SAVING LONDON

WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING WITH SOME OF LONDON'S HISTORIC BUILDINGS

SPITALFIELDS CHARNEL HOUSE BRUSHFIELD STREET

In advance of major redevelopment of the western area of the former Spitalfields horticultural market, archaeological investigation unearthed the substantial remains of a 14th century charnel house associated with the priory of St Mary Spital. Used as a repository for bones from earlier burials, disturbed when new graves were dug, it was converted into a house after the Dissolution and then demolished to ground level in about 1700 and its crypt covered with earth. Following close consultation between English Heritage, the developers and their architects, the substantial remains have been preserved in situ. They can be viewed from above through glass panels, and from the side via a sunken courtyard, all situated within public open space off Brushfield Street.

ST GEORGE'S BLOOMSBURY

Designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor and built between 1716 and 1731. It has a stepped spire, which was inspired by Pliny's description of the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus (modern Bodrum in Turkey). A major programme of restoration costing £6.75m is currently underway, with major contributions from English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the World Monuments Fund. This important grade I listed church will fully re-open in October 2006.

ⓘ **www.stgeorgesbloomsbury.org.uk/**
ⓘ **www.thebeasts.info/.**

NEXT ISSUE
LONDON'S SPORTING HERITAGE

With the 2012 Olympics being held in London, we will be looking at the wide variety of historic buildings and sites associated with sport in the capital down the centuries.

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ENGLISH HERITAGE

Changing London

AN HISTORIC CITY FOR A MODERN WORLD

MARKETS

Reminders of London's ancient markets are all around in the capital's street names: medieval Cheapside, 17th century Haymarket, 18th century Shepherd Market…

Markets have always had an impact on London's built environment. The splendid Billingsgate market hall designed by Horace Jones in 1874 is a reminder of the area's association with fish (and bad language!) even though the market itself moved to the Isle of Dogs in 1982. The attractive Victorian market buildings of Leadenhall and Smithfield are still in use, although there are concerns about the future of Smithfield.

But it is not only in the centre of London that markets add to the character of an area. Across the city, around one hundred general and specialist markets of all sorts bring life and vitality to our streets, often reflecting something of the nature of the communities in which they have developed. New markets, such as the burgeoning 'Farmers' Markets', bring a temporary village air to several London neighbourhoods.

In this issue of Changing London we look at this rich and diverse aspect of the capital.

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ENGLISH HERITAGE

LONDON'S MARKETS

SUSIE BARSON OF ENGLISH HERITAGE'S ARCHITECTURAL INVESTIGATION TEAM TAKES A LOOK AT THE DIVERSE AND FASCINATING HISTORY OF THE CAPITAL'S MARKETS.

'Markets hold an historic place in the life of our towns and cities and play an important role in promoting their civic identity and regeneration'

Old Billingsgate Market, closed in 1982, now an events space.

From Greenwich, Camden Lock and Portobello Road to Electric Avenue, Columbia Road and Walthamstow, London's markets provide distinctive local colour.

London has always been a market town. Established by the Romans in the 1st century A.D. Londinium became a thriving centre of commerce importing and selling olive oil, wine, pottery, glass and marble. Trading took place in the forum, close to the present Leadenhall Market. In the late 9th century Alfred the Great re-established London as a major port, rebuilding its defences and establishing new wharves and waterside markets at Billingsgate and Queenhithe, which encouraged the growth of transport and trade in fish, grain, salt and timber, and later, iron and coal. By the 12th century, the City of London had several markets around what is now called Cheapside (ceap was the Saxon word for market), providing food, cloth, and leather. Within the City walls each craft or trade had lodges in their respective area. Street names recall them: Cornhill, Bread Street, Wood Street, Milk Street, Ironmonger Lane and Poultry.

The growth of London in the Middle Ages caused an increase in wholesale trade. Larger trading fairs held annually were established at Smithfield in the 12th century (Bartholomew Fair and Cloth Fair) and Westminster in the 13th and 14th centuries, attracting foreign merchants to sell textiles, furs and spices. Three of the city's great wholesale markets date from the Middle Ages: Billingsgate, Borough Market and Smithfield. Billingsgate, which for 900 years occupied a site in the City close to Lower Thames Street, began as a general market but was subsequently used by wholesalers trading in coal, corn and fish. It was devoted exclusively to fish by the mid -16th century, and gained a reputation for the colourful language of its porters, dockers and fishwives. The market remained on the site until 1982, when archaic facilities, traffic on the newly built Lower Thames Street and threats of redevelopment of the site forced the market out to the Isle of Dogs.

Borough Market, with a history almost as old as Billingsgate's, is a small fruit and vegetable market which began operating in the 13th century close to the old London Bridge. Granted a charter by Edward VI in the mid -16th century, in the mid -18th century it moved to Rochester Yard west of Borough High Street and remains there to this day.

Old Columbia Market, demolished 1960.

From at least the 12th century, a livestock market was established at Smithfield north-west of the city walls. Every Friday, sheep, pigs and cattle were driven through the streets of London to be slaughtered and sold. This practice came to an end in 1852 and the site was covered with the large and elaborate purpose-built market buildings designed by the City architect Horace Jones, for the sale of butchered meat. It is one of the few great medieval markets to remain on its original site.

With increased trade in the 16th and 17th centuries new markets appeared at Whitecross Street and Leather Lane, coinciding with the banning of street markets within the City walls. The old markets around Cheapside were closed; others at Leadenhall, Newgate, and Billingsgate were rebuilt as covered markets under Royal Charter. Many private landlords were granted charters to hold markets on their land: Covent Garden was the first of these to appear in 1670. Others followed at Carnaby Market, Spitalfields Market, Shepherd Market and Oxford Market, near Oxford Street.

The arrival of the railways from the mid-19th century had a major impact on London's markets. In the 1860s and '70s new foodstuffs could be brought into town from further away, and sold at markets close to stations. Conversely many markets were cleared away as a result of the railways, increased traffic and tramlines. Bermondsey Antiques Market moved to its present site after the Second World War. Others were forced off their sites because of wartime bomb damage. The post-war influence of various immigrant communities has breathed new life into a number of traditional markets especially Brixton, Shepherd's Bush and Ridley Road, but several have closed or are dying: Hammersmith Market, Lambeth Walk, Burdett Road and Chatsworth Road – Victorian markets that have all but gone.

Markets today are facing a number of challenges to their survival. Supermarkets increasingly deal directly with suppliers and not through the market place; the high value of land in London encourages owners to profitably develop on land previously used for markets; the undesirable and unsociable aspects of some markets can also contribute to their demise. Major impacts on market trading, both wholesale and retail, include altered shopping habits, depopulation in central areas, gentrification, and antagonistic council laws.

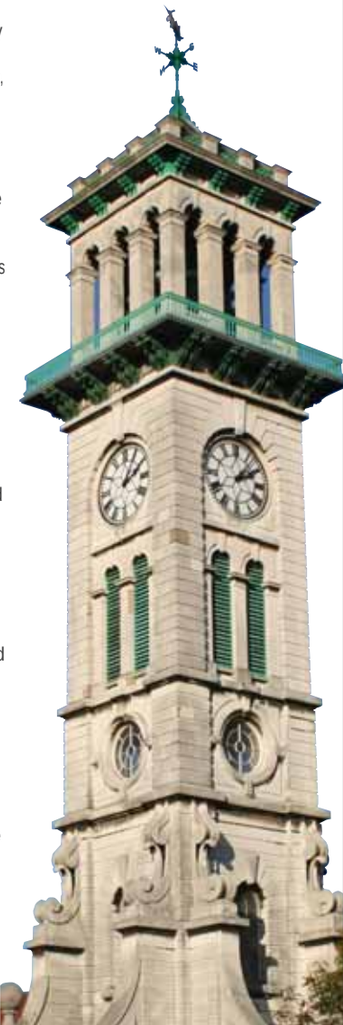
London councils vary in their attitudes to the markets in the boroughs. Some starve the street markets of licenses and places to operate while allowing sites to be developed by supermarkets or high street chains, or replace marketplaces with fund-raising car parks. Businesses that relocate away from the centre have caused some of London's central markets to decline as they rely on the trade of local workers. Tourist stalls are replacing commodities such as traditional fruit and vegetables; Covent Garden is a prime example of this. However, conversley, Farmers' markets selling fresh, locally grown produce are making a good comeback in some parts of London, particularly in the suburbs.

The dispersal of traditional markets means that many market structures have been swept away, but sometimes associated buildings have survived, some of architectural or historic interest. The earliest surviving purpose built market hall is at Covent Garden (1828-30 and later); other Victorian examples survive at Smithfield (1866-68), Billingsgate (1877), and Leadenhall (1881). These important examples are listed, as are smaller market buildings at Greenwich and around Shepherd Market, and remnants such as the former market clock tower at Caledonian Road (pictured here). Many adapt to new retail or commercial use; others occupy valuable land and face an uncertain future such as at Spitalfields and Smithfield, while some such as Borough find renewed vigour as retail trading replaces wholesale, and build a new customer base. English Heritage encourages the continuation of traditional use wherever possible. Markets hold an historic place in the life of our towns and cities and play an important role in promoting their civic identity and regeneration – the very antidote to the 'cloning' of our high streets.

ⓘ The first national survey of retail markets has recently been published. Visit www.nabma.com/news for more information.

To read about the efforts being made in support of markets across the U.K. see www.marketsquared.co.uk

For fascinating historical insights visit www.victorianlondon.org.uk



ROGER MASCALL REFLECTS ON SMITHFIELD'S PAST – AND CONTEMPLATES ITS FUTURE

SMITHFIELD: FUTURE UNCERTAIN

Smithfield, or "smooth-field" has been the site of a meat market since at least the 12th century, when animals, driven in from the surrounding countryside were sold, slaughtered and the meat retailed in the nearby butchers' quarter known as the "Shambles" (along present day Newgate Street). Its increasing success was the spur for development of the surrounding lanes, becoming lined with inns, houses and tenements, for both visitors and numerous spin-off trades such as button dealers, tanners' merchants and bacon curers (thus forming one of London's earliest suburbs). A popular location for many other activities; tournaments, jousting, wrestling and archery to name but a few – it also hosted the popular annual three-day Bartholomew Fair, and witnessed a number of executions (including that of William Wallace and Wat Tyler). Inevitably, this growth (and its location on the margins of the City) also attracted its fair share of prostitutes, criminals and the down at heel. Spared the ravages of the "Great Fire" this colourful, if rarely wholesome, mix of pursuits continued right through to the mid 19th century, when, with the expansion of London and changing attitudes, the Corporation was forced to address the dreadful conditions afflicting both man and beast.

'This very special sense of place is a fragile thing, easily diluted and degraded by unsympathetic development or loss of important buildings'

With the convergence of the new Metropolitan and Great Western Railway lines at Farringdon by 1863, clearance of the site for new market buildings began. The impressive New Metropolitan Meat and Poultry Market, designed by the City Architect, Horace Jones, was built over the intersection of these lines in 1866. Its four corner towers contained refreshment rooms for workers and visitors, and a high degree of decoration was given to both the exterior brick and stone and internal ironwork, all now listed grade II*. In the period up to 1892, a further four new market halls were constructed, of which the Poultry Market (listed grade II) was completely rebuilt following a fire in 1961-63. This huge development with its accompanying offices, warehouses and cold stores (many associated with well-known names such as Dewhurst and Vestey) resulted in the street pattern and buildings which form the special character of the area today – most of which is within a conservation area.

By the 1970s, the market had entered a period of decline, and although a major programme of modernisation by the Corporation in the 1990s (to comply with EU food hygiene regulations) enabled the meat and poultry markets to continue to trade, the unlisted late 19th century General Market bordering Farringdon Road was taken out of use, along with the adjacent contemporary former fish market/cold store annex. Major changes in the meat trade over recent years has seen many buildings in the area take on new uses as a vibrant mixed economy has grown up around the market complex. However, this very special sense of place is a fragile thing, easily diluted and degraded by unsympathetic development or loss of important buildings.

Situated on the City fringe, the area is under increasing pressure for development. The proposed east-west Crossrail route will pass through Farringdon Station, making it potentially the second busiest in London after Oxford Circus. In the Mayor's London Plan, Farringdon is identified as an Area for Intensification, i.e. where public transport accessibility is to be exploited to seek potential increases in residential, employment and other uses through the creation of higher densities and more mixed and intensive use. Indeed, there is currently an application for the demolition of the unlisted former General Market block on Farringdon Street and replacement with a new 8-storey office development providing ground floor retail space. There is a general presumption against the demolition of buildings which form an intrinsic part of the character of a conservation area, unless their replacement preserves or enhances that character and similarly preserves the settings of adjacent and nearby listed buildings.

The increasing pressures that this area will be facing in coming years means that there is a need to understand the 'big picture' of what makes Smithfield and its environs so special. Not just identifying its surviving historic elements, but also looking at how change might be incorporated in ways that meet new uses, whilst sustaining and enhancing the special qualities of the area as a whole. Early work commissioned by English Heritage to produce such a framework has commenced, and it is hoped that this will enable Smithfield to move forward confidently; retaining and reinforcing its existing character while adding yet more layers to its long and colourful history.

ⓘ To see some images of the Smithfield down the years visit http://viewfinder.english-heritage.org.uk/

COVENT GARDEN: SAVED

IN CONTRAST TO THE UNCERTAINTIES OVER SMITHFIELD, THE REVAMPED COVENT GARDEN CONTINUES TO BE A RESOUNDING SUCCESS, AS JOHN GREENACOMBE REPORTS.

Few post-war changes in central London have had such an immediate impact on the character of a district as the removal in November 1974 of the three-hundred-year old flower, fruit and vegetable market from its original site in Covent Garden to a new home at Nine Elms. Founded in 1670, under a charter granted by Charles II to the owner of Covent Garden, the Earl of Bedford, the market had originally been confined to the central square or Piazza, where it was overlooked by Inigo Jones's church and arcades. In 1828-30 the jumble of stalls in the Piazza were replaced by a handsome and regular stone market building, designed by Charles Fowler – the glazed roofs were added later in the century.

Before long, the market outgrew Fowler's building and began to spread into the surrounding streets, causing widespread congestion. The private owners of the market, now the Dukes of Bedford, and their advisers tackled this problem by providing additional premises outside the area specifically designated for the market in the original charter. A new Flower Market was built (1871-87) and later a new Foreign Flower Market known as the Jubilee Hall (1904).

The overcrowding continued, and although the unsuitability of the Covent Garden area for trading on this scale had long been recognised, it wasn't until the market finally passed into public ownership in 1961 that the matter was given serious consideration. The passing of an Act of Parliament in1964 sanctioning the move to Nine Elms signalled an exceptional opportunity to re-plan an important and historic area in the heart of London. A draft redevelopment plan was drawn up.

The Draft Plan of 1968 called for the retention of Fowler's central market as part of a 'line of

'Public and local opinion had begun to turn against faceless developments, and the Covent Garden Plan was one of the first and most spectacular victims of this backlash.'

character' stretching from Leicester Square to Lincoln's Inn Fields. However, most of the surrounding buildings were to be sacrificed to 'comprehensive redevelopment'. Among its now more incredible proposals was a new sunken road, four-lanes wide, to relieve the Strand of eastbound traffic. But the timing of the plan could not have been more unfortunate. Public and local opinion had begun to turn against grandiose and faceless developments: the Covent Garden Plan was one of the first and most spectacular victims of this backlash.

ⓘ To read more about the history of the site and its architecture visit www.covent-garden.co.uk

BOROUGH: REJUVENATED

BOROUGH MARKET HAS UNDERGONE A TRUE RENAISSANCE, MAINTAINS CHAIRMAN OF THE TRUSTEES, GEORGE NICHOLSON.

With the installation of the restored Portico to the former Floral Hall from Covent Garden, Borough Market is fast becoming the focus for the revival not just of this ancient market in Central London, but also the surrounding area. Borough is London's oldest wholesale market, having traded from its present site since 1756 – archive pictures reveal just what a magnificent set of buildings used to exist on the present site almost at the foot of London Bridge. Fire damage, the arrival of railways and war have eaten into that historic legacy. But, with the arrival of the Portico (see front cover), a vivid reminder of past glories has now re-emerged – fulfilling the dual needs to find a proper and fitting home for the historic structure from the former Covent Garden market, and to reinstate an example of the delicate iron and glass features that once graced Stoney Street. All this the product of a chance enquiry with the Royal Opera House some 10 years ago!

It is not just the age (it dates from 1856) and nature of the structure that makes the Portico so appropriate to its new setting, as the Market's archives have recently revealed an earlier unrealised plan for a Floral Market building adjacent to Southwark Cathedral. The Market Trustees have no plans to use the newly erected structure for a floral market as such. However, the Portico forms the frontage to a new structure which will be home to a range of different stalls within the nationally acclaimed retail food market as well as host to a new British restaurant at first floor level called "Roast".

'We've come a very long way from the stark picture of the mid 90s, the result of long term decline of the market, lack of funds and the inevitable deterioration of its historic structures.'

All this is a very long way from the stark picture facing the Trustees in the mid 90s as a result of the long term decline of the wholesale market with the consequent lack of funds and the inevitable deterioration of its historic structures. The first step of a 10 – year revival plan – an architectural competition in 1995 – led to the appointment of architects Greig & Stephenson who had recently been responsible for the restoration of Leeds' stunning Victorian indoor market. In turn this led to a successful bid for government funding under the Single Regeneration Budget scheme. Funding from surplus property sales and additional help from the London Development Agency completed the £7m funding package for the first phase of regeneration. Further, more modest refurbishment phases remain to be tackled.

As if trying to develop an entirely new retail market on a building site was not enough, the threat of a new railway viaduct (Thameslink 2000) going through the Market is an additional challenge. Following an initial public inquiry, it was successfully argued that the affected structures would be dismantled and re-erected close to their original position for continued market use if the scheme goes ahead. A further public inquiry was held this autumn to resolve outstanding issues such as the effect of the viaduct on the conservation area in which the Market sits. As anyone who has visited Borough will know, this is not the first time a railway has been introduced. The Trustees are confident given the increasing success of the Market, that even if the present scheme is given the go-ahead it will survive and indeed thrive.

Borough Market has become synonymous with what a quality food market should be – in 2004 it was awarded "Best Market in the UK" by the Observer Newspaper food magazine, having grown in just seven years from six stalls to over one hundred. In 2006 it celebrates its 250th birthday on its present site and is to be twinned with Barcelona's La Boqueria Market – the first in a wider European initiative. With related shop-based trade already in place, others such as bakeries, coffee shops and specialist stores were quick to set up site near the Market. Many local businesses are now open at weekends for the first time, all playing a major part in rebuilding the economy of the area. The ongoing rejuvenation of Borough Market sees it confidently on course for the next century and beyond.

ⓘ To learn more of the restoration work and the Market itself visit www.gands.co.uk and www.boroughmarket.org.uk

LEADENHALL: THRIVING

LEADENHALL MARKET CLOSE BY LONDON BRIDGE IS STILL GOING STRONG DESPITE CHANGES IN THE LIFESTYLE OF CITY WORKERS AND RESIDENTS. ALAN GARTRELL, DIRECTOR OF BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES HAS AN UPDATE.

The Corporation of London is preparing to celebrate 600 years of running Leadenhall Market. Dick Whittington, a real figure and three times Lord Mayor, purchased the Leaden Hall in 1409, when it had already been a flourishing market for a hundred years – and more: the Roman forum stood on this site in the 2nd century A.D.

It was originally a market to control the standard and quality of cheese but moved to trading in meat and poultry, until in the late 19th century the Corporation had to take steps to move the unruly and noxious hide market.

At that time the City Architect, Sir Horace Jones, was instructed to design a new market. The 1880 construction shows the influence of the Victor Emmanuel Galleria in Milan and is a riot of cast iron, stone and brick by the architect of Tower Bridge and Smithfield Market. Pevsner writes of 'dragons cheekily squeezed in' and 'lots of stamped and cast detail excellently picked out in rich colours' – qualities reflected in its grade II* listing.

The Market again moved on, with its traditional meat and poultry business relocating to Smithfield between the wars. Some traditional shops remained, adjuncts of these wholesale trades and serving directors' dining rooms. Now, with the exception of one fishmonger,

'Our vision for Leadenhall Market is to maintain and enhance its historical authenticity.'

all the traditional trades have gone and the market has had to reinvent itself again.

The Corporation's vision for the Market is to maintain and enhance its historical authenticity and create a tenant mix that will provide a unique retail experience. The careful restoration and maintenance noted by Pevsner, draws out the exquisite High Victorian atmosphere of the Market. The Corporation is cooperating with its tenants to reinstall historic shops fronts where they have been lost over time. Traditional spiked game racks have been retained. Attempts to promote traditional traders have been more difficult despite the offer of substantially discounted rents. Changes in shopping patterns and the City's five day week poses challenges for retailers despite the proximity of Lloyds and a wider range of banks, brokers and finance houses.

The Corporation now aims to provide a wide mix of mid-range retail outlets including fashion. A particular success has been to make the Market a destination of choice for eating, and restaurants have colonised previously underused buildings. Events, concerts and film shows support the traders and introduce people to an architectural gem that is not as well known as it deserves to be.

ⓘ For further information visit www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/corporation/our_services/markets

BERMONDSEY: ANTIQUES ABOVE.....

LONDON'S LARGEST ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES MARKET HAS SEEN SOME DOWNSIZING IN RECENT YEARS – BUT IT REMAINS A VIBRANT PLACE FOR EARLY RISERS IN SEARCH OF A BARGAIN, FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST, AS GORDON DULIEU REPORTS.

Markets sometimes have a deceptive air of permanence, even if they only happen on a few days each week. Visiting the antique market at Bermondsey, one has the impression that it's always been there – but that's untrue: until the Second World War, it was actually trading by Caledonian Road in Islington, set up among the empty livestock pens on Fridays (animals were sold on Mondays and Thursdays). Cockney pedlars dealt in bric-a-brac from emptied attics and lumber rooms and the market became known as a haunt for bargain hunters. By the beginning of the 20th century, the cattle market was declining and there was an increasing interest in antiques. By 1924, the General Market as it was known was extended to Tuesdays. Stolen goods and general junk flowed in and some of the notorious 'Caledonian Silver Kings' made fortunes. But the war brought it all to a halt and the stallholders were not allowed back. It was time to find a new site and in 1965, the New Caledonian Market (its official name) opened in Bermondsey Street.

One dealer who has been trading there since soon after the move recalls 'There were always markets of some sort in this area – there was a leather market serving the local tanning industries in Leathermarket Street nearby, for example. That went as the trade declined but we antique dealers are keeping the market traditions of Bermondsey going – for the time being at least.' The dealers may be on the move again before too long as regeneration plans are very much in the air. The traders don't seem unduly worried. One commented, 'Antique dealers are a mobile lot. It might be Portobello one day, Bermondsey another, then off to a provincial fair such as Ardingley. I like to think we're a bit like the travelling players of the 18th century, the 'pomping folk' – and if we have to move on again, it won't too much of a wrench.' Not everyone agrees but the market has already seen a reduction in the number of stalls in recent years as the available stock of antiques diminishes and tastes for collectibles change. It's just part of the continued flux of London life – after all, even the great Bermondsey Abbey which once dominated the area is now just a memory, its sometime presence marked only by the archaeological remains which Steven Brindle reports on opposite.

STEVEN BRINDLE, ENGLISH HERITAGE'S INSPECTOR OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS, REPORTS ON RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS.

.....ARCHAEOLOGY BELOW

The Borough of Southwark has, after the City of London itself, the capital's richest archaeology. Bermondsey, 'Beormund's Eyot,' was one of a series of islets amid the mudflats on the south bank of the Thames, occupied in Roman and Saxon times as suburbs of the City. Shortly after the Norman Conquest, a great Cistercian nunnery was founded here, followed soon after by a large Benedictine Abbey. This seems to have gone up remarkably quickly, making it one of the first generation of really large Romanesque buildings to go up in England, contemporary with the White Tower in the Tower of London and Old St Paul's Cathedral.

Bermondsey Abbey stood, apparently largely intact, until the Dissolution in 1538. Thereafter, the buildings were cleared and their materials recycled with remarkable thoroughness, and by 1900, the site was entirely covered with terraced houses, warehouses, Abbey Street and the market square. Several generations of antiquaries and archaeologists have struggled to reconstruct the plan of the Abbey, but the evidence has proved complex and difficult to interpret (the remains are scheduled to acknowledge their historic importance, but none of them are visible above ground level).

Southwark Council, as freeholders of the market site, are seeking to develop it in a way which maximises its economic value, while safeguarding its social value as a much-loved market place. The aims are to preserve as much of the mediaeval archaeology as possible, while allowing the foundations to be designed around it, thus allowing redevelopment, but also achieving a better understanding of the archaeology. Investigation is being carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology, funded by developers Urban Catalyst through which a foundation design is emerging, as is a much clearer idea (after 200 years of trying!) of the Abbey complex. One unexpected surprise was a small 17th century burial ground, probably associated with a Dissenters' Chapel, necessitating the lifting of about 50 partial or complete skeletons.

Ultimately we hope that, on completion of the investigative works, both the Borough and the developers will have agreed a way forward for this sensitive site, that not only provides opportunities for the future (including retaining the market) but protects the remains of its fascinating past

ⓘ
For more on the proposals for the Square visit www.southwark.gov.uk/YourServices/RegenerationSection/bermondseysquareregen/

The Antique Market is open on Fridays from 06.00 until about midday.

For archaeological reports visit www.pre-construct.com

ROMFORD: STILL GOING STRONG

FEW INSTITUTIONS CAN BOAST A USEFUL AND UNBROKEN EXISTENCE COVERING SEVEN AND A HALF CENTURIES, YET ROMFORD MARKET CAN DO JUST THIS SAYS HAVERING'S ASSISTANT TOWN CENTRE MANAGER, JANE EASTAFF.

The market town of Romford has grown from a small Roman settlement (on the road to Chelmsford) with a population of just 1,000 to 50 times that number. Probably one of the best traditional open air markets in the country, Romford Market (pictured here in 1910) has been trading since it was first granted permission by King Henry III in September 1247. Originally a livestock market, it owes its existence to the stamina of sheep. Traditionally, markets were no less than two leagues, or six miles apart – the manageable daily walking distance for livestock.

In the fifteenth century it was an early centre for the leather trade. An old Essex saying, "go to Romford to be bottomed", refers to the plentiful supply of good leather breeches to be found here. Over time, the market became an agricultural centre selling fruit and vegetables, farm tools and clothing. In 1892 the precursor of the Council, the local board, bought the market and it is still owned and managed by Havering Council.

No town history would be complete without a certain amount of notoriety. In 1831 a Thomas Newcombe is recorded for bringing his wife in a halter to Romford and auctioning her off. And some local traders can recall tales of the infamous Colonel Blood who attempted to steal the Crown Jewels in the 1670s.

Records indicate that Romford was home to numerous hostelries during the 19th century when the market was at its peak. A number are still with us such as the Golden Lion. Thought to be one of the two remaining coaching inns in London, this grade II listed building dating from around 1450 continues to trade today.

The Church of St Edward the Confessor that overlooks the market is also grade II listed. This Victorian building was built by John Johnson in 1849, re-using some of the stone from the old church on the site together with stone from John Nash's elegant Quadrant in Regent Street. The church replaced the earlier chapel of St Edward the Confessor consecrated in 1410.

Romford has gone from strength to strength and is now considered to be the biggest metropolitan centre outside central London. At its heart is the unique, thrice-weekly, 750 year old selling point: Romford Market itself!

ⓘ
For information on visiting the Market see www.havering.gov.uk/business

FARMERS' MARKETS

FARMERS' MARKETS HAVE BEEN A GREAT SUCCESS STORY OVER THE LAST DECADE OR MORE, BRINGING SEASONAL AND UNUSUAL PRODUCE TO LONDON NEIGHBOURHOODS IN THE BEST TRADITION OF LOCAL MARKETS OF CENTURIES GONE BY. GORDON DULIEU TAKES A CLOSER LOOK.

Greater London covers some 1,572 km² of which 135 km² are devoted to agricultural production and farmed woodland. This represents just 8.4% of the total regional land area, compared with 81% in England as a whole and 62% in the South East. Nonetheless, more than a dozen farmers' markets are a vibrant addition to the city's life from Ilford to Twickenham and Palmers Green to Peckham.

The aim of these markets, according to the company London Farmers' Markets which supports and regulates them is to provide Londoners with fresh local food, and farmers with a good return for their work. Producers come from within 100 miles of the M25, raising, growing or baking everything they sell.

It's estimated that they bring £3m back to the rural economy each year. A spokesperson for LFM said, 'Many farmers are now establishing links with restaurants and other food outlets in London, selling to them directly. The markets provide the hub to make it viable to drive to London. Farmers can then sell at market and deliver to retailers. We estimate that at least 50% of our farmers would not be in business if the London markets did not exist.'

They seem to bring a real sense of local belonging to the areas where they set out their stalls. Take the Saturday market in Orange Square in Pimlico. The local residents spearheaded a scheme to refurbish the square, once the site of the famous 18th century Ranelagh Gardens, a place of resort and entertainment. A delightful statue of Mozart as a child (he wrote his first Symphony just around the corner from the square) was commissioned and paid for by those who live in the vicinity and the weekly market completes the sense of a cohesive local community. Or consider London's largest farmers' market in Marylebone. It's not as attractive a venue as Orange Square – in fact it's one of the last large bombsites left in central London (off Cramer Street behind Marylebone High Street). However, the Howard De Walden Estate which owns much of the land in this valuable area of the capital made a deliberate policy to encourage specialist food shops to set up business in the High Street and the weekly farmers' market adds that extra touch that makes the locale a real destination.
This is a prime example of the way in which markets help to define places, reinforcing the identity of London's urban villages.

'Farmers' markets encourage sustainable agriculture, traditional animal breeds and heritage fruit and vegetable varieties and reduce the gap between rural and urban communities.'

London Farmers' Markets sum it up like this: 'There are social benefits to the markets. People get to meet their neighbours. They talk to people and swap recipes. It has become increasingly rare for people to make shopping a community event, but that is exactly what happens at a farmers' market.' Farmers' markets are also helping to address many food issues in London, from education to food poverty. The aim is to increase the availability of fruit and vegetables to sectors of the population who do not have access to healthy foods, and develop ways of increasing both school based and adult nutrition education across London.

There are unexpected benefits too: 'Children love seeing Brussels sprouts on the stalk and may even be persuaded to eat them!' Anyone for Tay berries or striped beetroot?

ⓘ To find out more about London's Farmers' Markets visit www.lfm.org.uk

SAVING LONDON

WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING WITH SOME OF LONDON'S HISTORIC BUILDINGS

THE GARRICK CLUB COVENT GARDEN

The once soot encrusted and decaying façade of the Garrick Club (grade II* 1860) in Garrick Street, has recently undergone a magnificent transformation. English Heritage worked closely with Westminster City Council and Richard Griffiths Architects in agreeing conservation work that included the careful cleaning of the architectural details and the replacement of hard cement facing with lime render and a lime wash. The fine balance in tone between the cleaned stone detailing and the re-rendering has revealed the Italian Palazzo style architecture as its architect, Frederick Marrable, originally intended.

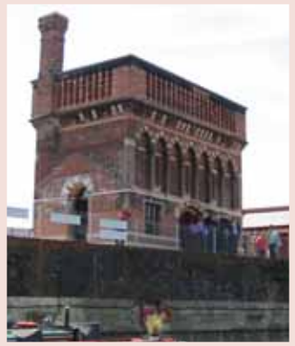
ⓘ **www.garrickclub.co.uk**

THE ST PANCRAS WATERPOINT

Built in 1872 to supply water to the steam locomotives at St Pancras, by 1996 this grade II listed structure faced demolition as it stood in the way of the huge Channel Tunnel Rail Link development. However, following a major operation by English Heritage and the Heritage of London Trust, it was was split into sections and moved 700 yards to a new permanent location overlooking St Pancras Yacht Basin on the Regent's Canal, for use by British Waterways as a reception and exhibition area. The cost of almost £900,000 was met by a wide range of funding partners.

ⓘ **www.heritageoflondon.com**

ⓘ **www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.5280**



THE CLAPTON PORTICO HACKNEY

In Linscott Road, near Lower Clapton Road, sits the grade II listed remains of what for many years was the Salvation Army's first headquarters, but which began life in the 1820s as the London Orphan Asylum. Fading fortunes led to demolition in the mid-1970s, leaving just the impressive Greek portico and flanking colonnades sitting as a feature within the grounds of Clapton Girls School. After 25 years without a use, and with deterioration setting in, a brief was drawn up in 2002 for the repair and restoration of the structure and a new extension to the rear, creating a learning resource centre for teaching I.T. skills to Hackney schoolchildren and the local community. Funded mostly by Government grant, but with assistance from English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund, the impressive new centre (Brady Mallalieu architects) successfully combines the need for new dedicated learning space with the preservation and enhancement of a significant local landmark.

ⓘ **www.bradymallalieu.com**