemic. The 12 pitches situated in the Corn Square are regularly at capacity on its Friday weekday trading. The number of food-based producers has increased over the seven years that the contractor has been involved. This would mirror the Hellens experience. The contractor commented that it was the "social hub of Leominster" once a week, and an important element of the community work undertaken by Leominster Town Council. He also ran the community hall and was in attendance at the market every week. However, the future of Leominster Market is uncertain as the Corn Square site is about to undergo refurbishment works, which will see the market transfer to Broad Street. This offers the potential for increased pitches, but the change may result in reduced footfall, and less of a sense of local community gathering.

C. Ledbury

Anecdotal evidence may give the impression that Ledbury Charter Market is struggling. The financial analysis suggests otherwise:

	Dec 2021	2021/2022	Year To Date
INCOME	£2246	£5150	£7084

There may be a number of contributing factors to this. Efficient invoicing, the success of two events (including the Christmas Lights Switch-on Market and late-night shopping), and new traders have all helped contribute. This is also a year that has not been affected by COVID restrictions, and members are asked to note that accurate comparative data with 2019 is not easily available. Regardless of this, Ledbury Charter Market is doing well financially and is already up by 40% on its targeted budget income. This is contrary to national trends.

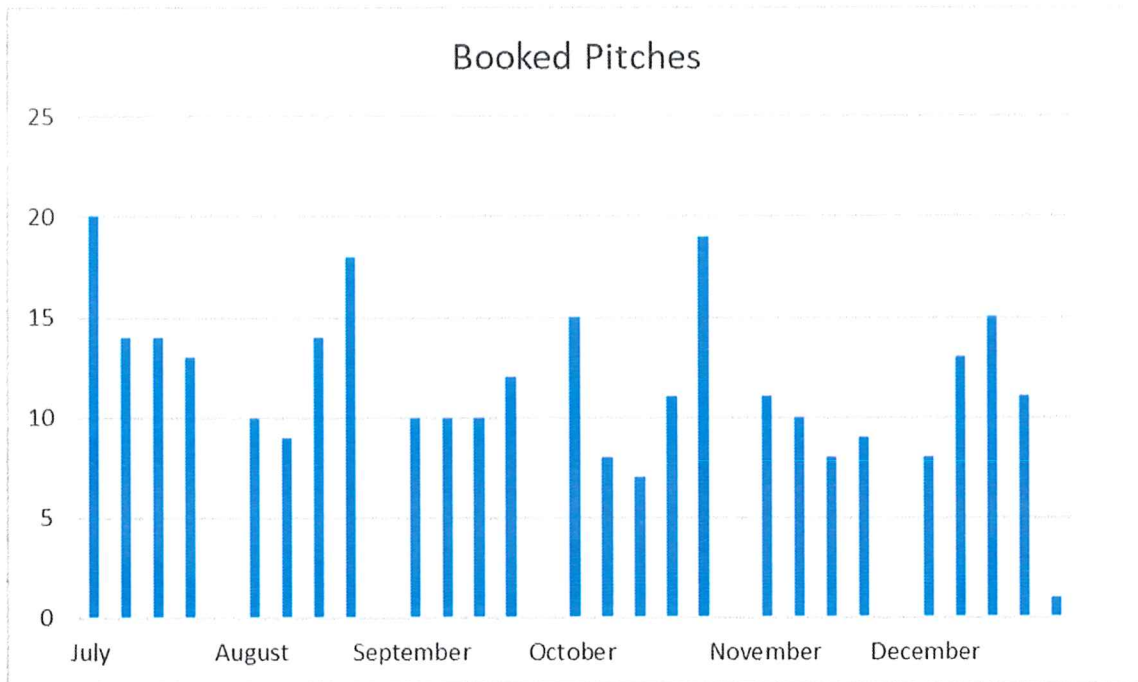
However, there is still room for improvement. Ledbury is a fair-weather market. Its exposed location noticeably impacts on both trader attendance and footfall. This is particularly noticeable on a Tuesday market, where capacity has rarely been above 20% this year. The Tuesday Market has however proved a useful vehicle for promoting information to residents, including attendance from Herefordshire Council and West Midlands Police Commissioning Service.

Ledbury's Saturday Charter Market reflects a different trend, that of the growing popularity of the artisan trader. The concept of a 'craft market' has evolved over one Saturday each month, and targeted sales to traders has helped. There are further opportunities to develop this on Saturdays.

There has been fewer social media around the Charter Market this year, due to a number of issues. Those days when social posts have been either promoted individually or officially have been positive and served as useful reminder. A targeted marketing campaign with features in free of charge local publications, and a dedicated regularly updated area of the website might increase footfall, but members are invited to consider the return on investment as well as ongoing maintenance costs.

Since the summer, the market has been unmanned on a regular basis. This has impacted on some day-to-day operational occurrences, such as pitch allocation or busking interference. The CDO and the Clerk regularly attend the market as customers, as do some Councillors. Traders generally welcome this interaction and find it helpful. Operationally, the CDO and Administrator manage the day-to-day bookings. This working arrangement, with the CDO securing new traders and the Administrator developing relationships with regular traders is generally working. The booking system has been improved and there are further opportunities for more stream-lined processes, including ensuring all regulatory requirements are fulfilled.

The data graph below demonstrates the overall trend of booked pitches since July 2022:



Members should note that there are frequently last-minute cancellations, and a review of the Terms and Conditions as part of Strategy Phase 2: The Audit is recommended.

