WESTMINSTER MARKETS

City of Westminster

Trader Business Support Prospectus

How Westminster City Council will target and deliver business support for market traders – and where you can find wider support options

For traders in Berwick Street, Church Street, Maida Hill, Rupert Street, Strutton Ground and Tachbrook Street. This guide should be read alongside the live Westminster Markets website and the current Trader Handbook.



BERWICK STREET MARKET

CHURCH STREET MARKET

MAIDA HILL MARKET

RUPERT STREET MARKET

STRUTTON GROUND MARKET

TACHBROOK STREET MARKET

Overview

Business support for Westminster's Markets will be practical, targeted and easy to use

Westminster City Council's approach to markets is to treat stalls as business platforms rather than simply licensed pitches.

This means the Markets service is not just here to collect fees and move on, we are here to help you trade better, grow your sales, build your confidence and progress into new opportunities over time.

Our business support package sits alongside clear fees, active market management, and careful curation. Together, these build the strongest possible trading environment for our six markets.

The strongest support model is not a long programme of generic classroom sessions. It is short, practical, trader-friendly support, delivered on-street, through clinics, simple toolkits, targeted recruitment, digital help, partner programmes and clear progression routes.

What traders tell us they need

Survey data from market traders tells us that the top three topics that matter the most to them are:

Increasing sales

Number #1 requested topic for support

Marketing & promotion

Need for sharper visibility and footfall support

Business planning

Demand for short, practical growth advice

What this guide is

A practical trader-facing guide explaining what Westminster Markets can offer directly, how support will be targeted and delivered, and where to go for wider business-support routes.

What this guide is not

It is not a legal guide, a fixed fee list or a guarantee that every programme is always open. Live fees, opportunities, dates, eligibility, and finance terms should always be checked before applying.

Wider support routes, programme dates and finance offers can change. Use this guide as a practical starting point, then check the live website or programme page before applying.



How we will target business support as the Markets service

Different traders at different stages need different support.

The needs of a first-time trader at Maida Hill will vary greatly compared to an established operator at Berwick Street looking to grow. We will use trader conversations, market observations, survey feedback, vacancy analysis and live opportunities to tailor the right support that traders need.

The council will not deliver the same support in the same way in every market. Support will be targeted through trader conversations, market observations, survey feedback, vacancy analysis, operational issues and live opportunities. Four principles will guide our approach to trader business support:

1 By trader stage

Are you starting up, stabilising, established, or ready to grow? Your stage will determine what support is most relevant to you.

2 By trader need

You know your business best. We will build support programmes based on what traders tell us they need. This may be via surveys, analysis, or face-to-face conversations.

3 By market role

Our six markets are distinct, with differing audiences, trading paces, and place roles. The support we offer will reflect each market, rather than a one-size-fits all package.

4 By live opportunity

Support is not static. Where new programmes, funding, or opportunities open, we will connect traders to them and provide progression routes into other pathways.

In practice, this means that some support will be individual and stall-side, some will be market-level and collective, and some will be delivered by signposting and referral into wider council or externally led business-support routes.

The Markets Service is the front door for market specific help

We will diagnose the issue, target support, deliver what we can directly, and connect you into specialist support where that is the best fit.



What you can expect from us

Business support will be embedded into the day-to-day running of our markets rather than being treated as an occasional add-on.

We will work to build support around you, keeping traders informed of live opportunities, and delivering packages that fit around your trading schedule.

Whilst specific support will be guided by trader stage, trader need, market role, and live opportunities, some broader topics of support that you can expect from us include:

1 Starting trading

We will provide clear guidance on the options available to trade at our markets, be that through temporary licence routes or by casual trading. We will work to find the market that fits for your offer and help you to take the first steps.

2 Trading better

We will provide quick, practical, and easy-to-implement help on pricing, display, menus, queue flow, merchandising, customer service and stall presentation, allowing traders new and old to trade to their full potential.

3 Going digital

We will provide easy and low-barrier support to work on your digital presence, including social media, simple content creation, Google presence, basic digital tools, and loyalty-building. Through our new Westminster Markets website, we will provide ways to increase your online visibility through a trader profile feature.

4 Being a good neighbour

We will advise on best practices for waste disposal, cleanliness, loading, and set-up discipline to help traders operate well in the public realm.

5 Growing and progressing

We will help you find the right next step, including keeping you updated on routes into different markets, themed trading opportunities, accessing funding or finance, and wider enterprise support. We will also provide a progression pathway for traders seeking to transition to brick-and-mortar retail.

How support will usually be delivered

We will focus on short stall-side coaching when that is the best approach. We may also run compact drop-in clinics and produce simple templates and toolkits that you can use at your own pace. Where traders would benefit from specialist external support, we will work to signpost you to these.

Not every form of support will be available at all six of our market at all times. But every market will have a clear support focus, and the Markets Team will always be your first port of call to signpost you to available opportunities.

Building the best trading environment

We will deliver this support to you whilst simultaneously working to build the best possible trading environment at our markets. Our business support package will sit alongside active market management, improved branding and signage and stronger recruitment, activations and events, in helping you trade to your full potential.

You can find out in more detail about what the council is doing to improve our street markets in the **Westminster Markets Strategy.**



How support will differ across Westminster's markets

Westminster's six street markets are each individually distinct, both in terms of their offering and their wider place role.

A single support package will not work for every market. Our approach to business support will reflect the different needs of each market and is rooted in the individual market visions.

The below table sets out the role each of our markets play, and how this will shape what our business support focus may look like at each market:



Market	Role	Strong trader fit	Support focus
Berwick Street	Flagship con-temporary Soho market	High-quality lunch operators, premium grab-and-go, bakery, deli, flowers and curated Saturday retail.	Sales growth, differentiation, visual merchandising, stronger collective Soho marketing and showcase presentation standards.
Rupert Street	Boutique Soho culture market	Selective pop-up retail, gifts, art, collectibles, food gifts and themed trading.	Brand storytelling, premium standards, events-readiness, fast set-up discipline and online conversion.
Strutton Ground	Victoria week-day food and Saturday discovery market	Fast weekday lunch traders, better drinks and lighter formats, plus weekend artisan and discovery traders.	Throughput, customer spend, frontage consistency, cleaner food operations and good-neighbour working.
Tachbrook Street	Pimlico's food market	Produce, specialists, healthier lunches, convenience-led formats and artisan themed traders.	Repeat trade, local loyalty, digital visibility, healthier offers and progression into local premises or pop-ups.
Church Street	Value destination market	Produce, value-led retail, stronger hot-food clusters and community/themed traders.	Display, trust, basket spend, compliance confidence, business planning and routes into wider enterprise support.
Maida Hill	Activation and incubation market square	Start-ups, makers, community traders, youth traders and themed low-risk trial formats.	Low-barrier onboarding, first-trade mentoring, digital basics and progression through the wider Westminster network.

You can read more about the council's vision for each market in the **Westminster Markets Strategy.**

What this means in practice

Support should be strongest where it helps a trader solve the next real problem: getting started, filling a market gap, improving daily trade, building repeat custom, or progressing into a wider opportunity.

Business support beyond the Markets Service: Westminster and local routes

The Markets Service will not deliver every specialist support route directly. Where a trader needs grants, workspace, procurement support, research or wider business support, we will work to signpost them into the right route.

This may include other council services such as:

Route	Best for	What it offers	Find out more
Westminster grant and funding search tool	Finding grant or funding oppor-tunities	A free account-based search tool for businesses and community groups. Useful when you want to identify likely grants and funding sources in one place.	**www.westminster.gov.uk/businesses/business-support-and-guidance/grants-and-sources-funding-businesses**
Westminster Economic Growth team	General business support, workspace and wider council routes	A single council access point that can connect businesses to support on high streets, enterprise, affordable workspace, meanwhile use and related support programmes.	**www.westminster.gov.uk/businesses/business-sup-port-and-guidance**
Westminster Business Library / Business Information Point	Research, work-shops, data-bases, networking and work-space	Free business resources and industry databases, events and workshops, plus co-working and meeting spaces. A strong route for planning, research and practical learning.	**www.westminster.gov.uk/leisure-libraries-and-community/libraries/business-information-points**
Supplier Readiness Programme	Traders who can supply goods or services beyond the stall	Workshops, guidance and meet-the-buyer events to help Westminster-based small businesses become ready to win tenders.	**www.westminster.gov.uk/businesses/supplier-readiness-programme**
Meanwhile On	Traders ready to test or grow into shop space	A progression route for emerging brands, entrepreneurs and creatives to use vacant or underused shops in central London and build a stall-to-shop pathway.	**www.westminster.gov.uk/meanwhile-on**



London-wide and national routes traders should know about

Some of the most useful support for traders may not be delivered by the council directly. Multiple external business support routes are available for when you need one-to-one advice, wider business support, finance or help choosing the right next step.



These include:

Route	Best for	What it offers	Find out more
Grow London Local	Guidance when you do not know where to start	A support route for London small businesses. Traders can use the Business Success Check, browse support by topic, attend events, or request a free consultation with a Business Support Manager.	**www.growlondonlocal.london**
National Market Traders Federation (NMTF)	Advice and networking from market traders across the UK	The only national trade association for market traders, it acts as a forum to share best practice and advice.	**www.nmtf.co.uk**
Start Up Loans	Early-stage finance for new businesses	A nationally recognised route for traders who early growth finance and want application support and mentoring alongside the finance process.	**www.gov.uk/apply-start-up-loan**

A simple rule of thumb

Use Grow London Local when you need advice and signposting. Use the Westminster grant and funding search tool when you need to look for grants. Use British Business Bank guidance when you need finance options rather than grant support.

How to find the right support

A quick guide to where traders should start

The table below is intended to make the support system easier to use. Start with the route that best matches your immediate need. Where the issue is market-specific, the Markets Team should usually be your first contact.



If you need...	Start here	What Westminster Markets will do
A first route into trading	Markets vacancies, casual trading or temporary trading route	Explain the market options, point you to the right route and help you understand which market fits your offer.
Help improving sales or stall performance	Markets Team	Provide practical trader-facing help on pricing, display, product mix, menus, customer flow and presentation.
Marketing or digital visibility help	Markets Team or Grow London Local	Offer market-specific guidance and signpost to wider marketing, digital or planning support where needed.
A grant or funding search	Westminster grant and funding search tool	Signpost you to the search route and help you understand when a grant search is worth pursuing.
Finance or a loan op-tion	British Business Bank guidance / Start Up Loans	Point you to the most relevant finance route and explain whether grant or debt finance is likely to be the better starting point.
Moving from stall to shop	Markets Team plus Meanwhile On / Economic Growth	Help identify whether your offer is ready for progression and connect you into the most relevant route.
Winning contracts or supplying bigger buyers	Supplier Readiness Programme	Signpost you to live support where your business has potential to supply goods or services beyond direct consumer sales.
Research, training or workspace	Westminster Business Library	Direct you to practical learning, in-dustry databases, workshops and workspace options.

When in doubt

If you are unsure which route fits, start with the Markets Team for market-specific issues or Grow London Local for a wider free consultation. Both routes can help narrow down the best next step.

Key contact routes for Westminster traders

Use the contacts below depending on the kind of help you need. In general, the Markets Team is the right first route for market-specific business-support questions, while licensing questions should go to the Street Trading Licensing Team.



Contact	Use this for	Contact details
Markets Team	Market-specific support, trader guidance, support packages and market character questions	**markets@westminster.gov.uk**
Market Operations Team	Operational queries or issues such as waste, electricity, etc.	**markets.operations@westminster.gov.uk**
Street Trading Licensing Team	Applications, renewals, variations, casual registration, event trading and licence administration	**streettradinglicensing@westminster.gov.uk**
External Funding Team	Help with Westminster's grant and funding search tool	**externalfundingteam@westminster.gov.uk**
Westminster Business Library / BIP	Research, workshops, events, databases and co-working	**bip@westminster.gov.uk**
Supplier Readiness Programme	Contract-readiness and procurement support	**supplier.readiness@westminster.gov.uk**
Economic Growth team	Wider business support, workspace, meanwhile use and linked council opportunities	**economicgrowth@westminster.gov.uk**
Grow London Local	Consultation, Business Success Check and wider London business-support signposting	**hello@growlondonlocal.london**

Contacts and next steps

1

Identify the need

Start with the most immediate issue: getting started, increasing sales, improving digital visibility, finding finance, or progressing into a new opportunity.

2

Choose the route

Use the quick guide in this document to choose the best first route. For market-specific issues, the Markets Team should usually be first.

3

Check the live information

Before applying, always check the live website or programme page for dates, eligibility, fees, finance terms and availability.

Final note

This guide is intended to sit alongside the live Westminster Markets website, the Trader Handbook and any market-specific opportunity brief. Where there is any difference, the live legal and operational documents take precedence.









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