

## **FUTURE MARKET PLAN 2017**

### **1. BACKGROUND**

Markets in general are in decline nationally and Much Wenlock Town Council have been keen to try and regenerate local markets and in return invigorate the High Street. In order to facilitate this and following early successes it was agreed that monthly food markets would help to achieve this objective.

### **2. FOOD MARKETS**

Food markets have therefore been arranged from April 2016-December 2016. Traders not involved in food have been advised that they are not able to attend on food market days.

It has been problematic for the Town Council to attract and maintain traders for these markets. Due to the popularity of the food market concept larger towns also regularly hold food markets which often clash with Much Wenlock's. Larger towns are often a more attractive proposition for traders as they tend to have a larger footfall and therefore higher sales.

Despite regular advertising, press releases, use of facebook, twitter and radio, visitors to the town does not appear to have largely increased other than on days where other events are taking place and individuals were planning to visit the town anyway. New traders who have been encouraged to attend the markets by Town Council staff often fail to return due to poor sales. Recent events have been poor with low turnout by traders and the public alike. The Corn Exchange was empty at the last event as all but one trader cancelled at the last minute. Non-food traders would have been able to trade on that day but had already been turned away due to the Council's policy. Unfortunately, Much Wenlock is limited with what it can offer due to its size and when there are other events taking place such as Ludlow food market, the public and traders choose the latter.

Much Wenlock Town Council should review how much emphasis it places on the food markets as a tool to invigorate the markets and more generally the High Street. Clearly as a panacea, it isn't working.

### 3. SUNDAY CRAFT MARKETS

A Sunday craft market has been held in Much Wenlock, fortnightly from May to September for the last two years. The organiser Gail Wilkinson books and pays for the Corn Exchange twice a month and the Buttermarket once a month and then sub-lets it to other traders. Gail undertakes all the organisation and advertising herself but does supply Public Liability insurance for all traders to the Town Council.

Gail has advised that these markets are reasonably successful. There is regular footfall into the town with many locals and tourists in the area. Tourists are often disappointed that there are not more shops open on Sunday's, she has informed.

With future market planning in mind and in order to review its existing policies, the Town Council has asked Gail if she would be interested in holding her markets on Saturday's instead of Sunday's. She has been informed that the Buttermarket due to its existing long term tenant, would not be available for her exclusive use. She is currently reviewing the change of date with her traders and will advise of her view in early October.

### 4. OTHER TRADERS

There are a number of regular traders and charities who have been involved in Much Wenlock's markets for many years. Some of these regulars have now retired or have found that market trade in Much Wenlock and other areas is no longer profitable and have therefore changed their careers. Recent changes to Town Council policies have caused unrest amongst some of these traders and the community alike. The Town Council therefore needs to consider how best to accommodate all of its tenants needs in its future planning.

The table below is a synopsis of the advantages and disadvantages of some proposals for consideration.

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	CONCLUSION
FOOD MARKET	<p>Some regular traders attracted into the town with quality products such as Weird and Wonderful Cheese.</p> <p>When well attended improves the atmosphere and vibe of the Town.</p> <p>Attracts potential new customers to the High Street.</p>	<p>Frequency is too regular and often traders tempted by the competition. The public are unlikely to be attracted into Much Wenlock for a small food market alone.</p> <p>The market is disjointed with food areas too far away from each other.</p> <p>Dissatisfaction from long time traders who are not allowed to trade on certain days.</p>	<p>Use the Square, the Buttermarket and the area outside the museum for food, providing more cohesion.</p> <p>Consider reducing the frequency of these markets to quarterly or allow traders to book these areas to sell food on a first come first served basis.</p> <p>Don't label the market as a food market as this sets up the event for potential failure. Allow it to become more informal in order to incorporate food into the structure of the town more generally.</p>
CRAFT MARKET	<p>A full Corn Exchange selling quality products.</p> <p>Potential improved footfall into the High Street for a regular market which adds interest to Much Wenlock's usual offering.</p>	<p>The limited capacity of other traders and charities to use the Corn Exchange when it is booked for the craft market.</p> <p>The market is only held during the summer months normally May to</p>	<p>Allow Gail to utilise the Corn Exchange on Saturdays monthly, with a Corn Exchange/ Buttermarket booking on Sunday's monthly.</p> <p>Ask Gail to consider incorporating the Town's</p>

	<p>Gail Wilkinson will organize the events and advertise them herself so there would be no additional Council resource required to run the events.</p>	<p>September, although Gail will consider booking for a longer period if she can book on Saturdays.</p> <p>Existing regular traders and charities will be unhappy if they are unable to utilise the Corn Exchange for two weeks a month. This will also have a potential impact on the goodwill that the Council has with local residents.</p>	<p>regular traders into this market if this is mutually beneficial.</p> <p>Charities and other traders to have use of the Corn Exchange three weeks out of every four.</p> <p>Consider allowing other regular traders to use the Buttermarket for bric a brac sales on Craft market days (Saturday's only).</p>
MUSICAL EVENT	<p>Liven up the High Street and keep visitors entertained.</p>	<p>Cost. Artists are unlikely to perform for free.</p> <p>Time. The Town Council has limited resources and a regular event would be difficult to source and maintain.</p> <p>Many local residents would not appreciate these events due to noise levels.</p>	<p>Not practical.</p>

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