

TOOLKIT

for

Parish & Town Councils



NABMA
the voice of markets

SLCC
Society of Local Council Clerks
Professional Supportive Innovative

Forward

It is clear that we are seeing more Parish and Town Councils take on responsibilities for markets and this is evidenced by the growth in NABMA membership in this particular section. From a personal background I have tremendous admiration for the work that is done by Parish and Town Councils and I have enjoyed a close working relationship with SLCC over many years. In this context, I am particularly pleased that NABMA and SLCC have developed a partnership to promote markets. Each year NABMA organises a Parish and Town Council Local Market Seminar where we showcase a local market and provide updates on market issues and advice on operational matters. As an indication of the growing status of NABMA's partnership with SLCC, we agreed to produce this toolkit which provides guidance and information on some of the important issues that need to be addressed when taking on responsibility for a market. Of course, the toolkit cannot provide all the answers but this is where the benefits of NABMA membership can make a real difference. I look forward continuing our productive partnership arrangement with SLCC for the mutual benefit of both organisations.



Graham Wilson OBE
Chief Executive NABMA

SLCC is delighted to continue to work in partnership with NABMA recognising the growing interest and involvement that many local councils now have in promoting economic and tourism growth. There are many wonderful examples where parish and town councils are winning awards and making a real difference in promoting events and activities in town centres, that include the management of local markets.



I am greatly encouraged to see local councils winning awards for indoor and outdoor markets, speciality markets and local events in the NABMA KPR Midlink Great British Market Awards each year. This is recognition of the vision and the professionalism evident within the SLCC membership, working in wider partnerships with elected councillors and local groups and organisations.

NABMA offers us not only a long standing friendship but also professional events, training and many publications that share good practice and information.

Starting out in markets as a new operator is not easy and this toolkit is an excellent reference point to look towards legislation, policies and good practice.

SLCC is pleased to continue to work with NABMA and appreciates its ongoing support to the local council sector and the professional officers employed within it.

Rob Smith
Chief Executive SLCC

1. Introduction

Markets have been around for over a thousand years and they contribute in many ways to local communities. Markets can come in all shapes and sizes but what is important is that your market meets the aspirations and needs of your local community. A market with a strong community focus can provide a number of significant benefits and these include:

Economic Benefits

- Provide a platform for small businesses to test trade in a low cost, low risk, supportive environment;
- Help people gain work experience and new skills;
- Keep money local

Environmental Benefits

- Offer a localised space in which to shop on foot or by bike;
- Increase opportunities for alternative food networks;
- Decrease waste with less packaging.

Educational Benefits

- Engage young people with food producers to supply more information about food origins and locations;
- Give young people opportunity to learn new skills or be inspired by artisans and crafters;
- Offer young people showcasing opportunities, whether this is for skills, school projects, or as a space to perform.

Health Benefits

- Increase access to fresh, local, affordable food often in quantities more suited to the individual;
- Raise awareness of the benefits of a healthy diet and lifestyle;
- Foster a sense of well being and increase self-esteem.

Social Benefits

- Offer a sociable place to shop;
- Engage local people in community activities;
- Raise awareness of, and meet local needs.

While many markets operate successfully on a weekly or periodic basis, there is increasing popularity in specialist markets which might include the following:

- Art Market
- Car Boot Sale
- Craft Market
- Farmers' Market
- Vintage Market
- Youth Market

What might work in one location may not be successful in another so it is important that your market offer is kept under review and you consult with relevant stakeholders on a regular basis.

2. Market Powers

The right to operate a market can arise in different ways. Parish and Town Councils can operate markets under one of the following:

- Royal Charter or Letters Patent;
- Prescription or immemorial user and lost modern grant;
- Local legislation;
- Part III of the Food Act 1984.

Many Charters or Letters Patent go back hundreds of years and sometimes there is difficulty in identifying their precise terms. The local Archive service or a local historian may be able to help. If you are relying on a Charter or Letters Patent, it is important that you have an understanding of the terms and how they relate to the market.

Sometimes there is no official record of when the market was set up. However, where there is evidence, through local historical documents or other reference material, that a market has been in existence for a long time then the market might well have gained rights through prescription or immemorial use.

A lost modern grant arises in a situation where there is a substantial belief that market rights were granted at some time in the past, and again this may be evidenced by historical background information, but the actual documentation granting the rights to the market cannot be found.



It is unlikely that there will be many Parish and Town Council markets that are created and controlled by local legislation but it is important to recognise that particularly at the beginning of the 20th Century a number of larger local authorities did enact local legislation covering a number of services including markets. If your market has been transferred from a Unitary or District Council the local legislation issue might apply and, if so, you need to be clear about its significance.

Most Parish and Town Councils will want to rely on Part III of the Food Act 1984 as a basis for operating their markets. This is the modern statutory framework for markets and provides miscellaneous powers including the ability to establish a market, fixing market days and hours, charges and also bye laws relating to the conduct of the market.

If a Parish or Town Council is taking over a market from a Unitary or District Council it is likely that there will be a licensing arrangement covering the operation of the market. It is important that the implications of such an arrangement are fully understood and that you are comfortable with the licensing requirements. It is particularly important that the licensing arrangements make clear the powers under which the market is operated. If the market is currently operated under Part III of the Food Act 1984 then it is important to acknowledge that Unitary, District, Parish and Town Councils, all enjoy these powers and the licensing arrangement needs to reflect this situation.

3. Market Plan

Having allocated resources to hold a weekly or specialist market you do not want to find your efforts undermined by another “rival market” being held in close proximity. The market powers highlighted above give a market operator, normally a local authority, rights to control other markets within a six and two thirds miles radius.

Most of these market powers have the same status except in respect of one small limitation. If two local authorities are both using Part III of the Food Act 1984 to operate markets in the same area then the one who operates the “oldest” market is likely to be in a stronger position.

If the Parish or Town Council operates the market under a licensing arrangement from the Unitary or District Council, then this is a matter that needs to be addressed in that arrangement and a decision made on who is to take responsibility for controlling other markets.

If the Parish or Town Council operates a market in its own right then consideration should be given to introducing its own Market Plan. Such a plan can deal with the role of the market, as previously highlighted in this toolkit, and set out whether the Council wants to adopt a licensing arrangement in respect of other market events. Such a licensing arrangement can control the number, quality and balance of market events in the area.

The Market Plan will set out the powers of the Council and its approach to other market events. This approach can be a very “light touch” in respect of charitable events such as table top sales and car boot sales but can be more onerous where a commercial event is being held.

4. Markets Manual

There are a whole host of policies and procedures that need to be put in place to operate your market. Among the most important are the following

- Trader Regulations;
- Health and safety;
- Application process;
- Balance of trade policy;
- Disciplinary procedures
- Consultation arrangements

It is important that all these policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and kept up to date and that traders are aware of their rights and responsibilities. You might want to have a section of your website allocated to current markets policies.

5. Markets Forum

It is important that opportunities are created for maintaining a dialogue between the Council, the traders and other stakeholders so that issues affecting the market are the subject of consultation before any action is implemented. A Markets Forum, or similar body, can exist as part of the Council structure and report to the Council or one of its Committees.

While the membership of a Market Forum will primarily be the Council and the traders, markets have a wider impact on the community and it is therefore suggested that consideration be given to including a representative of High Street shops and also possibly a representative of the public who use the market.

The Markets Forum can be a very useful "sounding board" for reviewing the performance of the market and any new initiatives which are under consideration. It is particularly important where major changes are proposed involving the location or redevelopment of the market.

6. Markets Performance and Research

It is important to know how your market is performing in line with national trends. NABMA normally undertakes an annual survey of retail markets and produces a report each autumn. You will want to compare your performance with the findings of this survey.

You also want to consider putting in place a system to assess how your market is performing. This can include measuring footfall, talking to traders about turnover, looking at rental income, undertaking shopper surveys and looking at the number of stalls let and remaining vacant. The annual performance assessment need not be complicated and expensive to implement and with a number of simple measures you can produce a worthwhile assessment that can provide a basis for future action and planning.

It is also useful, from time to time, to carry out local questionnaire surveys. There are a number of internet sites such as Survey Monkey that will allow sample questions to be drawn up when consulting the local community on a research issue. In such a way you can obtain useful feedback about the performance of the market.

One of the most effective ways of gathering opinion is through social media and there are a whole range of social media outlets such as Twitter and Facebook which can help you get public reaction to your market and also promote what your market is doing.

7. Market Promotion

Promotion is vital for the success of your market. People need to know about what you are offering and encourage people to use the market.

Signs and banners are proven to be a great draw to markets. They can announce when the market is held and they are particularly important for speciality markets which might be on a different day the normal weekly market. Of course the creation of signs and banners may be dependent on the approval of the highway authority and if there are difficulties getting approval you may wish to consider approaching local landowners or ask people to put notices up in their garden or on other buildings. It is important to ensure that fonts and colours are legible and do not obstruct visibility on highways.

You might want to consider adopting a brand or logo for your market which will give it an identity. Some markets adopt a colour scheme for their stalls and promotional material giving the market another form of identity.

It is important that your market has an internet presence. In this age of electronic communication the internet is often the first place people will look for your market. You may be able to get assistance from traders in supporting your market through the internet but it is important that you have resources to ensure that all platforms have as much information about your markets as you can provide. This includes good pictures, the location of your market, opening times, and details about the traders and what they offer.

A periodic newsletter facility to provide information about the market and any speciality markets that are coming up in the future. The newsletter can deal with any promotional offers, trader stories, seasonal recipes and how the local community can support the market.

Stay in contact with your local press. They can highlight what is going on at the market and also help raise the public profile in respect of any changes that are under consideration.

Why not get yourself a markets champion? Finding someone to champion your market will add to the market's visibility and help promote your market. It doesn't have to be somebody famous but somebody with a personality and a good ambassador.

Winning an award will always give your market a higher profile and there are lots of national market awards that you can enter; in particular, the Great British Market Awards run by NABMA feature particular categories for Parish and Town Councils and as part of this toolkit, case studies from a number of award winning markets are provided to give you some indication of what can be achieved.

CASE STUDIES OF

AWARD WINNING LOCAL COUNCIL MARKETS AND EVENTS

BRIDGNORTH CHRISTMAS LIGHTING UP EVENT

This is an annual event that incorporates significant market activities, pleasure fair, community activities, Christmas Light Switch On, local food and drink promotion and street entertainment.

The aims are

- To provide an event for Bridgnorth of local and countywide interest
- To promote market activities, the high street and local arts and crafts
- To celebrate local food and drink
- To provide a family evening of entertainment
- To welcome and celebrate Christmas
- To promote footfall and boost local tourism/ local economy

The event is arranged by the Bridgnorth Community Events Working Party and Bridgnorth Town Council. Many partners are involved including Shropshire Council.

The Community Events Working Group is a genuine partnership with its membership coming from principal and local councils, local organisations, the business sector and residents.

This is now one of the largest evening events in Shropshire during the month of December.

The numbers and interests in participating, and visiting, increase year on year. The numbers and interests in participating, and visiting, increase year on year.

The available space with the streets dictates the occupation level possible and the event is oversubscribed with a long waiting list.

The event keeps its foundation of a being a market with community activities in support.

The Town Council, in partnership with the Community Events Working Party, made up of local businesses, residents and Council representatives now run an ever increasing number of events in the town throughout the year including Continental Markets, Town Carnival and the Local to Shropshire market.

The Christmas Lighting Up Night has been a driver to show the community what can be achieved at low cost and what a difference can be made to the profile and footfall of a town. It has been a catalyst and model to shape other town events and it has given confidence and pride to individuals and organisations of what can be achieved through partnership, and the enjoyment of working together.

Importantly, the success of this event has helped meet, and exceed beyond expectations, the aspirations originally set for the event.

Without doubt this event has contributed to the town being awarded the accolade of Best Large Market Town in the Great British High Street Awards 2016.

This application therefore offers to the judging panel a successful event with national recognition, it demonstrates extensive innovation and importantly, the strongest of links too, and involving, the widest elements of the local community.

FOREST ROW VILLAGE MARKET

Voted as a Best Small Community/Parish Market in the Great British Market Awards.

Operated by the local Council with 35 - 50 stalls, operated monthly and an average occupancy of 90%.

The entry into Great British Market Awards details how this market is going the extra mile.

“In terms of New start opportunities the market has already started working with local food businesses (Business Forum) by giving one business a month a free stall at our market to showcase the produce that they sell in their shops in the village. If they decide to carry on they are given the stall at a reduced cost. The following are being implemented with effect from January 2017: Loyalty Scheme - for every 5 markets attended stallholders receive the 6th one at a 1/3 off.

If an existing stallholder recommends a new vendor they both get a reduction in fees of 1/3 for the first month the new stallholder attends the market. Food vendors requiring a Basic Food Hygiene. Those that have not already obtained this qualification can do this free via our computer training package in the council office. We are working with our district council who have agreed to fund the purchase of banners for new stallholders so that they comply with regulation on displaying their business details on their stall at the market. We have recently signed up with MarketSnap so that our traders can benefit from online sales and the click and collect service. We offer a free stall each month to local charities so that they can raise funds and awareness of their cause.

We use social media extensively to promote our individual stallholders produce by linking our Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Website to their own media of the same. We advertise any promotions/special offers that they are running well in advance of the market. We also advertise their produce on months that they cannot attend so that customers are able to order in advance and collect at a later date.

We hope to be able to work with local secondary education schools and colleges to promote youth traders in 2017.

We are working to promote the local food business to showcase their produce and also working with our district council to promote markets across the Wealden area. This includes helping other market managers in Wealden on how to make the most of social media to promote their individual markets. This is because they are experiencing a decline in traders and footfall where as our market is increasing in both.”

Our market may not be one of the largest ones in the country and it is only held once a month but we pride ourselves on the quality of service we give to our vendors as well as the quality of the produce sold on market days. The market was nominated and reached the Grand Finals of the Sussex Food & Drink Awards, Best Farmers Market category.

Finally we offer free Wi-Fi in our market area as well as free water & electricity to those who need it. We have a very social market with music playing all day and at some of our themed markets we have live bands playing along with other attractions. We will be having our LYLM in May as well as an international themed market in June, Dog Show Market in July and a Bake Off theme in August 2017.

OSWESTRY INDOOR MARKET

Oswestry indoor market which is special to its town and one that has gone through a major refurbishment after winning a national competition with a design produced by Sir Terence Conran. There is a new market website with other social media initiatives and also the introduction of Wi-Fi to the market hall building. This has given the market increased profile and proactive management has improved footfall and also created a greater visual impact for shoppers.

Oswestry Indoor Market boasts specialist retailers from cake supplies, sewing repairs, home brew, Welsh goods, party wares and a vinyl record store to name a few. If you like collectables and antiques there are four great shops to rummage through and when you feel like you need refreshing there's an excellent cafe and coffee bar. There's also a fantastic quality butcher and fishmonger and a delicatessen which sells the best variety of cheeses in the town.

Oswestry Market is special to the town as it offers something different whilst continuing to meet existing customer requirements. All the shop units are fully let and the quality of the retailers has improved dramatically in recent years, many of which have won awards in their sector.

Oswestry Markets have designed a new market website, Facebook and Twitter account, much of which is managed by the traders themselves.



SKIPTON MARKET

Skipton Market operates in a unique way, with traders requiring not only an agreement with the Council as the Market Authority but also with the individual owners of the land on which the Market is sited. This long-standing, complicated arrangement can make the task of joining the Market somewhat daunting.

Skipton Market operates on four days each week – Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. In recent years, the Monday market has become quieter with some regular traders choosing not to trade on the Monday. To help address this, for longer-standing, regular traders a further incentive scheme is now in place whereby regular attendance at the Monday market triggers a full refund of Monday fees – in effect, a free trading day.

Traders joining the Market also get first refusal for attendance on themed event or festival days, at discounted rates. In particular, the annual Skipton Christmas Market provides valuable additional trading days with extremely high volumes of visitors.

Social media is a vital part of the promotion of Skipton Market using both Facebook and Twitter, including additional accounts specifically for our Christmas Market.

Skipton Market has traditionally operated on the basis of allocating ‘pitches’ to traders on the High Street ‘setts’ (cobblestones to the front of individual shops and properties). Traders generally bring and erect their own stalls each market day and have agreements in place with both the Market Authority and the individual landowners.

In 2015, Skipton Town Council took full control, for the first time, of a large prime area of the High Street setts and took the opportunity to introduce a new style of stall aimed at smaller traders and at introducing new product lines onto the market – mainly artisan foods from local producers, together with locally produced craft items.

The Council believes that the Market should support local community groups and organisations and provides a number of opportunities for community groups (schools, charities, clubs, societies and other similar organisations) to run their own stalls on the Market – particularly on special event days (such as the Christmas Market and Sheep Day) where additional stalls are erected and provided to community groups for a very small nominal fee. At the Christmas Market in particular, this offers the Skipton Town Council took over as Market Authority in Skipton less than three years ago with a view to ensuring there was a clear plan, going forward, to ensure the future of a unique, four day a week, street market operating in the heart of a Town Centre.

In this short time the high profile of the Market has been restored and a substantial number of operational problems have been addressed.

Whilst there are still challenges to be met, the Market is better placed to meet those challenges and its contribution to the success of the Town is beyond doubt.

SAFFRON WALDEN MARKET

The market is held twice weekly (Tuesdays and Saturdays) operated by the Town Council with 20 stalls on average at 100% occupation.

A commercial pitch taster session is offered at a one off charge with the opportunity to progress to a permanent pitch if trading is successful. A Market Officer is available during each market. The Market Officer visits each stall to check all is well. Electric hook up and dedicated toilets are available to traders. The market is compliant with health & safety /environmental regulations. There is also a Market Trader representative on

Tuesdays to help new traders engage with existing traders (currently this is a vacancy on Saturdays). The Bookings Officer and/or Market Officer is happy to meet with any new trader to talk them through good practice, the pitfalls of trading and to help and advise them on any appropriate certificates and licences they may require for trading.

Saffron Walden Town Council, which runs the market, also funds Saffron Walden Tourist information Centre (TIC). The TIC administers successful Facebook and twitter pages and involves the market traders as much as possible, encouraging them to embrace social media.

The Market Manager has completely redesigned the layout of the market to improve the flow of customers amongst the stalls. This has created a more natural movement of shoppers, encouraging them to browse up and down the market aisles which in turn ensures footfall is constant throughout the market and not centred in any one particular area. One of the stallholders has worked with a Town Councillor to launch a "Hands Off, It's Mine" handbags protection scheme.

The Town Team works alongside the Town Council and the Tourist Information Centre to promote the whole town, including the market, with the aim of increasing footfall, and, ultimately, spend. This group, working with the Saffron Walden Initiative and a representative from the market, presented the Walden Winter Wonderland Christmas initiative.

The TIC maintains a 'The Market Town' section on its website and produces literature promoting the town and the market. The general leaflet includes promotional information about the various stalls. All other promotional literature, including the extremely popular Town Trail, makes reference to the two market days (Tuesdays & Saturdays).

The Town Council is represented on the Town Team by the TIC Duty Manager. One of the market traders liaises with the Town Team representing the interests of the market. New promotional materials highlighting the town's independent shops as well as the market have recently been produced.

Saffron Walden market is at the heart of the town and the footfall and visitors into town is considerably increased on market days. The market boasts an excellent reputation both amongst traders and shoppers alike. The market is currently limited in its footprint and as such has a substantial waiting list of traders interested in attending. Traders from across the country are waiting to join Saffron Walden Market known for its professional management and excellent standards for trade.

NABMA

the voice of markets

NABMA, The Guildhall, Oswestry, Shropshire SY11 1PZ

Telephone: 01691 680713

Fax: 01691 671080

Email: nabma@nabma.com

Web: www.nabma.com

