

Frequently Asked Questions

Changes to the management of Hertford and Ware Markets

1. Do the new arrangements mean the markets will still take place?

Yes, the collection of stalls will have the same appearance of the current market, but stalls will be managed in a different way, under street trading legislation.

2. Will there be any changes to the current days / times of the markets?

It is proposed to provide the street trading on the same days and times as the current market days.

3. What is the council doing to support traders? How will the markets be promoted to continue to attract visitors and new traders?

The council plans to re-launch the market service and promote pitch opportunities to seek to improve the vibrancy of the markets. Traders will be supported in applying for street trading consents to achieve a seamless transfer.

4. What about casual traders?

Traders can apply for an occasional trading consent for up to one month at a time, which is an option for seasonal producers or traders wishing to trial a market stall. As part of the street trading policy review, additional short terms consents will be investigated.

5. Do these changes mean that the council will no longer set up the gazebos for the farmers markets?

To assist with a smooth transition, it is proposed that the council will continue to arrange and fund the setting up and taking down of the gazebos for the farmers markets for a period up to 12 months.

6. How will traders be allocated pitches and what affect will it have on the charges?

Traders will be allocated specific pitches and the council will aim to allocate the current pitches that regular traders use. Fees are per trader, per pitch and regular traders will pay less than they currently pay under market fees.

7. If traders can't afford to pay for the fee all at once, is there an option to pay by instalments?

Under street trading the fee for an annual consent is paid when applying for the consent; however the ability to pay by instalments will be investigated. Traders can also apply for a monthly street trading consent which provides flexibility and a shorter commitment e.g. for those wanting to trial a stall.

8. What happens to specific market events (e.g. Hertford/ Ware food festivals) which currently take place on a monthly basis?

The council wants to continue to encourage and support these events. It is proposed that under the review of the street trading policy, these are treated as 'group consents'. One trader would then apply for 'consent' on behalf of a group of traders.

9. Who will license and regulate other markets (i.e. car boot sales) in the area, and can they still continue?

Yes, they can still continue and will still have to operate under other regulatory legislation. However as the council will be operating the market stalls under different legislation, it will no longer have the right to control or regulate other markets or car boot sales, however these would continue to operate via arrangements between the organisers and the land owners.

10. How will the council ensure market traders keep the area around their stalls safe?

There are standard conditions that are attached to all consents issued. These include the responsibility to maintain public safety and prevent nuisance. The council would only give consent to traders that have the necessary insurance cover and any claims arising would be referred to the trader.

11. Who is responsible for enforcement when an unauthorised trader turns up on market day, sells illegal products, expands beyond their pitch, blocks access or spends too long unloading?

Enforcement and management of any unauthorised traders will be investigated by the council's enforcement officers. To assist with this information will need to be provided including photos if possible. Officers will also carry out occasional inspections on market days at Hertford and Ware to ensure compliance with consents.

12. Who will market traders contact if there is a problem that needs a contractor to attend?

In a situation such as a damaged electric bollard that needs to be made safe, traders can contact the council's out of hours service who will arrange for someone to attend.

13. If the Council no longer provides bins for market waste how will traders dispose of waste ?

Under street trading, traders are required to remove their own waste from site, and provide adequate proof that waste is disposed of legally when applying for consent. The council will provide advice and support about waste disposal and work with traders to assist them with this change.

14. How will the council prevent more than one trader selling the same product?

The current street trading policy doesn't restrict more than one type of trader selling the same product. This will be considered as part of the review of the street trading policy, subject to complying with other legislation e.g. fair competition.

15. Why can't the town council take over the market, like in Bishops Stortford?

This option has been investigated and Hertford and Ware Town Councils have declined to undertake this at the current time. This option will remain available and the council would support them should they decide this is something they wish to take on in the future.

16. Are there private operators that would be interested in running the markets?

There are private operators but they are more inclined to operate larger markets where the returns can be greater.

17. Why don't / can't traders operate their own service?

Subject to the review on street trading, traders may have the opportunity to apply for a 'group consent' where one trader could apply for consents on behalf of the other traders. This is the current arrangement for the street food markets.