

# Information for Traders



**1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the Month  
St Mary's Parish Church  
The Square, Comber  
9.00am -1.30pm**

## **1. Introduction and Background**

Comber Farmers' Market was started in July 2014 by members of Comber Regeneration Community Partnership (CRCP) with the primary objectives of regenerating the town; giving small, local food producers an opportunity to sell their produce directly to the customer; and to attract more visitors to the town. The market has become firmly established in the Comber calendar of events and attracts over 1,000 customers every month from both Comber and the surrounding area.

## **2. Management**

It is managed by a sub-committee of CRCP, the Comber Farmers' Market Committee (CFMC) who all volunteer their time to run the market. With funding secured from the Big Lottery's Awards for All programme, CFMC bought ten gazebos, promoted the market through advertising, leaflets and posters, and set up a website. A team of Comber volunteers arrive at 6.45am on market day to put up the gazebos and return at 1.30pm to take them down. It is a social enterprise and is operated on a not-for-profit basis. Any monies which are left over after paying rent and other necessary expenses are used to promote the market.

## **3. Market Opening Times**

With the exception of January, the market is open on the first Thursday of every month. It is an outdoor market and held in St Mary's Parish Church car park, in the Square, Comber. The opening times to the public are from 9.00am – 1.30pm. Access to the car park for traders is from 7.30am and all traders should have their stalls set up by 8.45am. Once you have set up your stall, you must remove your car, van and/or trailer to the the bottom end of the car park. If there is no room here, then your vehicle must be taken to the main public car park in Comber. We expect stallholders to stay at the market for the full time as there are employees from the businesses around Comber who take their lunch hour from 1.00pm. Customers arriving later at the market can be disappointed to find that a stall has been taken down.

## **4. Site Plan**

There is space for 26 stalls and each stall has a space allowance of 3 metres. Members of CFM will allocate a space for you and their decision is final. Traders must bring their own table as these will not be supplied. If you are supplying your own gazebo, it is your responsibility to ensure that you have enough weights to keep your stall grounded on windier days. It is helpful if you put up a banner or sign to promote your business.

## **5. Criteria**

It should be noted that CFM is primarily an artisan food and plant market. We do not accept crafts or hot food stands at the market. The principal producer or a representative who is directly involved in the production process should be working on the stall. It is an important ethos of the market that the consumer has direct contact with the producers. The produce sold must be either:

- grown, reared or caught by the stallholders
- baked, smoked, pickled, preserved or cooked by the stallholders
- garden plants, shrubs or cut flowers must be grown by the stall holders from seeds or cuttings

It is the intention of the CFMC to provide as wide a variety of local artisan food and plants as possible. Therefore, we strive to have only two stands who are selling similar products to attend the market eg breads, chocolates, home baked products etc. Preference will be given to a trader who is offering a unique product that is not already at the market.

On occasions, it is at the discretion of the committee that we permit a guest stall from a charity or local community group who want to promote their organisation.

## **6. Fees**

Rent will be £20 if you bring your own stall and £25 if you book one of our gazebos. Our ten gazebos are all taken but if one becomes available it will be offered to a regular trader. If you require electric power, an additional £5 will be charged. The rent is collected after 12 noon by one of the committee members who will issue you with a receipt.

## **7. Legislation and Compliance**

All traders must comply with statutory regulations with regard to food safety and food hygiene. All food products which are packaged must have proper labelling with regards to sell by dates, weights and allergies. Because the market is held in private grounds of St Mary's Parish Church car park, a street trader's licence is not required. Traders must also have their own public liability insurance. Evidence of the above certification must be produced before joining the market.

## **8. Facilities**

There are a limited number of external power sockets for those traders who require electricity for their stand. Water is available from an outside tap at the side of the church hall. Please ensure that you bring your own utensil for carrying water. Toilets are available in the church hall. Ladies from the church committee provide tea, coffee, buns and scones in the church hall for a small donation.

## **9. Promotion**

It is essential for the longevity and sustainability of the market that every trader helps to promote the market. You can do this by emailing information about the market to your networks, giving out leaflets when you are at other markets, and posting information on your website or your Facebook and/or Twitter pages. CFMC advertises regularly in local newspapers and issues a press release before every market. If you have any new products, good photographs or interesting newsworthy stories, please let us know and we can weave it into our press releases. The Comber Farmers' Market website [www.combermarket.co.uk](http://www.combermarket.co.uk) is used to promote the market and every trader who attends the market will have a space on this website to promote their products and business free of charge.

## **10. Special Events**

Throughout the year we organise special seasonal events eg Christmas, Easter, Comber Early Potatoes Arrival, Halloween etc. Occasionally we will have cookery demonstrations by local chefs or other demonstrations which are related to growing and producing food. If you have any ideas, then we will be glad to have them!

## **11. Rubbish**

Please ensure that you take all your rubbish home with you and lift any rubbish which has been dropped around your stall area. Please remember that we are volunteers and have no wish to clean up after traders or indeed customers!

## **12. Contact and Cancellation**

Before each market, you will receive an update by email. If bad weather is forecast eg high winds of over 20 mph, heavy rain or snow, you will be notified by one of the CFM Committee members if the market is to be closed by phone or text. If you are unable to attend the market it is essential that you give at least five days notice so that we can let someone on the waiting list take your place. Failure to do so may result in a demand for payment of the site fee and/or loss of site.

The key contact for the market is **Deborah Girvan** who can be reached on **07872 857 912** or email [c-f-m@hotmail.com](mailto:c-f-m@hotmail.com)