



Pitch Perfect Stallholder Guidelines for a Successful Market Day

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in trading at one of West Oxfordshire's historic charter markets. Whether you are a first-time stallholder or an experienced trader looking to join a new community, we are delighted to have you here.

This guide is designed to help you get started, understand what is expected, and make the most of your market experience. Here you will find everything from how to apply for a stall and trading hours, to sustainability tips, insurance requirements, and how we work together to create a vibrant, welcoming, and successful market environment.

We are proud of our markets — not just as places to shop, but as lively community spaces that support local enterprise, celebrate creativity, and bring people together. We look forward to seeing what you bring to the stall!

Core Principles

1. **We want a vibrant mix of traders...**offering high-quality, diverse goods and experiences that attract a wide range of visitors and reflect the character of the local area.

2. **We want a buzzing, welcoming atmosphere**...where people feel encouraged to browse, linger, and connect—supported by great design, entertainment, and a sense of place.
3. **We want the market to serve and reflect the community**...by supporting local businesses, celebrating local identity, and creating opportunities for people to come together.
4. **We want the market to be environmentally responsible**...by encouraging low-waste practices, reusable materials, and sustainable transport options.
5. **We want the market to adapt and evolve**...with space for seasonal themes, pop-ups, and events that keep things fresh and exciting.
6. **We want the market to be a safe and inclusive space**...where everyone feels welcome, respected, and able to enjoy the experience.

Applications

All applications for stalls must be submitted using the online booking form, as listed on the website. Stallholder applications are not completed until written confirmation has been received from Cotswold Markets Ltd.

Trading Hours

Core trading hours are 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Traders are expected to remain on site for the full duration unless they have received explicit permission from the Market Manager or Supervisor. Early departures are only permitted in exceptional circumstances (e.g. severe weather) and must be agreed in advance with Cotswold Markets Ltd. Leaving early without authorisation on is considered a breach of terms and conditions and may impact future booking opportunities.

Traders who regularly leave early may be relocated to a less prominent pitch, at the discretion of the market manager.

Trading in All Weather Conditions

Markets will go ahead in all weather conditions unless extreme circumstances — such as severe weather or other disruptions beyond the operator's control — require closure for the safety of traders and the public.

It is the stallholder's responsibility to check with Cotswold Markets Ltd if they are unsure whether the event will proceed. Please see Cotswold Markets' [Adverse Weather Policy](#) for details.

Sustainable Practices

We are committed to making our markets as environmentally responsible as possible — and we ask all traders to support this goal by adopting low-waste, sustainable practices.

- **Minimise Packaging:**
Please reduce packaging wherever possible. Choose materials that are recyclable, compostable, or reusable, and avoid unnecessary wrapping or single-use plastics.
- **Encourage Reusables:**
Promote the use of reusable bags and containers among your customers. Bring your own supply of biodegradable or non-plastic alternatives.
- **Plastic Use:**
Plastic packaging should only be used when absolutely necessary for health and safety reasons — such as for raw or chilled food items.
- **Sampling Responsibly:**
If offering samples, avoid single-use items like disposable cutlery or cups unless essential. Consider using compostable options or offering samples in a way that does not require packaging at all.

By working together, we can reduce the environmental impact of our markets and offer customers a more sustainable, forward-thinking shopping experience.

For more details, please see Cotswold Markets' [Environmental Policy](#).

Behaviour & Code of Conduct

We want our markets to be welcoming, respectful, and enjoyable for everyone—traders, customers, and staff alike. As a trader, you are responsible not only for your own conduct but also for the behaviour of anyone working on your stall.

All stallholders must ensure that they and their staff behave in a way that supports the smooth running of the market and does not cause nuisance or annoyance to the public, fellow traders, or market staff.

Code of Conduct

The following rules must be observed at all times:

- No use of offensive or inappropriate language
- No arguing or fighting
- No drugs or alcohol on site
- Smoking is not permitted in the vicinity of the stalls.
- No children on stalls unless agreed in advance with the Market Manager (note: the safety and welfare of children remains the sole responsibility of the trader)

Traders are expected to present a positive and professional image, including appropriate dress and courteous behaviour. Respectful treatment of customers, fellow traders, and market staff is essential.

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including the potential relocation or loss of your pitch.

Parking

Traders should park in designated areas: in Witney, this is Zone G of the Woolgate Car Park, where permits will be issued; in Chipping Norton, traders should use the New Streetcar Park.

If you need a parking permit for Witney, please contact trade@cotswoldmarkets.com

Facilities

Witney and Chipping Norton both offer public toilet facilities with disabled access and baby changing. In Witney, toilets are available at Langdale Gate and The Leys, while Chipping Norton has facilities at the Town Hall and New Street car park. Most require a small fee and are open during daytime hours.

Insurance

All stallholders must hold appropriate insurance to cover them for these activities and provide evidence of this before attending the market. If this is a problem, please contact us to discuss. Here are a few types of insurance to consider, and please note that some are compulsory:

- **Public Liability Insurance (PLI):** This is a minimum requirement for our markets and is a compulsory insurance you must have to take part in our markets. PLI covers you if a customer is injured or their property is damaged because of your stall, products, or negligence of any of your staff.
- **Business Equipment & Contents:** If you rely on tools, stock, or equipment, contents insurance can be a lifeline in cases of theft, damage, or loss.
- **Employers' Liability:** If you have staff—even casual or seasonal helpers—it is likely that you are legally required to have Employers' Liability insurance. You will need to investigate whether your organisation requires this cover, and if you do, then this is compulsory in order to take part in our markets.
- **Product Liability Insurance:** Covers you if a product you sell causes injury or damage. This is especially important if you sell food, cosmetics, or handmade goods. If your stall sells such products, this is compulsory insurance you must have to take part in our markets.

For confirmation of required minimum indemnity levels, stallholders will need to seek agreement from Cotswold Markets Ltd. For all other advice around covers, stallholders must seek independent insurance advice.

Publicity

The Council and Cotswold Markets Ltd will provide a level of publicity for the market. However, we kindly ask that you also promote the market through any relevant marketing materials and/or on your website. Cotswold Markets Ltd will also be available to offer guidance on matters such as the most effective ways to promote your products.

Clear-up and Waste Disposal

Keeping the market clean and safe is a shared responsibility — and a vital part of creating a welcoming environment for everyone. As a trader, you play a key role in maintaining high standards of hygiene, safety, and environmental care.

- All traders are responsible for keeping the market clean and tidy. This includes clearing away all belongings and waste and leaving the site by 4:00pm.
- As a business, you have a legal duty of care to manage any waste your business produces. This duty applies from the moment the waste is created until it is handed over to a licensed waste carrier (which may be you if you transport your own waste). For a clear and accessible overview of all your responsibilities, we recommend visiting the GOV.UK page: [Dispose of business or commercial waste: Your responsibilities](#). It simplifies the legal requirements and includes all the links you need to ensure you are compliant — especially helpful if you are new to understanding Waste Duty of Care.
- If you regularly transport your own business waste, you must register for a waste carrier's licence. You can register or renew your licence [here](#).

Key Requirements:

- Bring suitable containers and tools (e.g. bins, bags, brushes) to manage your waste.
- Waste must be stored securely to avoid attracting pests.
- All waste and food debris must be removed at the end of the market.
- **Do not dispose of trade waste in public litter bins**—this is strictly prohibited.

Food Hygiene and Health & Safety

Maintaining high standards of food safety and hygiene is essential for all market traders selling food. These guidelines outline the key responsibilities and legal requirements to ensure that food is handled, prepared, and sold safely. Compliance not only protects customers but also helps uphold the reputation of the market and its traders.

- **Registration:** All food businesses must be registered with the local authority where they are based. <https://register.food.gov.uk/new>
- **Food Safety Management:** Traders selling food must have a written food safety management system in place, detailing the checks and procedures needed to ensure food is safe.

- **Staff Training:** All staff involved in food handling must be trained in food hygiene to a level appropriate to their role.
- **Hygiene Certification:** Anyone handling food must have a copy of their current Basic Food Hygiene Certificate available at the market.
- **Protective Clothing:** Staff handling unwrapped food must wear clean protective clothing (e.g. aprons, coats, jackets). Long hair should be tied back, and a head covering is recommended. Protective clothing should not be worn while travelling to the market or when leaving the stall.
- **Temperature Control:** Traders must maintain proper temperature control for all food products, both during transport and while trading, in line with Environmental Health guidelines. This applies to both displayed and stored items.
- **Unwrapped Food:** Sneeze guards and covers are recommended for open food to prevent contamination. Unwrapped food should also be raised off the ground to a height where it cannot be contaminated by young children and dogs.
- **Alcohol Sales Licence:** If you intend to sell alcohol at the market, you must hold a valid Temporary Event Notice (TEN) or be covered under a Premises Licence. Please contact the Licensing Team well in advance to discuss your plans and ensure the correct permissions are in place.

Natasha's Law October 2021

The new law, known as [Natasha's law](#), concerning allergens, came into effect on 1st October 2021. This affects everyone selling pre-packed foods, known as PPDS – Prepacked for Direct Sale – or pre-packaged food that was packaged by another business – all of which must be labelled with ingredients and allergens. Also, even if you are selling an item with no allergens, you should mention allergens if there is any danger of cross-contamination.

The label for PPDS food needs to show:

- the name of the food
- an ingredient list
- any of the [14 allergens](#) must be shown in **bold** in the ingredients list, if these are present in the food

Products that now need to be labelled include e.g. cheeses and meat that are already wrapped and ready to be served. Using an allergen information sheet is not a substitute for PPDS food labelling – PPDS food will (still) require a full ingredients list and allergen information on the label.

Regulations for freshly prepared street food, deli food, bread, pies, cakes etc. that are not prewrapped, (i.e. [loose foods](#)) are different. Either display lists of the ingredients used in each of your products or dishes, highlighting the allergens, or provide a clear sign for customers, like a poster.

General Safety

- Any producers cooking at the market must ensure that they do not endanger any member of the public. They must site any apparatus away from the front or edge of their stall and should have a safety barrier placed at least 50 cm from the appliance, provide warning signs and comply with any request from the market coordinator to ensure the safety of the public.
- All producers using gas-burning appliances must have on-site a fire blanket and an appropriate fire extinguisher.
- All portable electric appliances must have an accredited test certificate available for inspection by coordinators at any given market.
- Prospective traders must be able to demonstrate that any electrical appliances are maintained so that they are in a condition which is safe for use. Typical appliances might include hog roasting devices, generators, coffee machines and chilled display units. These appliances are generally portable and transportable. It is a requirement of this policy that portable/ transportable electrical appliances are subject to testing to testing, commonly known as PAT Testing to demonstrate that appliances are safe to use.
- Trader's cooking food must provide a 4kg dry powder or 4L foam fire extinguisher. If deep fat frying is taking place a suitable fire blanket must be provided. Stalls with generators/electrical equipment must provide 4kg dry powder or carbon dioxide. You must ensure that the fire extinguishers are checked every 12 months and that a Certificate of Compliance is submitted annually to Cotswold Markets Ltd for each fire extinguisher. Alternatively, you can purchase a new fire extinguisher each year and provide evidence that it is a new purchase.

Liability

Cotswold Markets Ltd and West Oxfordshire District Council accept no responsibility for any injury, loss, or damage incurred by stallholders, their staff, guests, or property while attending the market. This includes incidents occurring within the market area, in transit to or from the market, or throughout the duration of the market. The organisers are also not liable for any theft, damage, or loss of goods, nor for any accidents involving visitors, traders, or their equipment. Additionally, no compensation will be provided for cancellations due to severe weather, acts of God, third-party actions, or other circumstances beyond the organisers' control.

Charity Stalls

Registered charities are welcome to apply for a charity pitch but must complete an application form and provide their registered charity number. Cotswold Markets Ltd reserves the right to decline applications that are not considered suitable for the overall benefit of the market.

Requirement	Details
Eligibility	Only registered charities (must provide charity number and address)
Application	Must complete a charity stall application form

Approval	Subject to Market Manager/Supervisor discretion
Compliance	Must follow all standard trader rules
Pitch Availability	One charity pitch per market (must be booked in advance)
Pitch Fee	Every week, Cotswold Markets will make one pop-up available on Saturdays for charities and local community groups, which will be free of charge.
Annual Booking Limit	Charities and community groups are limited to just one market every three months, i.e. Jan-Mar, Apr-Jun, Jul-Sept, and Oct-Dec.
Gazebo Hire	3m x 3m gazebo available for £10/week (pre-booking required, subject to availability)

Useful Links

Whether you are looking for support, guidance, or further information, here are some key resources:

- [GOV.UK – Business](#)
Comprehensive guidance on starting and running a business, including self-assessment, registration, and practical steps to get your business up and running.
- [GOV.UK – Business Finance Support Finder](#)
Discover government-backed financial support for businesses, including grants, loans, and other funding opportunities.
- [Start Up Loans](#)
The official government-funded initiative offering personal loans and mentoring support to help entrepreneurs launch and grow their businesses.
- [National Market Traders Federation \(NMTF\)](#)
The leading trade association for market traders across Great Britain and Northern Ireland, representing over 26,000 members and offering resources, advocacy, and support for the markets industry. Check out their [comprehensive guide](#) to starting up as a market trader
- [GOV.UK – Moving from Benefits to Work: Starting Your Own Business](#)
If you are receiving benefits and want to start your own business, you may be eligible for tailored support. This includes:
 - A 12-month start-up period under Universal Credit, where you are not required to look for other work and receive guidance from a self-employment-trained work coach.
 - Additional help through Access to Work grants if you have a disability or health condition.

Disclaimer

The information provided in this guide is intended to support stallholders participating in West Oxfordshire's charter markets. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy and clarity, the guidance herein does not constitute legal or financial advice and may be subject to change.

Details such as trading hours, policies, procedures, and applicable rates (including pitch fees, parking permits, and waste licences) are correct at the time of publication but may be updated by Cotswold Markets Ltd or West Oxfordshire District

Council without prior notice. Stallholders are responsible for checking the most current information directly with the relevant authorities or market operator.

All traders must ensure they comply with applicable laws, regulations, and market policies, including those relating to insurance, waste management, health and safety, and trading standards. West Oxfordshire District Council and Cotswold Markets Ltd accept no liability for any loss, damage, or inconvenience arising from the use of this guide. Stallholders are encouraged to seek independent advice where necessary and to contact the Market Manager or relevant departments for clarification on specific requirements.