

London Borough of Islington

Street Trading Strategy 2008 – 2012





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The Vision

To create a dynamic street trading and market experience that is diverse and vibrant adding value to the economic, social and cultural fabric of Islington.

About the Strategy

The Strategy aims to assist all individuals and organisations involved with street trading to reach a vision of creating a dynamic street trading and market experience that is diverse and vibrant adding value to the economic, social and cultural fabric of Islington.

These include organisations and individuals in a variety of areas including street trading, town centre planning, market managers, health professionals, social inclusion, community enhancement, urban planning, environmental sustainability, tourism and a wide variety of other businesses and activity.

Prior to the public consultation on the proposed Street Trading Strategy there was a popular belief that the markets had seen their time and their contribution to the retail mix was in decline. This view is very different to the reality. Street markets are seeing resurgence in popular recognition and support. Street markets are able to meet some of the objectives and outcomes of significant big policy directives particularly in the area of environmental sustainability, healthy eating, economic regeneration and community social cohesion.

This Strategy aims to identify and overcome many of the problems and limitations markets have experienced in the past. To maintain and develop the existing markets by creating bustling centres of economic and social interaction whilst providing opportunities to support new locations and events for street trading activity.

Delivering this strategy will involve many individuals, organisations and areas within council either independently or in partnership. All areas of council have an important role to play in implementing this strategy which will be driven by Public Protection.

Part 1: 2012 Realising the Vision

Part 1 sets the scene of why street markets and street trading is vital to the economic vitality of any local area. Whilst presenting the Council's policy context identifying links with this strategy.

Part 2: Street markets and Islington Borough – facts and figures

Part 2 provides statistical information about residents in the borough and information about the number of pitches and licensed stallholders. The resident population in the borough is very diverse making profiling of customer groups and locations difficult.

Part 3: Taking the Strategy Forward

Part 3 identifies Key Issues and Opportunities for Islington Markets. Actions are listed under six key headings.

Many of the actions contained in this Strategy do not require significant amounts of financial support from the Council. In fact many of the actions can be done at minimal cost if actions are implemented as part of other existing initiatives. Financial support can be gained through external sources such as bidding for EC1 New Deal money, seeking out S106 funding, identifying relevant LDA opportunities and researching European Social Fund grants. Bidding for council money will need to be undertaken as part of the council's budgetary cycle.

In order for this vision to be fully realised it is necessary that funds are secured and elected members are committed to delivering the key actions with its strategic partners.

Part 1: Recognising the vision

“To create a dynamic street trading and market experience that is diverse and vibrant adding value to the economic, social and cultural fabric of Islington”.

1.0 Introduction

The retail offer in any city or town cannot be underestimated. The mix of retail opportunities within the borough is varied and cosmopolitan with street markets and trading sites contributing an affordable and healthy alternative to main stream shopping options. Although Islington is a small borough it offers a number of varied experiences to residents and visitors. Reinvigorating street markets and trading sites will complement the borough’s proposed and existing regeneration and revitalisation programmes enhancing the social and economic offer within Islington. The most significant street trading activity is the street markets and is the primary focus of this strategy.

Over the past 15 years or so traditional street markets have experienced significant decline. A number of reasons have been attributed to this national decline such as increasing competition from other forms of retail, lack of investment or vision from local authorities and changing demographics in the area of trading. The markets in the London Borough of Islington are no exception to this decline.

Until the 1990s the residential population in Islington was in decline. Not until the late 1990’s early 2000’s did the borough see an increase in the resident population. This growth has been rapid and is set to increase significantly over the next 15 years (London Borough of Islington, 2003). These population shifts will have a significant impact on the economic and social success of markets.

The council's "One Islington" vision sets out an ambitious programme of change for the borough, building on the key priorities of Listening to Islington, Stronger Communities and A greener, cleaner and safer borough. The Street Trading Strategy addresses these key elements and recognises the important role local residents and businesses have in articulating, through the consultation process, what happens in their local area.

Islington’s current challenge is to ensure that the borough moves forward: evolving and embracing change whilst maintaining and building upon existing strengths.

1.1 Scope of the Strategy

Islington has a number of street markets that add value to the retail experience in the area. The Council recognises the value of adopting central government’s policy which encourages developers and local authorities to invest and revitalise markets and recognise the cultural and economic contribution they make to town centre retail success.

Street and covered markets (including farmers' markets) can make a valuable contribution to local choice and diversity in shopping as well as the vitality of town centres and to the rural economy. As an integral part of the vision for their town centres, local authorities should seek to retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones. Local authorities should ensure that their markets remain attractive and competitive by investing in their improvement (ODPM 2005)

This is reflected in our Planning Policy Statement 6 - Planning for Town Centres. The primary focus of this strategy will be to regenerate the markets to be key retail and leisure destinations. The strategy aims to address the issues identified as causing the decline of traditional street markets.

The strategy has been developed with a number of overarching themes shaping its content. The retail experience of any consumer is undertaken in a broader context with a number of elements impacting on a shopper's visit. A visit to the market is more than just the stalls it includes existing businesses and retailers, access, amenity, urban design, public spaces, ambience, arts and culture.

The Council's Street Trading Team provides the guiding principles, decision-making criteria and administrative guidelines for the effective management of street trading activities on the footpaths, streets, open spaces, and public spaces within the London Borough of Islington. The types of street trading available include: Street Markets; Scattered Site Locations (selling newspapers, flowers, greengrocery and other in demand commodities); Arsenal Pitches (licensed food and drink vans and merchandising on match days); and other temporary street trading activities that support festivals and events.

Whilst the strategy provides the overarching direction for street markets within the borough it recognises that each market has its own point of difference, attracts different shoppers and experiences different issues. The strategy does not aim to be a best fit nor a model to make all markets the same but it recognises the individuality of each one.

There are three council managed street markets within the Borough - Whitecross Street Market, Chapel Market and Exmouth Market. The Council also licenses a number of pitches in Camden Passage and Archway. The development of a Street Trading Strategy also cannot ignore the impact of privately run markets such as the Farmer's Market (currently operating at William Tyndale School), Nags Head Covered Market and the private areas of Camden Passage Market.

1.2 Policy framework

The London Plan, produced by the Greater London Authority for the Mayor of London, provides the regional planning policy context for Islington. The strategy contains a number of sub-regional development frameworks setting out more detailed requirements for spatial development and support for town centres. Future town centre planning needs to assess the significant role street markets present within the retail options and not disadvantage them through developments.

The Mayor's Food Strategy, May 2006 supports and reinforces the significant role food markets continue to play in London's food system. The vision for London is "a world-class, sustainable food system for London". Where food retail extends to all who are responsible for selling food and the important role they play in promoting a healthy and more sustainable food chain in the capital. Street markets are positioned well to provide access to local, healthy affordable food to low income earners. Street markets are also in a position to significantly contribute to environmental sustainability policies by encouraging walking to the markets, minimal food packaging, promoting local produce and reducing food miles and well placed to develop best practices in recycling, reducing and reusing waste.

The policy for Shopping and Town Centres can be found in our local plan. The ones relevant to this strategy are :-

Camden Passage – the Council will designate Camden Passage as a specialist shopping area, as shown on the Proposals Map. Within this area the Council will limit the number of non-retail units.....

and

Street Markets – The Council will seek to maintain and support the three established street markets (Chapel Market, Exmouth Market and Whitecross Street), the established individual market stalls scattered throughout the borough and the covered market at the Nags Head

Future development of supplementary planning documents involving retail policy will need to include strategies addressing the key role street markets have in the borough.

'One Islington' is the Council's overarching strategy as set out in the Corporate Strategy Service and Financial Plan 2007-10. The Plan has three key themes of: Listening to Islington; Stronger Communities; and a cleaner, safer and greener borough. These key themes have been addressed and incorporated within the Street Trading Strategy.

A number of other strategies exist within the Council which impact on the borough's retail landscape they include, but are not limited to:

- Islington Street-book – A borough-wide streetscape manual
- London Borough of Islington: Standard Street Trading Licence Conditions
- Islington Streets – Assisting Pedestrians and Shoppers
- The Angel Town Centre Business Improvement District Plans
- The Nags Head Town Centre Strategy.

Part 2: Statistical snapshot

2.0 Islington Demographics

Islington is the third smallest local authority in London and is the second most densely populated with over 118 person per hectare. The population of the Borough was 175,797 persons (census figures 2001), 84,229 were male and 91,568 were female. The population has increased by 7.3 per cent (11,895 persons) since 1991 and is predicted to increase by approximately 17,238 over the next ten years. The average age of the population is 35 years with the majority of the population aged between 20 to 44 years. The proportion of children of school age and elderly aged 75 years and older is under represented when compared nationally (Office for National Statistics, 2001).

The borough has the third highest proportion of single households nationally and not surprisingly over half (54 per cent) the adult population is single. Approximately 25 per cent of Islington residents belong to an ethnic minority group, this is fairly high when compared nationally but low compared with other London Boroughs. The highest represented categories are Black African, Black Caribbean and Bangladeshi (Office for National Statistics, 2001). Local data suggests that there is a high proportion of Turkish residents (Islington Council, 2003).

Nearly 70 per cent of residents are economically active, that is working or unemployed looking for work with 47 per cent working either full time or part time and 27 per cent looking for work. Those who are economically inactive include those who have retired, are full-time carers, permanently sick, students and children. The unemployment rate is relatively high at 5.8 per cent, making Islington's unemployment rate the seventh highest for all the London Boroughs. The high level of unemployment influences other factors, such as the level of disposable income available for shopping. Islington has one of the lowest car ownership rates in the country, a significant factor when considering access to markets and shopping areas and the need for parking in retail areas within the Borough (Islington Council, 2006).

Although Islington is considered an affluent borough it has the sixth highest level of social deprivation in the country. This is a critical factor to consider when identifying the role of markets in providing affordable healthy choices of food. The daytime population in Islington is estimated to be 194,000 with 112,000 people commuting into Islington to work each day (Office for National Statistics, 2001). The day time population is greater than the residential population indicating a high level of economic activity in the borough which is set to increase by 20,000 – 30,000 over the next 10 years (Islington Council, 2006). In addition to the increase in jobs over the next decade, the number of tourists and visitors predicted to arrive in Islington is set to increase due to the completion of the International King's Cross Channel Tunnel Rail Link.

2.1 Street Trading and market statistics

Chapel Market has 160 designated pitches with approximately 105 traders licensed. The market is a conventional street market selling a mix range of fresh produce and

other personal and household items. The market is open Tuesday to Sunday and is located in the heart of the Angel Town Centre.

Whitecross Street Market has currently undergone extensive street improvements, once completed there will be a potential for 100 designated pitches, at the moment there are 15 licensed traders. The Market (one of the oldest markets in London) is located between Old Street and Fortune Street in the south of the borough. The market is open 10am - 3pm, Mondays to Saturdays, and is popular at lunchtime with local office workers. Although all types of goods and foods are sold within the market it is evolving into a food destination market supported by a number of festivals and monthly markets.

Exmouth Market has 20 designated pitches.. The market is located between Rosebery Avenue and Farringdon Road in the south-west of the borough. The market is open Monday to Saturday.

Other markets in the borough include:

- The Camden Passage Market which is a mixture of traders on private and public land
- A private covered market at Nags Head
- Archway Market
- The Islington Farmers' Market
- Freightliners Farm
- Boot Sale at the Nags Head

Part 3: Taking the Strategy Forward

3.1 Implementing the Strategy

Realising the Council's vision of a dynamic street trading and market experience that is diverse and vibrant will be challenging. This will require significant effort to ensure all areas of council are aware of the objectives and incorporate them into their own strategies. To ensure future street trading initiatives embody the direction of this strategy.

The value of revitalising and keeping the markets alive, providing local jobs for local people and meeting environmental sustainable objectives should be the stimulus for action.

Islington needs to ensure that the decline in its markets is reversed and consumers and residents are provided with an attractive alternative to the all-pervading clone town Britain.

3.2 Key themes

The strategy has identified a number of key action areas for consideration. Each of these actions will need to be considered and then taken forward if appropriate.

The objectives follow these key themes:

Look and Feel of our Markets

Identifies ways in which the streetscape of the borough's street markets and street trading sites can be improved. Implementing a plan that will deliver what consumers and businesses require.

Running Viable Markets

Recognises the link between Council's investment in improving the street location and the economic benefit for local business and the borough.

Promoting our Markets

To ensure markets are not the borough's best kept secret. Develop a marketing and communication strategy to promote street markets.

Greening our Markets

Promote street trading's inherent 'green' operation. Market operation and consumers using markets leave a small carbon footprint. Initiatives are required to build on this whilst leading the way to improve sustainability.

Markets within our Community

Street markets play a valuable role in creating and harnessing community interaction. Actions to be implemented need to recognise and build on the historical role markets have had in providing places for social interaction.

Managing our Markets

Street trading is integral to ensuring the day to day activity within the markets and scattered sites.

Issues and Opportunities

This section of the strategy expands on the key issues listed in the previous section and sets out opportunities for change.

Look and Feel of our Markets

Key Issues

- Recognise the importance of local markets and how they impact on the local area.
- Consider the needs of the local community before making changes that could have an adverse impact..
- Take care when regenerating markets to ensure that the correct balance is maintained.
- Ensure that new street works installations and infrastructure take account of the 'Islington Street Book'.
- Wherever possible, consultation should take place with relevant trader associations or groups before work commences and all works should be properly managed and coordinated.

Opportunities

- To look for opportunities for funding to:
 - review and upgrade current storage facilities
 - purchase new stalls/canopies for market use
 - purchase kiosks for appropriate sites install toilet and washing facilities where appropriate
 - install lighting to ensure the safety of stall traders during the winter months
- Develop improved co-ordination to control and manage street works in market areas, to ensure appropriate mitigation measures are employed to minimise the disruption to business operators and residents.
- Identify imaginative lighting solutions to highlight entrances and enliven dead areas. Use lamp posts to incorporate signage, provide a spot for hanging banners to promote special events and to highlight seasonal activities. Ensure the new lighting structures are vandal proof and include access to electrical sockets for traders and for events where appropriate.
- Initiate a programme of design for market stalls considering issues of:
 - consistency of approach to stall design, fascia, canopies and display;
 - recognition that each market in Islington may require a different 'look';
 - identity – incorporating aspects of the Borough's history; and
 - Flexibility - to ensure stalls complement shop fronts in the market area.
- Liaise with traffic management area to review options for road closures, loading and unloading options and parking restrictions during market opening times to promote safe access of traders, neighbouring businesses and shoppers.

- Continue to promote the Heritage Environment Regeneration Scheme in Chapel Market to facilitate the upgrade of shop fronts.
- Work with Transport for London (TfL) on their interchange programme to improve accessibility for pedestrians within public transport interchanges to access the markets, particularly review the transport links with the new Kings Cross interchange. Improve signage to markets from transport hubs.

Running Viable Markets

Key Issues

- Recognise that street traders as small business operators and support them in their development wherever possible.
- Encourage new business start-ups to consider market trading as a first business step and support them through this process.
- Recognise that the number and type of stalls in any market needs to complement not compete with the existing retail mix of an area.
- Ensure that there is some form of quality control of product and trader in place for new and existing stallholders.

Opportunities

- Include street traders in the Business Partnership Programme.
- Through the Partnership and other Council Programmes support ongoing sustainability of market stalls
- Assist traders to develop appropriate signage (eg. banners) to identify and promote their stall.
- Enhance the relationship between local retailers/businesses and traders by creating and maintaining traders' associations through the Business Partnership Programme and other council initiatives.
- Develop guidelines on Council's role and responsibility in assisting trader associations.
- Consider the implementation of new controls for licensing to limit the commodity available e.g. hot food stalls
- To encourage quality control by traders – encouraging traders to develop business plans covering quality, presentation and customer service
- Involve Town Centre Managers in the selection process for considering new traders where appropriate.
- Consider the creation of Council funded community pitches and develop guidelines for eligibility.

- Investigate the availability of support for small business operators through start up grants and assistance with business planning, financial management, product development, presentation and marketing.
- Implement pilot programme of business development in Whitecross Street and other relevant areas.
- Promote the diversity and variety of job opportunities at the market and the potential route towards entrepreneurship and self-employment.
- Include street markets as a retail destination in planning policies.
- Work with local businesses and restaurateurs to promote local procurement from our markets.
- Encourage traders to incorporate environmental sustainability initiatives into their business.
- Provide business support for traders to improve their business skills and self-confidence as business people.
- Implement a programme of training focusing on health and safety, food safety, customer's rights, customer service, business planning, promotion and best practice.
- Introduce a 'Market Trader of the Year' Award
- Implement payment of licence fees by direct debit, credit and debit cards and develop an on-line application process.
- Review trading hours to cater for commuter and working residents and consider remaining open into the evenings at least once a week, particularly in line with surrounding retailers.
- Review systems and criteria used to manage the location of stallholders, focusing on the benefit of moving pitches to complement existing traders and businesses.
- Consider research to identify consumer's needs of the following:
 - type and quality of commodity required
 - operating hours

Promoting our Markets

Key Issue

- To recognise the importance of a marketing strategy to promote Islington's markets and scattered sites.

Opportunities

- Identify all Council and borough wide free communication media to carry stories on markets and events. Develop a communication plan to incorporate market news, updates and events.
 - Develop the Council's Street Market website promoting markets and street trading sites to consumers and tourists.
 - Consider co-ordinating and facilitating a Markets Marketing Forum for all markets (private and public) and town centre managers in the borough. With the aim of discussing events in markets to better co-ordinate activity and promotion.
 - Scope and include how markets can be incorporated into London wide walking, transport, tourism and retail initiatives and promotion.
 - Promote the positive environmental sustainable role traditional markets hold by recognising:
 - the low levels of packaging used for fresh produce
 - the minimal energy use to maintain stalls
 - Extension of Environmental Health's 'scores on the doors' initiative to market traders, kiosks and scattered sites.
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- Identify opportunities to promote the markets as tourist destinations as part of the opening of the international train terminal at Kings Cross and the 2012 Olympic retail tourism initiatives.
 - Consider research to gain an understanding of the consumer profile to enable targeted marketing and promotion of the markets.

Greening our Markets

Key Issue

- To recognise the role that Street Markets can have in promoting and engaging with policies on environmental sustainability and becoming centres of excellence.

Opportunities

- To consider a scheme to identify and reward traders who demonstrate support of the Council's environmental sustainability policies and objectives.
- Promote sustainable transport options of accessing local shopping destinations by bike, foot or public transport as shopping locally allows shoppers to support local, national and international greening initiatives.
- Promote street markets green credentials.

- Educate and promote recycling where possible across all street-trading areas. Ensure bins are available for recycling.
- Work in partnership with the Angel BID to ensure waste management plans for Chapel Market and Camden Passage are consistent with the objectives of this Strategy. Identify opportunities to reduce and reuse plastic bags, look at producing and using cloth or bio-degradable bags that advertise and promote the markets.
- Develop education programmes and promote a reduction in packaging.
- Investigate a programme of composting within all areas of street trading.

Markets within our Community

Key Issue

- To ensure that Street Market's role in social interaction is recognised

Opportunities

- Promote use of tables and chairs in markets where they will not impede shoppers.
- Work with Town Centre Managers to identify the type and installation of street furniture and art to create spaces for shoppers to linger.
- Enliven dead areas and create spaces for social interaction. Promote the role markets have in providing places to take a break particularly for older people and parents with young children.
- Develop a schedule of community events at the markets involving local schools, community groups and celebrities.
- Look at opportunities to use markets as a focal point for building stronger communities.
- Encourage street traders to sell fairly traded products and consider incentives, such as reduced pitch rates, for traders supporting the borough's fair-trade status. (Fairly traded products help to extend the concept of community to other communities who are producing many of the goods being sold).
- Work with schools to link education on nutrition with what is available at the local market.

Managing Our Markets

Key Issue

- To ensure Islington's Street Trading Section is effectively resourced to manage and enforce street trading activities within the parameters of the legislation

Opportunities

- To review and update practice notes for street trading staff
- Standardise enforcement procedures
- Raise consumers, traders and businesses awareness of the Enforcement Concordat promoting a consistent approach to enforcement.
- Encourage and support Islington's Street Trading Officers to gain relevant street trading qualifications.
- Continue to work with all authorities and agencies to eliminate illegal street trading from the borough.
- Develop the Street Trader application process to ensure that new traders embrace the key themes of this strategy
- Explore the creation of a post to manage the implementation of the Street Trading Strategy objectives. The duties for this position will be similar to that of a Town Centre Manager's position.
- Encourage an elected member to champion and support street trading initiatives and the implementation of this strategy.
- Explore areas where new street trading sites could be located.
- Identify the need, type and location of street trading required to support night-time activity in the borough, aiming to alleviate the problem of non-licensed activity.
- Monitor and evaluate the number of new successful business start ups.

