
BURY MARKET

TASK GROUP REPORT - MARCH 2020



TASK GROUP – OVER VIEW



Remit

- To agree a strategy for Bury Market to ensure that it remains at the heart of the towns retail experience.
- To help create a vision for how the market evolves to meet changing consumer tastes and preferences
- To identify the big investment opportunities that can secure the future of the market
- Identify how the market can better connect to wealthier local residents who don't use it
- Identify how the market can adapt without alienating its existing customer base

Methodology

- The task group will hear from a range of experts in retail, market trading and place making
- The task group will review best practice examples from the UK and overseas in delivering outstanding markets
- The task group will review the potential impact of operating events programmes
- To invite traders who represent different consumer markets to provide input and evidence
- The task group will examine some of the high level options and will make recommendations
- The task group will produce a final report for full Cabinet by an agreed date

MEMBERSHIP

Chaired by: Councillor Jane Black

Councillor Steven Wright, Councillor
Gavin McGill

Report drafted and written by Paul
Lakin: Director of Regeneration and
Capital Growth

task group Secretariat: Sinead Gracey

Officer Support: Andrew Heyes
Markets Manager, Liz Gudgeon Head
of Property and Assets

Chairs Introduction

Bury Market is an incredibly important asset for the Town. That's why I accepted the Leaders offer to form a task group to consider what we need to do to ensure we have an outstanding market that future generations will want to visit.

The group has benefitted from working with Leeds University who are leading a national research project on markets, of which Bury is one of three national case studies. The lead researcher has given his time to engage twice with the task group.

We obtained the opinion of a range of market traders. It is tough for many Traders, they are retail businesses after-all, and the current retail environment is facing unprecedented challenge.

The view of the task group is that we don't want the Council to be simply managing the decline of the market. We think there is a strong case to put the market at the centre of our plans for the regeneration of the town centre.

A vibrant market helps sustain our physical retail offer and it also creates opportunities for local residents and entrepreneurs to start out in the process of setting up and running a business.

The social value of the market is of huge importance to the town and wider borough.

This is why I commend this report to the Cabinet and the wider Council as a blueprint for reinventing Bury Market



FACTS ABOUT BURY MARKET

- Ca. 365 stalls, leasehold and day license – on full market days, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday.
- Ca. 161 leasehold units (including all those in the market Hall) and ca. 204 day licenses. 60 + stalls in the market hall.
- Ca. 93% market occupancy (current refurbishment work accounts for a small decline).
- Nearly all stalls in the market Hall are on six year leases that expire in January 2023.
- Current three year rent freeze.
- Approximately 800 people work at the market
- Footfall to Market Hall, Fish and Meat Hall and Mill Gate Shopping Centre of ca. 150,000 per week (2018).
- In 2019 Bury Market won NABMA Britain's Favourite Market and Best Markets Attraction Award in 2015. It has won numerous other awards.



Bury Market Timeline

1440's - Bury Council first given exclusive rights by virtue of a Royal Charter to hold Markets & Fairs within the Borough

1559 – the market cross was sighted at the location of the Sir Robert Peel Statue for farm produce, livestock, and woven goods as well as fish

1839 - a new Open Market, set out within a walled triangle, opened on the area of land now known as Kay Gardens

1971, the old Bury Market had moved to the current site

1999 - refurbishment of the Outdoor Market new purpose built Fish and Meat Hall

WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT BURY MARKET



Steve L wrote a review Feb 2020
Bedford, United Kingdom • 18 contributions



Bury Market !

Superb ! You deserve a treat! Give yourself plenty of time. Lots to see, plenty of food and drinks on offer. A proper Market , great stalls , good Northern banter. Markets inside and out along with Bury town centre shops making this a worthwhile trip.

Read less ▲

Date of experience: January 2020

Rosemary D wrote a review Nov 2019
Liverpool, England, United Kingdom • 143 contributions • 47 helpful votes



An amazing market

We went to Bury market with friends on wednesday and we had a fantastic day. The stalls are great and it is a traditional market and how a market should be. We had a good look around and me and my friend purchased our turkey and meat for christmas day and as my son could not come he asked me to get bacon ribs for tea which I did and they were fab. really enjoyed them. I also bought some sweets from a sweet stall and the choice of sweets were endless something for everyone.

Read less ▲

Date of experience: October 2019

Richard G wrote a review Dec 2019
Nottingham, United Kingdom • 102 contributions • 31 helpful votes



Great Choice

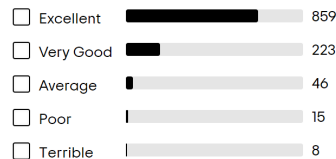
Day trip from Nottingham. Great market such a great choice of food. Picked up Pork Pies Black & White puddings. A great place to visit all within easy walking distance of the main shopping centre. Vendors all very friendly and helpful

Read more ▼

Date of experience: December 2019

Reviews

Traveller rating



Bury Market
1 Murray Rd, Bury

4.6 ★★★★★ 3,800 reviews ?

Sneha Nikhila Kotha
Local Guide · 40 reviews · 911 photos

★★★★★ a month ago

Great place!! No wonder why wouldn't be the Britain's best markets!!! love the meat hall and the fresh meat at cheaper deals. Its a proper place to go if you are looking for some quality fresh meat and seafood. There are all soughts of shops here. N the famous Black Pudding is a must try when you visit Bury Market. You could do a whole day of shopping and would still have shops to checkout..That big is this market..Could be a proper day outing for shopping.

Jane Webber
35 reviews

★★★★★ 3 months ago - 🇬🇧

Well I've not been to Bury Market for a very long time. Since my childhood. And as we were visiting a very good life long friend we went and it's not changed a bit, I loved it. I took my family to my childhood home for the first time.

Bury market black pudding was required to have also. We went through the fish market, that hadn't changed either.

Lesley Corr
Local Guide · 19 reviews · 13 photos

★★★★★ 4 weeks ago

Got everything you need and Beautiful people who are more than happy to help you Singers and entertainment to make you feel happy 😊😊😊😊😊😊

WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT OTHER MARKETS



Ashton Market

52 Reviews

#8 of 12 things to do in Ashton-under-Lyne

Reviews

Traveller rating

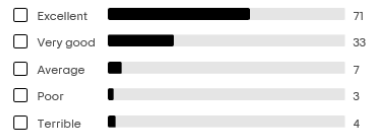


Bolton Market

119 Reviews

Reviews (119)

Traveller rating



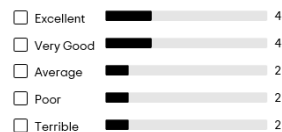
Warrington Market

14 Reviews

#36 of 65 things to do in Warrington

Reviews

Traveller rating



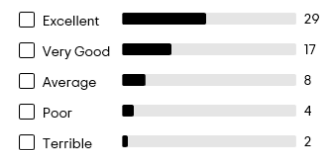
Stockport Victorian Market Hall

60 Reviews

#2 of 14 Shopping in Stockport

Reviews

Traveller rating



Leeds Kirkgate Market

465 Reviews

#23 of 174 things to do in Leeds

Reviews

Traveller rating



Barnsley Market

62 Reviews

#19 of 44 things to do in Barnsley

Reviews

Traveller rating



BURY MARKETS FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE



- Budgeted income: £2.8 million; budgeted expenditure £1.7 million (2018).
- Surplus of £1.1 million - 40% return on investment.
- In recent years, Bury Market has been receiving an annual maintenance budget from the Council of £105,000.
- In addition investment, £1.38 million in 2019 (over a four year period) from the Council for important refurbishment work which is ongoing.
- 2015/16 surplus £925,000, 2016/17 surplus £1,169,000, 2017/18 surplus £1,150,000, 2018/19 surplus £1,042,000



LEEDS UNIVERSITY FINDINGS ISSUES AND PROBLEMS?



Glass Half Empty

- The market is looking “tired”. Recognition that this is an “old facility”. “It does look tatty”.
- Poor or absent signage. The market is tucked away behind bus station and shopping centre.
- Some concern about increasing the prepared food offer.
- Difficult for traders to adapt when their product lines are no longer popular.
- Low (or unenthusiastic) membership of traders’ association.
- Potential for discord created by a fragmented system of leases, rents and rates.

Glass Half Full

- Bury Market has a very diverse offering and this is an important ingredient in its success.
- Coaches and their visitors contribute to the aura of ‘World Famous Bury Market’.
- Although they form a small proportion of visitors, coach visitors spend more and more widely.
- They also help fill the cafés, which have been growing in number.
- The market is a space of sociability. Long-time customers get to know traders well.
- Social media: an apprentice has helped get market and stalls out on social media.

TASK GROUP FINDINGS



IMPORTANCE OF THE MARKET TO THE TOWN



What we Established

- Many towns in England often feel like ghost towns during the day with a lack of people animating the streets. This adds to a feeling of being run-down and neglected
- On market days Bury Town Centre is particularly vibrant with market visitors wandering into the Millgate Centre, over to the Rock and into some of the larger pub properties
- Each town and market is different. There has been a lot of focus on Altrincham which has created primarily a food hall and craft market. It has clearly resonated in that town. However, it would be unwise to think other models can be wholly lifted and shifted to other towns
- The market is central to the identity of Bury Town Centre and is a critical driver of footfall to the Town
- Bury Council puts the market in a prominent position in marketing the town and a focus for our social media

What we Recommend

- The market needs regeneration of its existing site and future development set out later in this report
- Bury Council need to widen the market and Town Centre appeal to all residence of the borough
- Future planning of the market is undertaken in line with future retail strategy for the centre.

THE CHALLENGE FOR MARKET TRADERS

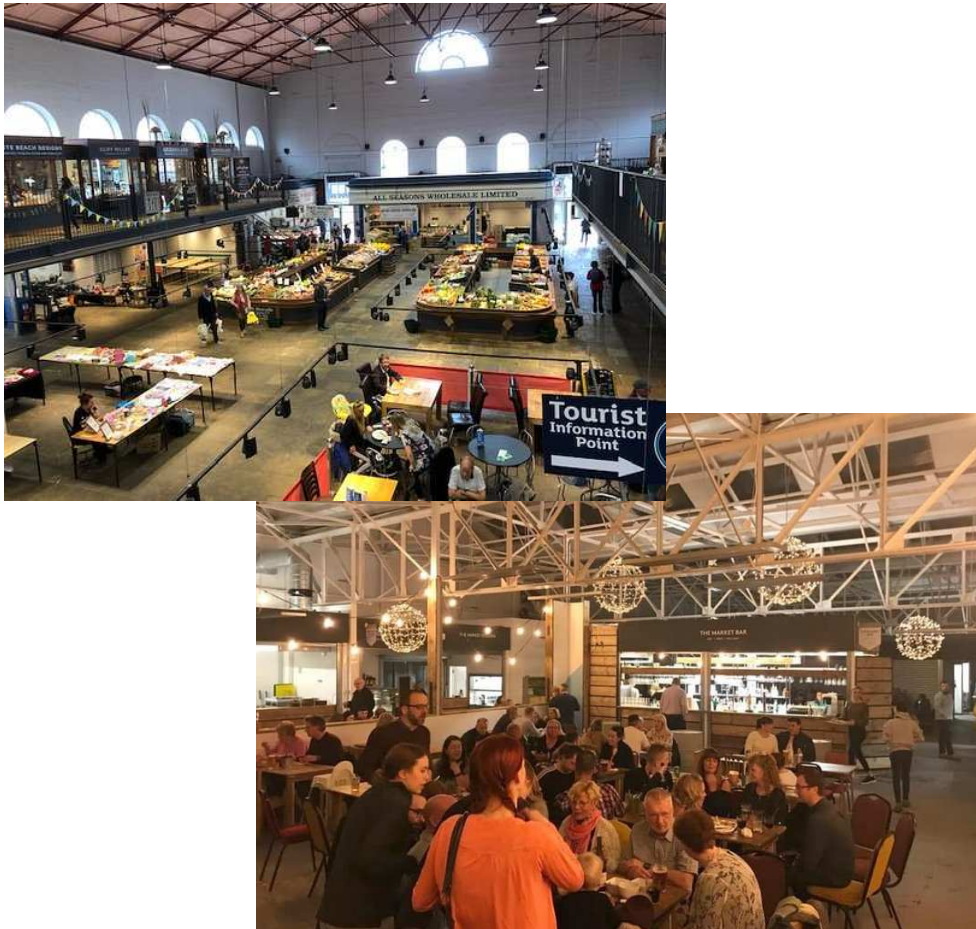


What we Found

- Markets are physical retail businesses and this sector is going through tumultuous change
- The changes to the profile of High Street retailers mean there is little difference between the products sold in stores such as Home Bargains, B&M and Wilkinson's and on the market. These stores also provide a much greater challenge than predecessor stores such as Woolworths and BHS because their business models are extremely efficient
- These companies have prospered because they have immense buying power and can offer many products that used to be sold on Markets at lower prices than a trader could viably sell them at (household cleaning, pet treats, gifts etc.)
- The clothing and fashion sector has changed beyond recognition and younger people don't use physical stores never mind markets to buy clothes. It is increasingly hard to compete in this sector
- Market traders are also coming under increasing competition from stalls placed in shopping malls, such as those in the Millgate Centre
- The market has no internet connectivity for traders or shoppers



THE CHALLENGE FOR MARKET TRADERS



What we Recommend

- Whilst the market will likely have to tilt towards food and events to maintain footfalls and attract younger and more diverse audiences it is important to recognise that the diversity of products and services available is a USP of Bury Market
- We need to address the lack of dedicated flexible space within the existing market estate to host events
- We may need to adapt the layout of the market to create a more visible and higher profile entrance to the market from the key points of arrival
- If the Council is to invest capital in new facilities they need to be operable on more than a three day a week basis
- We need to plan the future of the wider area with the owners of the Millgate Centre and accept a degree of competition is inevitable
- Town Centre full fibre is due to be rolled out in 2020 however other options for connectivity should be investigated for the market.

CUSTOMER DEMOGRAPHICS (1B)

What we Established

- There is a perception that coach visitors have a much larger contribution to the market than research suggests.
- The markets coach visitors have increased year on year, with large numbers coming from the North of England and in particular Yorkshire.
- Contrary to some trader opinion coach visitors are spending money when they get to the market
- Market feels desolate in the late afternoon, one theory on this is coaches leaving and that we could 'do more' to improve the day-out experience for coach visitors afternoon
- The current generally older age profile of market-users will cause the market vulnerability if not replaced by a younger generation
- The market is used for social interactions by many. The value of this should not be measured in pounds



Bury
COUNCIL



Approximate Spend



Data: Coach & Staff Survey by Bury Council

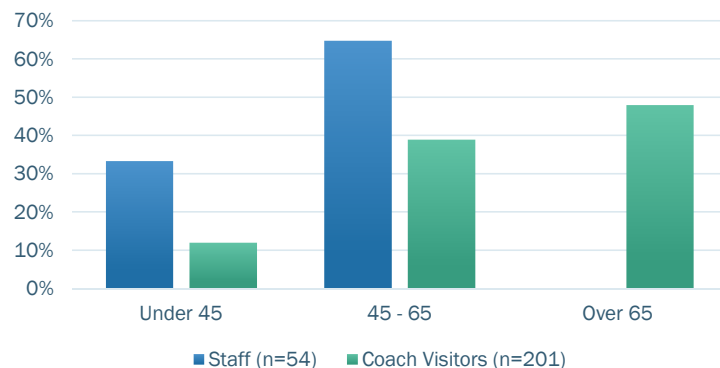
Tuesday, March 17, 2020

CUSTOMER DEMOGRAPHICS (1)

2019 Coach Visitor Data

- More than 50% of coach visitors spend at least £25
- 19% spend in excess of £50
- Over half of visitors are under the age of 65
- 2019 saw 1,826 coach visits, a 5% increase on 2018

Demographics



Data: Coach & Staff Survey by Bury Council



What we Recommend

- That coach trips remain important and we should focus on improving the overall experience of visiting Bury and give Market customers a better day out.
- We need to provide dwell space and entertainment areas to create a more rounded experience for existing visitors to ensure repeat visits.
- We need to address the lack of vibrancy on the market in the later afternoon.
- Increased marketing locally, within GM and via coach operators in different areas.
- Consider a shorter trading day but increase the number of days it operates, what about Sunday half days?
- Health and well being should feature heavily in the regeneration of the market as its social importance is currently unmeasured, however socialising plays a huge part of the day to day operation of the market for our more vulnerable and aging population.
- Engage with younger population and encourage youth markets and younger entrepreneurs to use the market as a start up point which will in term provide younger visitors

CUSTOMER DEMOGRAPHICS (2)

What we Established

- The market is probably too dependent upon coach visitors and local pensioners arriving via Buses.
- The markets regular users are from lower income house holds and it is not attracting affluent residents of the borough.
- The market does not appear to be attracting younger customers from Bury or the wider metropolitan region.
- There are large numbers of public sector workers and college students in and around the centre, but they don't appear to be heavily using the market.
- The college students appear to walk past the market to get to the fried chicken and fast food outlets by Kay Gardens. Engagement and marketing with the college.
- There are large populations close by (in central Manchester) looking for new and interesting experiences and the existing market offer doesn't appear to appeal to them.

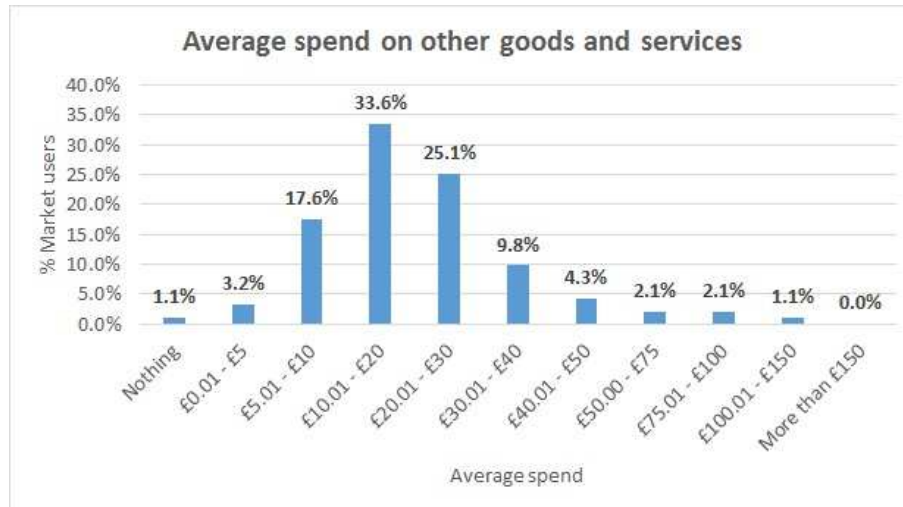


Top three reasons for visiting Bury Market	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
To shop	88.9%	6.7%	1.8%
To eat	4.0%	70.8%	5.0%
For leisure	3.4%	6.0%	49.6%

- 90% of market users say that shopping is their main reason for visiting Bury Market; 97% give it as one of their top three reasons.
- 71% say eating is their second main reason for visiting; 80% give it as one of their top three reasons.
- 50% say leisure is their third main reason for visiting; 59% give it as one of their top three reasons.

Data: University of Leeds, Community Value of Traditional Retail Markets project

CUSTOMER DEMOGRAPHICS (2)



- 99% of market users spend money on other goods and services at the market.
- Average spend per market user on other goods and services is £22.62.

Data: University of Leeds, Community Value of Traditional Retail Markets project

What we Recommend

- We need to reconnect the market to our affluent residents. It may be that the market in its current format will not appeal to these groups
- We need to enhance the existing experience of visiting the market if we are to attract different customers
- However, we must not alienate those coach visitors
- We may need to create other reasons to visit Bury town centre and the market area in particular if we are to connect the market to wider customer groups
- Rent a space to the business/textile/Art/catering etc. students of the college, they could put their business/creative studies into practice

SUPPORTING MARKET TRADERS



What we Found

- The objective of the Council should be to do what we can to create footfall, link the market to other development in the town centre, help with promotion and hold a capital development plan for the market.
- Whilst the Council can help bring people to the market, it is the job of traders to sell to them.
- Market stalls are small businesses and owners have to be able to multi-task which is not always easy.
- Despite this previous business support projects have not always had much impact.
- The market Traders Association has a relatively low level of membership.
- A petition on rent reductions submitted to the Council and was review by the task group.

What we Recommend

- An effective Market Traders Associations is the right forum to discuss market rules and regulations to get proper engagement from Traders, the alternative of each Trader voicing their own opinion is not likely to lead to a coherent position.
- Whilst business support projects cannot solve all the problems of traders who cannot sell enough goods, they can help with financial planning, labelling, purchasing and other practical tasks. Budget should be sought to run these session.
- Encourage people who work in the town centre to use the market, also more engagement with the college.
- Perhaps increase the market days but reduce the opening hours particularly in winter.
- The Council do not believe a rent reduction will resolve the issues that some traders face and intend to invest in the market and wider area, proposals are set out at the end of this report.
- However a rent freeze is in place for the 3rd year.

NATIONAL EXPERIENCES

What we Established

- Altrincham Market is regularly cited in the media as an example for other towns to follow. Whilst the old hall has been transformed into a modern food-hall it is not attached to a market of any scale.
- There are examples of towns in the north of England that have spent huge sums of money on new Market Halls and the results have been mixed. The 'Glassworks' development in Barnsley is an example of a scheme which has not worked for many of the towns traditional Traders.
- Modernisation projects need to be handled with care as a modern markets appeal is partly about the experience and creating a more standard retail environment might lose that along the way.



What we Recommend

- Markets are complex trading environments and proposals to create conformity can stifle the appeal of an organic and unique urban experience. Bury market needs to 'bottle' what makes it special and evolve its offer.
- The quality of the food and drink offer will be critical to sustaining the market and steps should be taken to build upon the existing offer.
- Proposals for change should seek to maintain the organic feel of the existing Market, but seek to increase wider footfall and diversify the potential customer base.
- Creating an open public space or Market Square to sit between the flexible hall and market with benches and tables to sit and eat and be all weather provision.

DATA



What we Found

- We need to more systematically measure the performance of the market
- Independent research was conducted for a number of years up to 2014 with the finding shaping investment such as additional toilets and better weather protection.
- In recent time we have a lot of strong anecdotal evidence and the soon to be published Leeds University research will help build a strong future plan.
- We need to find out much more about what the visitors to Bury Market think about the experience, what they spent their money on, and what they would like to see on the market
- Equally, we need to understand what might be stopping other groups of people in Bury from using the market
- We need to better inform our future investment plans

What we Recommend

- A comprehensive annual and independent visitor survey is conducted
- Employee survey
- Stronger collection of data from Traders
- Surveying work to assess what is stopping people in wider Bury area from using the market

LEEDS UNIVERSITY PROJECT TEAM FEEDBACK



Key Recommendations

- Governance and management issues – The Council should ‘reward’ the market by ploughing back more profits into repair and improvements to basic infrastructure.
- Stability should be brought to the market’s organisational berth within the Council – there is no *perfect* home.
- The good work of the task group should be translated into a sustained attempt to reinforce the appeal to traders of their association.
- We hope that the owners and managers of Mill Gate Shopping Centre will recognise the importance of a strong market to their own success.
- Facilities and infrastructure – While some may see a big opportunity for change now, our findings suggest any change should be incremental and focused on the basics (toilets, benches, signage, etc.).
- Market offer and market users – Safeguard existing strengths and current customer base.

General recommendations

- Danger of being trapped into a discourse of change – and of contracts with consultants who might have a different vision of a successful market. **On all fronts, Bury Market is performing extremely strongly.**
- Concern that the ‘Altrincham model’ might be applied unthinkingly.
- Other markets that have been rebuilt provide an object lesson.
- Master planning for Bury town centre must put the market at the forefront of its concerns.
- A careful balance needs to be struck.
- **Remember that the glass is much more than half full.**

OPPORTUNITIES



Market could be well positioned to take advantage of changing trends, tastes and behaviours of consumers

- If people want to buy something specific they can simply order it on the internet and a matter of moments and have it delivered directly to their house
- This simple change has transformed the entire retail environment
- The only growing part of the physical retail world has been the value-chains such as B&M and Home Bargains who have thrived because they sell goods it is usually impractical to distribute online. They also sell products and goods that many market traders have historically sold and operate in towns where traditional markets still operate (such as Bury), but because of their lean and scaled business models it is near impossible to compete on price
- However, there is evidence that consumers are also becoming more sophisticated wanting more unique and bespoke products and experiences
- There has been a huge increase in cooking using locally sourced fresh ingredients.
- There has been a huge increase in home baking and artisan bread making
- Bury being the Town Of Culture 2020 bring the opportunity to include the Arts to the heart of the market
- There is increasing awareness of the carbon footprint of food produce, with supermarkets using global supply chains, many consumers want locally grown produce
- The growth of craft beer and local brewing has been a phenomenon in the US and is increasingly fashionable in the UK
- The same phenomenon is evident in the Gin and other premium drink sectors sector
- Vinyl records, consigned to history in the 1990's have made a comeback and there are increasing populations of collectors also vintage markets
- There are many local artists and 'not on the High Street' operators who may want to have a physical presence on an occasional basis to connect to new customers
- Live music and film have increasingly diverse ranges of niche followers, unable to fill larger venues but with a requirement for space to host events
- The internet has brought together groups of enthusiasts and collectors across a whole diverse range of hobbies and shared interests

VISION FOR A NEW MULTI-PURPOSE HALL



The Council could invest capital in a new multi-purpose Hall, but it would have to be underpinned by a commercial business plan

- The hall would be a flexible space with a stage area, a flexible floorplate and would act as an entrance to the market
- Bury lacks large event space. The hall could deliver this and be one of the legacies of the Town Of Culture.
- On Market days it could support 'pop-up' trading and host events as part of the market day experience
- The hall could be let to commercial promoters to run events independently of the Council
- The hall could be used as a live venue in the evenings and used for community events and by community groups for larger events
- Workspace for small businesses



VISION FOR A NEW MULTI-PURPOSE HALL



Examples of how the Flexible Hall could be used:

- Pop-up independent trading space and visitor entertainment on Market days (Live performance, cooking demonstrations etc.)
- Live Music and Comedy events
- Children's entertainment (school holiday themes events)
- Food festivals
- One off arts, crafts and antique visiting markets
- Beer and wine festivals
- Seasonal events
- Third party promoted events Hire (a place where companies may want to do produce launches)
- Community Use

Benefits

- A flexi-hall would generate significant new footfall which could be captured by market traders
- It would allow us to dramatically improve the existing Markets visitor offer
- It would provide new space for the Bury community and a new live venue
- The multiple community, small business and other local benefits would make this proposal an ideal candidate for the Governments future high streets fund and other potential sources of funding.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS (1)

- The Council should fund pre-development costs and a business plan associated with development of a new indoor flexi-hall
- The market should be subject to a remodelling once plans for the hall are drawn up to take maximum advantage of a new facility
- The Council should make an allocation within our capital programme as part of a funding package, this would greatly aid the credibility of any proposal for grant funding from Government

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS (2)

- Regeneration of existing site and surrounding area included in town centre master plan. Create dedicated flexible space, make the market more visible at key points of arrival and connect with neighbouring shopping centre and transport interchange to do this.
- Improve marketing and seek to connect to new audience. Improve current offer, improve customer space and entertainment programme. Connect to wider town offer, arts, museum and shopping. Promotion of Health and Well being by encouraging more social events
- Engage with local schools, colleges, business and community groups to offer platform for their organisation and engage with visitors
- Create proper engagement between traders and council. Re-establish an effective Market Traders Association. Offer business support training.
- Provided comprehensive data via independent rents review, Trader information and customer surveys annually.
- Review trading days, shorter trading day but increase number of trading days. Look at parking charge reduction after 3pm on market days.
- Holistically improve the trading environment and improve the current offer.

QUICK WINS



Short Term

- End parking charges after 3pm on Market Days on Market Car Park
- Build/Re-establish Traders Association
- Share capital investment programme with traders, Councillors and press to show long term plan.
- Internet Access for Traders. Investigate options outside of the town centre full fibre roll out including Barclay Card offer to other markets and cost of Wi-Fi on market
- Seek marketing opportunities appeal to wider audience and to do collaborative offers across the market i.e. food hampers for Christmas
- Review trading days, shorter day increase market days.
- Cultural Audit to see what is happening within the town and find out what our strengths are. Town Of Culture legacy

Medium Term

- Data collection: independent rents reviews, trader information, customer surveys
- Connections with wider community, business, colleges, arts

Long Term

- Investment in new flexi hall and wider market area

THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



- University of Leeds, Community Value of Traditional Retail Markets project
 - Paul Waley
 - Myfanwy Taylor
 - Rosemary Wilkins
- Rivington Hark
 - Mark Williams
- The Met, Bury
 - David Agnew
 - Victoria Robinson
- CLES/Director of Levenshulme Market CIC
 - Helen Power

- Traders Association
 - Tony Hill – Carpet & Rug Centre
 - Debbie Pierce – Bury Black Pudding Company
- NABMA – David Preston
- NMFT – Joe Harrison
- Bury Market Traders
 - Sue Riley
 - Jennifer Eagle Cooper
 - Nathan Mills
 - Jason Floyd