

MARKET TIMES

PAGE 2-4
NEWS BITES

PAGE 5
TEMPEH GETS TESTED

PAGE 8-9
NINE ELMS FOR NINE ELMS

PAGE 10-11
WELLS LOOKED AFTER



**SECOND
PHASE OF
REDEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMME
COMPLETED**

SEE PAGE 7



A mural outside the Market featuring England centre half Millie Bright cheered on the Lionesses to European Championship glory



Editor's Message



It's been another busy three months at the Market, with trade on the up and another big milestone ticked off on the road to the end of the redevelopment programme. Inside this issue you'll read details of the completion of the new phase 2 buildings, which are now being fitted out ready to house 24 Market businesses by October. By that time, of course, phase 3 will be well under way and there's no doubt now that we can all see the progress that's being made and build our own vision of what's coming down the line.

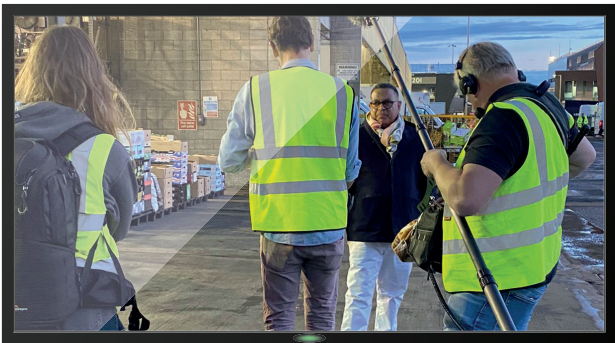
In June, we hosted a long overdue visit by the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers, the livery company that connects our industry with the City of London, and as well as being an excellent opportunity to introduce some influential figures to the redevelopment and the Market's plans for the future, we also gained something of great significance. At the end of the visit, Laurence Olins, Master of the Fruiterers and formerly of this Parish, planted the ninth of nine symbolic elm trees in a rewilding area next to our entrance plaza, which is of course in the London district of Nine Elms. I won't ruin the story for you (page 8-9), but the planting is also an important landmark for butterfly conservationists, which was an exciting added bonus.

Also inside, you'll find articles about a new campaign we've launched that intends to rubber stamp the support of the Market's wholesalers to their independent retailer customers and ensure that everyone out there who could shop at NCGM is aware of the incredible breadth and quality of our offer, the experience and expertise of our people and the myriad benefits of buying fresh produce, flowers and plants from this Market. We also feature Stevie Wells, one of the longest standing customers of our fruit and vegetable wholesalers and explore how we tick all the boxes for him.

Recruitment is one of the key ongoing challenges facing many of the companies in the Market and to that end, we were one of the exhibitors at a recent employment fair organised by Wandsworth Council's Work Match initiative. Despite it being a blisteringly hot day down by the river outside Battersea Power Station, the number of skilled and relevant candidates who came by to find out more about New Covent Garden Market and the employment opportunities here was high. Hopefully we'll see some of the people we met there in the Market before too long. The Council has promised to keep up the momentum with future events and is keen to engage with tenants across the Market to help fill their vacancies going forward.

Enjoy the rest of the summer and any holidays you have planned. We'll see you again when all the leaves are brown and the sky is grey!

Tommy
Tommy Leighton,
Market Press Officer



Lights, camera, action – Market on the BBC

The Market is becoming a favourite location of the BBC, with several crews visiting in the last quarter to create some great coverage that demonstrated the amazing people and phenomenal range of produce available from NCGM. CGMA Chair David Frankish and traders Gary Marshall and Dean Knight appeared on the BBC breakfast show when the Market was chosen as the location for business discussions on the impact of rising inflation. Five segments with reporter Nina Warhurst focused on the market during the breakfast show, which has 1.5 million viewers, and a short segment of Gary's interview was also repeated on the lunchtime news, which attracts around two million viewers. The BBC is also making a programme featuring on the Market as part of the 'We are England' series, and recorded an episode of 'The Night Shift', filming

through the night on 30th June and 5th July. CGMA's Jo Breare will be featured, as will Gary and George Marshall, Peter and Sonny from Yes Chef, Vernon, Martin and their team at Natures Choice and Alfonso from La Sovrana. The programme will air in mid-October and we will communicate through our normal channels once we have a confirmed date. As anyone who works here would have noticed, these weren't the only occasions when cameras were in the Market during the last quarter. CGMA receives a large number of requests from TV and film production companies in various countries and wherever possible, we will accommodate them, particularly if they are beneficial to the Market. It's a really useful method for us to put the New Covent Garden Market 'brand' in front of a wider audience, across TV and cinema screen, as well as social media channels.

Bill Sanderson, last of the old market porters retires

June 1st was a historic day in the Market. Bill Sanderson retired after 53 years working here, as the last man standing of more than 2,000 porters who moved across from the old to new market in 1974.

Bill began as a 17 year-old in WC2, working for Pavitt, Steward and Calder (which has now become Allison Risebro). He became a porter when he turned 18 and has stayed in the role ever since, with the last 20 years spent at Bevington Salads.

"I've worked at a few firms," said Bill. "And I've seen a lot of changes. There's no union now, a much more diverse workforce and a few less characters, though there are still some."

"I hadn't been working for a few months when the job at Bevingtons came up and I knew Gary Marshall well. He's obviously one of the characters and he's been a good guv'nor to work for," he said.

"I still enjoy it, but I'm looking forward to taking it a bit more easy, playing some more golf and getting some routine back into my life. As the Market has got earlier, I've ended up starting at 9pm, so it's going to take some getting used to. I'm sure I'll come back and say hello and I'm still interested to see how the newly developed market turns out."

Bill is an Arsenal fan, with six grandchildren and three great grandchildren, so he's not going to be short of things to do!

Gary said: "Using a football analogy, Bill is like one of those great players who



always look they have more time to do things than everyone else. He's never rushed and he always gets it done. In his years with us there has been industrial action called by the T&GWU and Unite, but we have never had an argument; there's always been total respect both ways.

"Bill is loyal, honest and reliable and will leave an unfillable void in my business. He'll be much missed."



Electric charging points installed in the flower market

Six 7-kilowatt electric vehicle chargers have been installed on the upper level of the Interim Flower Market (IFM) car park. They are available to everyone who has access and for the time being, they are available to use at no cost.

The new chargers provide the charging capability to the IFM that already exists in the Multi-Storey Car Park, as CGMA continues to work to maximise the accessibility to EV charging facilities for the increasing numbers of electric and hybrid vehicles using the Market.

The installation was supported by a grant from Merton, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils, which are funding clean air initiatives that reduce business emissions in neighbourhoods in their local Boroughs.

"This all fits in with our sustainability objectives including supporting tenants, suppliers and customers of the Market with environmentally friendly and sustainable transport options," said Jo Breare, General Manager of Covent Garden Market Authority. "We monitor the usage of the charging points and have seen a significant increase in recent times – I think everyone would agree that this is where things are heading and whatever we can do to help facilitate that, we will."

Flexible Co-working Memberships now available at Mission Kitchen



Mission Kitchen, the shared workspace for food entrepreneurs based in the Food Exchange at the Market has introduced new affordable co-working memberships for anyone working in the food sector.

Mission Kitchen recently celebrated its first birthday and, now housing a community of more than 100 food start-ups, it offers flexible access to commercial kitchens, event space and high-quality co-working and office space, where members can work on all elements of their business outside of the kitchen.

This is now supplemented by the introduction of flexible hot-desking memberships for just £200 per month + VAT. These provide unlimited access to the co-working spaces featuring high-speed Wi-Fi, beautiful interiors, great coffee,

meeting rooms and printing services.

All members are also invited to a full range of member events including weekly networking drinks, monthly community lunches, specialist business skills workshops and regular Founder Q&A events with high profile entrepreneurs from the food and drink industry.

These memberships are perfect for anyone working at New Covent Garden Market or living in the local area who could benefit from flexible and affordable access to a high-quality workspace, right on their doorstep.

More information can be found on the Mission Kitchen website: www.missionkitchen.org or to find out more and arrange a visit please contact Rose: rose@missionkitchen.org

Fab four up for Fresh awards

Four of the finalists at the FPC Fresh Awards in September will come from the Market.

George Marshall of Bevington Salads has been shortlisted for the Rising Star of the Year award for the second consecutive year and Bevington Salads itself is also again shortlisted in the Wholesale Fruit & Veg Supplier of the Year category.



Green & Bloom, the organisation formed by the merger late last year of Arnott & Mason and Zest Flowers, is in the final three for Wholesale Floral/Plant Supplier of the Year.

And making up our fabulous quartet, County Supplies is in the running to be the Foodservice Supplier of the Year.

The Awards ceremony will be held on Friday 16th September at the JW Marriott Grosvenor House on Park Lane and once again feature a range of categories that recognises and celebrates all elements of the fresh produce industry.

Belgian peppers bring burst of flavour to Buyers Walk



A FLANDRIA Tasting Tour brought a bit of early morning theatre and flavour to Buyers Walk on June 9th, as Sabine, Vanessa and Eva delivered “simple but refined flavour bombs” to traders and refiners to promote Belgian fresh bell peppers.

FLANDRIA believes the best way to convince people of a product’s taste and quality is to give them an experience, so the VLAM-Flanders’ Agricultural Marketing Board organised the tasting together with the two co-operatives BelOrta and Hoogstraten, both of which supply plenty of product to the Market.

Everyone was welcome to come and have a taste, as the colourful cargo bike added a pinch of flavour to the daily trade.

Belgium exports about 4,000 tonnes of peppers to the UK a year and would like to export a lot more. If you want more information about Belgian fresh produce, contact Vanessa at vanessa.ringler@vlam.be, Export Manager at VLAM.

10th anniversary for British Flowers Week

British Flowers Week - a campaign run by New Covent Garden Market, returned for its 10th year between 12th and 19th June. The week-long celebration highlighted the beauty and variety of British cut flowers, foliage and plants, as well as the amazing work of the florists, growers and wholesalers who put British-grown flowers in the spotlight.

Anyone and everyone was encouraged to get involved by decorating their windows with British flowers to mark the occasion. Whether featuring a single stem, a bouquet made from garden flowers or a spectacular display, a decorated window signalled support for the British flower industry this June.

This year, we focused online and targeted a wider audience – encouraging people to share their designs, their shop windows and inspirational ideas so we could help tell the nation.

Talking during the week, one of the Market’s leading customers, celebrity event florist Simon Lycett, highlighted why the Market is so crucial to the flowers and plants sector across the South East. “New Covent Garden Market is vitally important as a unique and indispensable one-stop-shop for everything that’s new and on-trend in flowers, plants, foliage and sundries,” he said.

“You can buy some of the flowers online, of course, but you don’t get to see and smell how they look when combined in one place, and for me, buying online feels very uninspiring. When you see so many different flowers, colours and textures next to one other within the Flower Market, it inspires and sparks ideas - you begin to combine things you may never thought of putting together. That juxtaposition of products isn’t available anywhere else, and never on a screen!”

“When you buy product online, you also don’t get to benefit from the incredible expertise and knowledge which is intrinsic to the wholesalers at New Covent Garden,” Simon (pictured) added. “Through a quick conversation, you will not only find out what’s blooming and beautiful today, but what you can expect to be arriving in the weeks ahead and that’s so important to florists like myself as we are often planning for future events.

“The Market is also where you’ll find the quirky things – the non-standard, unusual and unique one-offs. Any florist who takes the time to come to the Market and search for those points of difference will find that helps them to stand out with ease from their competitors on the high street.”



Posters mark big local and national occasions



If you’ve been in and around the market in the last few months, you’ll have seen plenty of posters designed to mark big occasions.

To celebrate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee in June, we adapted the market logo to include a crown and produced two photos that showed the Queen’s involvement with NCGM over the years – one of Her Majesty at the official opening of the Market in early 1975 and the other a charming shot of the Queen in front of a British Flower Week installation at the Chelsea Flower Show in more recent years.

We also designed an image for each Market to mark Pride London, which reached its own milestone of 50 years since the very first Pride march and took the opportunity to remember LGBTQIA+ activism and culture down the years.

And throughout the Women’s Euros in England, a mural was installed by Adidas on the outer wall of the west end of the Market, next door to Nine Elms Power League. We’d be hard pressed to claim that the fantastic image of Lioness Millie Bright helped inspire England’s women to glory. But we’re glad we were able to play a small part in the celebrations as the team brought only the second major international football trophy to these shores!

Obituary

Peter Wilson

Peter Wilson, who worked for Covent Garden Market Authority for more than 20 years, has died, aged 80.

Born in Lambeth, Peter joined CGMA as a messenger in the early 1990s and was a well-known face around the Market, taking the post around and also working on reception at CGMA, as well as being a fanatical follower of Charlton Athletic.

A much-loved member of the CGMA team, having officially retired in 2008, he continued to help out whenever he was needed and stayed in touch with several of his former colleagues.



Peter leaves behind sisters Doris, Vi, Susan and Linda, nephews Stephen, David, John and Paul, nieces Jennifer, Lynne, Sara and Carolyn, great niece Isobel and great nephews Luke, Matthew and Oliver.

Could you guess what tempeh tastes like?

Max La Manna and Better Nature put people to the test

Pictured: Max La Manna: Influential chef working with Better Nature to boost Tempeh awareness



“ It's nutritious, delicious and sustainable. It's just not widely known or available enough

Better Nature, based in the Food Exchange, has partnered up with low-waste and plant-based chef Max La Manna to encourage people to try tempeh for the first time and guess what they're eating.

Instead of trying to get people to think they were eating something else Better Nature added their own twist to the taste test concept and focused on the novelty and curiosity that comes from trying a unique food like tempeh.

Tempeh is a plant-based protein that has been around for over 300 years in Indonesia. It is a naturally nutritious food made from cultured soybeans and water and contains around double the protein of tofu. It can be stirred, fried or baked into a wide range of dishes in a matter of minutes. Despite its credentials, tempeh still only represents a very small percentage of the meat-free market; sitting at only 2% in 2019 (Vegan Society).

With none of the participants having tried tempeh before, the focus of the Tempeh Taste Test was to celebrate the natural reactions to trying a new food for the first time, and to see if they could guess what it was (spoiler: they couldn't).

“I'm a huge fan of tempeh - it's nutritious, delicious and incredibly sustainable. It's just not widely known or available enough right now, so I was very excited to partner up with Better Nature to get the word out there,” said Max.

Elin Roberts, Co-Founder and Chief Marketing Officer of Better Nature, added: “We want people to embrace this special food but we know we have a long way to go. We hope that working with Max to showcase people's natural reaction to trying tempeh for the first time will spark some curiosity and encourage people to give it a go.”

Better Nature is supporting this activity with a social campaign and encouraging people to run their own Tempeh Taste Test with friends and family. Its Tempeh can be bought via the company's online shop, with free next-day delivery over £15 across the UK.

Funding boost

Better Nature also recently secured £350,000 of funding through Innovate UK to develop all-natural plant-based fish made using food by-products.

The food-tech company is building on its proprietary fermentation methods inspired by tempeh and is aiming to

create the first “animal-free fish analogue that is physically, visually, nutritionally, and sensorially equivalent, if not superior, to fish”.

Using a newly developed and proprietary method, Better Nature will apply tempeh fermentation on food industry by-products to obtain a plant-based fish with optimised taste and texture.

“While demand for animal protein is increasing, 90% of the world's marine fish stocks are depleted,” said Driando Ahnan-Winarno, Co-Founder and Chief Technology Officer at Better Nature, who is leading the project along with fellow co-founder and Chief Operating Officer Fabio Rinaldo. “The chances of a meaningful transition to more sustainable, plant-based alternatives to fish are hampered by technical barriers in replicating its structure, taste, and nutrition.

“Tempeh fermentation, combined with co-inoculation and natural encapsulation techniques, tackles just this. At Better Nature, we want to address this gap through an appealing and affordable fish analogue, made using all-natural and sustainable sources.”

The team at Better Nature are not the only people thinking about plant-based fish. With the global plant-based seafood market predicted to soar to £1.06 billion by 2031, accelerated by Netflix documentary Seaspiracy, plant-based fish and seafood are set to be in high demand. The United States has shown the most interest in vegan seafood, with a 100% increase over the last year with Australia and the UK not too far behind, with 83% and 45% advances respectively.

Better Nature will be supported on the project by award-winning fermentation companies across Europe, including Nucaps Nanotechnology, S.L. and Neoalgae Micro Seaweeds Products in Spain and the Centre of Food and Fermentation Technologies in Estonia. The project will run until 2024 and Better Nature aims to commercialise its plant-based fish alternative in European markets by 2026.

Since launching in 2020, Better Nature has developed a tempeh range including Organic Tempeh, Smoky Tempeh Rashers and BBQ Tempeh Strips. The whole range has earned a top rating for its low carbon footprint and Better Nature offsets double the carbon and plastic used to make the tempeh, making it Carbon and Plastic Negative. Better Nature also donates 1% of its sales to the 1000 Days Fund, to improve the wellbeing of families in Indonesia, the home of tempeh.

Better Nature's tempeh range is already sold in Mindful Chef, Selfridges, Gopuff, Allplants, The Vegan Kind Supermarket, Amazon, their own online shop and 350 independent stores across the UK. For more information, please visit www.betternaturetempeh.co or reach out to Elin Roberts, Co-Founder and CMO, at elin@betternaturetempeh.co

The ex-CEO of Planet Organic Peter Marsh and the world's most cited food scientist Prof. Julian McClements joined Better Nature's board in August.

Marsh, who led Planet Organic as its CEO from 2008 until his retirement in 2021, has been appointed as a Non-Executive Director and will be supporting Better Nature with their plans to enter the UK supermarkets and for international expansion. McClements has published over 1,300 scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals and is the sole author of “Future Foods: How Modern Science is Changing the Way We Eat”. He joins as an Innovation Advisor, supporting the business's mission to create all-natural and nutritious plant-based products, from fish to dairy alternatives, using tempeh.

Buy world class produce from world class people

The wholesalers at New Covent Garden Market (NCGM) have launched a campaign to underline their support for their independent retailer base and highlight the many benefits of buying world class fresh produce from the UK’s largest fresh food wholesale market.

In recent times, as the British public has become accustomed to eating out of home more regularly, NCGM has become renowned as the leading source for premium fresh food for the burgeoning catering and hospitality industries. However, independent retailers on high streets and in retail markets remain a crucial driver of the Market’s unique ecosystem and traders at NCGM have huge belief in the strength of a sector that found itself thrust back into the conscience of the country during the pandemic.

Gary Marshall, Chairman of Covent Garden Tenants Association, says: “NCGM already supplies a large proportion of the independent retailers in London, the Home Counties and across the South East of the country. If we’re not already supplying you, then it’s time to give us a try and enjoy our bespoke services – we can transform your fruit, vegetable and flower offer and move your fresh category onto another level.

“Without the tireless efforts of the independent retail sector, the supply chain would have been extremely fragile when the first lockdown was imposed on the nation,” he adds. “The intrinsic value of independent greengrocers to their communities has been re-instilled into the hearts and minds of the British public and we’d like to help you ensure that the opportunity to remain in their thoughts is not lost.”

Jo Breare, General Manager of Covent Garden Market Authority, explains the thinking behind the campaign: “It would be easy to believe that everyone’s heard of us, but we know there will be people reading this who haven’t been to NCGM and therefore don’t have the full picture of what

an incredible trading environment this is,” Jo says.

“Our traders give their customers the chance to buy world class fresh produce from world class people – as comprehensive a range of premium fresh produce as they’ll see anywhere at prices they can work with. Nowhere comes close to matching the levels of experience and expertise we have in this Market and nowhere can match our unbeatable central London location, in Nine Elms, London’s newest district on the south bank of the River Thames.

“New Covent Garden is being redeveloped as we build a market for the future,” she adds. “We’re already the oldest and most reliable wholesale brand in the business and soon we’ll be working out of the newest market in the country. The future is incredibly bright for the wholesalers here, and whether you’ve shopped here in the past or you’ve never been here, we’d love to see you soon.”

Gary says: “We’re proud of our heritage, many of us are multi-generational wholesalers and we’re proud of our role in our industry. We’re proud of our Market community, our fantastic suppliers and our network of customers across the South East of England too.

“We welcome customers of all sizes – come and meet us, we don’t bite! We’re here to help your business grow and will support you every step of the way.”

Competition

NCGM is running a competition for new customers; a mail shot was sent to 4,000 independent retailer addresses across the south east, including an offer of a prize for two retail businesses of £500 of free fruit and vegetables of their choice, delivered to their store. We have already received a large number of entries and we will also be delivering flyers in person to businesses across local postcodes in the next few weeks. Full details of the competition are on the Market’s website – www.newcoventgardenmarket.com

That approach was agreed by the Fruit & Vegetable Statutory Committee, as was a period of three months during which all new customers will be able to get their £5 entry fee to the Market refunded by a wholesaler.



Here are 10 very good reasons we’ve given potential new customers to come and buy their fresh produce from wholesalers at New Covent Garden Market:

- Quality** – world-class people and product
- Expert** – industry-leading experience and expertise
- Location** – unparalleled access to central London
- Premium** – the broadest range of top-class, high-end produce
- Pride** – proud of being part of the NCGM community and what it represents
- Diversity** – both in terms of the products we sell and the people we are
- Service** – supportive of our customers and always willing to go the extra mile
- Heritage** – many multi-generational and family-owned businesses
- Welcoming** – we care about our people, our suppliers and our customers
- Future** – the redeveloped NCGM is the platform for a bright future

“ Nowhere comes close to matching the levels of experience and expertise we have in this Market

Key milestone achieved as second phase handed over

Redevelopment works at the Market continue to advance with VINCI St. Modwen (VSM), the 50/50 joint venture between St. Modwen Properties Ltd and VINCI PLC, having reached a further milestone with the delivery and handover of the 131,481 sq. ft. (12,215 sq. m.) Phase A2 of the new Fruit & Vegetable Market on schedule to Covent Garden Market Authority (CGMA).



Pictured top right: All smiles on the handover of phase 2, left to right: Nick Harrington, Senior Construction Manager, St. Modwen Developments, Josef Vere-Bujnowski, Construction Manager, St. Modwen Developments, Colin Corderoy, Senior Market Operations Manager, CGMA, Jo Breare, General Manager, CGMA, and Tony O'Reilly, Project Director, CGMA

The new section is designed to house 24 market businesses in state-of-the-art facilities and forms the second of six construction phases. Following beneficial access earlier in June, Market traders have begun to fit out their new units in readiness to transfer their businesses to open by October this year within the now fully completed 217,689 sq. ft. (20,224 sq. m.) western block of the market. Work on the third phase of the redevelopment is scheduled to begin in October.

The works are of course part of a landmark multi-phased project and the largest development site in the Vauxhall

/ Nine Elms / Battersea opportunity area. The mixed-use project has already seen the delivery of a new Interim Flower Market in 2017 and the Food Exchange, which it is hoped will be the foundation of a new Food Quarter for London. A new entrance plaza and security facility now welcome customers and visitors with the refurbished multi-storey car park and a brand new recycling and waste on-site facility, which also features 5-a-side football pitches for community use on the upper level and on the roof.

David Frankish, Executive Chair of CGMA, said: "This is another important

milestone for the Market. With each completed phase, the Market community is seeing real progress and while there is still a way to go until the programme completes in January-2027, the fact that we are visibly on schedule is giving everyone here a boost of confidence. We continue to work extremely hard with VSM to create facilities that will ensure NCGM remains a link in the food, drink and flower supply chain for London and the South East for many years to come."

Nick Harrington, Senior Construction Manager at St. Modwen, said: "Huge congratulations to our team and VINCI for

delivering this high-quality complex project on schedule in the challenging period during the pandemic and, in particular, ensuring the market continued to trade throughout.

"This is not just about building a new wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market; we are contributing to maintaining the local supply of fresh food in London and helping establish a whole new food quarter for the city.

"We are already planning to push on with next phase and looking forward to continuing our strong partnership with CGMA."



Nine elms for Nine Elms

Planting at New Covent Garden Market by the Fruiterers Livery Company will provide natural habitat for rare butterfly species

The Worshipful Company of Fruiterers planted a symbolic nine elms in Nine Elms on 22nd June, to mark a long overdue visit by its liverymen to the Market.

The trees were planted on a rewilding site to be known as the Butterfly Garden, close to the entrance of the Market. They will not only add to the diversity and sustainability of the environment in Nine Elms, London's newest district on the south bank of the River Thames between Vauxhall and Battersea, but also eventually play their natural role as host trees in the breeding cycle of one of the country's threatened butterflies, the White-letter Hairstreak.

The Fruiterers group was given a tour of the Market by CGMA and an extensive overview of the progress of a redevelopment programme that was then 362 weeks into its 602-week schedule. CGMA Project Director Tony O'Reilly showed off one of the new units that was about to be handed over to tenants and gave a presentation that outlined how the redevelopment is taking shape and how it fits into the wider regeneration of the local area.

A delicious lunch was provided by Marie et Marcelle, one of the members of Mission Kitchen, the innovative shared workspace for independent food businesses in the Food Exchange. A presentation of the incubator

for fledgling food entrepreneurs was also on the menu.

The visit ended with the planting of the elms, which were propagated and grown in Worcestershire, by Frank P Matthews, one of the largest tree-growing nurseries in the UK. The business donated the trees for the occasion and Managing Director Nick Dunn said: "Elms were such an important part of the UK landscape in years past. Dutch Elm Disease (DED) was devastating for elms here in the 60s and 70s and consequently, a number of breeding programmes were established in Europe to develop a high degree of resistance to the disease."

Many of these hybrids have been extremely successful, according to Dunn. "Our nursery has propagated two of these varieties, both of which are highly resistant to DED now and we believe they will continue to be resistant. Both of them – 'Nanguen' (selling name LUTÈCE) and Wingham – will be planted in Nine Elms. There have been a lot of new elms planted in the UK in recent years, but not that many in London and of course, it's particularly apt that we can plant nine elms in Nine Elms."

Elm conservation is one thing, of course, but providing a new home to a previously struggling butterfly adds a second interesting element to this story.

Both Wingham and Nanguen are known to host the WLH butterfly, which was also threatened as a species by DED. The discovery of the White-letter Hairstreak on Nanguen was particularly significant as the tree has a very different periodicity from the reputedly favourite native host, wych elm, suggesting the insect is possessed of a considerable adaptability which could see it breeding on other high-resistance cultivars.

Hampshire butterfly conservationist Andrew Brookes said the planting in Nine Elms adds to others in the local area, as 'New Horizon' elms at Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens host the White-letter Hairstreak, as do wych elms at Battersea Park and, across the river, at Middle Temple Gardens. There are also nine elms once more on nearby Nine Elms Lane opposite the US Embassy after Wandsworth Council planted two young elms to replace two that had disappeared over time, back in January 2019.

"The White-letter Hairstreak is a small, dark, butterfly, belonging to the same family as the little blues (Lycaenidae), but spends most of its time basking atop the elms once they (the trees) are sexually mature," explains Andrew. "This is important, as the caterpillars, hatching in early March, need elm flowers, and later seeds, for sustenance until the leaves flush. The females seem

“ There have been a lot of new elms planted in the UK in recent years, but not that many in London.



to have quite a capacity for dispersal; the butterfly is found in central Portsmouth, for instance, on an ancient roadside wych elm only a stone's throw from Dickens' birthplace.”

Laurence Olins, Master of the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers, who made the ceremonial planting of the ninth elm at New Covent Garden Market said the livery company was delighted to be making such a relevant and potentially momentous donation to the country's largest horticultural wholesale market. “This Market has been central to the food supply chain in London for more than 800 years and it was where I cut my own teeth in the fruit and vegetable industry,” said Olins. “It now lies at the heart of London's newest district and is being redeveloped to retain its position a long way into the future and there could be nowhere more appropriate than here for us to plant these trees and hopefully restore a lost butterfly population in central London.

“As fruit and vegetable specialists, we understand the vital role that insects play in the sustainability of our production environments.”

For New Covent Garden Market, where the redevelopment programme will be completed in 2027, this was a great chance to give something back to the environment in which wholesalers ply their trade.

Jo Breare, General Manager of Covent Garden Market Authority, said: “Sustainability and environmental responsibility are right at the top of our agenda as we develop a market fit for the long-term future. One of the changes we've

seen in recent times is a welcome reduction in the amount of fruit and vegetables wasted in the supply chain, as people across the world have recognised our responsibility to the environment. New Covent Garden Market is a zero to landfill site now and the traders here are all working towards a more eco-friendly and sustainable future in everything that we do. We are constructing state-of-the-art energy-efficient buildings with energy-efficient equipment and the traders are all working towards greener, sustainable and energy-efficient equipment and vehicles as technological advances are being made.

“To plant these elms in such an appropriate place is a great gesture by the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers and we are all looking forward to welcoming the White-letter Hairstreak to the New Covent Garden Market community!”

Pictured:

1. CGMA's Project Director Tony O'Reilly talking to the group in one of the new phase 2 units
2. The Fruiterers group gathers around the ninth elm, planted by the Master with the ceremonial spade
3. Past Masters of the Fruiterers on parade
4. The Fruiterers group had lunch and a tour of Mission Kitchen
5. The Master presents the trees and a plaque to fellow Fruiterer, Sarah Calcutt, Board Member at CGMA



Steve gets the best out of the Market

Steve Pegrum took on CC Wells from his father in law in 1988 and has been driving up and down to New Covent Garden Market from Dereham in Norfolk on five nights a week ever since. Here, we find out about his family business today, his buying habits and why he uses the market.

It might come as a surprise to some of the salesman and governors at New Covent Garden to learn that Stevie Wells, as Steve is universally referred too, actually has a different surname, but the man himself has no problem with being branded with his company's moniker.

"It's funny," he says, "but I even refer to myself as Stevie Wells now. There are plenty of other regulars in the market who people refer to in the same sort of way and I guess it's a badge of honour that everyone associates you with the good name of your company."

There's no doubt that CC Wells has a good name, as one of the market's oldest and largest customers. "When we took on the business, it had been a difficult time and unfortunately we started out with sizeable debts on the market," Steve remembers. "It was a lot of money, but we had paid every penny back by 1991 and I think that has held us in very good stead since because people, and particularly those guys who were around at that time, remember what we did and know that our word is our bond. For our part, we know we can hold our heads up."

CC Wells had 14 market stalls across Norfolk and Suffolk in the late 1980s. The thinning out of that sector means the Pegrums now have stalls in six Norfolk towns. On Tuesdays, you'll find them in Dereham Market, on Wednesday in Watton, on Thursday they're in North Walsham and Bungay, Friday is their Beccles day and on Saturday, they pitch up in Sheringham.

Pictured: Steve buys in the Market five nights a week for his customer base in Norfolk and Suffolk



Happy Customer

★★★★★

"We have a very good catering and wholesale business in Norfolk too, supplying shops, post offices, pubs, restaurants, care homes and schools," says Steve. "We don't look for business any more, it comes to us. As well as that, we have our warehouse open to the public and trade. We are open for the public to shop Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm and Saturdays 8am to midday. Our huge fridge is a wonderland to anyone who loves fresh produce; they can help themselves to a trolley and select as much or as little as they like from our huge range. We total their shopping up and carry it to their car and it's hugely popular with the local community, whether they are getting the weekly family shop, or just a few items every day."

CC Wells also has a haulage business, delivering fresh produce from growers in its area into New Covent Garden. Steve explains: "The costs involved in purchasing produce have increased significantly in the time we've been doing it. So, the ability to backhaul product into the market and keep our truck full on both legs of the journey has become extremely valuable to us. Because we

are as regular as clockwork into the market and everyone knows we'll be there early – 9.30 or 10pm at the latest – we are accurate and reliable and bring produce up for G's for Side Salads, for example, as well as Hyams parsnips, Portwood Asparagus, Caffarelli cucumbers and blueberries we deliver in to Bevington Salads.

"The guys in the market know we're there five nights a week, so when they are talking to growers in our area, they'll mention us to them and we've picked up business that way. As we're going there anyway, it's far easier for us to guarantee times than for companies who are distributing loads to several destinations on one truck. And if one of our clients finds they have a problem and we have space on our lorry, we can also pick up at very short notice if we're driving past them.

"That side of the business is lovely; it keeps us busy for 10 months a year. It does mean that we have to make our first pick up on a Sunday afternoon at 6pm, but as this is a family business, we're all bought into it," he adds.



“ We've built our name on the quality and value we deliver and New Covent Garden Market has been crucial in that.



“I started in the fruit and veg game when I was 14. I had a newspaper round, a milk round and worked for the local greengrocer in Leigh-on-Sea, in Essex. “I first met my future wife and father-in-law at that time. I’ve always had a passion for fruit and veg. However, I did a four-year engineering apprenticeship at the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment in Foulness Island, then two years in a trade shop. I made piece parts for Marconi Avionics, Nacanco, Ford Tractors and Plessey Engineering. I gave up engineering for fresh produce though when I moved to Norfolk with Maureen.”

Family affair

These days, Maureen works in the office. She arrives at the yard at 4am three days a week and gets back home at 5pm, yet thinks nothing of calling Steve at 11pm while he’s on the road. “She’s just like me,” says Steve, “we just work hard.” Sister-in-law Karen does the same and also runs one of the market

stalls once a week with her sister-in-law Melly, who also works in the warehouse three days a week. Brother-in-law Myles runs the other five stalls, while son Darren manages the warehouse five days a week. Last, but by no means least, daughter Siobhan works in the warehouse four days a week too.

Buying habits

So, how does Steve go about his business on the nights he visits Nine Elms in what is an almost new, hi-spec 26-tonne refrigerated truck? “When I get to the market, I co-ordinate all my orders and lists and I’ll start buying by 10.30pm,” he says. “I’m one of the first buyers into the market and so get to have first choice of what is coming in that night. There are plenty of salesmen around at 10.30pm, partly because they know that there will be a few buyers like myself who are already in the market and also because they are taking their orders by

text, whatsapp and email and transferring them into their systems.

“I walk the market backwards and forwards, seeing what is in, which stands have what produce available, and keep going back to stands to see what other items have arrived. Once I have found the products I want to buy, I’ll try to bid with the salesman, if they would take less or come to the best price we can get. Trust me, it’s hard work! We then order up how many we require and they are sent out to our vehicle.

“I tend to be back in Dereham by 6-6.30am these days, whereas I didn’t used to leave Dereham until 1am. Since the Olympics everything has gone so much earlier. It works for me, because the guys in our warehouse need me back by 7am and I’ve got catering customers who want early top-up deliveries too.”

His buying philosophy is pretty logical. “I’ve always bought the best quality I can

afford, to sell at the best price I believe I can get for it,” says Steve. “I don’t buy what I’d call ‘old fashioned’ market produce and occasionally some people might say I’m guilty of buying gear that is probably a bit too good for my market stalls. But we’ve built our name on the quality and value we deliver and New Covent Garden has been crucial in that.

“The number one thing for me is the strength of the relationships I have with just about every company on Buyers Walk. Basically, they know what I want and I know what they’ve got, so if they say, for example, ‘this won’t suit you, Stevie,’ then I completely trust them. I guess it’s down to what you know and who you know. I like the quality of the product at New Covent Garden – I can be sure I’ll get everything I want and that people will accommodate my requests, down to ensuring that the pallets are stacked correctly to fit my truck. Because every salesman and porter knows my requirements, they never need to question them.

“Every single company serves me – I feel like I get very well looked after by all of them. That says a lot about them, but it’s also because I’m easy to deal with and never a problem.”

It’s one thing, of course, trading at the market with a solid reputation and a longstanding relationship with the businesses here, but what would Steve say to anyone who hasn’t yet shopped at the UK’s largest wholesale market? “You’ve got to give it a try,” he advises. “These guys are very good at what they do and the produce is good quality across the board. They are all looking to serve new customers, it doesn’t matter who you are, and they look after you.”

Tony in second Olympian role

As phase 2 of the redevelopment programme completed at the beginning of July and a new raft of units was handed over to Market tenants, we thought it would be a good time to introduce the man at the forefront of it all, Tony O'Reilly, Project Director at Covent Garden Market Authority

What are the key elements of your job?

My key role is to lead and oversee the redevelopment project, providing the visible leadership to the CGMA Project department. This entails monitoring and reporting on the delivery of all CGMA obligations under the Development Agreement. The position is the fulcrum between CGMA, the redevelopment, DEFRA and our delivery partners VSM and my role is to find the smoothest route through all of this whilst keeping the Market's businesses operating without distraction

Phase 2 has just completed – what does that mean for the Market?

This is showing that collaboration is working well and the Market is going to be getting a modern estate of industrial units to meet all 21st century challenges. The tenants involved in this phase are gearing up to move into brand new facilities that meet food hygiene requirements and, importantly, provide an environment that is fit for purpose. Up-to-date building regulations can no longer be met with the existing infrastructure of the current buildings, which are now nearly 50 years old

What does the next phase involve?

The next phase involves the fitting out of the newly completed A2 building that will allow Vinci UK to demolish the section of the existing A/B building from its current demise back to the eastern cut through passage. The next section of the B Building will then be built ready for the wholesale tenants to start their moves.

Is the redevelopment programme on track and what are the biggest challenges ahead?

Having re-sequenced the project, the programme is now on track to deliver the finished redevelopment for 15th January 2027. The biggest challenges would be the same issues we have previously encountered, such as finding old concrete railway sidings and turntables buried deep in the soils, ground contamination and the sheer extent of asbestos prevalent in the existing buildings. Migrating tenants without disruption is still the highest priority for the wider redevelopment team.

Personal Fact File

Place of Birth
Charlton, London

Career Experiences
I left school at 16 and came straight into the construction industry, where I have been through some interesting and challenging roles such as being the LOCOG (Lead Project Manager) for the delivery of the three Athletes Villages for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, housing up to 17,000 athletes and staff for a two-week period. I stayed on after the Games at the Stratford Village and was part of Senior Management Team that set up the first Private Rental Company to take on 3,000 rental homes. I have also worked for the Ministry of Defence at Sandhurst, I have worked inside a Category A prison, refurbished a World War II destroyer, The National Destroyer Memorial, worked for the Duke of Westminster, started the Elephant and Castle project for Lend Lease and spent the obligatory two-years at the Battersea Power Station project.

How long have you worked at CGMA?
In September I will have worked here for five years.

How does working at New Covent Garden compare?
This is quite probably the most inspiring project I have ever worked on. It has previously been very acrimonious and with real politics thrown into the mix. The near legal challenges and vast complexities of keeping the project on track whilst endeavouring to maintain all tenant business without interruption have made this the most complex project in my long and soon to be finishing career. The project has come through all these trials and encounters and is now a much more collaborative place of work. I believe it is a truly iconic project for the 21st century.



Lives in
Downham, Lewisham.

Family?
I have two daughters aged 31 and 22 who have both flown the nest now. Just me and my wife of 35 years are left at home, so I might have to get a dog to be able to blame things on!

What do you like to do outside of work?
I have taken up more leisurely pursuits now such as fly-fishing, long country walks, playing the guitar and golf. I still jog, scuba dive and surf but my knees are consistently telling me to stop this silly carry on!

What are your favourite fruit, vegetable and flower?
My favourite vegetable is the potato, which has to be my heritage and I strangely love grapes and Victoria plums as my favourite fruits. My favourite flower would be the Hibiscus. I always imagine that it's poking its tongue out!

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