



NORWICH  
City Council

# **Norwich Provision Market survey Market Traders' Survey**

## **Summary Report**

**February 2008**

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# Research Objectives

**To inform Norwich City Council's new marketing initiative for the Provision Market.**

**More specifically:**

- ❖ **To assess the extent to which the Provision Market satisfies the needs of shoppers.**
- ❖ **To Identify changes and improvements which could drive a new marketing initiative.**
- ❖ **To identify the real issues and concerns of market traders.**
- ❖ **To evaluate ways of optimising the back of the market.**

# Research Methodology

## Depth Interviews with Market traders

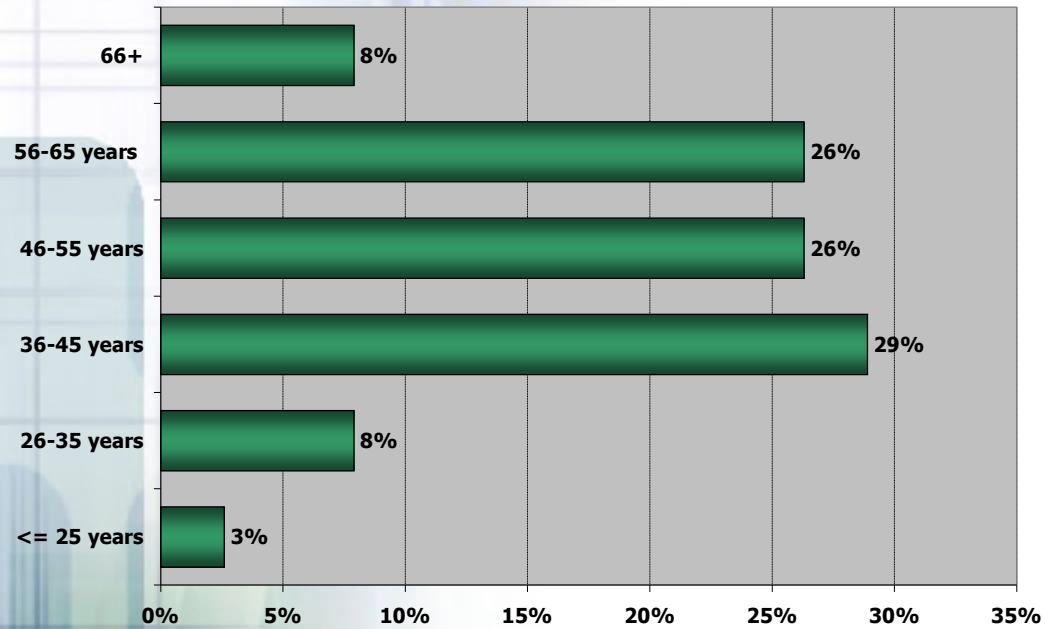
- **12 interviews conducted w/c 5 - 12 November 2007 each lasting approximately 1 hour**
- **Respondents selected at random but to achieve broad range in terms of**
  - **number of trading years**
  - **commodity sector**
- **Interview guide designed by Heawood Research and approved by Norwich City Council. Interviews conducted by Cecile Tuddenham.**

## 'Postal' Survey amongst Market Traders

- **Following the conclusion of the market trader depth interviews, a post-back quantitative questionnaire was prepared and distributed by hand to all market traders.**
- **Traders were given a couple of weeks to complete the questionnaire and return it in a freepost envelope. A total of 40 questionnaires were completed and returned.**

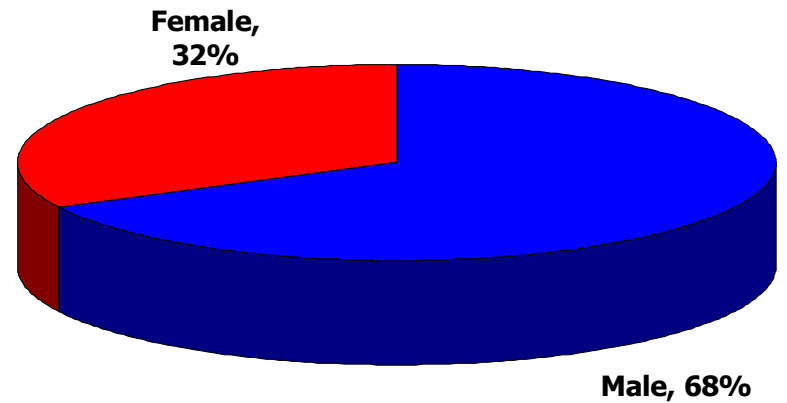
# Who took part in the research?

## Age



Base: 37 respondents

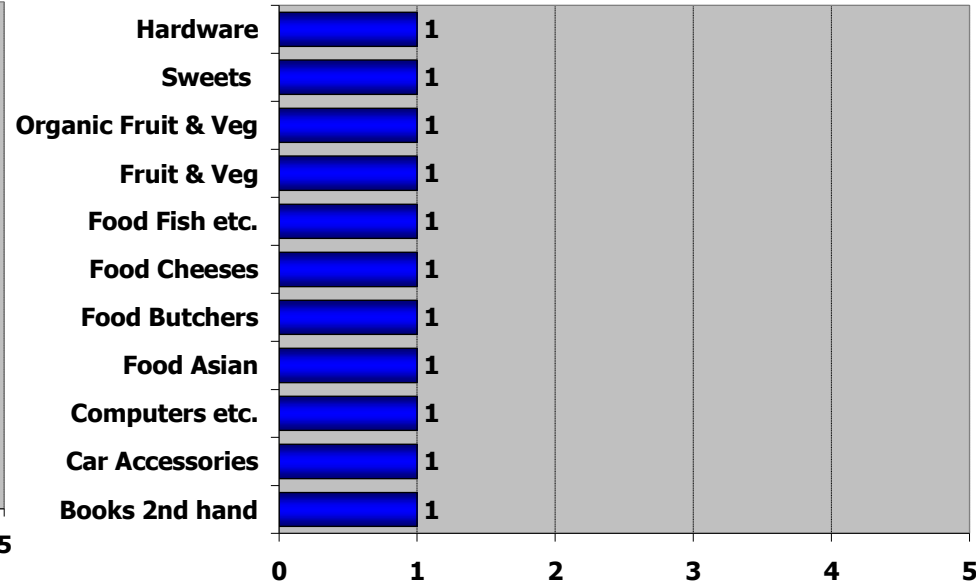
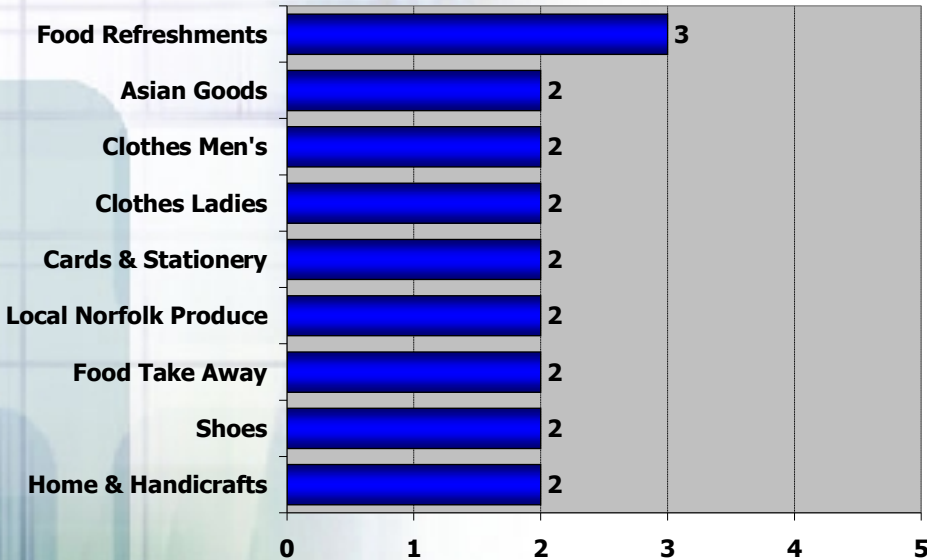
## Gender



Base: 38 respondents

# Who took part in the research?

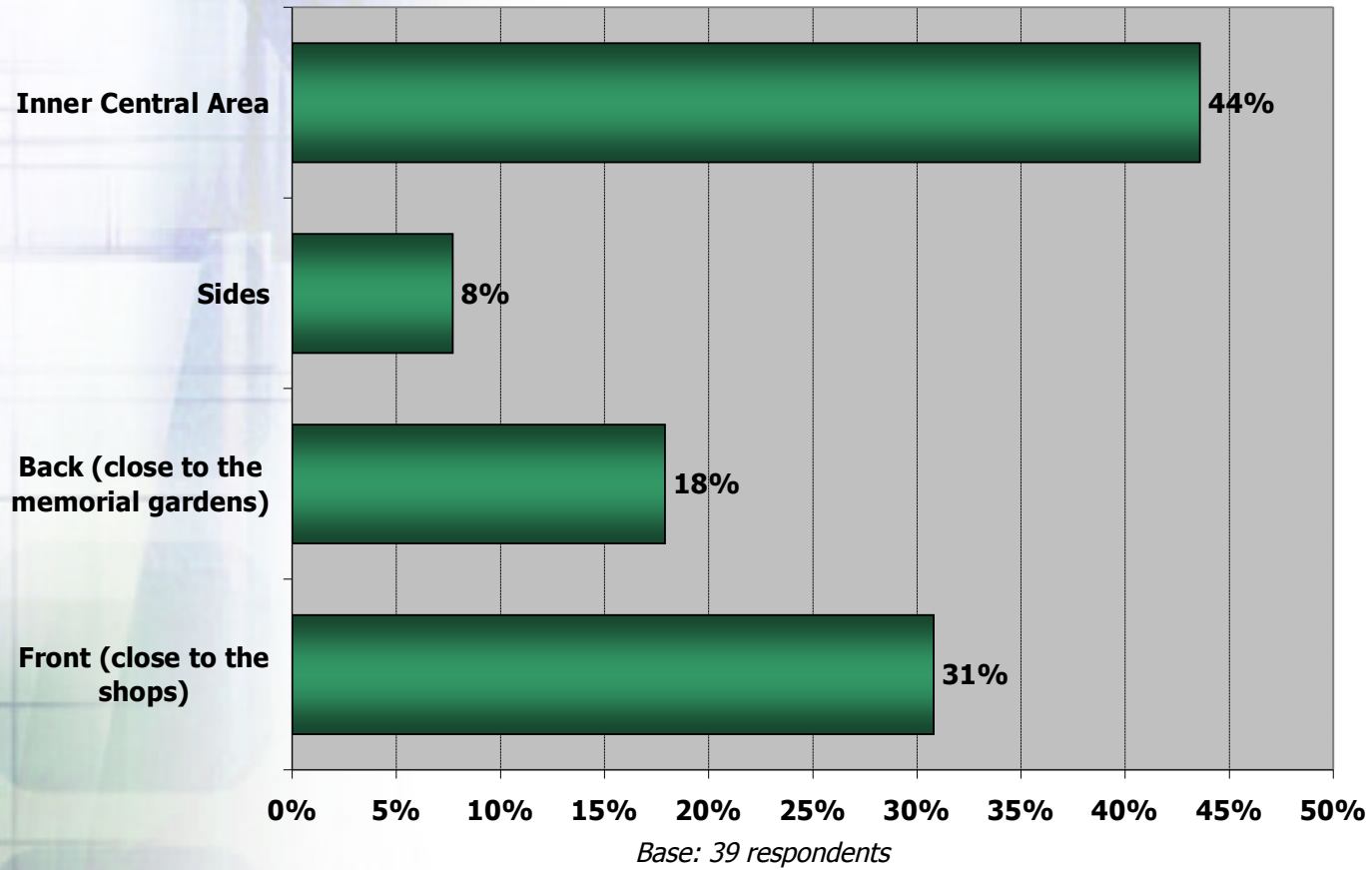
## Which of the following trade groups best describes your business?



Base: 30 respondents

# Who took part in the research?

## In what general area is your stall located?



# Life On The Market

**All respondents say that they value the freedom of being their own bosses and working outside (depending on the weather), but express real concern about visitor numbers and the subsequent impact on their turnovers.**

### **Best and worst aspects of being a stall holder**

- ☺ Good to be your own boss
- ☺ Being outdoors
- ☺ Nice to be part of the market
- ☺ Camaraderie amongst stall holders

- ☹ Poor weather
- ☹ Turnover anxieties
- ☹ Rising costs
- ☹ The general public

*"I prefer being self-employed to being employed."*

*"Being outdoors. I don't like being indoors at all."*

*"We all know each other. There's a friendly atmosphere."*

*"The cold weather gets into your bones a bit."*

*"We're all worried about our businesses."*

*"They're not spending on credit cards."*

*"I think we see the public at its worst quite a lot of the time."*

*"There used to be fun and laughter. Now we're all watching our backs and what each other is doing."*

**Although the majority of respondents did not divulge such information, the remainder painted a negative picture of the financial health of the market.**

### **What is your current annual turnover?**

- **Turnover ranges from £8k to £200k per annum.**
- **The average turnover for this small groups of respondents was £69k.**
- **Just three of the 13 respondents had a turnover of £100k+.**

*Base: 13 Respondents*

### **What is the percentage change in your sales this year compared with last year?**

- **Just five of the 18 respondents increased sales whilst the remainder saw a decrease.**
- **The average percentage change in sales, for this whole group of respondents, was a decrease of 12%.**
- **Five of the respondents saw a sales decline of 25% or more.**

*Base: 18 Respondents*

# Many traders claim that turnover is down this year, compared with last. They blame a number of factors such as the current economic climate, changing shopping habits, or poor footfall through the market

## Turnover & trade

- **The mood amongst many interviewees is quite sombre.**
- **Everyone mentioned that visitor levels have dropped in the last 2-3 years.**
- **Impact on turnover is variable and linked to commodity (food stalls attract a core of regulars).**
- **Removal of the back row has affected footfall.**

*"The footfall has died considerably."*

*"Somebody said to me that if we aren't careful we're going to be the new St Benedict's."*

*"Less busy. It's definitely less busy."*

*"We are made up of regulars. If you've got that I think you're pretty safe."*

*"We're probably more steady than most because over the years we have built up a good regular trade."*

*"Yesterday I stood here all day for £26. It's soul-destroying."*

*"No back row is really hurting the market."*

*"People used to walk through to the back row. It used to draw people up."*

# Some traders maintain that stall holders' costs have risen, making them less profitable or less competitive. Others say that a market stall still makes good commercial sense.

## Profit and loss

- **The introduction of a maintenance charge and a separate business rate, in addition to the rental, means higher overheads.**
- **Accommodating the increased costs and making a profit means higher prices to the customer.**
- **But some traders maintain that a stall represents good value for money.**

*"Our overheads have rocketed."*

*"All this has to be passed on which has made us a little less competitive."*

*"Our overheads have gone sky high."*

*"It's not cheap to be here. You've got to find your rent, rates, and everything else."*

*"Being in the centre of the city for £150 a week. It's very cost effective."*

*"Having a market stall is a good way to start a business. It's relatively cheap, especially compared to a shop."*

## Shopping habits have changed. People are shopping later in the day and are looking for greater convenience and bargain prices.

- **Early morning visitors to the market used to be the norm, but no longer.**
- **Some traders think people don't like outdoor shopping when it's cold and wet.**
- **The market is competing with big stores like Primark, or with the Internet.**

*"Hardly anything seems to happen until 11.00am. Trade is definitely later now."*

*"I used to open at about 6 o'clock and I would have customers. Now I open at 7 o'clock and I don't serve my first customer until a quarter to 8."*

*"We open at half past eight and there's nobody about until half past ten."*

*"If you go in the Mall, it's warm."*

*"It's too cold and dark. People want the warmth."*

*"The youngsters would rather go to the supermarket."*

*"In this day and age customers go where the best price is. I don't think there's much loyalty now."*

## Market Visitors

# Everyone feels that the number of local shoppers visiting the market has declined.

## Locals –vs- visitors

- Traders say that they don't get as many local customers as they used to.
- Their perception is that visitors to Norwich are enthusiastic about the market whereas locals tend to be more critical (especially older people).
- There is a feeling that the local population overlooks what the market has to offer.
- A core of regular local shoppers would sustain the future of the market.

*"What amazes me is that we had so much support from the public when they wanted to take the market away. People signed petitions for us. You don't see them now."*

*"It definitely attracts tourists. It's usually better than any market from wherever they've come."*

*"I would say visitors have picked up, but regulars have decreased."*

*"The number of tourists is increasing. "*

*"We rely on the tourists mainly. We get more foreigners now than we used to."*

*"We need more produce stalls where people have to come to Norwich market every week to buy it. A core coming in all the time."*

# A lack of parking in the immediate vicinity of the Market is a deterrent to shoppers; changes to bus routes have also had a significant impact.

## Transport issues

- **Shoppers can no longer park for 30 minutes on Gaol Hill or St Peter's Street and "nip in" to the Market.**
- **This has substantially reduced early morning shopping and affected numbers using the market.**
- **Buses no longer come down St Giles and this has significantly reduced pedestrian traffic flow through the market.**

*"Even the buses used to be able to get closer to here but not anymore."*

*"You had buses pulling up there every 5-6 minutes and people would walk through the market for somewhere else. I reckon that accounted for 25% of footfall through the market."*

*"Now there's no bus stops there."*

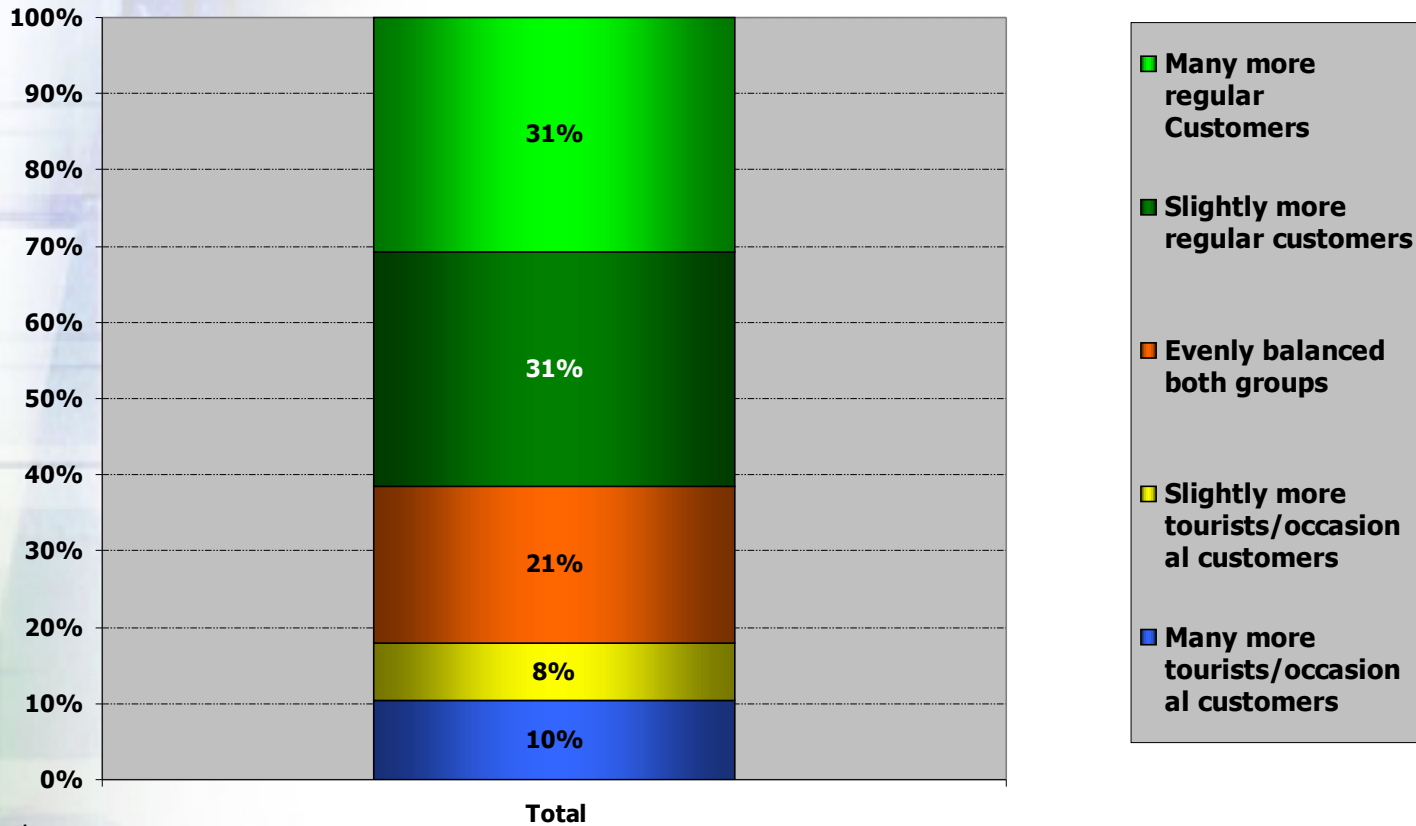
*"People wouldn't mind paying 50p to park for 30 minutes on the Hill or St Peter's Street so they could shop in the market."*

*"There should be somewhere for people to park when they come shopping here."*

*"They had the perfect opportunity when they were doing up St Peter's Street - they could have introduced meter parking along there above The Gardens."*

# The market tends to get more regular customers than occasional / tourist visitors.

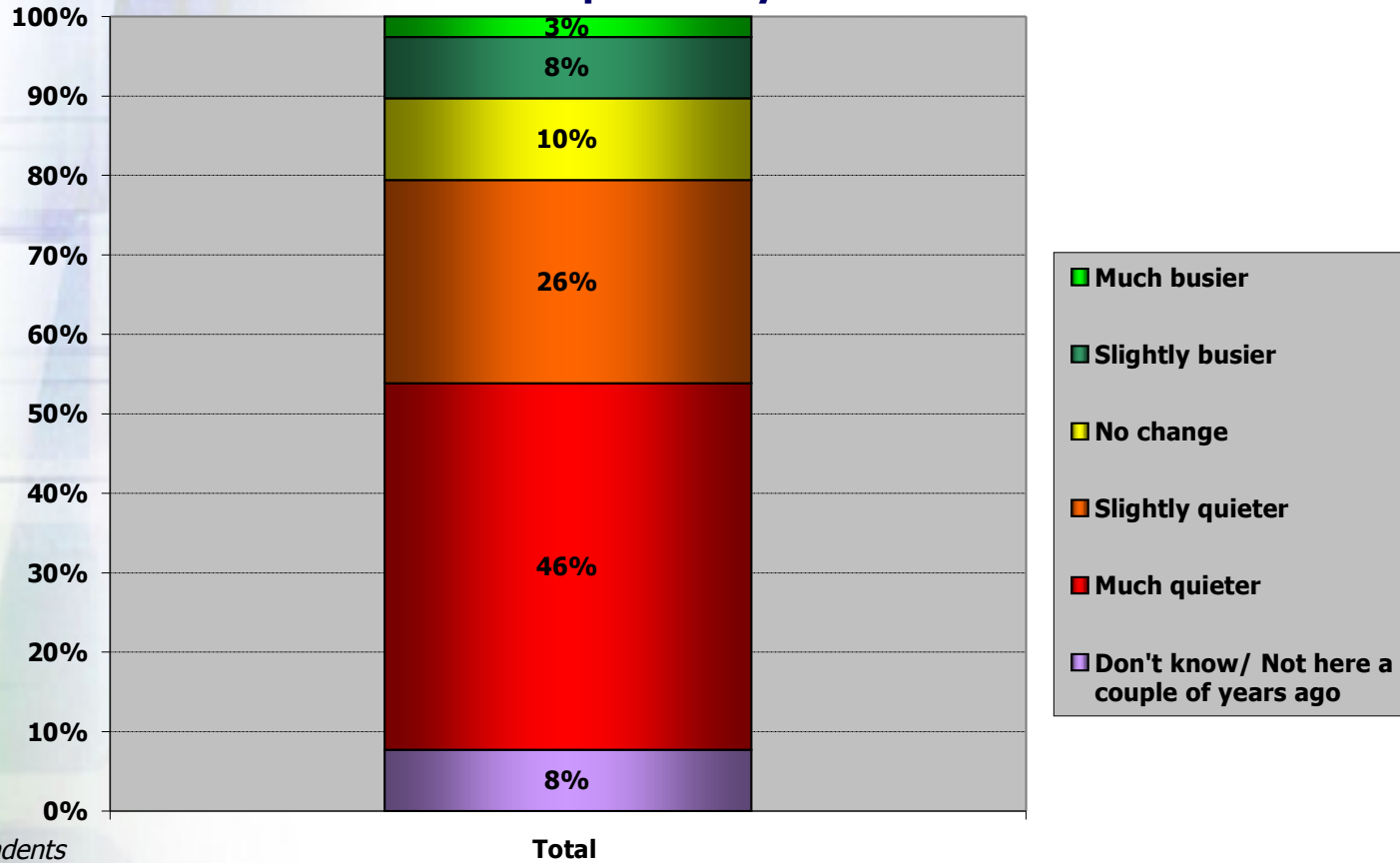
## How would you describe the balance between local regular customers and tourists / occasional customers?



Base: 39 respondents

# The fall off in visitors, noted in the shoppers survey, is confirmed by the stall holders.

## How busy would you say that the market has been in the last year compared with the previous year?

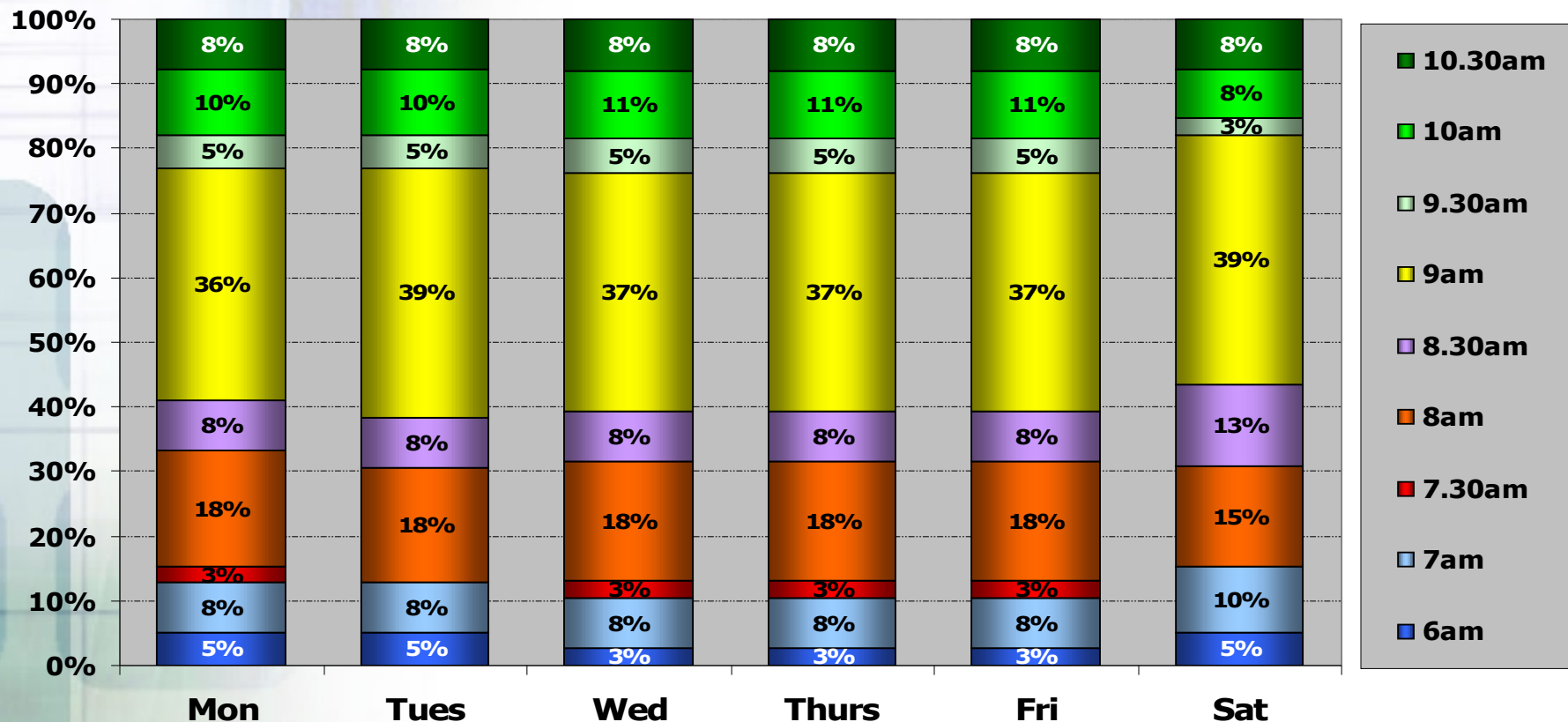


Base: 39 respondents

# Trading Times

Nearly all stalls are open six days a week. Traders tend to stick to the same opening and closing times each day. Only one stall reported being open on a Sunday.

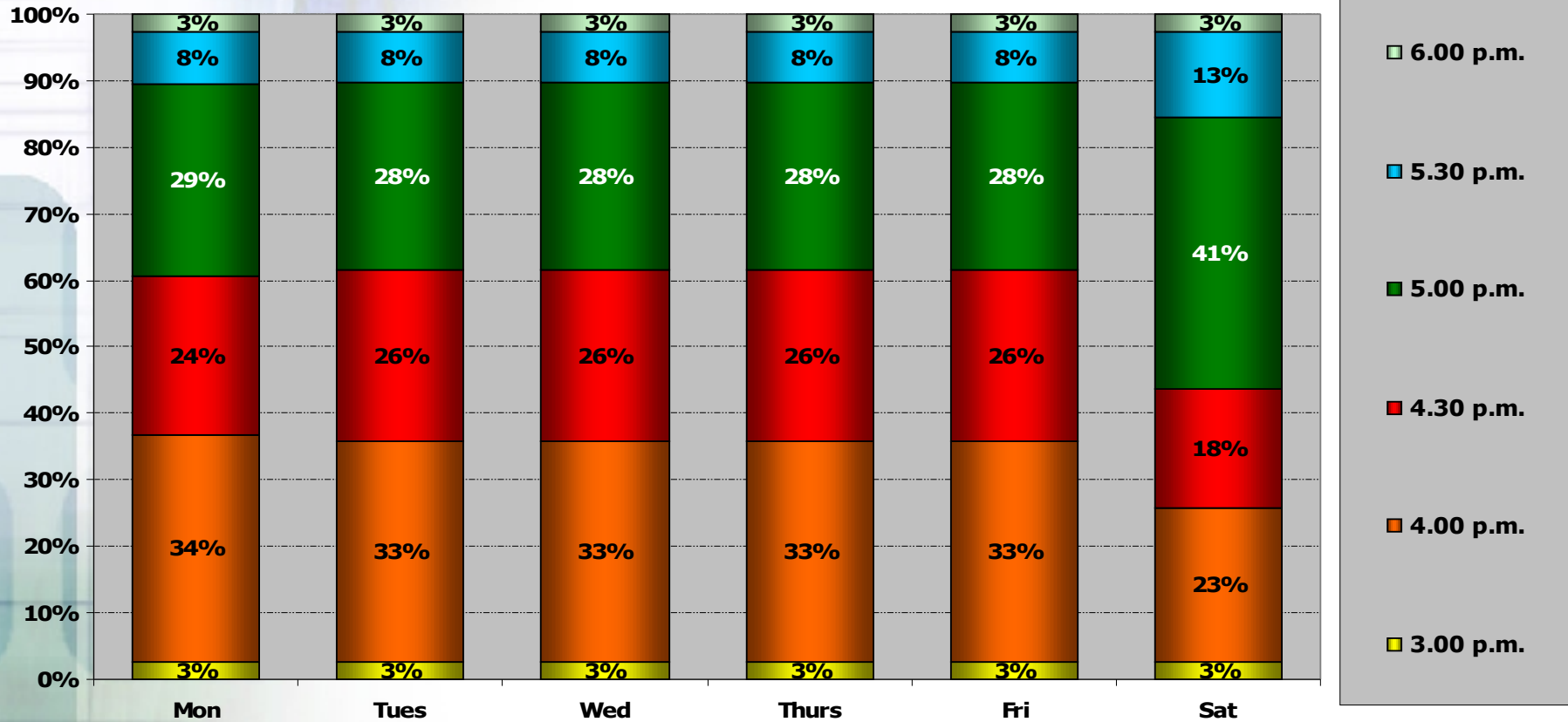
### Opening times.....



Base: 40 respondents

**60% of stalls are always closed by 4.30pm on weekdays, but a few stay open longer on a Saturday.**

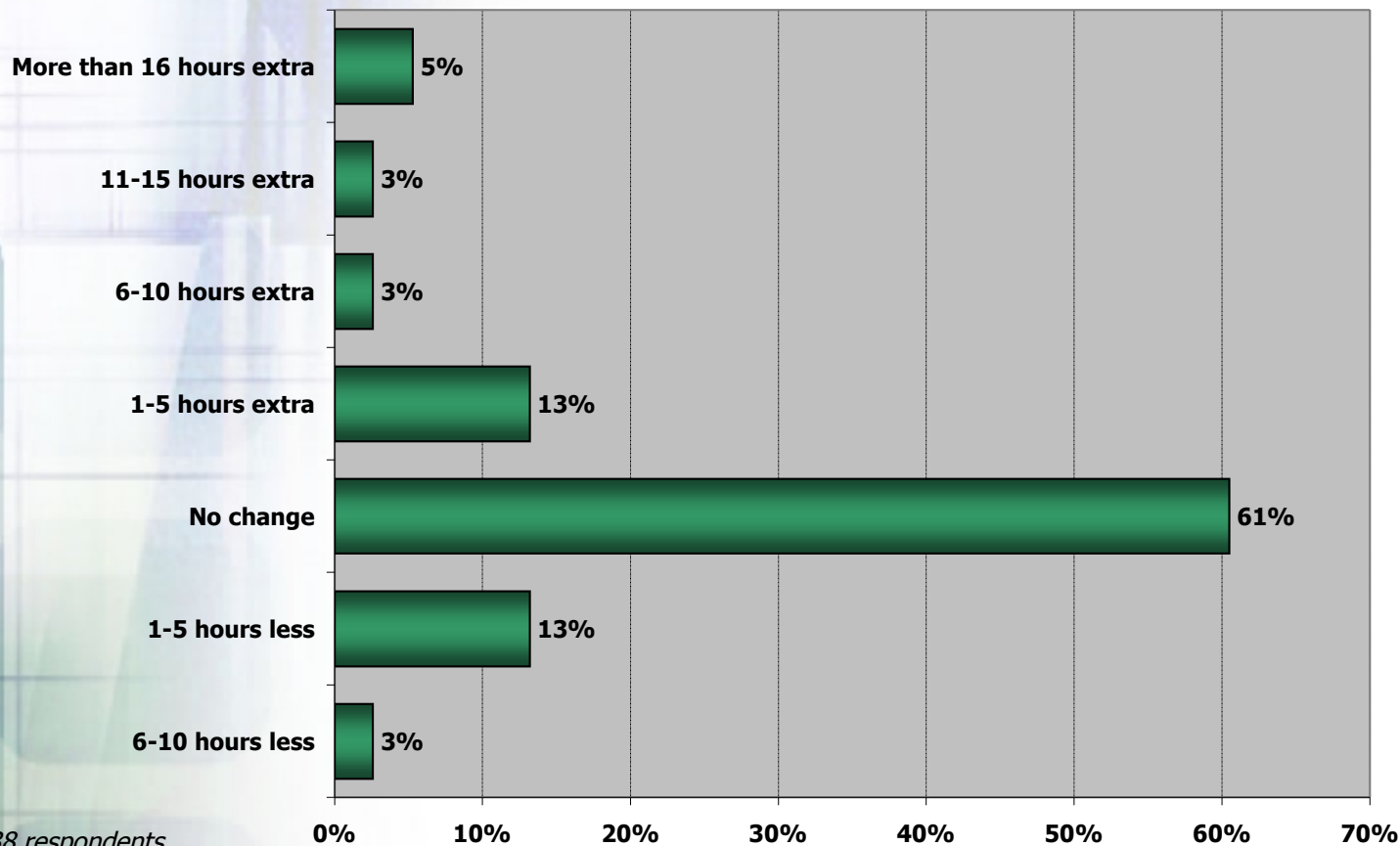
### Closing times.....



Base: 40 respondents

**Whilst the majority (61%) of stall holders have maintained similar hours, there has been a slight net increase in total trading hours over the last two years.**

**How have your trading hours per week changed (if at all) over the last couple of years?**



Base: 38 respondents

# Typical comments...

## Why have you changed trading hours?

### Increased....

*"Because other shops open longer."*

*"To try to earn more money to pay the rent."*

*"Overheads are more expensive so need to work longer hours."*

*"Bills have gone up and takings have gone down."*

### Decreased....

*"After around 3 p.m. the market is slowly deserted."*

*"Due to lack of early and late trade."*

*"People are not coming onto the market like they used to."*

*"Afternoons are very quiet."*

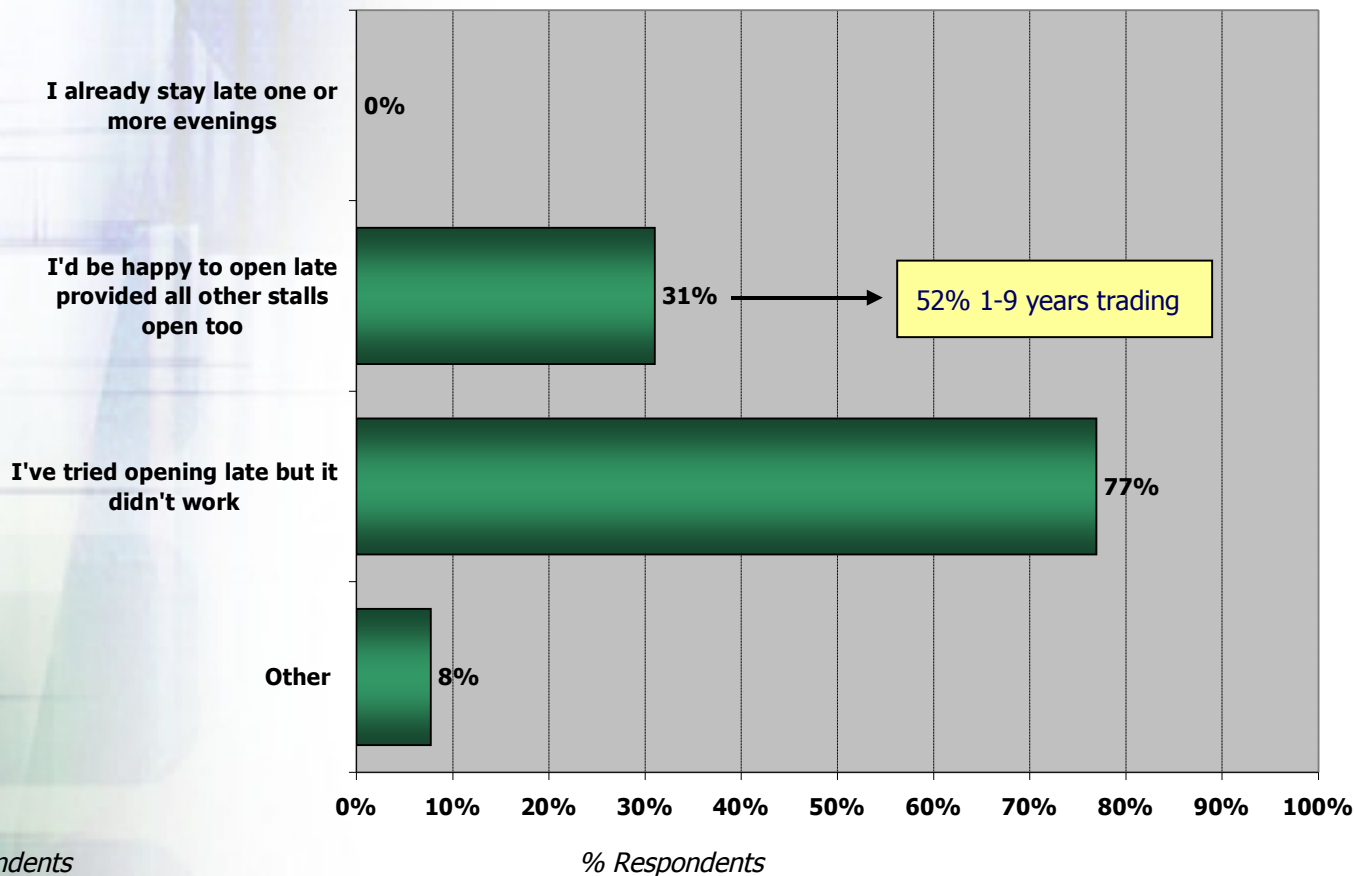
*"Because other traders on market close and it's not good on your own."*

*"Used to open earlier but never had any customers until around 10 a.m. , also market is empty around 3.30 p.m., so close earlier."*

Base: 15 respondents

**Late night opening would need a concerted effort by all market traders. The majority of traders (77%) are not convinced of its value however.**

### What do you think about the market having one late night opening?



## Typical comments...

### What do you think about the market having one late night opening?

*"The lighting is way too poor to be open after dark on any day."*

*"Been there, done it."*

*"Works if no supermarkets are in the city."*

*"As working owners with no employees we do enough hours."*

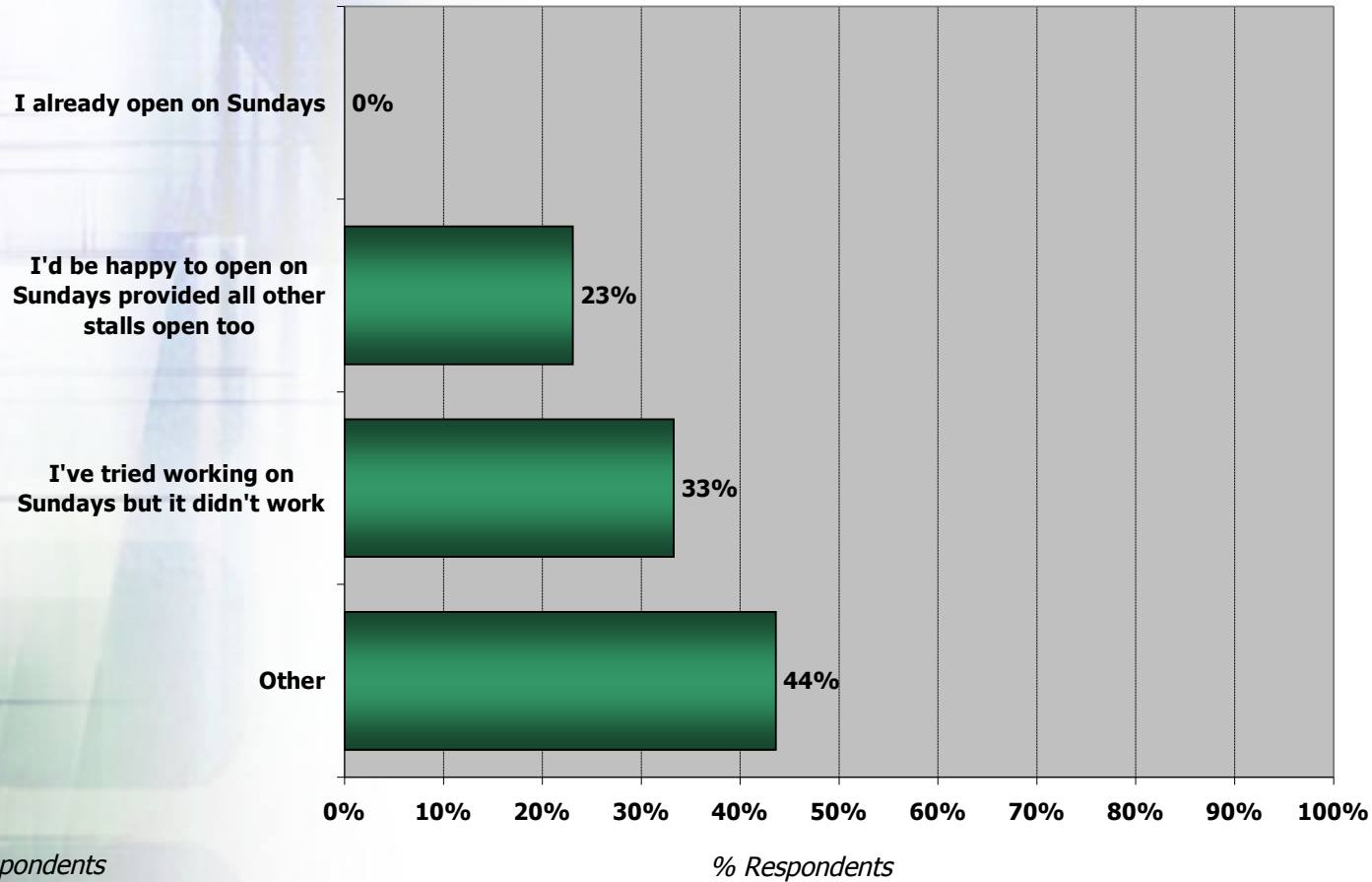
*"After opening 8.00-4.30 I think it's fair to say that's enough for any woman with a family."*

*"We have had a late night - the Christmas light switch on - but we did not have one customer."*

*"Would need support from the City Council. Re-advertising, highlighting needed."*

# Attitudes towards working on Sundays are mixed.

## What do you think about the market opening on Sundays?



## Typical comments...

### What do you think about the market opening on Sundays?

*"Would never do seven days."*

*"We don't want to work on Sundays."*

*"I already open six days a week (70 hours) and need Sundays to do book keeping etc."*

*"Would it be fair to say we have a life after work? Six days is ample, work does not finish on the stall - paper work, ordering etc."*

*"I strongly disapprove of Sunday shopping."*

*"It's against my religion."*

*"I only open at Christmas, as only the last three weeks are cost effective."*

*"Open on Sundays on the run up to Christmas only."*

## Trading hours are a chicken and egg situation

- **Some stall holders say there's little point in staying open beyond 3.00pm because there are no customers.**
- **Others say that shoppers don't come after 3.00pm because the market looks closed and shuttered.**
- **Late night opening has been tried by some. It will only succeed, like Sunday opening, if all stall holders participate.**
- **But Sunday is the only day off for sole traders.**



*"It's like a vicious circle. They won't open if there's no business but if they don't open there's not going to be a buzz about the place."*



*"Sometimes we're the only two stalls open and it's only 4.00pm!"*

*"There are lots of tea stalls closed at 3.30pm."*

*"I tried late night opening last year and it didn't work. I think there was ten of us and it was a complete waste of time."*

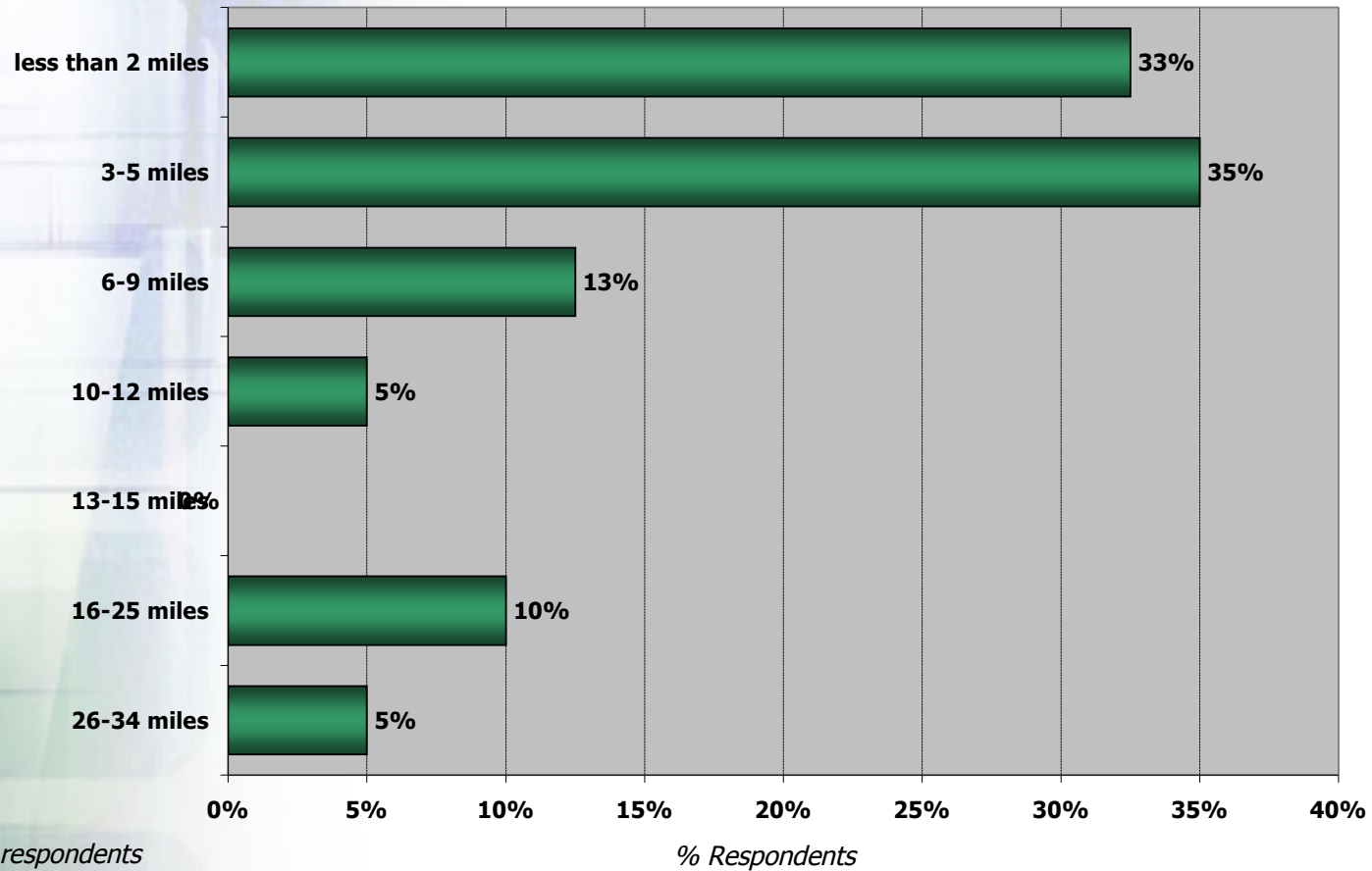
*"If I was open on Sunday, I'd probably shut on the Monday instead."*

*"I'd open on Sunday if it was successful."*

# Travel, Parking and Unloading

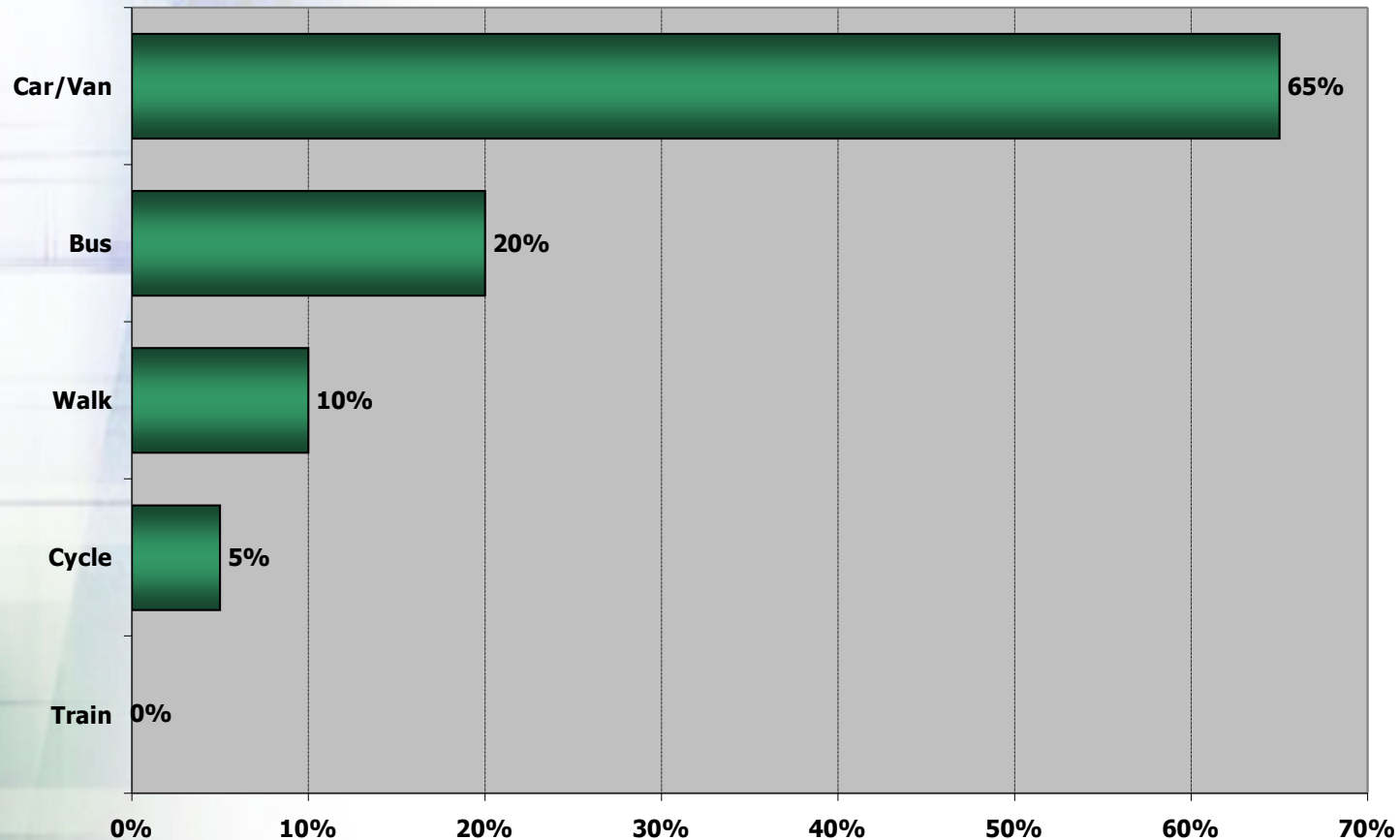
The majority of stall holders (68%) live five miles or less from the market.

### How far away do you live from the market?



**Approximately two thirds (65%) of the respondents use a car or van for travel to/from the market.**

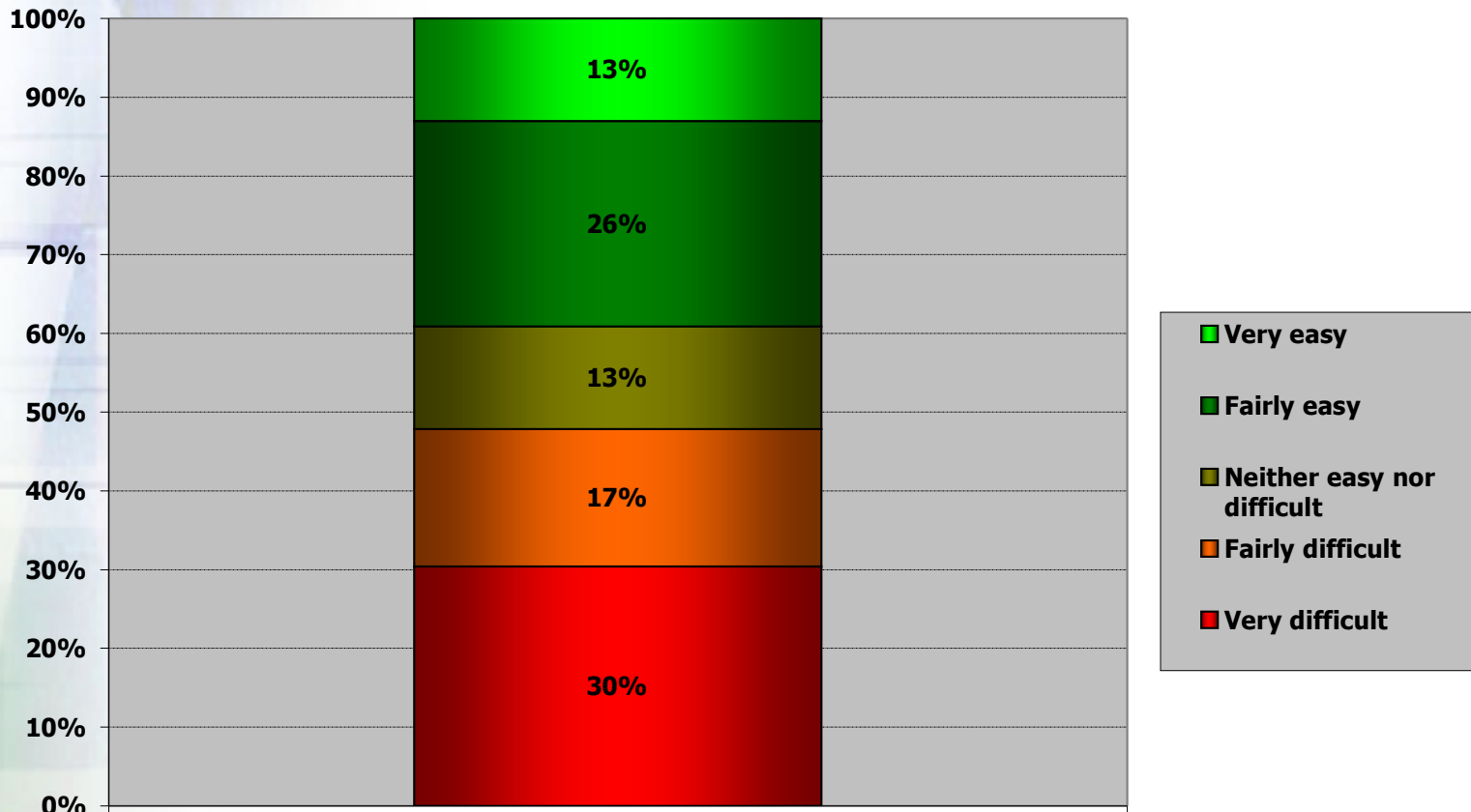
**What is your principal mode of transport to and from the market?**



*Base: 40 respondents*

**Almost half (47%) of the car/van drivers experience some difficulty in finding a parking space. This backs-up the concerns raised in the depth interviews.**

**If you come by car, how easy or difficult is it to find parking space?**

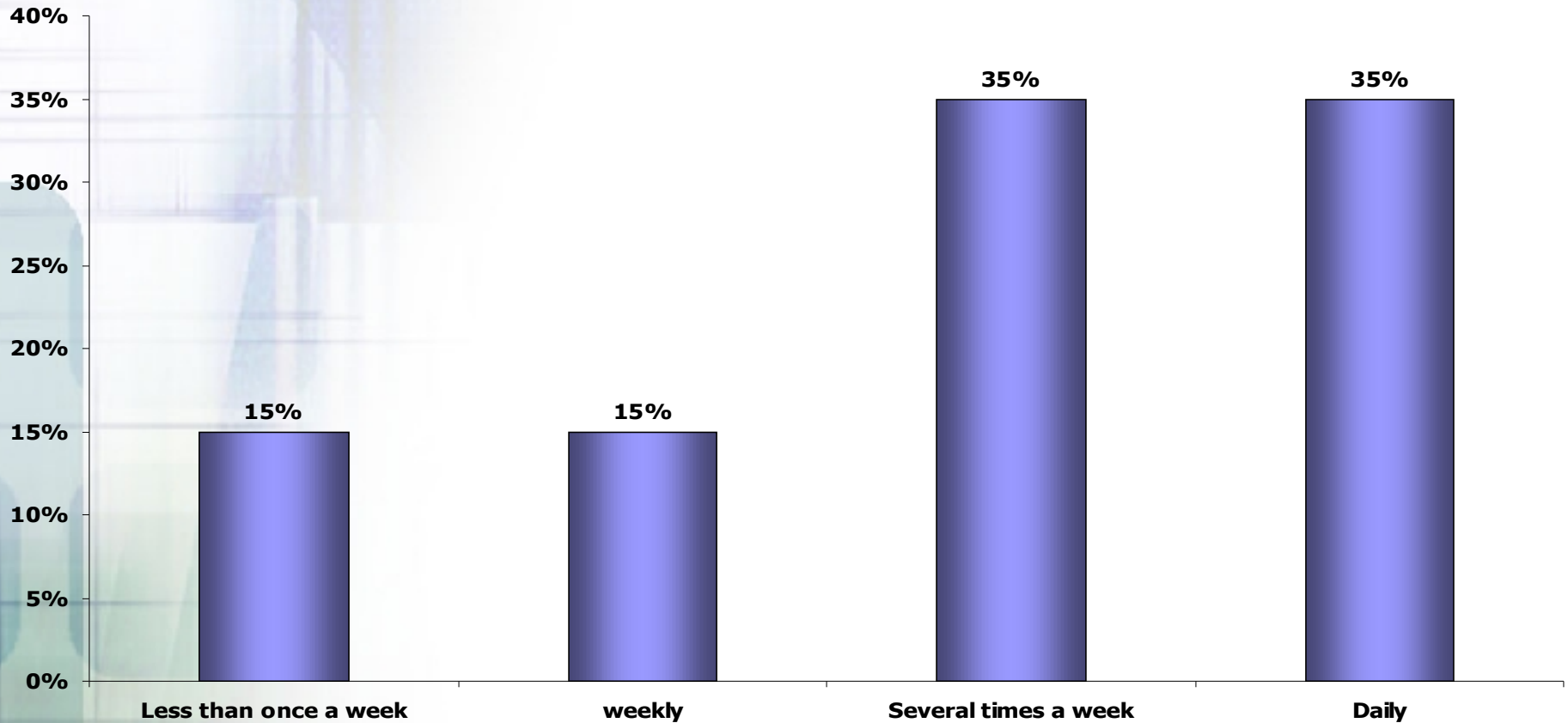


*Base: 23 respondents*

**Car / Van Drivers**

**The majority of respondents (70%) need to unload goods at the market at least several times a week.**

**How often do you have goods that you need to unload at the market?**



*Base: 40 respondents*

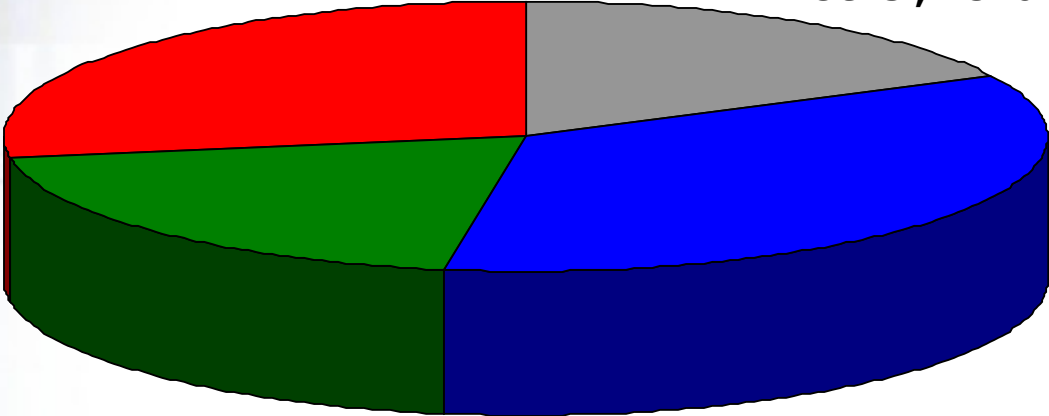
**Not surprisingly, use of a loading bay or driving on to the market is determined, in part, by position on the market.**

**When unloading, do you use a loading bay or do you drive into the market?**

67% Sides  
50% Front (close to shops)

**Drive into the market, 28%**

**Other, 18%**



**Loading bay in St. Peter's Street, 20%**

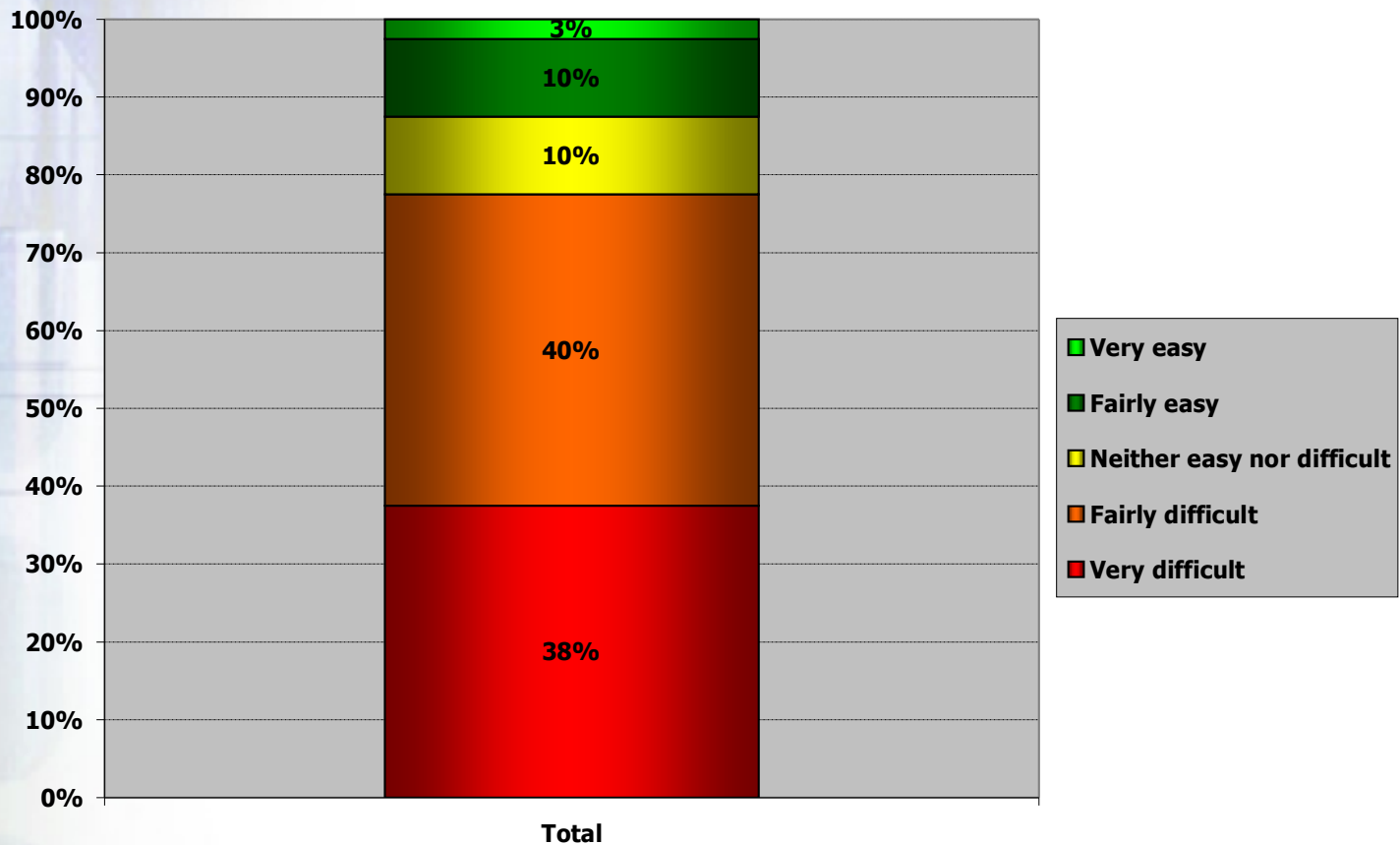
**Loading bay on Guildhall Street, 35%**

57% Back (close to memorial gardens)

Base: 40 respondents

# The fact that the majority of respondents find difficulty in getting space to unload confirms the need for a review of loading bay arrangements.

## How easy or difficult is it to find parking space for unloading?



Base: 40 respondents

## Typical comments...

### Why is this?

*"The loading bay gets misused."*

*"Car parked in the loading bay."*

*"Anybody parks there, some all day."*

*"Because it is used by people who are not unloading for the market."*

*"Too many other cars and the market itself is blocked off now."*

*"Because parking wardens allow anyone to park there."*

*"Traders who know attendants sit all day, I have told City Hall but they don't care."*

*"Limited space for amount of stall holders."*

# Loading bays are a bone of contention because of access difficulties.

## Loading Bays

- **The loading bay on St Peter's Street isn't ideal because it's either steps down or a long walk round via the ramp.**
- **The loading bay on Gaol Hill is invariably full and so it's impossible to park to unload.**
- **The installation of bollards to the back row hasn't helped.**

*"You've got a loading area on the top but you've got steps, which is a no go."*

*"I came down the other day and the loading bay was full of City Care workers. They were sat there eating bacon rolls."*

*"One day a week I have to re-stock and I can't park anywhere. I know they've been giving permits out for that loading bay on the side but there are cars on there all day. This has been an issue for years."*

*"Somebody is parking there every day all day and not getting a ticket because apparently there's something not quite right with the regulations."*

*"Things like the bollards that have gone up. We were told we need to ask for a key. Where do I get a key from at 7 o'clock in the morning?"*

*"We used to take our cars along the back row because you couldn't get into the loading bay but they've now obstructed that."*

*"They've put two bollards there so you can't drive along the back no more. They've made it more difficult for me to unload my stock."*

## The Refurbishment

# There is a belief that local shopper numbers have declined as a result of the market refurbishment.

## Refurbishment effect – loss of trade?

- **The refurbishment may have altered shopping habits.**
- **Although the market stayed open there was disruption and people drifted away.**

*"Since they revamped the market I think trade has gone downhill. I'd say by 15% - 20% turnover."*

*"They gradually went to other places to get what they wanted and probably enjoyed it. It's going to be a while before we get them back."*

*"It dropped, big time. We are well down on what we used to take."*

*"People got out of the routine of coming to the market. And wherever they went I think some of them are still going. So we've never got all of that trade back again."*

*"We lost quite a few. They found other places to go."*

## But there is also a feeling that the market is beginning to attract new (and different?) shoppers.

### Refurbishment effect – gaining new customers?

- **Maybe it's mainly the older generation who are resistant to change and grumble about the market?**
- **One trader reckoned the market is moving more upmarket, appealing to a completely different type of customer.**
- **To bring local shoppers back is a key objective, but how? Maybe one route is to promote the market as a flagship for local produce and healthy eating.**

*"We get people who would never set foot on here before when it was the old market but they say it's really nice now."*

*"Since the new market, the trend is upmarket. It's no longer a place for people just looking for price, they're looking for quality."*

*"We didn't have the mix of stalls in the past. Now people can buy what they want. There is a good quality mix."*

*"We're getting youngsters experimenting with food and coming back saying – I can't believe how good your vegetables taste! And that's encouraging."*

**Generally, the revamped stalls are considered an improvement. Security of stock is much better. Food stalls are perceived to be more hygienic.**

### **New versus old**

*"We do get complimented on how much better they look."*

*"I definitely think it's a cleaner place, but it has lost appeal for the shoppers."*

*"Now that it's done, I like working in it. It's a lot cleaner and drier."*

*"I'd say it's a better place for shoppers because it's cleaner and brighter."*

*"From a hygiene point of view it's fantastic. I sometimes look at pictures of how we used to be and it's shocking to think of the conditions we were working in."*

*"You'll get the odd person who will come along and say it has lost its character and I'll say – yes, and the rats."*

*"I couldn't have operated on the old stalls. I couldn't have left this stuff in that environment. I couldn't lock it all up at night."*

**Reactions from visitors / tourists to the new-look market are more favourable than the locals**

*"If you have any silly comments they're from the people who live here."*

**Maybe locals take the market for granted and haven't explored it recently to see what's available**

*"They probably don't realise there's posh coffee stalls round here now and a mushroom stall."*

# However, there is a view that the market has lost some of its atmosphere.

## Atmosphere

- **Proliferation of solid walls has possibly had a detrimental effect on the 'communal' feeling within the market.**
- **As a result of the solid walls, inability to see across rows/aisles has affected the banter/camaraderie between stall holders.**



*"Where there's a shutter now, it used to be all open."*

*"All these guys have got stalls with shutters on all sides and there are so many shutters that are down all the time, so it looks closed."*

*"Somebody said this morning that the units are a cross between a retail unit, a market stall, and an industrial unit. There's no warmth to it."*

*"I wonder if it's because they're all box units and there's lots of surfaces that you're confronted with."*

*"When you come up the rows they've got all the side shutters down because they're racked inside. You can easily get the impression there's very little open."*

*"I think what they don't like is they used to be able to see through all the stalls. And a lot of banter would go on. And they seem to have the opinion it's very sterile now."*

*"We used to be able to talk across the stalls to people two or three aisles away."*

**The change in 'atmosphere' could be related to restrictions on displays.  
A certain amount of overspill helps the atmosphere, but there is feeling that it can go too far.**

### **Displaying goods**



*"You're not allowed to hang things on the sides of the stalls. And that's really just like the German underground hospital in Jersey. It's just corridors of this horrible stone colour."*

*"The council said we're not allowed to display on the outside of our stalls, so when you look down it looks cold."*

*"They're not conducive to displays."*

*"When you look at the front of the market it looks really inviting and then it tails off as you walk up."*

*"We're now displaying on the stall sides so a little bit of character has come back to it."*

*"You can clutter things too much, can't you."*



# Without exception, traders bemoan the loss of the back row by the War Memorial and say that it has radically affected pedestrian flow through the market.

## Loss of the back row

- **The “back row” part of the market has gone from being a busy, sought-after band A zone to an eerily quiet band C zone.**
- **Far from being the draw that it used to be, it can be a deterrent.**
- **Traders say it is not a good advertisement for the market and they want to see the stalls brought back.**
- **There is little enthusiasm for a food zone with tables and chairs; traders say that it wouldn't work.**

*"It used to be a walkway from Guildhall up to the Forum. Now, it's like a ghost town after three o'clock."*

*"I looked at the back row about three o'clock and there was only two open."*

*"The back row used to be the busiest part of the market."*

*"We used to have a flow through the market, it doesn't flow the same."*

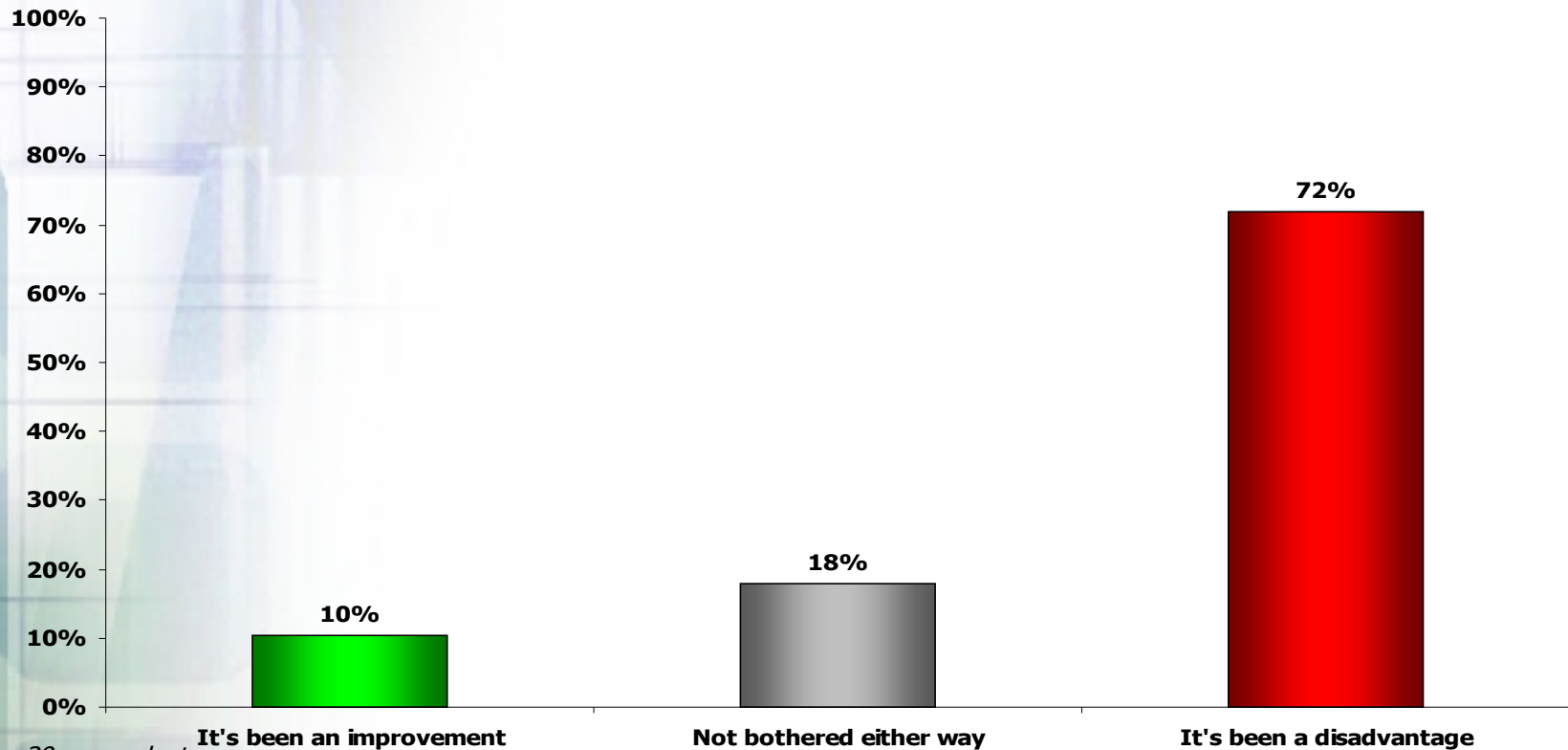
*"That's where the smoker and leprosy colony is now!"*

*"If you walk along that back row from 10.00am onwards it's full of people smoking."*

*"It has completely cut off this end of the market now."*

# The overwhelming majority feel that removal of the back row of stalls has had a negative effect on the market.

## What do you think about the removal of the back row of stalls near to the war memorial?



Base: 39 respondents

## Typical comments.....

### Why do you think this?

#### Improvement

*"More space for public to eat/smoke and relax."*

*"Has opened up spaces at rear of market."*

*"Because there is more space for public, to eat or drink, so they don't hang around blocking sites."*

#### Disadvantage

*"Public used to walk through the market, but no longer do. Lost its atmosphere."*

*"It's taken the main pull from the market."*

*"Because there is now no flow of people through the market and drunks sit about there."*

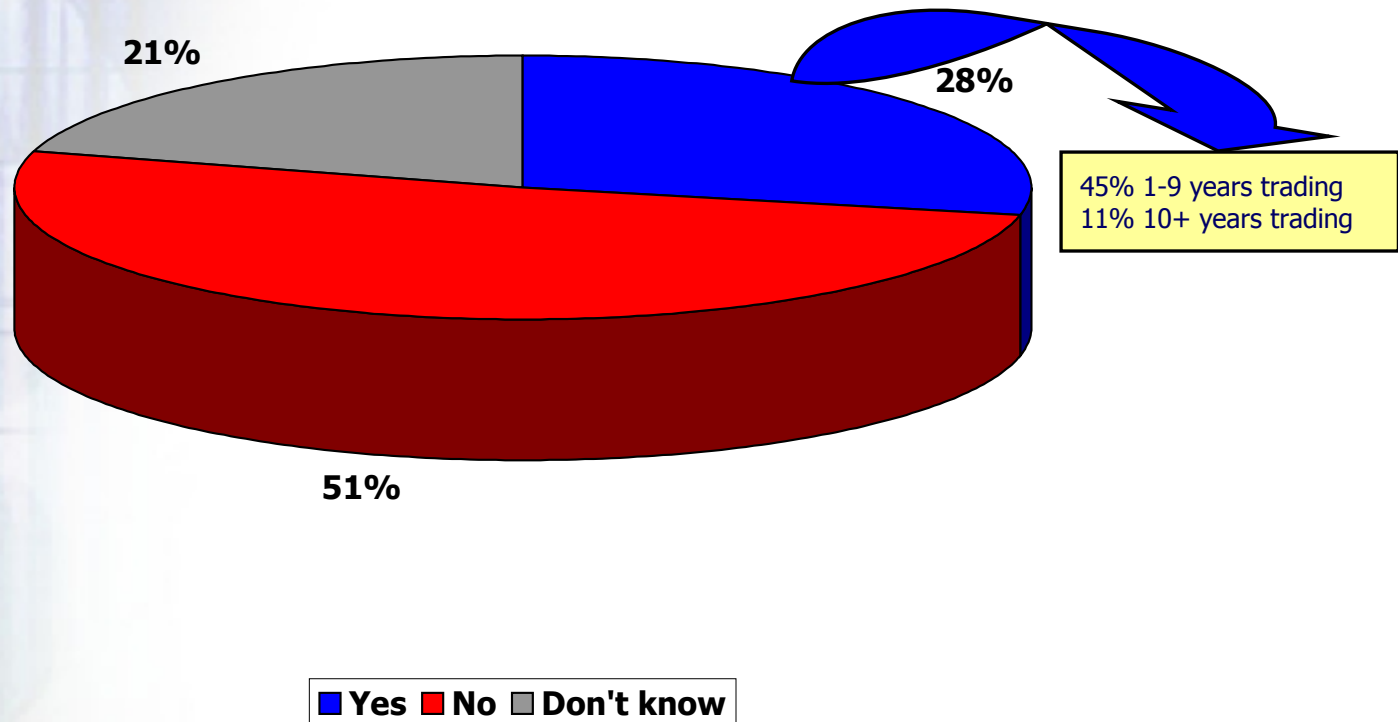
*"Back of market use to be a hive of activity, it's now derelict."*

*"This so called eating area is full of scummies and does nothing for the market."*

*"Less atmosphere."*

**Views are mixed on the provision of more tables and chairs along the back row.  
Traders of 10+ years standing give little support to the idea.**

**Should there be more tables and chairs for food stall holders along the back wall?**



*Base: 39 respondents*

## Typical comments.....

### Why do you think this (No or Don't Know to more tables and chairs along the back wall)?

*"Because all the drug addicts and drunks sit there."*

*"It attracts the wrong kind of people to the market, not the shoppers."*

*"It is now a sullied area where the yobo's mainly congregate."*

*"People are put off from back row as the down and outs use that area now, it's awful."*

*"Because there are enough drunks and druggies sitting on them now, feeding the ruddy pigeons."*

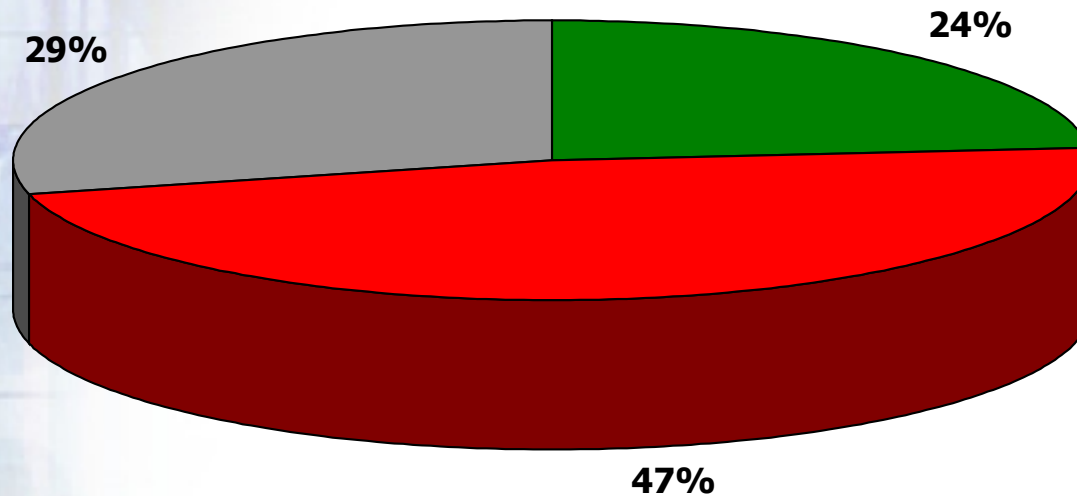
*"There should be more traders to attract visitors."*

*"I think you (the council) should put back the stalls that were there to bring more people to the back."*

*"This is no benefit to the stalls on the back near the wall."*

## There is certainly no general consensus towards opening up the central market area.

Do you think that the market would benefit from opening up a central 'square' in the centre of the market area?



■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

Base: 38 respondents

**Attitudes towards the French market are somewhat mixed. Those against, claim it is detrimental to their own trade; others say it boosts trade. Many question its authenticity.**

**It's okay**

- ☺ **It brings in visitors**
- ☺ **It doesn't harm my business**

**It's a problem**

- ☹ **It blocks access to Provision market**
- ☹ **They steal our trade**
- ☹ **It comes at the wrong time of year**

**It's not even French**

- "They're as French as fish fingers."*
- "Bonsai trees. What's French about that?"*

**"Why not bring them at quieter times of the year? That's when we can do with them."**

**"They did bring a lot of people in on Friday. I can't complain."**

**"Every year they have their backs to us so they've cut us off completely."**

**"The days the French market's there we take 50% more money."**

**"My trade slumps for a full fortnight after the French market."**

**"When it suffocates our market it does have a detrimental effect. The last couple of years they have spaced it a bit better."**

## Finding your way around

**The market can look gloomy at dusk or on a winter's evening. Lighting levels could be improved. It is also suggested that stall sides could be painted different colours to act as way marks.**

## **Lighting and decoration**

- **Low levels of lighting are not conducive to people entering the market.**
- **And poor lighting doesn't help shoppers to find their way around.**
- **As an aid to locating different areas of the market, perhaps stall sides could be colour-coded.**

*"The lighting on here is absolute rubbish."*

*"You need it brighter because it looks cleaner."*

*"I've put lighting outside the stall to make it a bit brighter. It's quite dull if you go through there at this time of the year."*

*"It's cold-looking and insufficient."*

*"I think the stalls could do with being painted different colours. They are all this dull grey. When people come and ask where the hairdressers are you could say – go to the yellow stall, then up to the green one and then you're there. "*

# Maps and signage

- **Orientating yourself in the market isn't easy and even market traders themselves don't always know the whereabouts of other stalls.**
- **Some traders said the maps at the four corners of the market aren't prominent enough and aren't kept up to date.**

*"Somebody asked about the mushroom guy. I had no idea where he is."*

*"I'm constantly being asked where different stalls are."*

*"Update the boards and make them more obvious."*

## Trader Relations

# Every man for himself or all for one and one for all?

- **Stall holders feel a sense of loyalty to each other and are willing to help each other out.**
- **They will unite in the face of a perceived outside threat to their livelihoods.**
- **There is a degree of camaraderie, but not what it was.**
- **They keep an eye on what other traders are up to.**

*"There are lots of people I know I could turn to and they'd do anything to help me out if I needed it. I would have no hesitation in asking."*

*"I enjoy my relationships with all stallholders on the market."*

*"I don't think many traders would see someone in trouble, even if you don't particularly get on with them."*

*"I try to keep myself to myself and I think others do that as well."*

*"I try not to get involved with the nitty gritty of it."*

*"If you're in the same commodity as someone else you make sure you're doing as well as they are."*

*"We're watching our backs and what each other is doing."*

*"That used to be handed down through the families. So that wasn't just the colleague relationships, that was families. Now that's all gone."*

## The issue of ancillary products remains a contentious one.

- **Most traders are very much against the idea of stalls being allowed to offer ancillary products.**
- **They consider this unfair practice and believe that it should be controlled/monitored by the Council**

*"When we started offering other products that we thought were compatible with our core product we had complaints made against us very quickly – within a week."*

*"There are people on this market who do encroach on other people's business. You think, - why's he allowed to do that?"*

*"If you start getting ancillary you're going to start getting arguments. You're going to start a war."*

*"If I wanted to sell something that encroaches on somebody else's business that would cause problems."*

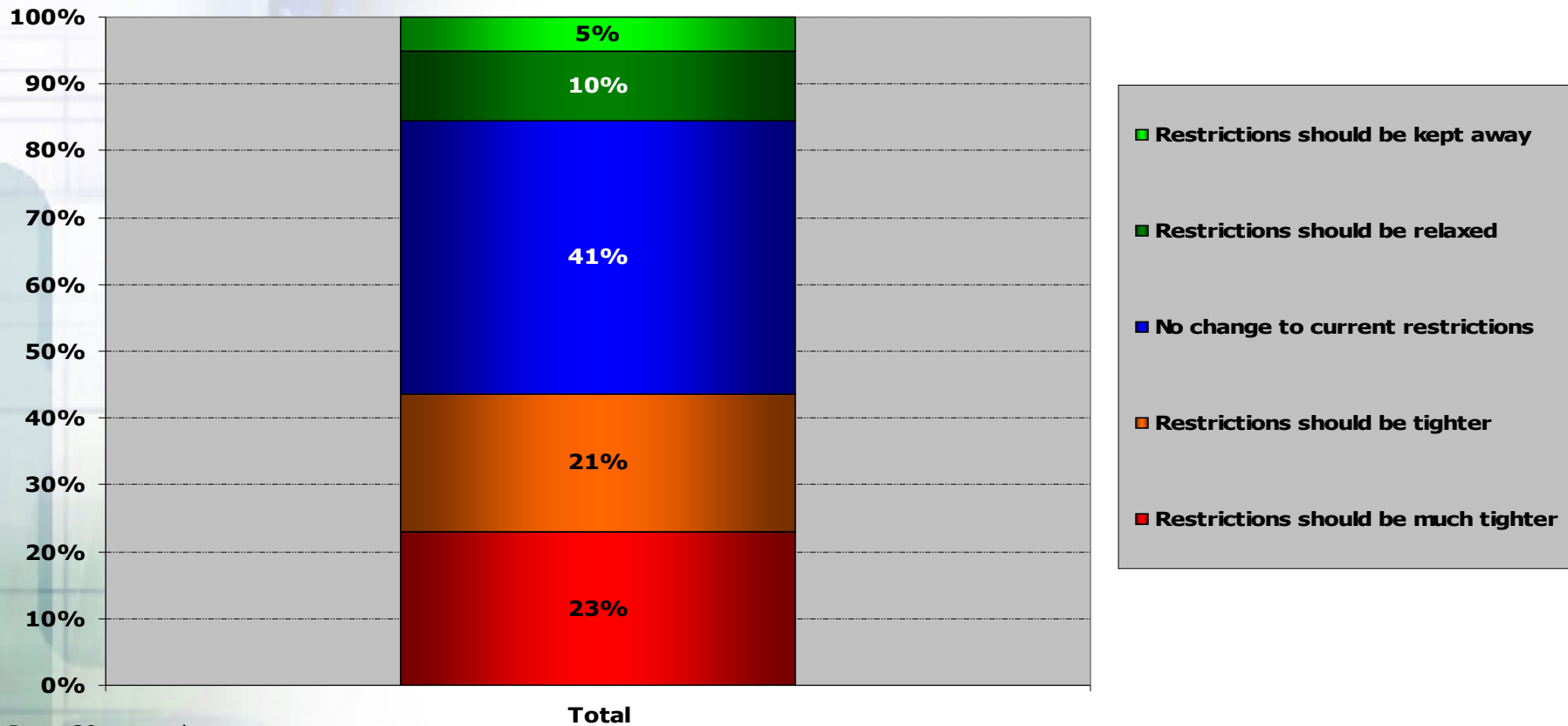
*"Whenever you bring somebody new in they want to sell something that somebody else already does. We need controlled trade."*

- **However, there are a couple of exceptions who think that the way forward for the market is in healthy competition and free trade**

*"It should all be done on customer and market forces shouldn't it. Not some man sitting on his seat saying you can't do this and you can't do that. Just let everybody run their own business for themselves and over a period of time it would allow Norwich Market to thrive."*

# There is little appetite for the relaxation of trading restrictions.

## What is your attitude towards the current trading restrictions imposed by the Council?



Base: 39 respondents

# There is little appetite for the relaxation of trading restrictions.

## Why do you think this?

*"Because if food stalls come on front the inside dies."*

*"Too many stalls sell illegal goods under the counter - imported tobacco."*

*"At the moment the council is allowing new traders to step on other traders toes - this shouldn't happen."*

*"Relaxing the restrictions would lead to all out war on good selling lines."*

*"We all have to keep to our own trades. If not ,stalls will cherry pick."*

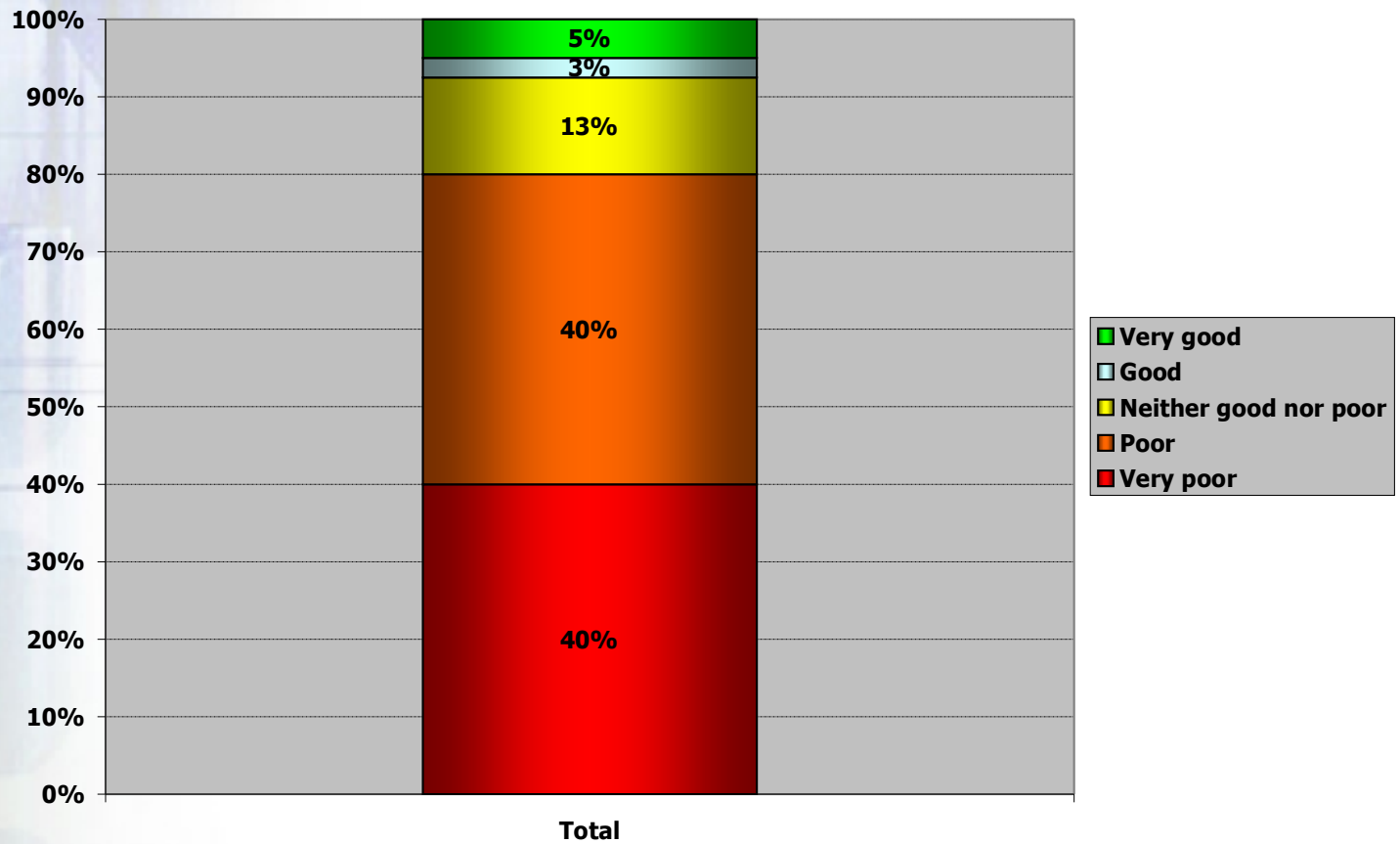
*"People are taking trade from other stall holders, you don't do that, we all have to make a living."*

*"Keeping it as it is will stop any bad feeling with the traders."*

## Council Relations

# Majority opinion about the Council as a landlord is clear.

## Overall, how do you rate the Council as your landlord?



Base: 40 respondents

## Typical comments.....

### Why do you think this?

*"The market is poorly managed and the Council don't seem interested in traders problems."*

*"Many U turns. No body with any authority to speak to face-to-face."*

*"High rents. They do not promote the market as much as other areas. Parts of the stalls are not working properly, market traders are not consulted."*

*"Relaxing the restrictions would lead to all out war on good selling lines."*

*"The cleaning is not good and the bin situations are not good as a lot of people moan about no bins around. Used to be bins but they got taken away."*

*"90% of the time they fail to address issues. Communication - marks out of 10 - 2."*

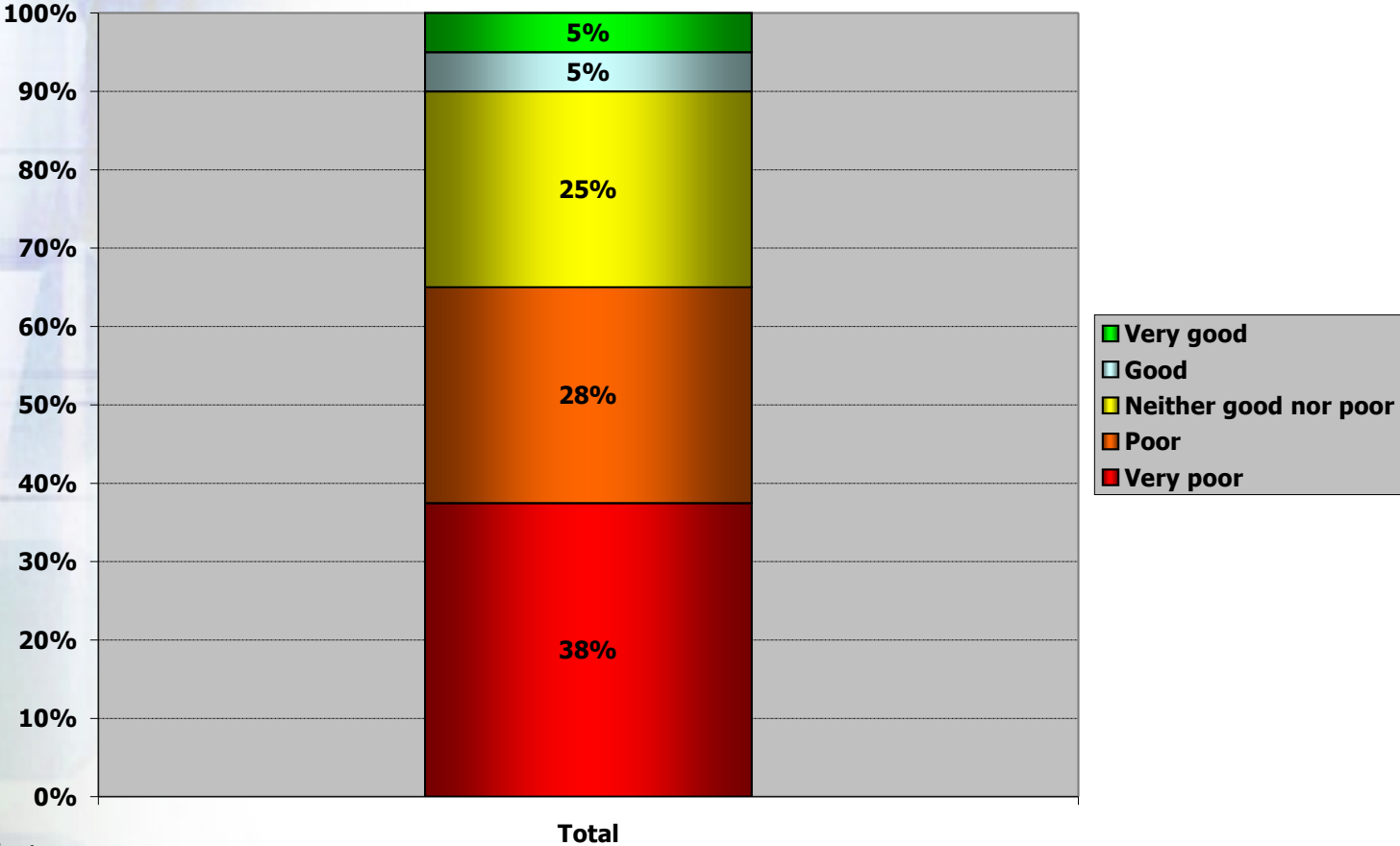
*"Because the market is dirty and no-one seems to care about stall holders anymore."*

*"Uninterested, poor communication. Not the correct body to run local business. Too autocratic. Traders do not have a say in what goes on."*

*"The market is seen by those who have no knowledge of how markets work and are not interested in learning. We are now run by 2 part time clerks and a part-time manager. We need a full time manager with power to sort out and support the traders."*

Over half the respondents (56%) rate communications as poor or very poor.

### How do you rate communications with the Council?



Base: 40 Respondents

## Typical comments.....

### Why do you think this is?

*"Lack of full-time manager."*

*"No permanent market manager on site."*

*"Bureaucratic administrators. Not retail traders. Not customer focused."*

*"What the council say at meetings and sometimes what they do are different."*

*"Sometimes they get back to you in a couple of days, sometimes 12 days."*

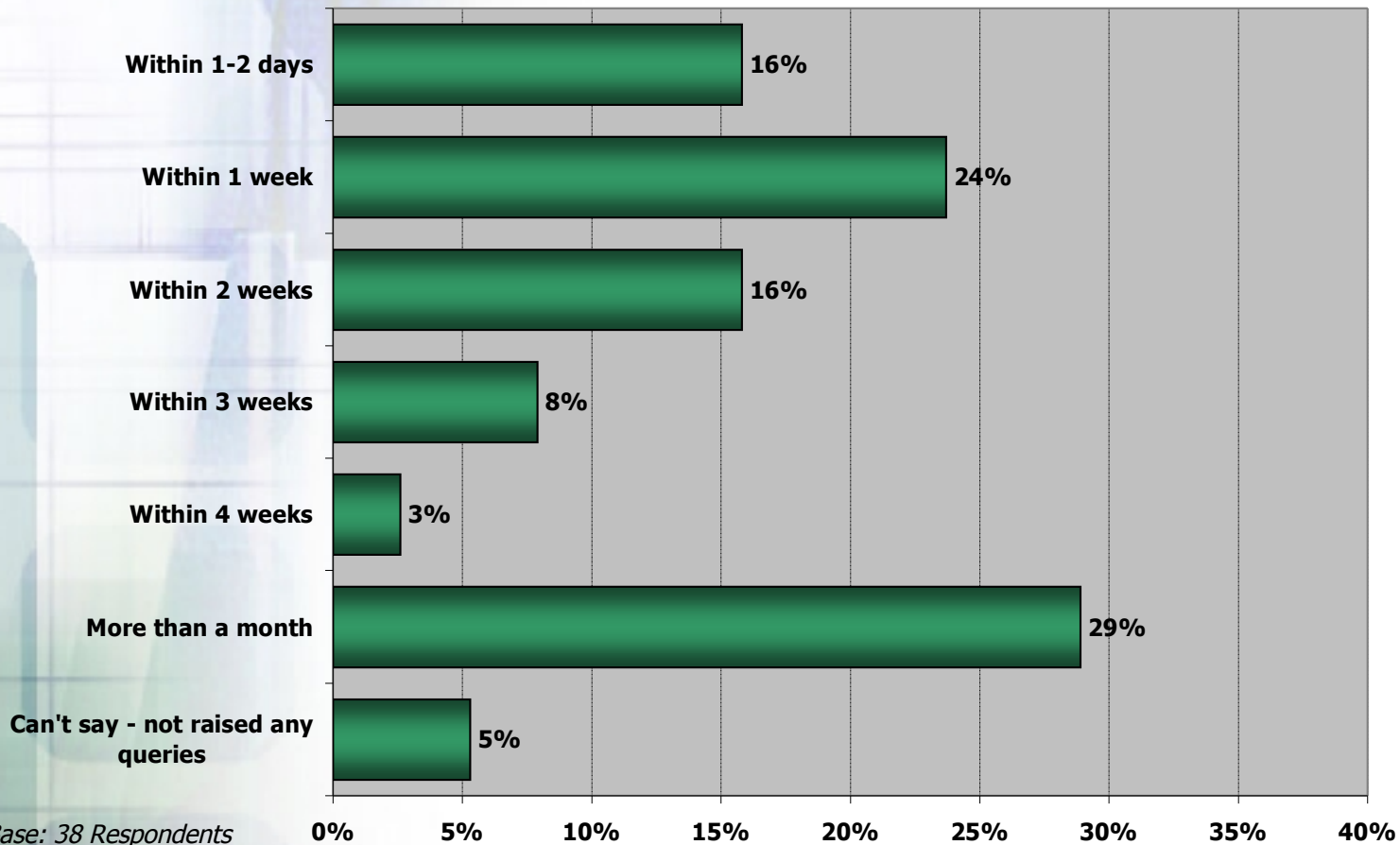
*"Our point of reference is 3 part-timers who have no time to sort out our problems and no power to take action."*

*"We need a strong onsite manager. It is the only market the WMTF have seen without one."*

*"No one cares."*

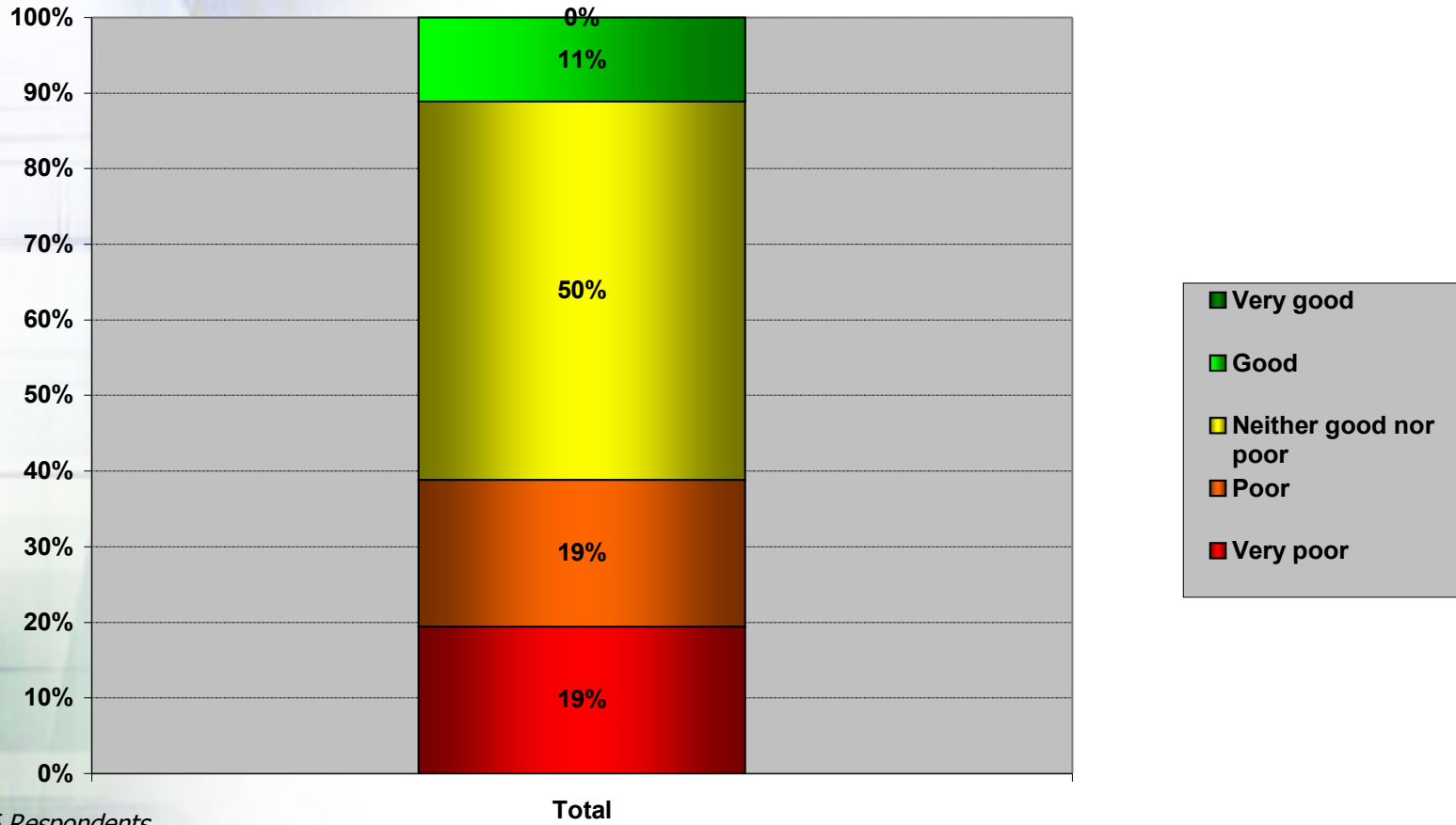
# Responses from the council can typically take anything from 1-2 days to over a month.

## Typically how quickly do you get a response from the Council to your queries?



# Exactly half of the stall holders felt that responses from the council were 'adequate'.

## When you received a reply, how did you rate the quality of the response?



## Typical comments.....

### Why do you think this (poor or very poor quality of response from the council)?

*"Everybody passes the buck so to speak."*

*"Because the Council just don't listen to you."*

*"No positive action was taken as there really is nobody in charge."*

*"Job share market manager has other priorities, not interested in the market."*

*"Phoned numbers all wrong. No one can tell me anything. No reply to email."*

*"Some traders will moan all the time, so the council stays away from the market, which spoils it for others when they genuinely need them."*

# When it comes to communication with the Council, stall holders express plenty of frustration.

## Communications issues

- **There is a genuine degree of concern about the lack of formal communication channels with City Hall.**
- **The feeling is that the market office does its best, but is battling against limited time and financial resources.**
- **Several stallholders are in favour of the appointment of a full-time market manager.**

*"We don't get a lot of support which is why I've given up all communication and trying to talk to somebody up there. It's just not worth it."*

*"They're difficult to get hold of because there isn't anybody in the market office."*

*"It's difficult to get hold of them. There's nobody on the end of the line. Though they do get back to you eventually."*

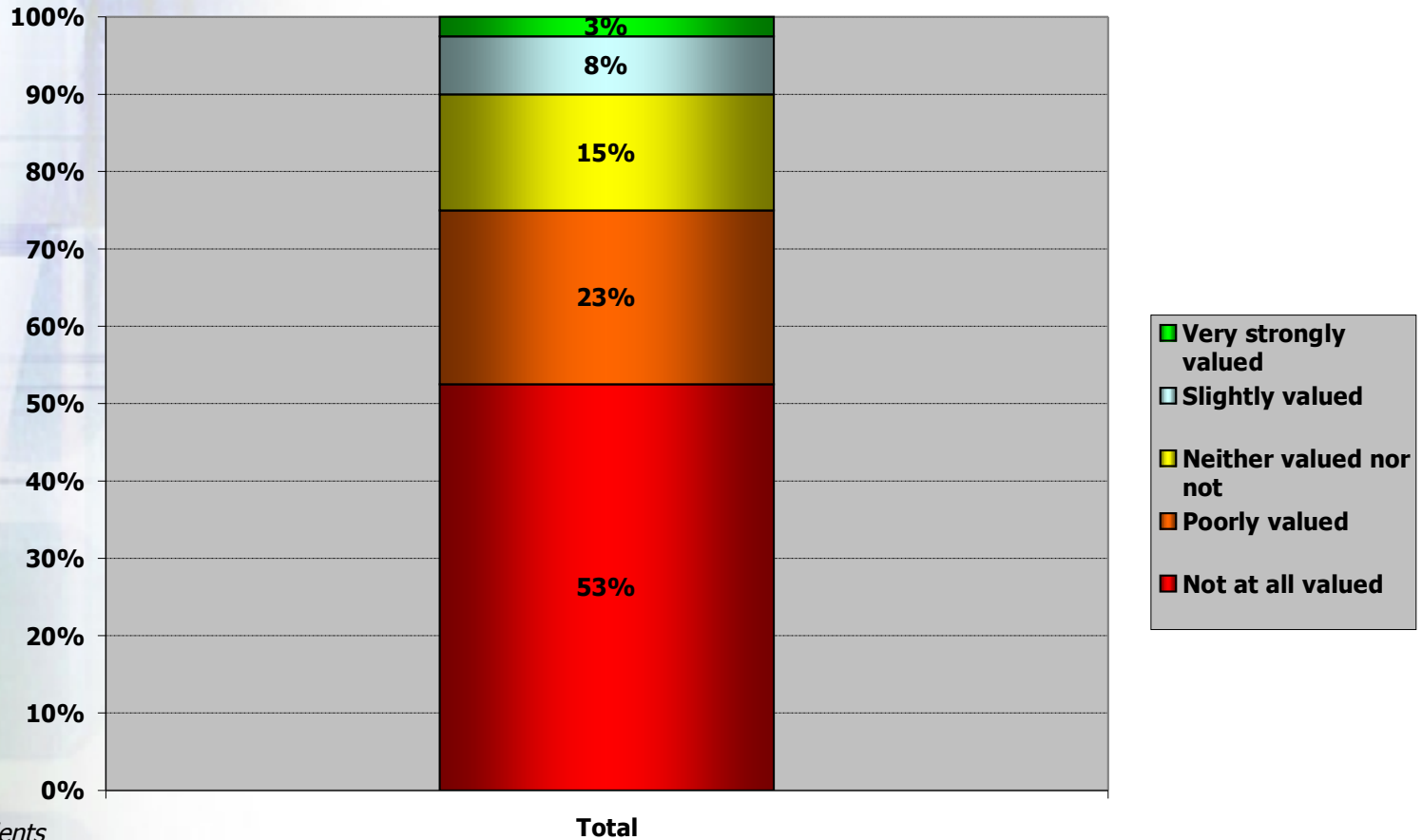
*"It's the only 6 day permanent market in the country without a full-time Toby. And little minor problems become major ones because we can't get people to cure them."*

*"I remember a market traders federation national executive member came down and he couldn't believe it. He said this was the only market he'd come across where there wasn't a markets office. He said even street markets have a markets office."*

*"I'm sure that the role of market manager is pretty much a full-time job."*

# Over three-quarters of respondents (76%) did not feel that they were a valued client of the Council

## Does the Council make you feel that you are a valued client?



## Typical comments.....

### Why do you think this (Poorly or Not at all valued by the Council)?

*"Money seems to be spent on seasonal markets but little has been done to address the decline of footfall (customers) on the market."*

*"The construction of the new market was deeply flawed, traders were angry , improvements weren't practical whilst rates went up and there is no Council representative who is strong enough to deal with their challenges."*

*"Treated as second class citizen."*

*"They are only interested in milking the trader or maximising rents/service charges. Doing as little as possible in return."*

*"Council's treatment of the market is take all and give nothing back. This has created a bad atmosphere between both parties."*

*"Taken the heart from the market. French, Christmas fayre, street traders, all catered for except the old Norwich market."*

# Traders believe they should be receiving greater loyalty and support from the Council.

## Loyalty factors

- **There are many remarks to the effect that the market operates almost 24/7 and that it is a significant part of the Norwich shopping and tourist scene.**
- **Yet, despite this, the market is frequently overlooked and priority is given to promoting other events or locations.**
- **Respondents also question the level of prominence and publicity devoted to the French Market compared the Provisions market.**

*"It's like the Council forget about us."*

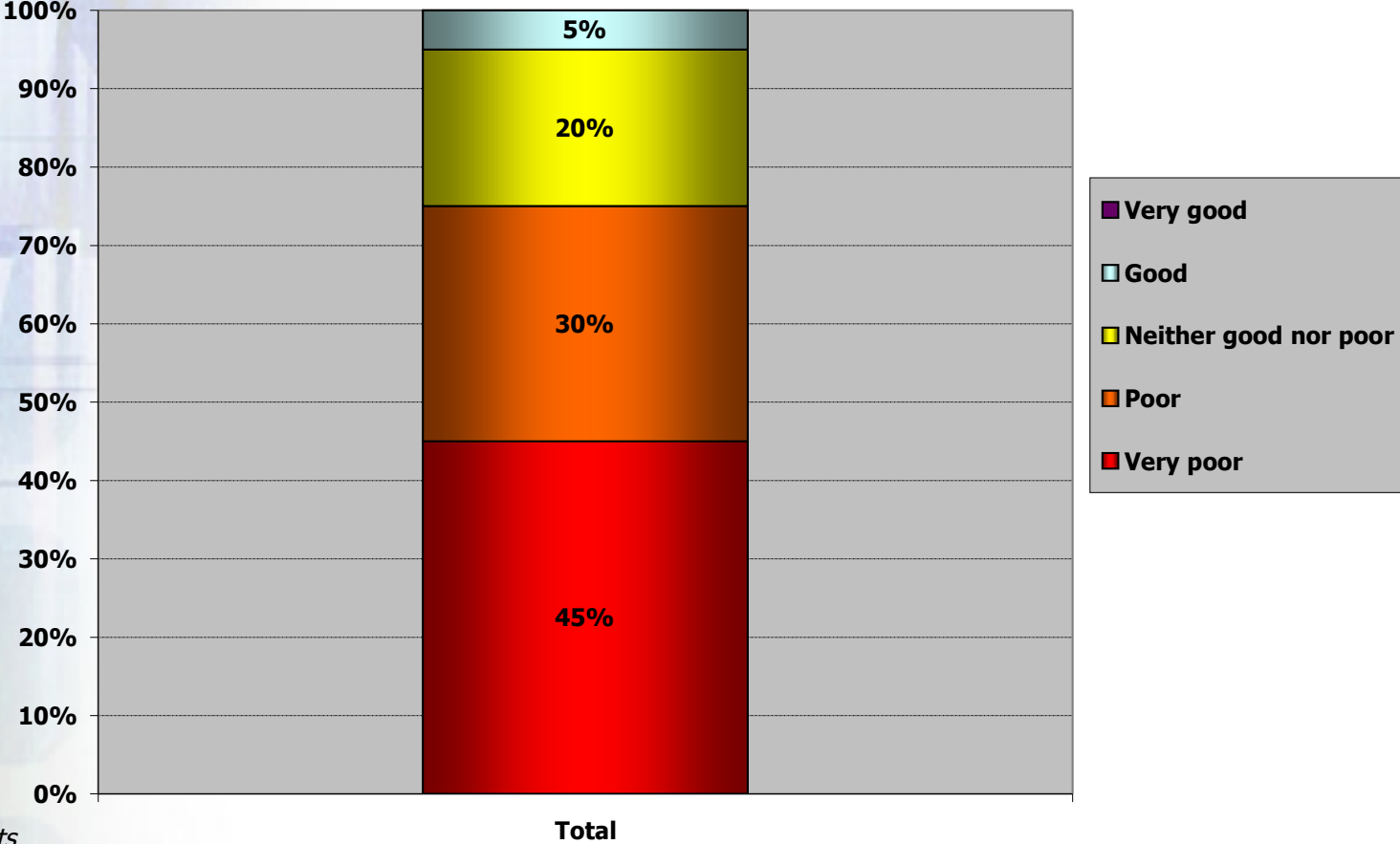
*"I can virtually guarantee we will not get many illuminations up. Everywhere else in the city will have them."*

*"We've got a wonderful market here every day. They make a lot of razzmatazz about the French market but we've got the same here 6 days a week."*

*"Why can't we have some lights, too? And some Christmas decorations? We're ignored."*

**General opinion about the cleaning services provided is also pretty low. This view coincides with the depth interview findings.**

**How do you rate the cleaning service provided by City Care?**



## Typical comments.....

### Why do you think this?

*"Because City Care is a poor business I guess."*

*"The market is not kept clean, not swept, not maintained."*

*"Bins are not emptied enough. No places for recycling."*

*"Some improvement seen over the past 6 months. Could be better."*

*"We never see a cleaner during the day. The council does not provide one. The toilets are a disgrace."*

*"They have contract with an extremely bad 'City Care' utility service, who are lazy, shoddy, unreliable but very expensive."*

*"They do not keep it up to standard as it should be, as it is all new."*

# Representation

## **In dealings with the Council, stallholders feel that their representation is not very effective, but not through any fault of the Committee**

- **All stallholders belong to the National Market Traders Federation and locally, they are represented by a Provision Market Committee at meetings with the Council.**
- **The Committee is the local branch of the National Market Traders Federation and comprises some 10 or 11 stallholders. Committee meetings tend to focus on Council issues and stallholders perceive them to be on an ad hoc basis.**
- **Stallholders who aren't on the committee appear to know very little about it and some claimed to get little to no feedback.**
- **There is a feeling that the Council pay lip service to meetings with the Committee. They will listen to the points put forward by the Committee but their decisions are made before meetings take place and so there is little action taken afterwards.**

*"When it comes down to it the Council will do what it wants to do."*

*"One gets the feeling the Council have made their decisions before they go to the committee."*

- **There is not much interest in the idea of another type of association. Maybe there could be more feedback from the current Committee, perhaps a newsletter or minutes could be circulated.**

## Committee members voiced frustration

- **Committee members say their meetings with the Council are little more than an information exchange, with the 'power' all on the Council's side. Trying to reach mutually satisfactory outcomes can be frustrating and they don't believe they have any influence.**

*"I think they listen but only to what they want to listen to. They've still got in their own heads what they want to do."*

*"I'm not a great fan of meetings where we all sit together with the councillors because you're only hitting your head against a brick wall and don't get anywhere."*

*"I just don't feel the City Council carries things through."*

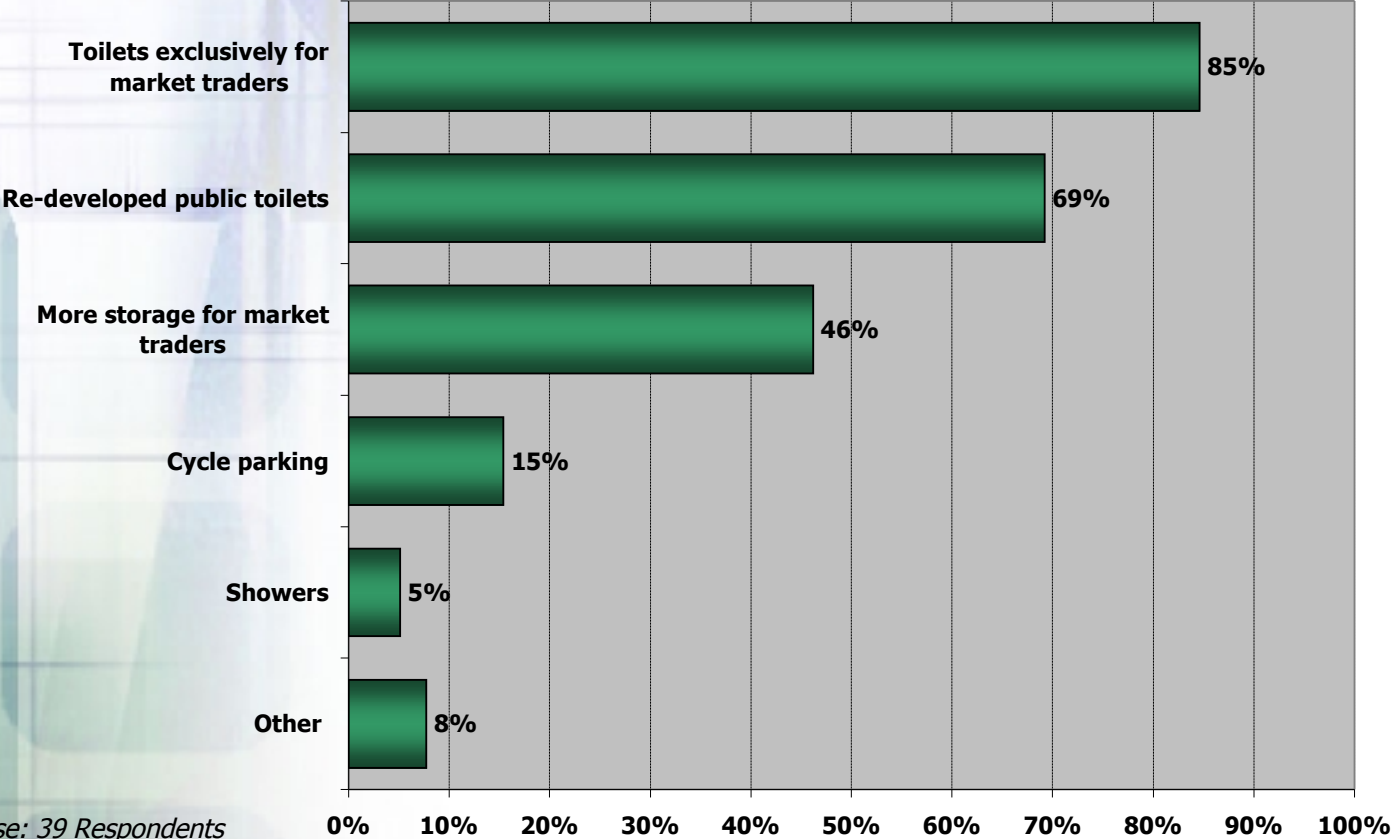
*"Do Councils ever listen?"*

*"It seems as though you covered a lot of ground and you thought a lot of good would come out of it, but down the line nothing ever happened."*

## Key Areas Of Concern

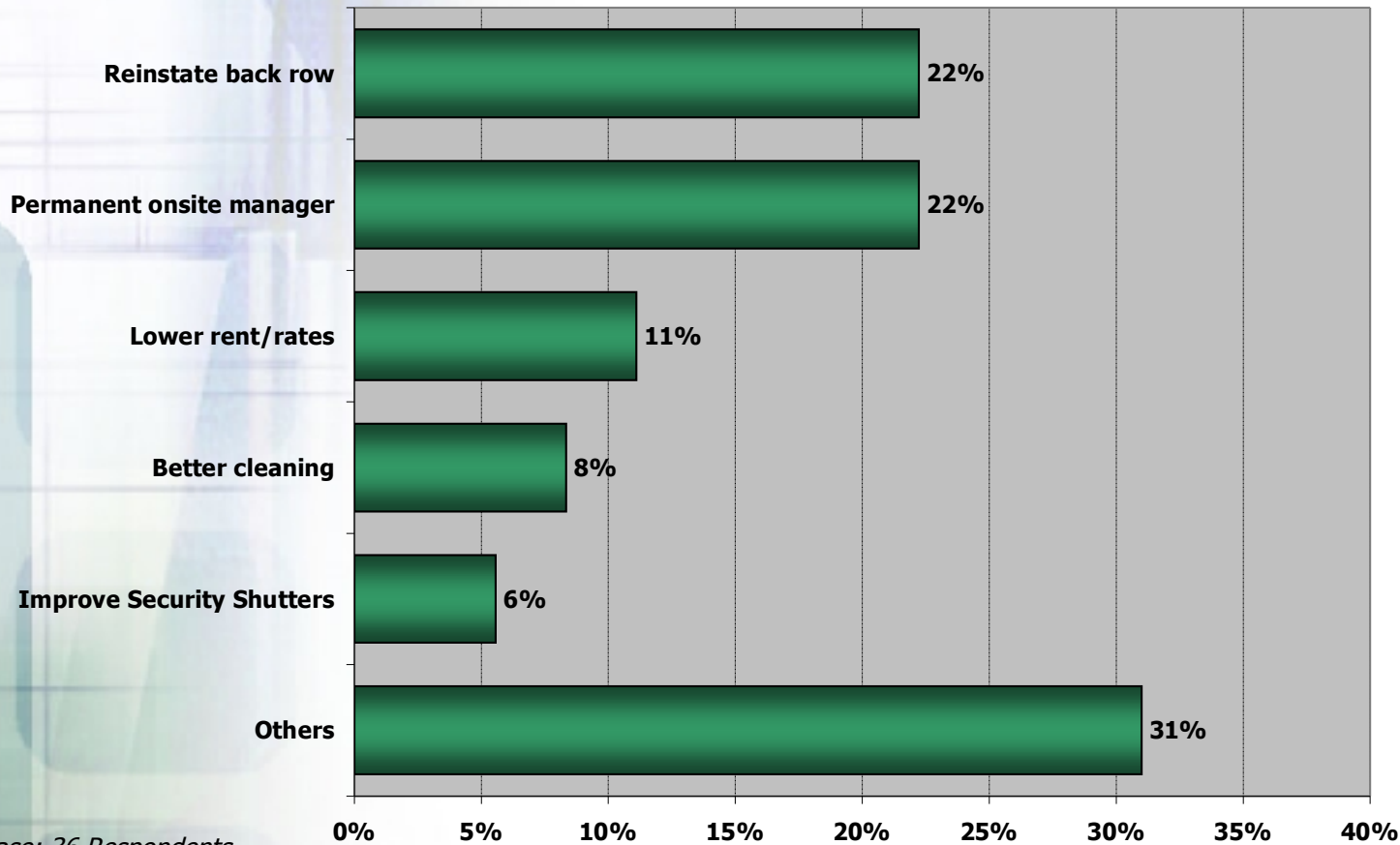
# Toilets for traders and public alike are high on the wish list of respondents.

## Which of the following facilities would you like to see in or around the market area?



**There were a variety of suggestions for improvements to the market, but back row reinstatement and a full time onsite manager were top of the list.**

**If you could make just ONE change to Norwich market, what would it be?**



*Base: 36 Respondents*

## Typical comments.....

### If you could make just ONE change to Norwich market, what would it be?

*"Bring back the back row of stalls."*

*"Employ a full-time market manager with retail and marketing experience."*

*"Rent and/or business rate reduction."*

*"Some improvement seen over the past 6 months. Could be better."*

*"Better cleaning and maintenance."*

*"Aisles clear from obstructions - goods/boards/boxes."*

*"Get rid of 'City Care'."*

*"The toilets should be a priority not just for the market, but Norwich city centre."*

**Traders share a number of pressing concerns that they claim are detrimental to the market and their businesses. There are also concerns about the removal of storage facilities.**

### **Key issues**

- **Public & trader toilets**
- **Standard of cleaning in the market**
- **Parking for shoppers and traders alike**
- **Peddlers**
- **Storage facilities**

# Public and trader toilets are universally criticized.

## Public toilets

- **Seen as a disgrace to the city**
- **Badly cleaned and maintained**

## Trader toilets

- **Bring back the trader loos when the Memorial revamp is done**
- **Current situation is intolerable**
- **They make a mockery of the SFBB initiative**
- **They're a health hazard.**

*"They are absolutely disgusting."*

*"We must have the dirtiest toilets in England."*

*"They came down and shut them because they were so bad and they didn't have anybody to clean them."*

*"There are only 2 toilets between the 150 women that work on the market."*

*"There's always a queue. And because I'm here on my own most days I can't stand in a queue for half an hour."*

*"They're so dirty they're a health risk. I'm serving food here. I daren't even use the washbasins in there. I come back to the stall and scrub my hands with anti-bacterial cleanser to get rid of germs."*

*"What annoys me is that we've just had this Safer Food Better Business initiative brought in. We've all done really well to keep standards really high and yet we've got filthy toilets. It's not good enough."*

# Hardly anyone has a good word to say about the quality of cleaning in the market. There are repeated calls for the current situation to be reviewed.

## Bring back Mervyn and Eamon

- **In the days before the refurbishment, the market had its own resident cleaners who were always on hand to keep the aisles and rows clean and tidy.**

## Poor standards now

- **Nowadays there are problems with the quality of cleanliness**
- **It reflects badly on the city and the market**

*"Sometimes I deliberately put paper down outside my stall to see how long it stays there. And it's there for days."*

*"That is ice cream on the side of that stall and it has been there for weeks."*

*"They took the cleaning staff off the market."*

*"We had two gentlemen, Eamon and Mervyn, who cleaned the market. They were really helpful and would do anything to help you."*

*"Years ago they used to wash the market down every Sunday. Nowadays they've got the machinery, everything could be steam cleaned."*

*"Half the problem is that they decided they'd do away with all their cleaning workers and put it out to City Care and now they don't have the same control."*

*"Get rid of City Care. They are bad news for the City centre."*

*"I've had urine around my stall and I've asked them to clean it, and they argued over who should clean it up."*

*"I've reported some human excrement opposite my stall. It took them a week to come and clean it."*

# The Council policy of discouraging cars from the city centre is not helping the market.

## Loading bays

- **There is reported mis-use of the loading bay on the Hill which stall holders want to see addressed.**
- **There are also reports of traders being faced with parking fines when unloading their vehicles and carrying stock to the stalls.**

*"You'll get somebody park in it (loading bay) for three hours or something."*

*"You've only got 20 minutes down the side there. If you've got more than 2 boxes to come in, 20 minutes is going to be gone."*

*"It seems as though there are special arrangements for certain people. It's like, if you've got a blue car you can stay there all day and you won't get a ticket."*

*"I was told they were allowed up to 20 minutes but they are sat there all day."*

## Shopper parking

- **With the Chapelfields and Forum car parks offering easy parking, the pedestrian traffic flow is shifting**
- **There are low expectations that the Council will capitulate over short term parking in St Peter's Street and Gaol Hill, but traders feel it would encourage more shoppers to 'pop in' to the market**

*"You can't just park and pop into Norwich Market. You haven't got parking round here."*

*"Now that parking's so bad you don't get people shopping really early in the morning. They used to come in, park on the Hill and nip in for 20 minutes. You can't do that any more. They need to bring back 30 minutes parking."*

*"Get one hour's free parking in the city"*

**With one exception, attitudes towards stalls around the Guildhall /Hay Hill are fairly relaxed. But, there are one or two traders who remain fiercely opposed to peddlers.**

## **Peddlers**

*"It's not the Guildhall and Hay Hill that are the concern, it's these bloody street peddlers. Come Christmas they get shipped in. Saturday it was like a convoy. They're a pain."*

*"The bigger problem here is the peddlers out on the street. They are delivered in by a big vehicle. There were 11 on the Saturday before last. They get a peddlers licence from the police anywhere in the country. They become stall holders but they are not paying the rent we're paying. The licence costs them £13 and they can move anywhere in the country."*

## **Guildhall and Hay Hill**

*"They're getting more and more on there. We are traders who work for a living, 7 days a week. Half these little traders come on at weekends around the Guildhall. One of them worked up the City Hall and did it as a little hobby. It shouldn't be allowed."*

# It will be of little surprise to learn that there is outrage amongst traders set to lose their storage space when the Memorial Gardens are revamped.

## Storage facilities

➤ **Those traders who currently have storage under the Memorial Gardens are vexed and anxious about the loss of the facilities**

➤ **For one or two, it may just be the final straw**

*"I will be devastated. That's a part of our business. They can't just suddenly take it away. I'm ready to walk away from it."*

*"Before I got the store I used to have cases stood in the gangways here that were waiting to be opened. It was just absolute chaos. I think for the 27 people who have got storage there should be some provision like containers on top of the cycle park there."*

*"That is going to affect me massively. The big, bulky stuff that has to be drawn out during the day, I can't put it under the stall so I don't know what I'm going to do. And I've said – if we're going to lose the warehouses I think you're going to lose me. It's as crucial as that."*

## Summary

## Key Messages from Quantitative Survey

- **Some traders are having to work longer hours to make up for lower footfall and higher overheads.**
- **The appetite for late night and Sunday opening does not appear adequate to reach 'critical mass' – a market that is fully open for business at these times. Traders feel they work long enough as it is.**
- **As confirmed in the depth discussions, parking and unloading remains a problem for stallholders.**
- **Stall holders would rather the back row was reinstated rather than any attempt to use it as a seating area.**
- **The sampled stall holders perceive there to be a relatively poor relationship with the Council and many believe that the appointment on a permanent on-site manager could help to overcome this.**
- **Improved facilities - toilets for traders and shoppers, and more storage space come top of the stall holders' wish list.**

## Summary (1)

- **The revamped stalls are better than the old ones:**
  - ☑ **more hygienic**
  - ☑ **more secure**
- **The market may have lost customers during the refurbishment but there are some indications that it's gaining new and different shoppers**
- **There is a need to bring back "the atmosphere"**
- **Pedestrian traffic flow through the market is much lower and this has been compounded by the removal of the back row of stalls**
- **Parking issues should be looked at, both for shoppers and traders**
- **When the bunker under Memorial Gardens is redeveloped stallholders would like to see storage and trader toilets re-introduced**

## Summary (2)

To encourage locals to use the market, there are areas that should be addressed:

- **New, modern, state-of-the art, spanking clean public loos are a priority**
- **Brightly lit, colourful gangways and aisles**
- **Signage and map displays**
- **A range of specialist food and commodity stalls to attract regular (weekly) shoppers**
- **30-minute parking within the vicinity**
- **A vibrant back row of stalls to lure shoppers to the top of the market**

**Opening and closing hours need to be debated because the present ad-hoc arrangement is not ideal.**

## Recommendations (1)

- **Create an ambience to the market with more colour, better lighting and a vibrant back row**
- **Promote the market as a fun place to shop**
  - Suggestion: music at weekends – a band on a Saturday afternoon**
    - ❖ *"we're not Covent Garden but we can promote a good atmosphere"*
  - Suggestion: special events**
    - ❖ *"I think one every 3 months, maybe to reflect the changing seasons"*
- **Recreate the continental market square café scene**
  - Suggestion: install seating for people at various points around the market**
    - ❖ *"when you look at the width of the Walk there could be more seating there"*
    - ❖ *"you just haven't got that atmosphere. It's not a place where you want to stay. If there was somewhere people could linger over a coffee or something you'd attract a wide clientele"*
- **Continue the continental market theme with specialist food and commodity stalls**
  - ❖ *"I like to think the new Norwich market is full of specialist traders"*

## Recommendations (2)

- Flagship public toilet facilities are vital both for the market and for the city generally
  - **Suggestion: a full-time attendant to maintain cleanliness & keep an eye on the place**
  - ❖ *"It would be a good draw if you had lovely toilets."*
- **Review the cleaning of the market and ensure it looks tidy at all times**
- **Look at bringing back short term parking as another facility for market shoppers**
  - ❖ *"Parking meters on St Peter's Street and the Hill. Half hour parking. Pull up, £1 in the machine, come down, do all the shopping, and away."*

## Recommendations (3)

- **Make sure that traders have the facilities they need to be able to operate**
  - Suggestions:**
    - incorporate trader toilets in the new space under Memorial Gardens**
    - make provision for storage space**
    - review and monitor loading bay arrangements**
- **Discourage anti social behaviour by members of the public, monitor the working of the market and improve communication with market traders**
  - Suggestion: have a markets office on-site**
    - ❖ *"What you need is a market office on the market, not up there. Not only can you get in touch with them but they can keep an eye on you as well."*



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