

# Understanding and enhancing the community value of traditional retail markets

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# Context and rationale

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- There has been a concerted effort over the last 10 years, including by NMTF, NABMA and the GLA, to improve the evidence base for the economic value of markets. There has been much less focus on demonstrating the social and cultural value of markets (tho see GLA/LEAP *Understanding London's markets* report).
- There is a risk that the holistic community value of markets is ignored or damaged through redevelopment processes. Better evidence about the community value of markets may help to support more holistic approaches to investment and redevelopment, that retain and enhance markets' social and cultural roles as well as their economic roles.
- The project builds on and responds to the increasing interest from the sector and policy-makers (including the LMB) in social and cultural value by developing new evidence, tools and insights for understanding and enhancing the community value of traditional retail markets

# The project

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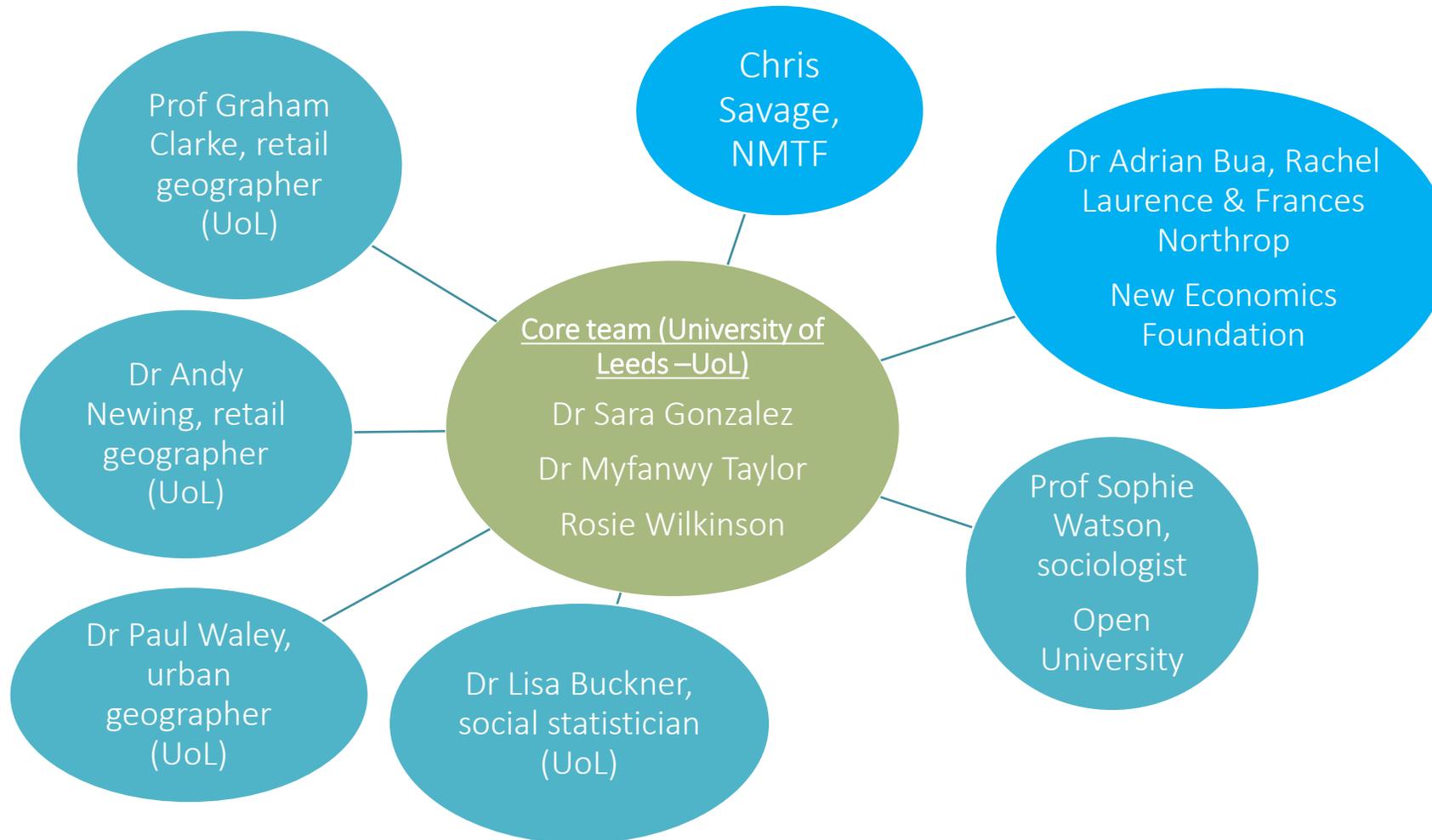
The overall aim of the project is to develop an innovative methodology and analytical framework for the study of the community value of traditional retail markets (TRM).

- **Timing** February 2018 – August 2020
- **Funded** by the Economic and Social Research Council.
- **Multi-disciplinary and multi-sector** team: academics (retail and urban geographers, sociologists) + think tank (NEF) + trader organisation (NMTF)
- **25 interviews** with key actors shaping the national debate on markets (WP1&2)
- **Six workshops** with operators, traders and campaigners (WP2)
- **Three case studies** (Bury Market, Newcastle Grainger, Queen's Market) each involving 10 interviews, a survey of 500 customers and two focus groups (WP3)
- **Publication** of policy reports, briefings, best practice examples, toolkits etc as well as academic outputs (WP4)

# The team

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## Steering Group

Ailbhe McNabola, Power to Change  
Alan Hallsworth, University of Portsmouth  
Gary Warnaby, Institute of Place Management  
Graham Wilson, NABMA  
Jonathan Pauling, Alexandra Rose Charity  
Richard Lee, Just Space  
Sasha Laurel Jagroo, Friends of Queen's Market  
Suzi Hall, London School of Economics and Political Science

# Progress / next steps

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The image shows the cover of a report. At the top left are the logos for E·S·R·C Economic & Social Research Council, the New Economics Foundation, and the University of Leeds. The title 'MEASURING THE VALUE OF TRADITIONAL RETAIL MARKETS: TOWARDS A HOLISTIC APPROACH' is written in white text on a green background. At the bottom, there is contact information for the New Economics Foundation and the University of Leeds, including a website, email, phone number, and social media handle.

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MEASURING THE VALUE OF  
TRADITIONAL RETAIL MARKETS:  
TOWARDS A HOLISTIC APPROACH

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- Published early policy briefing on measuring the value of markets
- Completed 25 interviews with key actors shaping the national debate and policy on markets
  - Held workshops with market managers and campaigners (traders workshop April 2019)
    - Selected case studies; developed and piloted survey; case study interviews underway.
  - Attended NMTF and NABMA conferences, APPMG, Retail Markets Forum, London Markets Board, Yorkshire Markets Forum.
- **Next steps:** complete survey, interviews and focus groups by July; presentation of early findings NABMA conference Sept; thereafter focus is on engagement, outputs and impact.

# Today's discussion

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- 1) Sharing some initial findings from interviews and workshops
- 2) Introducing the case studies
- 3) Exploring ideas for potential outputs
- 4) Issues for the London Markets Board

# 1) Interviews & workshops

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## **Main national level bodies**

- All-Party Parliamentary Markets Group
- Local Government Association
- NABMA and NMTF

## **Key London actors**

- Greater London Authority
- Members of the London Markets Board
- Association of London Market Operators

## **Major operators and consultants**

- Major operators: Geraud UK, Market Place, Market Asset Management
- Influential examples: KERB, Barcelona Markets Institute, Borough Market, Altrincham Market/Mackie Mayor
- Consultants: The Retail Group, ROI Team and Bill Grimsey

## **Charities, community and campaign groups**

- Project for Public Spaces Inc
- Alexandra Rose Charity
- Levenshulme Market CIC
- Just Space
- Latin Corner UK

## **Workshops**

- 30 market managers from the local authority sector, private operators, charitable trusts and the wider industry. Held at NABMA conference Sept 2018.
- 17 market campaigners from London and beyond. Organised independently and held at UCL Nov 2018.
- Traders' workshop to be held at NMTF conference April 2019.

# Initial findings

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- There is a wide-ranging appreciation of traditional retail markets' social and cultural roles. There is, however, presently a lack of vision for a contemporary successful traditional retail market.
- Existing approaches to measuring the performance of markets do not incorporate social and cultural aspects. There is a strong need for new tools and methods which would allow markets' to demonstrate their importance and contribution.
- To gain greater recognition and support for the community value of markets, the markets sector also needs to make stronger links with other parts of local authorities (e.g. public health, economic development, regeneration, planning) and other relevant public, private and third sector organisations.
- Stronger links are also needed with the varied communities that use, rely on and value markets, at all scales from the local to the national. Charities, community and campaign groups can offer knowledge and evidence about the social and cultural aspects of value of specific markets, ideas for how to improve them or partner with operators and/or traders on specific initiatives.

# 2) Selecting case studies

## Criteria

- Be large enough
- Serve a diversity of customers
- Evidence of social/cultural value
- Has an organised group of traders
- No or limited disruption from refurbishment or redevelopment during survey period
- Cooperative traders / management / community group

## Process

1. Long-list of 18 UK markets from suggestions from project partners.
2. Desk-based research to collect basic information.
3. Phonecalls with market managers and trader reps for shortlisted 12 markets
4. Final shortlist of five markets selected through research team discussions (Bury, Barnsley, Leeds Kirkgate, Newcastle Grainger and Queen's Market)
5. Visits to final shortlist markets May to August 2018
6. Assessment of different combinations; exploration of possibilities to include more case studies.
7. Final decision reached by research team Oct 2018: Newcastle Grainger, Bury Market and Queen's Market.

# Bury Market

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- 300 stalls on open market, 58 in market hall, 7 in fish & meat hall and 28 shops on the perimeter.
- Occupancy 96-100%
- Approx. 8 million visitors a year (250,000 a week); the market drives footfall in the town.
- Generates a surplus of £1.1m
- Winner of NABMA Best Market Attraction Award 2019
- Customers 70% female, mainly white British, 53% 65+ years, 75% have been visiting for more than 10 years, 36% from Bury and 41% elsewhere in Manchester, 5% come by coach (2014 data).
- Bury Markets Management team works closely with other relevant local actors, traders and community groups
- Vacancies, footfall and vacancies all on a downward trajectory; churn a particular concern. Council is working to attract more local people and younger customers and is beginning a four-year capital investment programme to address backlog maintenance and refurbishment.
- Town centre masterplanning exercise underway to deliver more housing and grow the night time economy, including through pop-up markets, appears disconnected from Bury Markets thus far.

# Newcastle Grainger

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- 110 units in 184 year old Victorian market hall
- Open Mon to Sat, 9am to 5.30pm
- Vacancies less than 10%
- Footfall 130,000 per week
- Generates annual surplus of £500,000
- Successful Christmas night market, attracting 11,000 visitors in 2011
- Customers 72% female; overwhelmingly white British; 78% have been visiting for more than 10 years (2014 data).
- Mix of traditional traders and new traders, in particular food; market is gradually changing. Some concerns about saturation of hot food.
- Operated under Charter rights by the Commercial Property Team, within the Operations Directorate of Newcastle City Council.
- Strong local NMTF group, which has developed good relations with the market management.
- Market operator lets a stall for free to Newcastle City Food Bank and manages a small space for community activities and specialist markets.
- Refurbishment programme underway for doors and roof is being paid for via prudential borrowing, triggering a market testing exercise in 2018 to explore options for raising rental income.

# Queen's Market

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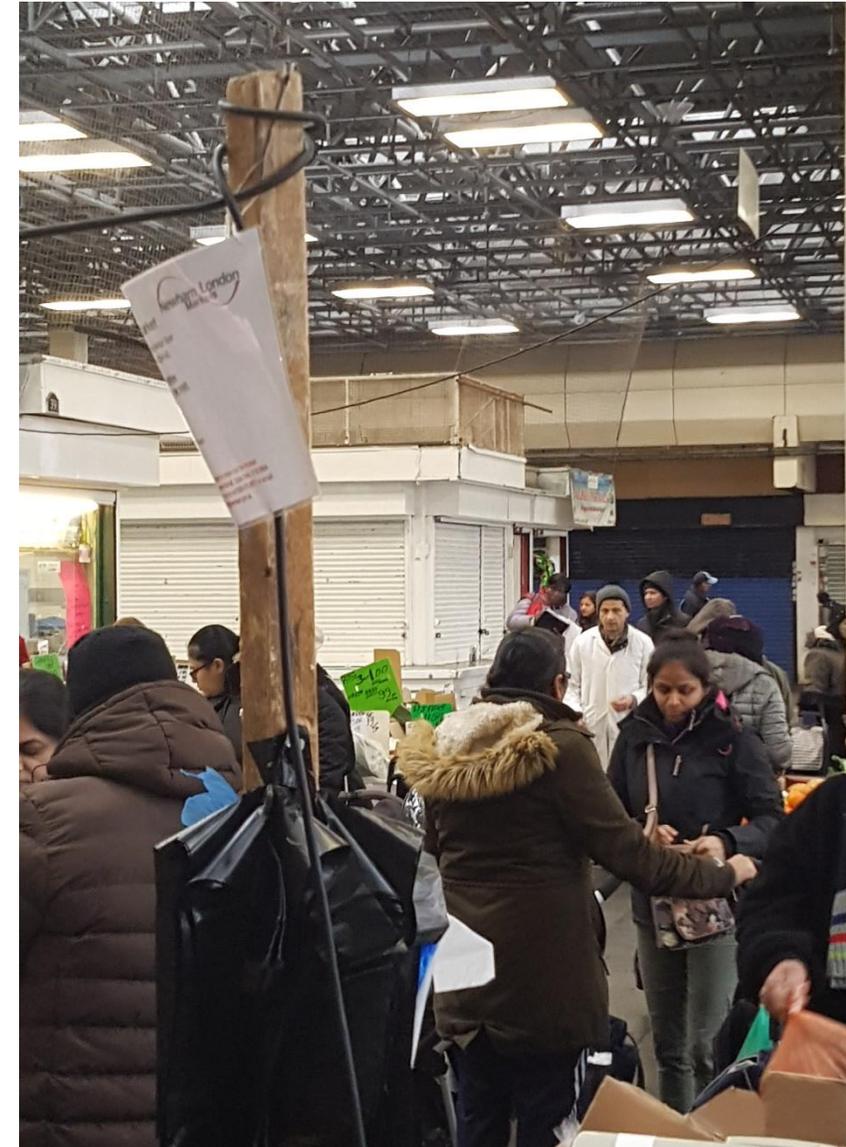
- 168 pitches, 10-20 kiosks and 78 perimeter shops
- Vacancy rate on pitches approx. 30%.
- Surplus/deficit TBC.
- Quality, affordable and specialist fresh fish, meat, fruit and veg, fabric and other stalls attract shoppers to the market and the wider area.
- Approx. 70% of customers are female, 60% Asian, 20% African & Afro-Caribbean and 20% White British/European; age range 30+.
- Threat of redevelopment in 2000s mobilised Friends of Queen's Market and generated evidence about its economic and social value (NEF 2006). Registered as an Asset of Community Value.
- Fragmented governance: Markets Service (operating under London Local Authority Act), Property Service, Highways and Car Parking divisions.
- Traders are not formally organised but act collectively in other ways.
- Current concerns: maintenance, cleaning and security; car park fees; lettings; accusations of harassment; rent increases on kiosks and shops; transparency and accountability.
- The market is part of a larger site listed for redevelopment in Newham's local plan. A feasibility study is also underway.
- Waiting to see what the new Mayor of Newham, Rokhsana Fiaz's approach to the market will be.

# Our survey

- 10-15 minute face-to-face survey with 500 market users; carried out by Fieldwork Assistance
- Aiming to capture a representative sample of market users, including usually hard-to-reach groups
- Asks about shopping, social interaction and feelings about the market
- Collects key demographic information which will allow us to explore how different groups are using the market
- Challenge: generating meaningful data about social and cultural aspects of markets through a large-scale customer survey; designing questions that might generate quantitative data.
- We have the opportunity to explore in more detail in two focus groups at each market during July
- We will be arranging meetings with market management, wider council staff, traders and community members in the Autumn to share the findings and contribute to debates about the future of the three markets.
- Exhibition of findings to the public at community events in the Autumn.

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# 3) Early ideas for outputs

1. Ongoing engagement with the markets sector, national and local government and other relevant public, private and third sector organisations to build relationships, understanding and collaboration.
2. Survey tool + guidance for measuring markets' economic, social and cultural roles (cf NABMA/ROI Team financial performance templates).
3. Development of indicators for community value for NMTF/NABMA national surveys of market traders and managers and APSE benchmarking exercise.
4. Development of teaching materials on community value for NABMA Market Management Diploma.
5. Best practice guidance for market operators on enhancing community value e.g. making a business case for investment; alternative sources of finance; handling redevelopment schemes; building relationships with local authority, private sector, third sector and community/voluntary groups.
6. Event and pamphlet on community and/or trader owned/managed markets.

## 4) Specific issues for the LMB

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1. **Social value.** How can this research project contribute to the LMB's goal to improve evidence and to maximise social value?
2. **International Public Markets Conference.** Can the conference visit and markets such as Elephant & Castle, Seven Sisters, Crisp Street, Ridley Road and Shepherd's Bush? Can conference fees be waived for traders and community members who wish to attend?
3. **Market campaigns.** How can the LMB work more closely with market campaigners such as Just Space, Friends of Queen's Market, Save Latin Village/Wards Corner Community Coalition?
4. **Threatened markets.** Can the LMB consider and respond to concerns about the present threat to many of London's most loved markets?
5. **The London Plan.** Can the LMB strengthen support for the social value of markets in the London Plan, currently undergoing Examination in Public?