

MARKET MYTHS & FACTS

Myth

The Council are killing the Market.

Fact

We now have more variety of stalls than we ever had, however those stalls take up less floor space than some of the stall who no longer trade so there may seem like there is more space, in total we now have 23 Traders on the books compared to 20 in 2019, in comparison Kings Lynn no longer has a Saturday market and has 5-6 stalls on its Tuesday Market.

28 new traders have tried the Market since covid and we continue to get new enquiries, we have had 4 new traders join between 21st July and 21st August 2021.

2 of the traders have successfully moved on to having shops withing the local area.

We promote the market every week on social media, and the post in July/August were being seen by between 2288 people and some have been seen by nearly 5000.

The Council have repeatedly shared their intention to grow the Market within our meeting and on social media and make it a place that people will want to visit.

Myth

Traders have left because of the licence.

Fact

Traders have left for various reasons, including opening shops, retirement, relocation however sadly one of the reasons we are seeing repeated as a reason for leaving is the atmosphere on the market created by a small group of existing traders.

Myth

There used to have a waiting list.

Fact

At the Markets meeting on 18th Nov 19 it was stated that despite traders enquiring to come to the market the restriction on goods sold, which had been in place for a significant number of years meant that new traders were unable to join the Market, therefore there was a waiting list, as a trader was not able to join the market until the trader who sold that commodity left. – this criterion has now been removed to increase choice and opportunities for everyone.

Myth

No other market asks for National Insurance numbers.

Fact

Downham Market TC is not alone many Markets ask for National Insurance Numbers more local ones include Cambridge, Brandon, Bury, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Clare, Haverhill.

Myth

There is 100 pages of rules and regulations in the new licence.

Fact

The licence is 15 pages long and includes the application form, Market charter and advice on completing the application – in comparison North Norfolk's is 21 pages long excluding the application form, Wisbech has 11 pages of information excluding the application form, Cambridge has 20 excluding the application form.

Myth

The Licence is not fit for purpose

Fact

The licence is no different to many Market Licences and has been reviewed by Graham Wilson, Legal and policy advisor of NABMA, who is and the acknowledged expert in the specialism of market law and he has no concerns about the licence and its content.

Myth

The rents have doubled.

Fact

Under the new licence traders pay per pitch and these fees are in line with other local markets, this ensures equity across all the traders as they pay for the space they use. Traders who use electricity now pay £3 per day to do so.

Myth

You want to turn it into a craft market

Fact

At no time has the Council said it wanted to turn the Market into a Craft Market. The Council would like to expand the market and hold different types of markets on non-market days. The Council has always held Craft Markets and these run alongside the existing Market.

Myth

Council refuses to meet with the Traders or talk to the traders

Fact

The traders have the opportunity to contact the Clerk directly at any time during office hours with any queries in relation to the market. A member of staff is present on Market days to assist with any operational issues.

A regular traders business meeting has taken place since May 2020 with the Council, this was chaired by Cllr Becky Hayes at the direct request of the traders. However, this meeting was not well attended due to the conduct of some the traders in this meeting.

Myth

Traders don't have the right to speak and the Council are "gagging us"

Fact

Council introduced some expectations regarding the behaviour expected from Traders. These are similar to other markets including Cambridge, all those in West Suffolk and North Norfolk, these mainly concentrate on maintaining the reputation and image of the market, and require traders to be courteous, not to discriminate or be abusive, and not to bring the market in to disrepute.

Myth

The council have been offered 250K for the car park to build on it that's why they want to get rid of the Market.

Fact

We have no plans to sell any land and have not been approached to do so. The Council gets an income from the market, when Full council agreed to progress with car parking charges it was on the understanding that the Market would continue in its current location.

Myth

People don't want to attend the market due to Councils actions.

Fact

Sadly, we are getting increasing reports that people do not want to attend the market either to shop or to trade due to the conduct of some of the Traders, and due to the negative comments on social media by some of the Traders and members of the public, rather than by actions of the Council.

Myth

The Clerk and Mayor and a few Councillors are ruining the Market due to their actions.

Fact

Decisions and actions relating to the Market are discussed and voted on by the **Whole Council** within a Full Council Meeting and need a majority vote to be passed. The Clerk carries out the wishes of Full Council.