

# BOSTON MARKET – DEVELOPMENT/ACTION PLAN



APPENDIX 1
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## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Boston Borough Council (BBC) has responsibility for two markets in the borough. Markets run on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the historic Market Place, from 8.30am – 2.30pm between 1<sup>st</sup> November – 31<sup>st</sup> March, and 8.30am – 3.30pm between 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> October.
- 1.2 Markets are an important and historic part of Boston. Across the country, markets have faced many challenges over the years, including the rise of online and out of town shopping retailers, competition from unregulated car boot sales, as well as the recent COVID pandemic which has changed the way many people shop.
- 1.3 The current stalls are at the end of their life cycle and are in the process of being replacing. The service also needs to make savings to achieve a breakeven position and support corporate savings required by the Council. The service is therefore reviewing its operation.

## **2.0 The Focus of the Action Plan**

This action plan is being developed through engagement with the Portfolio Holder, Cabinet, Scrutiny, Boston Town Area Committee, traders and Lead Officers. The plan seeks to focus on: -

- Delivering modern traditional markets that are cost efficient delivering the best value for money.
- Delivering vibrant attractive markets that appeal to visitors and residents alike.
- Attracting new young traders.
- Increasing marketing activity.
- Working with the Council's Events Team and local partners to add value to markets with entertainment and events.

### 3.0 Approach to the Action Plan

The following four themes have been developed, each supporting key strategic objectives and actions.

**Objective 1** – To deliver a sustainable Markets Service and become financially resilient.

Objective 1 strategic actions under the, Sustainable & Financially Resilient theme, include: -

- To review delivery models
- To achieve efficiency savings through restructuring the service, phase 1 in Q1 and 2, and phase 2 in Q3 2024/25 financial year
- To look for funding opportunities
- To review the markets commissioning mechanism

**Objective 2** – To deliver Modern Markets, improving both Infrastructure & Delivery

Objective 2 strategic actions under, A Modern Market – Infrastructure & Delivery theme, include: -

- Saturday market road closure in place Q2, currently in final consultations to apply for a road closure on Wednesday market days in Q4.
- Review market stalls and Workforce requirements – 30 New gazebos purchased, Stall Erector restructuring Phase 1 completed Q3, Phase 2 to be completed Q4.
- Introduce new equipment – Work van for Market Officer, storage container and silent generators purchased.
- Introduce online/card payment systems – Talks in progress to introduce a Process data quickly (PDQ) machine to the market, as well as development ongoing for a new booking and payment system on GOSS.

**Objective 3** – The Boston Markets Service becoming known for its Specialist Markets and Events

Objective 3 strategic objectives within the theme, Known for Specialist Markets and Events, include: -

- To increase the number of specialist markets each year.
- To work with partners to bring new activities and events to the markets.
- To develop and improve the teenage markets.

- To develop and improve the Farmers Markets.

**Objective 4** – The Markets Service is successfully Promoted and Well Marketed

Objective 4 strategic objectives within the theme, adept at Promotion and Well Marketed, include: -

- To maximise promotion of the markets by using local groups on Facebook for free advertisement and utilising BBC Communications and Place Teams.
- To continue to increase social media presence, creating a new Instagram account and updating current market Facebook account.
- To develop the Boston Market UK brand.

Actions with timescales have been developed to seek to deliver against the strategic objectives.

**3.1 Resources**

The Boston Markets team consists of one full time Markets Manager shared across South Holland, Boston and East Lindsey and one Markets Officer dedicated to Boston.

Markets delivery forms part of a full Leisure & Culture Service Review which is scheduled to progress in the first half of 2024.

**3.2 Monitoring and Governance**

Monitoring of the actions will be reported on at Portfolio Holder Briefings, Cabinet and Scrutiny meetings as appropriate.

The current lead officers are: -

- Markets Manager
- Interim Cultural Services Manager
- Assistant Director for Leisure and Culture

## 4.0 Objective 1 - Sustainable and Financially Resilient

<u>Reference Number</u>	<u>Strategic Actions</u>	<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Current / Proposed Action</u>	<u>Detail including comments to support delivery (e.g. resources required etc.)</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Timescale for Delivery</u>	<u>How will success be measured</u>
1	<b>To review delivery options</b>	Leisure & Culture	<b>Short Term Action:</b> Market Policy review along with severe weather policy.	Policy to be reviewed again for 2024 (following a review in 2023), including a consultation exercise for a reduced budget a different Markets delivery model and development of a new payment system (see below actions).	Market Manager	June 2024  New policy Completed.  Markets Payment system due October 2025	New policy adopted, consultation completed and new Markets payment system in place.
2	<b>To achieve efficiency savings</b>	Leisure & Culture	<b>Current Proposed Action:</b> Service review underway for the Leisure and Culture service to seek efficiency savings, across the Partnership.	Work with HR and Finance colleagues on service review implications and benefits.	Market Manager / AD Leisure & Culture	June 2024  Review completed, savings to be built into 2025/26 budget	Service review completed, and long-term budget savings determined.
3	<b>To look for funding opportunities</b>	Leisure & Culture	<b>Current Proposed Action:</b> Submit a bid to access Department for Levelling up Communities and Housing – £20m	The Markets qualify for this funding stream. Work is ongoing with Growth Team to prepare a bid to this funding stream. This funding would	Market Manager/ Growth Team	Bid Submission April 2024, for	Funding is accessed and the markets service redeveloped.

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			<p>Endowment funding. This funding bid is to replace the market stalls and vehicle.</p> <p><b><u>Long Term Proposed Action:</u></b> Potential for UKSPF funding in 2025 as well, to bid for additional equipment needs at that time as necessary.</p>	<p>support the delivery of Actions 2 and No 6.</p> <p>This is to be looked at to help support the market offer.</p>	<p>Project completed.</p> <p>Market Manager/ Program Manager UKSPF</p>	<p>2024/25 delivery</p> <p>July 2025</p>	A successful UKSPF bid.
4	To review the mechanisms for commissioning the Markets Service	Leisure & Culture	<b><u>Longer Term Proposed Action:</u></b> To review the current method of commissioning the Boston Markets.	The Markets are currently delivered in house, a review will be undertaken to determine if a more efficient and effective model is feasible.	Assistant Director – Leisure & Culture	December 2024	The most efficient and effective delivery model identified.
4	To review delivery options	Leisure & Culture	<b><u>Short Term Action:</u></b> Market Policy review along with severe weather policy.	Policy to be reviewed again for 2025 (following a review in 2024), including proposal to freeze 23/24 fees, restructure several aspects of the policy to enable the Council to be in a stronger position when enforcing its policy.	Market Manager	<p>April 2025</p> <p>Completed April 2025</p>	New policy adopted; consultation completed



## 5.0 Objective 2 - A Modern Market - Infrastructure & Delivery

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5	<b>Wednesday Market Restructure</b>	Leisure & Culture	<b><u>Short Term Proposed Action:</u></b> Consider and if appropriate seek to relocate traders including the auction, to the main market in the Market Place.	By relocating the small number of traders that remain on Bargate Green, it will open up the car park there on Wednesdays and increase income to the Council. Support from the Council's Assets to facilitate this will be followed up/required.	Market Manager	April 2024  Completed March 2025	A successful relocation of most/all traders from the Green to the Market place.
6	<b>Review Market Stalls &amp; workforce requirements</b>	Leisure & Culture	<b><u>Current Proposed Action:</u></b> To restructure and update Markets operation and delivery.	This will be integrated into the wider Leisure & Culture service review (Action 2). This approach aims to support the markets teamwork in a more efficient way.	Market Manager/ Assistant Director Leisure & Culture	September 2024  Completed April 25	A modern market offering, with equipment and service structure in place.
7	<b>Introduce Online Payment System</b>	Leisure & Culture	<b><u>Current Proposed Action:</u></b> Consider and report on the viability of alternative online payment options that could possibly be better than the current method.	To deliver a more efficient payment system for both the Council and the Traders. Better options for traders may encourage new traders to the service.	PSPS ICT/ Market Manager	September 2024 Due for completion October 2025	A new payment system in place, that is beneficial to the service and traders alike.



## 6.0 Objective 3 – Known for Specialist Markets and Events

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8	<b>To Increase the Number of Specialist Markets each year</b>	Leisure & Culture	<b>Current Proposed Action:</b> Explore options and availability of niche/artisan markets to help increase footfall and bring new traders to the markets.	Farmers and Teenage Markets in place, with an aim to start new niche craft and antique markets by June 2024.	Market Manager	June 2025  Completed April 2025 (Capacity reached at current staffing levels)	An artisan/niche market each Saturday to compliment the current Market offer.
9	<b>To work with partners to bring new activities and events to the markets.</b>	Leisure & Culture	<b>Current Proposed Action:</b> Continue to work with the events team to host events on market days in Boston.	Look to expand events/entertainment to more market days where funding permits from 3 to 6 events.  Work with Econ Growth Team on monitoring HUQ data.	Market Manager/Event Team	July 2025	Increase the number of events on market days from 3 to 6 per annum. An increase in footfall verified through HUQ data.
10	<b>To continue to develop &amp; improve the teenage markets</b>	Leisure & Culture	<b>Current Proposed Action:</b> Continue to promote the teenage market opportunities.	Host 11 teenage markets per annum. Encourage more young people onto Boston markets and events. 2023/24 saw 7 new teenage markets added to the programme from June 23.	Market Manager	Aug 2025  Due to staffing, 3 events booked for 2025.	Add an additional 4 Teenage markets into the programme.

## 7.0 Objective 4 – Adept at Promotion and well Marketed.

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11	<b>To Maximize promotion of the markets</b>	Leisure & Culture	<b><u>Current Proposed Action:</u></b> Continue social media presence and promotion of teenage and niche markets.	The addition of new niche markets and continued growth of the teenage markets should help increase the presence of Boston Markets on social media. 2023/24 saw 2 additional niche markets added to the programme per month.	Markets Manager/ Executive PA	August 24  Completed April 2025	Monitoring of Social Media Impressions and recording trends in activity.
12	<b>To continue to increase the social media presence</b>	Leisure & Culture	<b><u>Current Proposed Action:</u></b> Continue to develop the social media presence for the markets.	Facebook page has been set up and continues to grow.	Markets Manager/ Executive PA/Communications Team	March 25  Completed April 2025  3000 followers reached	The social media presence continues to grow with the existing 2,300 followers growing to 3,000.
13	<b>To develop the Boston Markets UK brand</b>	Leisure & Culture	<b><u>Current Proposed Action:</u></b> Work with print and design to create branding (banners and promotional material) to add to the identity of the	There is a small budget within print and design that can be used to print new banners and material. There will also be money within the budget to help support this.	Markets Manager	June 2025  Completed April 2025	Trader feedback and public perception online and within the

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			markets and seek feedback from traders and public.	Surveys to be undertaken in order to seek to continually improve the service.		New banners, bunting, Trader of the week feature, barrier covers and A2 advertising foamboards now in place.	market via a 6 monthly survey.