

# Researching the community benefits of public markets

*Unconference*, 10<sup>th</sup> International Public Markets  
Conference

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# Why research the community benefits of markets?

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- There is a strong demand amongst policy-makers, operators, traders and community/campaign groups in the UK for more tools and evidence for the community benefits of markets.
- In the UK, research commissioned/carried out by the markets sector has tended (until recently) to focus on economic benefits.
- There is a risk that the community benefits of markets are ignored or damaged through improvement/refurbishment/redevelopment processes.
- Better evidence may help operators, traders and communities to make a holistic case for investment and enhance the community benefits of markets.

# What do we mean by 'community benefits'?

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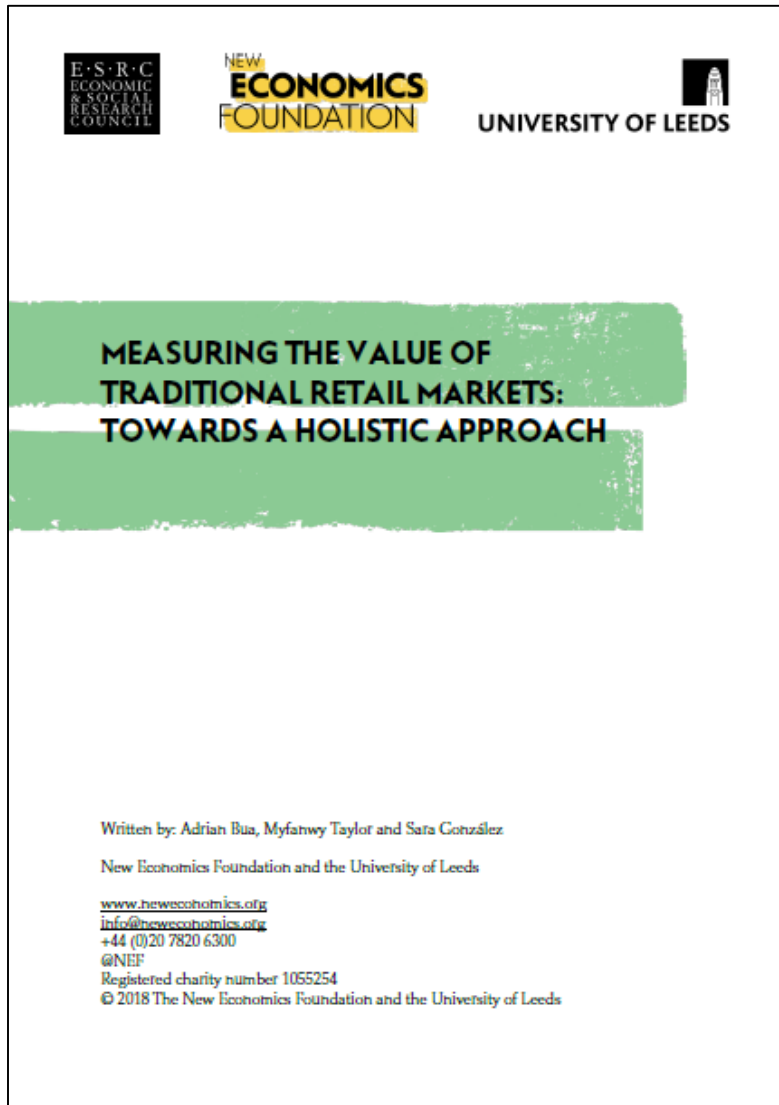
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- No single definition/answer
- It will depend on the market, and on the place
- Different groups and interests will have different perspectives
- Broadly, we mean social benefits and cultural functions, as well as more socially-oriented economic outcomes
- Role of markets in serving specific communities: low-income, migrant/refugee, black and minority ethnic (BME) groups, socially isolated, vulnerable etc.

# How to research markets' community benefits?

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- Ask market traders and customers: how do they use and value markets; what do markets mean to them?
  - trader/user surveys
  - build links with trader and customer, community and campaign groups
- Make use of tools for measuring local economic multipliers, social return on investment and social impact analysis
- Include social/community measures in national surveys/benchmarking exercises/performance indicators

# Markets4People research

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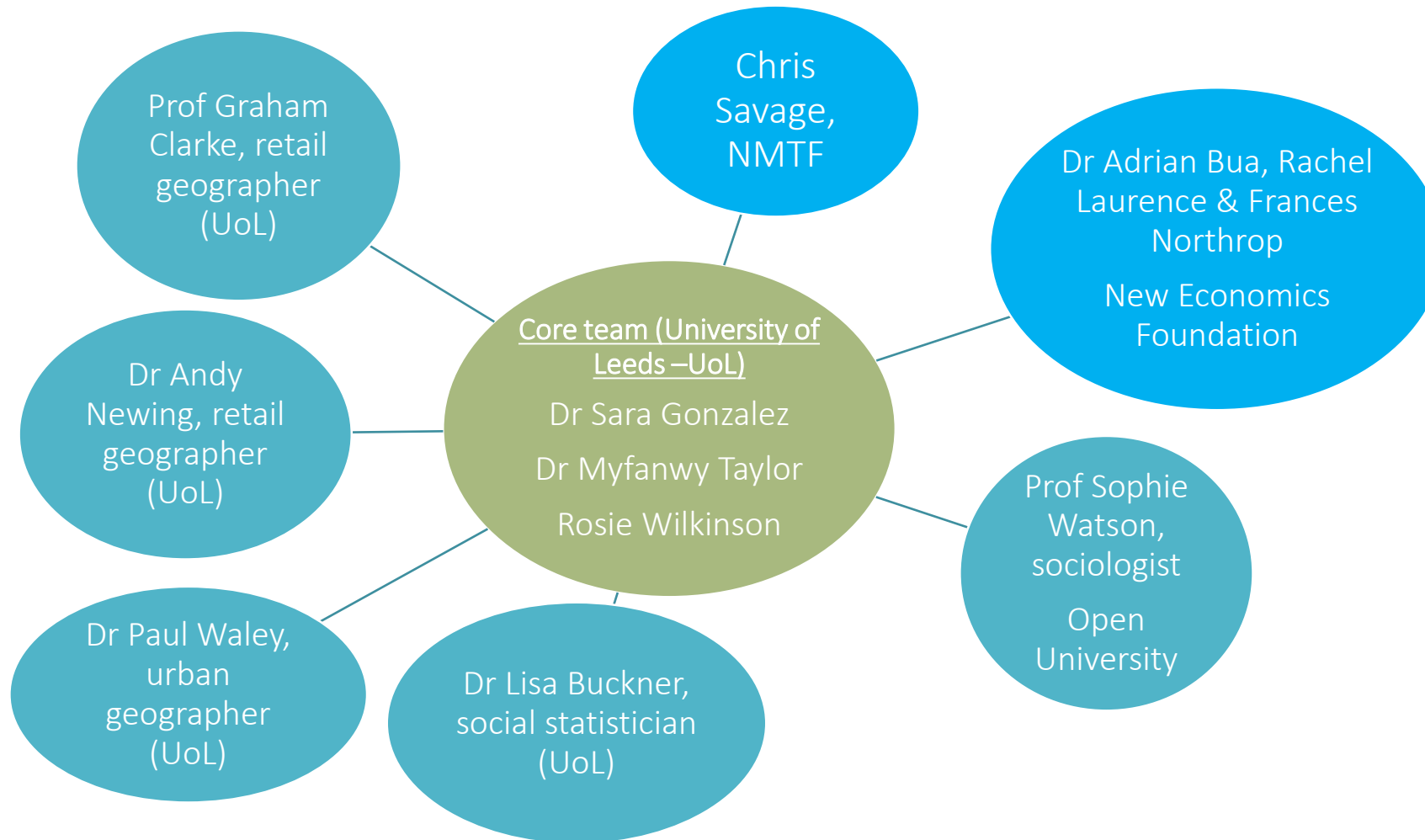
The overall aim of the project is to develop an innovative methodology and analytical framework for the study of the community value of traditional retail markets.

- **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
- **Six workshops** with operators, traders and campaigners
- **Three case studies** (Bury Market, Newcastle Grainger, Queen's Market) each involving 10 interviews, a survey of 500 customers and two focus groups
- **Publication** of policy reports, briefings, best practice examples, toolkits etc as well as academic outputs
- **Get involved!** Website & Blog: [www.trmcommunityvalue.leeds.ac.uk](http://www.trmcommunityvalue.leeds.ac.uk) Twitter: @Markets4People

# 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

# Our market user survey

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- **Visiting history/patterns/habits** (e.g. length of time; regularity; duration of visits; travel; reasons for coming; wider local spending)
- **Shopping and eating at the market** (e.g. types of food/drink, goods and services; spending; price & quality; speciality functions; other and online shopping)
- **Social aspects of visiting the market** (e.g. feeling safe/welcome etc; interactions with traders and other customers; using facilities; attending events)
- **Views about the market** (e.g. its community functions; its importance relative to other amenities; any changes would like to see; understanding impact if market wasn't there any more)

# Today's discussions

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*Overarching focus: hearing perspectives from markets in different countries and contexts.*

*We want to hear as many different – and opposing - views as possible!*

- 1) Your perspectives on the community benefits of markets
- 2) What data on markets do you currently collect and why?
- 3) Filling the gaps: what new research is needed and why?
- 4) What are the roles of policy makers, operators, traders and customers/communities?

*→ three key 'take-aways' to report back to the full conference*