

The Prudhoe Market – background to present day

1. In August 2013 Prudhoe Town Council approached Northumberland Council about the feasibility of having a Market on 'The Glade, working with the then NCC Markets Officer, Keith Gray.
2. At the September 2013 Ordinary Meeting, it was agreed that the Street Scene Group would progress a 'Prudhoe Market' with the first to be held in the springtime.
3. At the December 2013 Ordinary meeting following a verbal update by members of the Street Scene Committee, it was agreed that the Council would support a monthly market on 'The Glade' and would speak to traders on Front Street to gauge their support. It was reported that NCC hoped that the Prudhoe Market would draw in shoppers from neighbouring villages to the town.
4. The Prudhoe Market was launched on Saturday 19th April 2014 and was exceptionally busy. This continued into May, June and July. Near the end of the summer and throughout winter interest from traders fell off and in August traders went from 13 to 9, then to 5 over the winter months. NCC reported that this was usual but that a market could operate successfully with 5 traders.
5. In April 2015 the Street Scene Group met with Gregg Gavin (NCC), Joanna Jackson (Trader & Market's Marshal) and David Robson (Neighbourhood Services) to discuss the falling numbers wishing to trade on the Prudhoe Market and the resulting loss of attraction. This was seen as a county-wide issue and Gregg Gavin offered that he could see the benefit of an Officer's role in promoting markets and sharing best practice throughout the County. At this meeting, it was agreed to survey regular stall-holders to see if they would be interested in changing the day to the first Saturday of the month when people have more money to spend.
6. The Prudhoe Market continued to decline and a meeting was held with the new NCC Market's Officer, Neil Brown in October 2015. The Street Scene group were looking for investment in advertising and an increase in the number of stalls operating. Neil Brown stated that at least 10 stalls were needed for the market and that banners and social media were the most effective publicity.
7. There was a big push on promotion for the October Prudhoe Market on social media and the Market Banners were put up in advance at the Gateways to the town. 6 stalls were booked to attend but only 4 showed up.
8. In December 2015 the Town Council discussed the 'free use' of gazebos to help the market attract more traders. The Street Scene Group felt that they were out of ideas as to what would work to bring the market back to the success it had been when launched.
9. In January 2016 the Town Council agreed to change the Market from the last Saturday of the month to the first and paid for a series of adverts in the Hexham Courant, however, the January market was cancelled at short notice due to lack of interest from traders; this is expected in January.
10. February 2016 through to June 2016 was poorly represented by traders and the Street Scene Group met with NCC Area Manager, Stephen Wardle and NCC Markets Manager, Neil Brown on 18th August 2016 to discuss this decline and the fact that no market had been held in July or August, although had been advertised. It was agreed that NCC would canvass traders about the market being held on a Friday and more frequently. Neil Brown confirmed that contrary to what NCC stated previously, they could permit market trading 7 days per week. ***This report was not received by the full council.***
11. The market did change to a Friday and to a weekly market, most Friday there were only 1 or 2 stalls. The Prudhoe Market was last on the Town Council agenda in January 2016.
12. More recently there has been no advertised market or any traders attending on a Friday. Throughout May a Plant/Flower seller has set up stall, with NCC permission, on 'The Glade' and trades as and when.