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Phase A2 of the redeveloped Fruit and Vegetable Market was fully opened to a new raft of tenants in October

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Editor's Message



This has been a quarter that none of us will forget, as we mourned Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II while for the second time this year celebrating her life and incredible service to this country.

As we touched on in our summer issue, which coincided with the Platinum Jubilee, the Queen conducted the official opening of New Covent Garden Market in early 1975. I'm sure there are a few people reading this who remember that day very well. On a far wider note though, I know how much Her Majesty meant to so many of us who work here and there were lots of fitting tributes within the Market, by people from the Market, and across social media.

May she rest in the eternal peace that her tireless service to the nation earned. God Save The King.

While the loss of Her Majesty dominated the quarter, Market life continued apace, of course, and the pages of this issue reflect that, with a heady mix of celebration, dedication, reflection and inspiration.

There's little point winning awards if you don't shout about them from the rooftops, so no apologies needed, I'm sure for leading all three of our news pages with stories about the award-winning exploits of five of the Market's marvellous tenants. Congratulations to all, as well as to Bevington Salads and George Marshall of the same company, who were among the runners up at the FPC Fresh Awards, which in itself is also a great achievement at an industry-wide event.

Three of our award winners were successful in securing Great Taste Awards, which are recognised as the most trusted awards in the sector and widely known as the Oscars of the Food & Drink world. As those companies specialise in kombucha, ice cream and peanut butter, the awards serve to reflect the increasing diversity at New Covent Garden – we're making waves from Nine Elms across a wide spectrum of the food and drink industry these days.

The front page pic shows the all-new distribution block A and we've listed the new unit numbers and addresses of all of the companies that relocated in October. There's no resting on our laurels – phase 3 of the redevelopment is well under way.

Further inside, we shine a light on two charitable initiatives that have their roots in the Flower Market - Floral Angels and The Golden Leaf of London. We also profile the relationship one of the award winners from the news pages has with ZSL, the operator of London Zoo and reveal the level of detail that goes in to planning the animals' diets. Marcus Rowleron of Le Marché tells us about The 100 Club, his business's elite customer network, and Paul Grimshaw of D.D.P Ltd looks back on 40 years for his family firm.

We hope you enjoy the read and a successful Christmas period and end your year in a suitably festive mood.

Tommy
Tommy Leighton,
Market Press Officer



Green & Bloom picks up award in first year

Less than one year into its existence, New Covent Garden Market's Green & Bloom won the Wholesale Floral / Plant Supplier of the Year at the FPC Fresh Awards.

In November 2021, Green & Bloom was created by amalgamating the experience and technological assets of three companies to create an all-encompassing wholesale flower, plant and sundries company. Arnott & Mason, Zest Flowers and the Floral Trade Group merged to build a company with the goal of competing on a larger scale with Dutch export companies in a post Brexit world.

Managing Director Freddie Heathcote explained: "Green & Bloom is in itself a creation born from adversity, as well as to beat any potential adversity our industry faces in the short- and long-term futures. This tactical move has seen us enable growth in six key customer areas through a combined sales force in the Market, as well as a newly launched online platform with over 15,000 available products, 95% of which are shipped directly from the grower upon order.

"Shipping directly from growers not only enables us to optimise the freshness of the product we sell, but also to

eliminate margins in the supply chain, thus allowing us to offer premium quality, long-lasting product at industry competitive prices."

The platform the merger has built means Green & Bloom can more easily offer product from suppliers both on the continent and in the UK. And having created this solid foundation at its London market base, the business is now ready to roll out hubs across the UK, in order to further extend its customer base and help realise its vision. "Green & Bloom is an innovative and progressive company which aims not only to grow to become an industry leader but do so by offering our customers the best experience in the process," Freddie said. "By 2024 we aim to have 10 hubs across the UK enabling our vision to be useable by thousands of different businesses across the industry."

Pictured above: Green and Bloom's Freddie Heathcote, centre, accepts the trophy from Paul Walker of sponsor New Spitalfields Market, right. Also in picture: awards host Richard Coles, left, and G&B's Luke Gilbert, second left, and Henk Van Der Plas - second right

New addresses for raft of tenants

Much of the newly completed 131,481 sq. ft. (12,215 sq. m.) Phase A2 of the new Fruit & Vegetable Market has been fitted out and is now occupied by Market businesses.

The state-of-the-art facilities are the second of six construction phases in the redevelopment and sit 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 has already begun.

The companies that now occupy the new block have the new unit numbers listed below, which will be followed in their full addresses by - Distribution Block A, New Covent Garden Market, London, SW8 5EN.

- London Dairies Ltd, Units 101-103
- Classic Fresh Foods / Rushton's, Units 111-116
- Vincenzo Limited, Units 121-122
- Entremettier, Units 123-125
- Brand Ice Limited (IceBox), Units 126-128

- J&D Ice (Eskimo), Unit 129
- Oui Chef Fruit and Produce Ltd, Units 130-132
- Riverford Organic, Units 133-135
- Attila Frozen Foods, Units 137-138
- Harwoods of Kent Ltd, Units 205-206
- Nicholas Lay, Unit 207
- First Choice, Units 210 – 214
- Thornicrofts Ltd, Unit 215
- Golden Fruit, Unit 218
- Paxmead, Unit 219
- Tropical Catering, Unit 220
- Euro Harvest, Unit 221
- I A Harris & Son Ltd, Unit 222 – 226

Having given everyone time to settle into their new surroundings, in the next issue of Market Times we'll feature some of the firms who have moved and find out how the new units are working for them.

County Supplies named top fresh foodservice supplier



County Supplies was named Foodservice Supplier of the Year at the FPC Fresh Awards on September 16th.

The annual awards ceremony for the fruit, vegetable and flower sectors was held at Grosvenor House on Park Lane and run by trade association, Fresh Produce Consortium, to recognise high-achieving companies and individuals across the fresh produce sectors.

For nearly 20 years, independent family business County Supplies has supplied London's restaurants and prestigious kitchens from its base at the Market.

The 24/7 operation serves more than 500 customers, 70% of which have been clients for 5+ years. It provides chefs, F&B managers, Zookeepers and nutritionists with daily insights into menu planning, produce availability and seasonality.

"Our philosophy has always been to provide the best possible service to meet the unique and specific requirements of our clients – whether its sourcing, picking or delivery," said Managing Director Robert Hurren.

"Expertise in delivery logistics is part of what makes our service exceptional. We understand how important it is that deliveries are both accurate and timely. We make certain that every order – from schools to Michelin Star restaurants – receives the same first-class treatment." This high level of service is made possible by an expert management team who, collectively, have 150+ years' experience in buying

Pictured above: Rob Hurren, second left, and Ollie Hurren, right, received the award from Jo Breare of CGMA, who was representing NCGM as sponsor. Also pictured is awards host Richard Coles

and operations. They're further supported by a wider 50+-strong team who follow the highest quality sustainability procedures, as recognised by LEAF and Red Tractor certifications and BRC AA accreditation.

County Supplies was also recognised for its vision of a greener future, said Rob. "Becoming more environmentally aware means needing to know where our food comes from. Chefs need to know the origins of their ingredients while tuning into food miles and becoming conscious about the number of deliveries they require. To support this, we educate chefs on seasonality – knowing when fruit and vegetables are at their peak flavour and ripeness – and widely encourage them to reduce ongoing packaging waste."

See pages 6-7 for Feeding time at the zoo – and more on County Supplies.

Two become one as Classic and Rushton's merge

Effective from November 1st, Classic Fresh Foods and Rushton's: The Chefs' Greengrocer, have merged and will trade under the name of Rushton's: The Chefs' Greengrocer. The combined business is trading out of units 111-116 in the recently completed Distribution Block A

Both businesses had been running side by side within the Thorogood Group with very similar values for the past two years, so there will be very few changes now that they are operating as one. Rushton's: The Chefs' Greengrocer will continue to be owned by the shareholders of S Thorogood & Sons, just as both Classic and Rushton's were.

"We are delighted to unite two strong fresh produce suppliers within London's iconic New Covent Garden Market," said group Managing Director Andrew Thorogood. "We felt it would be clearer for customers



and suppliers for us to be trading under one name and with the redevelopment of New Covent Garden Market and our new warehouse we felt this is the prime time to merge as one."



Harwoods names new unit to honour Tommy Palmer

It was with much sadness that Harwoods of London announced the sudden passing of Thomas Palmer on Monday 1st August. Tommy was a much loved and respected member of staff, having joined the business last September. He was the young age of 60 when his life ended.

Tommy lived in the East End of London and leaves behind his wife Karen, their three children, Amy, Louis and Harry and their grandson Ethan. Not forgetting Bella the dog. He loved nothing more than fishing and watching boxing and football, but his passion was his family. He was a true family man and they meant everything to him.

Tommy spent around 20 years at New Spitalfields Market working for Prescott Thomas and Fresh & Fruity before making the move over to New Covent Garden Market. Jim Dew, Managing Director of Harwoods of London, said of Tommy: "He loved his job and nothing was too much trouble for him. He had a great character and liked nothing more than a laugh, a joke and a cigarette. Tommy was employed as a driver/warehouseman, but for us he was a true greengrocer...a real all-rounder. There is no-one who would have a bad word to say about him, He will be missed by us all.

"We re-located to our new home in the Market at the end of September and it was on that Monday morning in August when Tommy was showed our new units before he went home. His words were "it's fantastic" and he could not wait for the move," said Jim.

"Our new units have been named The Thomas Palmer Distribution Centre in Tommy's memory and we have adapted our company signage to feature the name prominently above the entrance. Many tenants of the Market have asked what the sign is about and have said it's a very nice gesture and all part of the Market being a big family."

Three Market firms win food Oscars



Three Market-based companies were successful in the Great Taste Awards 2022, recognised as the largest and most trusted awards in the sector and widely known as the Oscars of the Food & Drink world.

Food Exchange based Oppo Brothers Ice Cream scooped four awards, gaining the accolades for its Double Chocolate Brownie, Vanilla Caramel Brownie, Salted Caramel sticks and Chocolate Hazelnut sticks. Managing Director Harry N Thuillier said: “Winning four Great Taste awards is a big deal for us – we won four between 2015 and 2021, so to suddenly win another four in the same year is something quite special!

MOMO Kombucha, which brews its product in the Arches, achieved a full house. “Our Ginger-Lemon picked up a 2-star award, with each of our other products picking up a 1-star award,” said Josh Puddle, Co-founder of MOMO Kombucha. The 2022 awards marked a first time win for MOMO’s Raspberry-Hibiscus and it was clear from the feedback that the judges loved it: “This kombucha has a vibrant, natural pink hue with a cloudiness that adds to the natural feel,” the panel said. “The aroma has clear notes from the fermentation and there is a lovely, clean flavour and mouthfeel.”

And another Food Exchange company, Manilife, which produces ‘Peanut Butter like no other’, took two awards, for its Rich cocoa smooth and Deep roast smooth products. “Through adopting the principles more associated to speciality coffee than peanut butter (small batch production, direct single estate sourcing, expert roasting) Manilife creates mouth watering products,” said Founder Stu Macdonald. This is massive for us. One of our goals is to create the best tasting products on the planet. Three Great Taste stars is the highest accolade, so for half our range to have that is a real testament to the work the guys put in.”



Local artist captures evolving Nine Elms landscapes

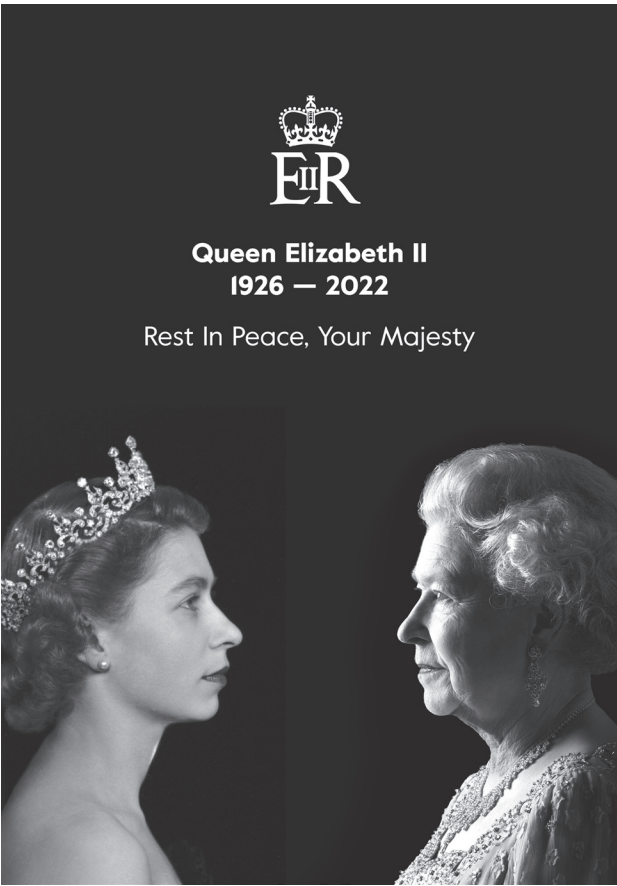


ActionSpace artist Ian Wornast has created a series of artworks inspired by the transport and architecture of Nine Elms.

Ian is passionate about London’s urban landscape, the city’s changes and developments and particularly its public transport system. Ian’s bold, highly patterned drawings are personal geographic mappings of the city. He incorporates elements of the design and colours of the transport system and creates connections and links showing London through his own lens. Local to the area, he has recorded the dramatically evolving landscape of Nine Elms in this series.

Ian’s Nine Elms commission was chosen by the Battersea and Nine Elms community in March this year as part of Make Art in Nine Elms, an open call with a community selection process in which seven local artists were chosen to develop new work for the Nine Elms arts programme. The commission is funded by Wandsworth Council.

The artworks are on public display at sites including Merchants Way on the outskirts of New Covent Garden Market, where you will find the one in the picture. They were produced in collaboration with Art on the Underground and TfL.



The entire Market paused with the rest of the country to reflect upon and celebrate the life and service of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Posters were placed around the Market to mark her passing and many Market firms and people paid their own fitting tributes as the nation mourned its Queen in the manner she fully deserved.

S Newman buys electric jeep

If you see this fully branded, snazzy little electric jeep buzzing quietly around the market, it’s a new purchase by S Newman and Son.

The firm’s Michael Mansfield said he saw it while he was scrolling through the internet. “It’s built in China. I thought it was a brilliant idea to try and help the market when it moves to its new phase: to have the buyers going up and down rather than pushing their trolley; to have an electric motor to get from A to B. It’s all green energy and a good advertisement for everyone,” he added.

How did he actually buy it from China, we asked. “I watched a couple of YouTube videos of people in America going through Alibaba. I thought it was a bit of a risk – you don’t really know what you’re getting. I think I got quite lucky,” said Michael. “All the export documentation fell to me. It seemed quite fun to start with – it’s a cheap truck. Then the real fun arrived when it got to Southampton port. All sorts of charges and hidden fees. But I did it! It’s brilliant to drive – like a little go kart.”



Floral Angels flourishing with Flower Market support

Floral Angels was founded in 2013 to recycle and reuse flowers from events, weddings and retailers and is based at Pinstripes and Peonies in the Flower Market. The charity's Chair and driving force Frances Hunter tells us about the inspiration behind its mission



Can you give us a potted history of Floral Angels?

Floral Angels has been around for nearly 10 years now - we started off in the old flower market in 2013. We put word on social media that we were looking for volunteers and a base, and Covent Garden Market Authority kindly offered us a place. We receive flowers from events and from florists and recycle and donate them to elderly care homes, hospices, charities such as Age UK, and women's shelters. We are fully supported by the floral industry, and we now work in full partnership with many florists and event companies. Rather than wasting flowers, we believe in recycling them to add joy to the lives of people who don't normally receive or have access to flowers.

What are the values of Floral Angels?

Our values are to reduce waste, recycle, reuse, and our mission is to bring some joy to people that normally wouldn't see something as beautiful as flowers, or that are going through a rough time - flowers brighten up everyone's day!

On the Floral Angels website, you say that you believe that flowers have healing properties. How do you believe that flowers heal and enhance people's lives?

There have been many studies that demonstrate that any living thing in a room - plants and flowers included - bring a particular positive energy. We have often noticed that when

flowers and bouquets are delivered to residents in care homes and hospices, they bring a flicker of light. With dementia patients especially, flowers can prompt a memory and spark unexpected conversations...staff always say that they bring an energy to the room. Additionally, flowers become a focal point, prompting conversation and they can also be quite stimulating, for example bouquets with herbs like thyme or rosemary evoke the senses.

Are there any particular flowers or bouquets that help the volunteers on a difficult day?

The volunteers absolutely love what they do with us as they are constantly surrounded by flowers. They are often excited about the change in seasons and the new variety coming up, for example spring flowers and autumnal flowers... every change in seasons is really exciting, so we don't have a particular flower, but we do look forward to the flowers at the start of each new season, as this brings in a fresh range and variety.

It must be a very fulfilling role in which you can learn a great deal from some of the people you deliver to. What words of advice or comments from anybody that you have delivered flowers to have had a lasting impact on the team?

Many people have been overjoyed to receive our flowers and one lady at a women's shelter said that it was the first time that she had ever received flowers. So, it felt really nice to

make her day and provide her with a joyful new experience.

Once a year we deliver flowers on Mothers Day to mothers with sick children at Great Ormond Street Hospital and Ronald McDonald House, in their rooms. One evening, one mum had had an extremely difficult day on the ward with her sick child and receiving the flowers in the room really meant something to her. It makes all the volunteers feel like what we do has value and is worthwhile.

Who do you wish to extend and expand your help to in future?

I think its important to keep doing more of what we are doing. It is important to expand and support worthwhile organisations and places. We have a great volunteer group who recycle the flowers and create the bouquets, but we are always on the lookout for drivers to volunteer to do deliveries.

Has your charity changed since the pandemic?

We were of course closed for 18 months as there were no events and care homes were closed. The safety of our volunteers was also very important. But, we started up again last September and things have gone from strength to strength. It is nice to experience the event industry is blossoming again... the nature of what we do hasn't changed, and life now feels pretty much back to normal.

How does being based at New Covent Garden Market help your trade and add value to your charity?

It is key. There is no question in anyone's mind that New Covent Garden Market is the natural home of Floral Angels and it's crucial to our success. We are based at Pinstripes and Peonies due to the generosity of the owner Ruari McCulloch. We have a caged area upstairs in the car park that allows us to have a 24-hour drop off and they have been very supportive in so many other ways.

The Flower Market is a focal point for the floral industry, when florists are coming to do their buying, they often drop off to us. If we were based in north London or somewhere else it wouldn't work, but because they are coming to the Market, it makes sense for us to be here. We were also a part of British Flowers Week, a campaign created for the floral industry by the Market, and the Duchess of Cornwall opened British Flowers Week in 2021, which was one of the first events after the pandemic.

What's on the horizon for Floral Angels?

Well, lots of lovely new bouquets and donations, and we are particularly looking forward to celebrating 10 years next spring.

Pictured: A quartet of cheerful volunteers create bouquets from donated flowers



Feeding time at the zoo

There’s much more to ‘feeding time at the zoo’ than sticky buns for the elephants and bananas for the monkeys. County Supplies provides the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) with fruit and vegetables for over 600 species of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and invertebrates and we talked to Lauren Palmer, ZSL London Zoo’s Logistics Manager about the processes involved in ensuring all of them get the right nutritional balance in their diets

How and why do you work with County Supplies to bring food in for your animals / birds?

With around 14,000 mouths to feed at ZSL London Zoo, it’s imperative that food deliveries are of high quality and arrive regularly - we achieve this with an early 6am delivery slot of fresh fruit and veg three times a week. We pride ourselves on having built a strong relationship with County Supplies all the way from directors to delivery drivers as it adds to overall productivity for all involved and means the animals enjoy the quality produce they need to thrive.

“ The gorillas love sprouts, but the keepers don't much like the aftermath!

Which animals or birds particularly benefit and in what ways? Could we have an example or two of specific animals or birds, what they are fed and how it benefits them nutritionally?

Fresh produce plays a dynamic role in the animals’ lives as not only do they enjoy a daily balanced diet, devised by ZSL’s dedicated nutritionist, but the way the food is prepared encourages the animals’ natural behaviours. For example, the lorikeets’ food is placed on branches in their enclosure to inspire foraging and the bearded pigs’ food is scattered on the ground so they can snuffle for it with their snouts - which are two thousand times more sensitive than a human!

What are your ESG targets - does using surplus fruit and vegetables help you to meet them?

ZSL, which runs ZSL London and Whipsnade Zoos, is an international conservation charity, working to help wildlife thrive across the globe – to that end, we actively look at how we can be more sustainable in every area. We have been working with County Supplies on having all our produce delivered in returnable plastic crates, and the keepers order the exact amount they need to last 2 – 3 days until the next delivery, to avoid any unnecessary wastage from surplus stock. This also means the animals’ diet is always fresh. We also work with County Supplies on ordering goods that are in season as this helps drive down cost on expensive items such as leafy greens and exotic fruit, and means the animals have a diverse and changing diet year-round.

How does fruit and veg fit in with the overall food regime at your zoos?

Fruit and vegetables are not only fed to the animals as part of a nutritious diet, but they are also fed to our onsite live food breeding colony which consists of different sized crickets and locusts. The live food is then supplied to the small carnivorous animals, including the meerkats, as part of a balanced and necessary diet. The animals also get the opportunity to eat seasonal food on special occasions such as pumpkins for Halloween and Brussels sprouts for Christmas! The gorillas love the sprouts, but the keepers don’t much enjoy the aftermath...!

Who is involved in the nutritional processes at the zoo, how is the menu for each animal planned and how often does it change? How does the knowledge and expertise of County Supplies contribute to those processes?

ZSL has a dedicated animal nutritionist who is essential in creating nutritious and varied diets for the keepers to work with – each species has their own tailored menu choices. The diets are closely monitored to avoid overfeeding, however there are flexibilities to allow for treats, such as popcorn for the red river hogs, and individual animals’ personal preferences. Just like us, animals have their favourite foods! During the changing seasons, County Supplies supports us through monthly Market Reports that detail crop availability



and cost-effective produce. It is important that the animals receive food that is as close as possible to what they would naturally eat in the wild as this supports their physical, mental, and social health and stimulates their natural behaviours.

What do the animals think of the fresh produce they eat?

I cannot speak on their behalf but judging from the empty food buckets every day I would imagine they love the variety of their daily helpings of fresh fruit and vegetables.

Back at County Supplies, Elizabeth Baldwin said: “We were amazed when we did the tender – there were at least eight people on the call, from keepers to nutritionists, talking about reptiles, birds and animals, and they were all telling us about what they feed the animals and how it is about keeping the animals engaged as well as nourishment. We had no idea beforehand how complex an operation it all is and how often they change the menus

“We decant all the produce to ensure there is minimum waste at ZSL’s end – it really is all about sustainability.”

Using surplus to meet your requirements

As discussed in this article, there is demand for fresh produce in all sorts of places. However, roughly three million tonnes of fruit and vegetables are wasted every year in the UK and to do its bit to address this problem, County Supplies has established County Surplus, which works with growers to sell leftover fresh produce that would otherwise go to waste.

Farmers are often left with surplus, no matter how good a grower they are. Whether that’s due to oversupply or because the product has failed to meet high-end specifications, it’s perfectly tasty produce that is fit for consumption (by humans or animals!).

From purple sprouting broccoli to spuds, County Surplus supplies produce that would otherwise be destined for landfill or left to rot in fields. They also help to educate customers on ways they can reduce waste. Managing Director Robert Hurren (pictured) says: “A third of all food grown is never eaten. County Surplus is our way of supplying fresh sustainable produce daily to our customers. Working with a network of growers we supply the very best produce when it’s in season, helping to reduce waste”



How it works

- Customers are notified about what surplus produce is available
- Customers then place their orders for the following week
- County Surplus orders are delivered as part of its normal delivery service

Whether you have a question about sustainable fresh produce, specific delivery requirements, or indeed, anything else, the County Surplus team is available to answer your questions.

Opposite: Squirrel monkeying around with strawberries
Top left: Peter unloads veg for a wide range of animals at ZSL
Top right: Another squirrel monkey considers consuming a corn on the cob
Above: Lauren Palmer, London Zoo's Logistics Manager

Market crucial to Danny’s high-quality offer

Danny Parsons owns and runs Fiveways Fruits, a greengrocer that has operated on Ditchling Road in Brighton for more than a century. He’s been at the helm for 18 years and as well as buying from his local wholesale market, Danny also regularly comes to London to buy high quality fruit, vegetables and flowers from New Covent Garden Market



“I actually started out working as a Saturday boy for a local greengrocer when I was 13,” Danny says. “I ended up working predominantly in the flower section, at TG Fruits in Brighton Wholesale Market and I’ve done everything from porter, to forklift and lorry driver, to salesman. I found myself working two jobs and sleeping three hours at night and three in the day and when my first child came along and the chance to buy the shop came up, I decided to throw everything at it.

“The understanding of the various aspects of the business and its supply chain that I built up in the market is one of the key parts of the success I’ve had as a greengrocer,” he says.

They say the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree and TG Fruits is a supplier Danny visits most nights, to buy fruit and vegetables. He also has another local supplier for flowers and plants. “They are great suppliers and they do a good range, but obviously they can’t carry everything and once a week, I get in my 7.5-tonne truck and go up to New Covent Garden,” he says.



“ I get a real buzz out of finding great product to take back to my customers

Chimney pots

“Where I am located has become a more affluent area and a lot of people have moved down from London. There are a lot of chimney pots round me and a lot of people. It’s got busier and busier and the customers are becoming more discerning – they expect to see greater variety of produce and consistently higher quality. New Covent Garden is crucial to me being able to supply them with that.

“I sell the full range and try to keep it interesting and unusual. I want to keep the local customers buying local, so I have to be providing different products and service to the supermarkets. I give them what they want,” Danny says. “I let them touch, feel and taste the product and I listen to their feedback. That’s really important to me.”

When he comes to New Covent Garden each week, Danny has a well-established routine. “I leave Withersfield at midnight, pick up the van and I’ll arrive at the fruit and vegetable market by 1.30-2am. I always have a long list and tick that off by around 4.30-5am, then head to the flower market. I try to be back on the road by 6am at the latest, in order to get back and stock the shop before we open.

“I don’t necessarily enjoy the driving side of things every week, but I do get a real buzz out of finding great product and the excitement of taking that back and putting it into the store for my customers. The variety and quality in New Covent Garden is very good as a general rule, so it gives me what I need to stand out in Brighton.”

Spreading the love

So, who does Danny buy from? “Everyone deserves a chance and I try to ‘spread the love’ to everyone on Buyers Walk,” he says. “As a buyer, you do get to know that certain things are best bought from certain firms. It works the other way around too – there’s a lot of trust involved and once they know you, that trust grows.

“On another level, I want the markets all around the country to be busy, so they are turning over enough as traders to keep the supply chain healthy. I think everyone like me should really



buy from various people if they can – you never know when you might need a certain supplier or a certain market for something specific. It’s very competitive at the moment, but we’re all passionate about what we do and despite the challenges, there’s no reason why we can’t be there for each other.

“I love the hustle and bustle and the people at New Covent Garden; it’s such a fast-paced market and everyone knows what they are talking about. I also like the fact that in so many cases, that knowledge has been passed down through the generations.”

Danny has a good team around him at Fiveways. His own son, who is 19, works for a different greengrocer in Brighton at the moment, and Danny would very much like to see him working alongside him, maybe even taking over the reins in the fullness of time. “Like a lot of people in this business, I guess you could say I’m a workaholic,” he laughs. “They are long hours, I don’t get a lot more sleep now than I did before I took the business on, and it’s tough.

“I’m only 51, so I’m sure I’ll still be coming to the market for many years, but I’d definitely like to take a back seat one day!”

www.fivewaysfruits.co.uk



Happy Customer

★★★★★

Liz aims to reconnect Londoners with nature

The Golden Leaf of London (Golden Leaf) aims to rewild urban areas with “ribbons of vegetation that become unique living sculptures and walkable routes for locals and visitors”. The registered charity is the brainchild of Liz Marsh, owner of Elizabeth Marsh Floral Design in the Flower Market, who sees it as a modern living art project that will put a stake in the ground and commit to a more sustainable world for us and our children. Here, Liz tells us what lies behind the project, which will start in London, and how people in the Market community can get involved.



Liz conceived the Golden Leaf concept early in the Covid 19 lockdown, as she considered ways to heal the population’s lost connection with nature. Her vision of rewilding cities was inspired by the structure of a leaf, whereby smaller veins (streets) would connect the wild, natural and educational spaces to a central spine, all of which can be explored on foot or by bike. This exposure to the wild and natural aims to inspire people to embrace healthier living, encourage people to coexist with Nature and imagine a future where populations are thriving, and not deprived. Rather than focusing on simply surviving and regaining what we had before, she wanted to ensure we re-built back better and in harmony with nature.

London is the first city in what the Golden Leaf of London charity hopes will be a national and even global campaign. The A13 and A4 are the ‘central spine’ that runs straight through the heart of the capital. Initially, the Golden Leaf of London had envisioned transforming the pavement area alongside this artery to create a greener and vibrant cafe society. It would encourage physical activity, walking and cycling, and attract people to an urban oasis of greenery, cafes and markets alongside the road which is a necessity to connect the city. The result of this would be cleaner air, more attractive space and improved mental health,” says Liz. “Our aim is to transform the approach to urban design, of which there are many examples from around the world. It’s London’s time. We recognise that the only way to make this change is to get large numbers of influential people behind it and create momentum. From there we want to see the network spread; it has the potential to be a positive project for people at every level of society.”

“There is very little wild space left in urban areas of the UK as we pave over more of it all the time. It doesn’t happen in reverse,” she adds. “Only those who escape to the countryside or live near a major park are assured of experiencing nature as part of their daily lives. “The south of England is becoming one long urban asphalt and concrete corridor. Since the start of the Covid 19 lockdown there have been more than 6,000 new houses built within a five-mile radius of where my father lives in Hampshire. It’s not countryside any more, it’s suburbia, and we need to ensure these areas are being developed while respecting what nature provides for us by intertwining this in at the planning stage. The UK is in a housing crisis and we understand the need to build more affordable homes. If we are starting fresh in some parts of the country we can adapt best practices from the brightest minds in the UK and the world. In central London, it’s more dense. It feels like every time I blink a new block of flats are goes up, squeezing even more in small spaces. It’s not enough to put a plant in the middle of a street canyon and say we are creating enough green spaces.”

“ We want to create a vision of what streets would look like if everyone played their part



Growth journey planner

The charity has just produced the first iteration of the Golden Leaf Growth Journey Planner, which illustrates how to become a Golden Leaf Street. “We want to be a celebratory charity that engages and celebrates resident’s willingness to learn and transform their own street and neighbourhood,” explains Liz. “We want them to embark on their own plans, knowing that they will be led by us to help them make a difference. None of us start anything as an expert, and there are many opportunities to learn what can be done no matter where you start. It’s important they feel the pride of what they have accomplished and are recognised for the impact they are having on their community. If you’ve got a flowerpot on your windowsill, for example, well that’s a start, but just imagine if you had three of them and everyone on the street had three flowerpots on their windowsills. We want to create a vision of what streets could look like if everyone played their part.”

The Golden Leaf initiative needs the support of local councils, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Transport for London (TfL). The goal is to elevate the conversation and realise the possibilities that can be achieved and a shared vision. “There is real value to this project and people love the idea,” says Liz. “By aligning humanistic values with current realities we will tap into our creativity to solve real problems and remove perceived barriers that block us. What we’re doing ties in well with the work of other organisations such as, Street Trees, which is encouraging people to water the plants and trees outside their buildings. If every community did that, whole areas would be flourishing within a few years.”



A summit was held in June to roll out a link with Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS). “LNRS was created by the government and launched by Natural England. It represents a chance for local communities to say what they would like to see and how they would like to live in our urban environments,” says Liz. “We want to ensure that the message goes out to as many people as possible – corporate organisations, science institutions, charities and our communities. This is a UK wide initiative and the GLA is taking a key role here in London. LNRS’s success depends on all stakeholders coming together, an eclectic group of people with a variety of expertise. This is one of the greatest strengths of Golden Leaf.”

The charity has four trustees, Liz as Chair and Founder, Lenka Moore, who is responsible for Community and Engagement, Sandeep Sesodia, Treasurer, and Fiona Marsh, who oversees Partnerships and Programmes.

“We also have five strategic imperatives,” says Liz. “These are Growth and Governance, Partnerships and Programs, Community and Engagement, Design and Technology, and Delivery & Support. Each team is supported by a team leader. With such a large and encompassing mission and no salaried employees yet we have divided the work across these specialities to drive the project forward.

“We’re actively looking for trustees and people to lead and join our teams. We are currently seeking a Team Leader for the Community and Engagement team,” she adds, so get in touch! “No-one gets paid although all are reaping the benefits and fulfilment by driving forward a real chance to help save Nature.

What can you do?

Any organisation or individual interested in donating financially, in kind, or volunteering their time and skill are encouraged to contact Liz. “There are other ways to get involved too,” Liz says. “We want people to talk about it to spread the word in as many different ways as they can. Follow us on LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.

“At the heart of what we’re doing lies healing our connection with nature and helping communities to thrive sustainably. Organisations, their employees, customers and all stakeholders are waking up to the fact that sustainability for our mind, bodies and planet will ensure the human race will survive if we adapt the way we live now. We have created the Golden Leaf at a time when awareness of sustainability our mental health and connection to nature can benefit us and future generations of all living things.

“I’ve just started bringing dahlias in from a grower in Guildford, which we’ll be selling through R French & Sons in the Market,” she adds. “We’ve seen the sale of domestically grown flowers drop off dramatically in the Market, often due to logistical challenges. Elizabeth Marsh Floral Design will be giving grower Withypitts a route back into the Market, where they sold large volumes of flowers for many years. A lot of this is about having the will to collaborate, which we all struggle with at times, but if we work together, the gains will far outweigh the potential losses.

“One of the huge strengths of the Market is our community and that reflects Golden Leaf’s values. I’d love to see us create a Golden Leaf corridor in the Market, with products sourced from the Market, to illustrate what can be

done. Why can’t the walls of units be covered in creepers, to create a habitat for insects and birds, help nature and look nicer? I’m not asking people to do difficult things, just to have a different mindset.

“As florists, if there’s no nature, then we’re out of a job, so we have vested interest in this being successful,” Liz admits.

The objectives have far more altruistic roots than that, however. “Droughts are prevented by maintaining a green canopy and there are lots of ways we can mitigate climate change by increasing the amount of vegetation in our urban communities,” says Liz. “It is up to those who live off the land to support that land before it’s too late.”

If you would like to donate, learn more or contact Liz Marsh go to [Goldenleafoflondon.org](https://goldenleafoflondon.org)

Pictured: A series of artist's impressions have been designed to illustrate how some of the capital's thoroughfares could be transformed by Golden Leaf of London

Le Marché caters for elite customer base

Much of London may be experiencing a difficult time financially, but the customer base at Le Marché puts quality ahead of price, every time. We talk to Managing Director Marcus Rowleron about his creation of an exclusive group of catering customers



Le Marché supplies 80% of the Michelin Star restaurants in London. The company’s entire, select customer network is either Michelin Star adorned, a 5-star hotel or a high-end restaurant.

“Nobody supplies fruit and vegetables to more Michelin Star restaurants than us,” says Managing Director Marcus Rowleron. His business is as selective with its customer base as the products it sources from around the world. “We supply what we believe are the hundred finest dining establishments in London. We call this The 100 Club and we believe we should have no more than 100 customers, in order to maintain our ability to deliver the level of personal service those customers deserve on a daily basis.

“Every week, I turn away at least two to three potential new customers. That may sound crazy, but for us, it’s about finding individuals who we want to work with and really understanding what they are all about, so we can provide them with exactly what their business needs to succeed.

“We think of this club as the catering world’s answer to the FTSE 100.”

Naturally in the current marketplace, there is a bigger focus on price in large parts of the restaurant trade in London, adds Marcus, but that’s not the environment in which Le Marché operates. “Price is always important, but our customers all want the same thing – quality is non-negotiable.

“We are not expensive; we’re working to roughly the same margins that other businesses in the Market work to, but we do specialise in premium, niche product and you have to pay for quality. As an example, we found a grower of Tahiti limes in Marrakech and they pick and transport the product to us, via Paris, in five days. The other limes on the market at the same time have been on the sea for three to four weeks and while they may be similar products, if you had the choice you’d rather serve a lime that was picked five days ago than one that’s a month old. That inevitably costs a bit more, but it represents value.”



Well defined business

Although it sounds French, Le Marché is a very British business and although its branch in Paris is important to what Le Marché does, it is not what defines the firm, adds Marcus. “Our relationships at Rungis are very important – it’s the largest market by far in Europe but it’s not all about French product, it covers the whole of the world. We have three buyers in Paris and three in London. I’d be startled if any other company of our size has that many. They are all dedicated to specialist areas and charged with one thing only – finding the best. They buy in the markets in London and Paris and they also deal direct with growers in the UK, France and Holland,” he says.

“We’re based here at NCGM and a lot of our business is still done here. The important thing though, is that we’re not loyal to one market or another, we’re loyal to quality.

“The key for us is that we interact with as many people as we can. Six buyers can obviously talk to and meet a lot of people and that opens plenty of doors. In the end, it is the knowledge our buyers gain that determines what we are going to buy, then allows us to educate our customers. If we have a new Charentais melon, why is this the one they should be buying, how can they tell the difference and what’s its value to their customers?

“We are totally customer-led, but we are also in the fortunate position that we are trusted by our customers and can to an extent spend our time looking for the stuff we like. It might not always work for everyone and it isn’t all done for profit by any means, but we believe in providing our customers with something different, the best that’s out there.”

The roots of Le Marché

Marcus has been working at NCGM since the early 1980s, when he came to work for his neighbour’s business during the school holidays. “I never went back to school!” he says. “That business was John Connell, which had been in existence since 1770, in Covent Garden since 1826, and the new Market since 1974. I took it over in the mid 90s.

“Around 10 years ago, we decided to create a catering company in the Market that was second to none. From the outset, we wanted someone to walk into NCGM, ask ‘who’s got the very best product’ and be directed to us. With our French connection, we knew we could take it to the next level.”

John Connell merged with two more companies, Prestige Primeurs and Le Marché, taking the latter as its trading name in 2017. “France is an integral part of what we do, so it made sense, but essentially the name doesn’t really matter. It’s what we do that’s important,” he says.



Seasonal focus

Le Marché follows the seasons like many fresh produce suppliers – with asparagus, it will take French right up to the English season, then bring in what it believes is the finest English asparagus from the Isle of Wight. Marcus adds: “We’ll always buy English strawberries when they are in season and again, we go where the quality is – we bring in strawberries from Yorkshire when we believe that’s the best eating English strawberry available. They are blast chilled within 30 minutes of picking, then transported to us that night, so it’s very possible that diners are eating them in a London restaurant less than 24 hours after they were picked. You can’t really beat that.”

When all’s said and done though, Marcus believes there is more to business than product and price. “At the heart of what we have created with The 100 Club is a community,” says Marcus. “The top end of the catering trade is a pretty small group of people, but while people often know each other, they rarely get the chance to be out of their kitchens or cellars and spend time with each other. We will bring together customers from different parts of the trade and take them to Rungis Market, in Paris, for example. When they meet up, they don’t know each other, but by the time we drop them off at the end of the trip, they are exchanging cards and inviting each other to their establishments.

“We have taken chefs to visit growers in the UK, we’ve taken them around the London markets, we’ve taken them into schools to cook with kids and every time, it’s about the interaction and education. I’m lucky that I’ve done my years in the Market and I am often able to take that time out with them. It’s brilliant fun and of course, we feed off that as a business, it gives us drive and ideas.”

Another source of energy is the prospect of a redeveloped New Covent Garden, he says. I’m very excited about the new Market and what it’s going to do for the trade. I believe it’s going to be a catalyst for change and that it will re-energise and refocus people. We’re really looking forward to moving into our new units, hopefully next year, and bringing more chefs down here to cook into the Market and see the facilities.”



Pictured: Over the years, Le Marché has created not just a customer network, but a true chef community. Pictured across these pages is Marcus with a number of the chefs he regularly spends quality time with in various locations around the country

“ We believe in providing our customers with something different, the best that's out there



D.D.P reaches 40-year milestone

It's 40 years this year since Direct Delivered Produce Ltd (D.D.P) opened on the Market and Managing Director Paul Grimshaw says the family firm has stood true to its principles from day one.

The business was set up by Paul's father Sham, who had previously worked in the Market at wholesalers Mack & Edwards and latterly DD Pankhurst. Sham found that as he stopped off on his drive home up the A40 each day, a growing number of catering and retail establishments were keen for him to deliver fresh produce to them.

"At the time, the Market was at least 80% wholesale and maybe 20% catering and the vast majority of smaller restaurants from outside London would come up with their own vans and buy in the Market," says Paul. "D.D.P was set up with a unit (B8) in the Market and a warehouse in Chesham, Bucks, and from day one, supplied direct to local schools, restaurants, contract caterers and retailers. We were one of the first firms to do that out of NCGM and our 'fleet' was one noisy, blue Volkswagen van with the engine in the back, in which dad delivered produce on his way home. He plotted his route home by the deliveries he had to make."

“ D.D.P has been a Grimshaw family affair from day one, both at the Market and at home

Customers as diverse as Chalfont Food Hall, Middlesex Polytechnic, Ashridge Management College and Planet Hollywood were amongst the earliest regular destinations for that D.D.P van, until the orders outgrew its capacity. "Our second vehicle was a big lorry that we could get more stuff on," says Paul. "We got it sign-written, then the driver managed to wedge it under the bridge at Berkhamsted station on its first day on the road. It brought the town to a stand-still for much of the day and the scrape marks are there to this day underneath the bridge!"

Maybe it was the lack of road awareness of his driver that swayed Sham's focus to a customer base closer to the Market. "Dad recognised in time that delivering in London was easier than to the surrounding counties and built up a healthy central London customer base. We quickly moved into the higher-class establishments, with retail customers including Harrods, several



high-end restaurants and hotels, the House of Lords and eventually the Royal Households, for which the company was awarded Royal Warrants and still holds them today, over 25 years later," says Paul.

Family affair

D.D.P has been a Grimshaw family affair from day one, both at the Market and at home. Paul remembers the daily routine of his mum, Carole, in the late 1980s being pretty busy, to say the least. "I don't know how she did it really," he recalls. "She'd get up at 2am and wake dad and my brother Kevin up. By 3am, she'd have started packing fruit lunch boxes of bananas, apples, satsumas and grapes, which we did for Selfridges and a few other retailers. I didn't come to work at the Market until 2002, so in those days she'd wake me up for work at 7am, then carry on with the day's packing, before doing some invoicing before dad and my brother came home at lunchtime. Mum would then do some more paperwork, make dinner, do the ironing and finish off the evening with some more paperwork!"

"She only had four hours sleep before starting it all again. Whatever it was that needed doing, that never mattered – she

was happy to do it." In time, special packed nuts were also made up at home by Carole, using similar foot-pedal machines. "My dad actually went to the Amazon in Brazil to secure regular nut supply – there were no phones and no internet, he left with a small holdall containing a couple of shirts and a thick suit made from wool!" Paul laughs.

As for Paul, he didn't follow brother Kevin into the firm straight from school. "I've always been part of it, of course, and used to work in the market while growing up," he says. "I remember coming in to grade apples during the night, for example, but by the time I was in my 20s, the hours didn't really fit my social life!"

Fitting his social life around the hours of work became more palatable as he reached his 30s though. "I was more suited to Market life by the time I entered the business," he adds. "Things had begun to modernise here, which suited me too. However, while we



Left: Paul models the famous D.D.P barrow, which is often seen at customer events

Above: Paul with Paresh Shah, his fellow Director
Top right: Hard-working Carole, on the firm's stand at the National Fruit Show
Right: Dad Sham, right, discusses bikes and fruit and vegetables with former Conservative Party Chairman Norman Tebbit

embrace modern technology and everything that goes hand in hand with that, we have never lost regard for our past as that's what got us here in the first place."

It's pretty evident that the entire Grimshaw family has put its heart and soul into the business and that family has also increased its number through a series of dedicated and passionate people who have worked for them across the years. Director Paresh Shah has been with the company for more than 25 years, while fellow director Muku, buyer Bala and packer extraordinaire Siva have also progressed through the ranks over many years of service. "We've always believed in giving people the opportunity to advance," says Paul. "They have not just become highly skilled and experienced members of our team, they have become part of our family too and it's been so good to watch their own families grow while they've worked with us."

Market value

D.D.P has moved twice within the Market and is now housed in units B59-64. Being at New Covent Garden has been integral to D.D.P's success, says Paul. "The relationships we have here are absolutely crucial. We have the same trusted supply base in the Market that we've always had, many of the people will have worked with us right from the start and without them we simply wouldn't have been able to do what we've done," he adds.

Direct relationships with suppliers have blossomed over the years too and as well as those Brazilian nuts back in the day, the firm has been a big advocate for British, whenever possible. "We've championed British produce right from the get-go and that will never change. We have some fantastic British suppliers, our customers love high-quality homegrown product and we're totally committed to them. The world and its weather are becoming harder to predict, of



course, and one of our stock replies to longer term pricing questions, when asked, is 'I don't know what I'm having for my lunch today, never mind the price of broccoli in three weeks!'

"We've always stuck to what we do best. From day one, we have maintained a dogged determination to treat every order as if it's our first. We still do and it's the dedication we have to supplying the best quality and delivering the best customer service that have helped us to achieve Royal Warrants and count customers like Coughlans, who we have served for 30 years, as friends. We have contract catering customers that cater for 1,000+ people three times a day and they have a lot of competition, so the quality has to be right up there, as well as our ability to deliver what they need, whenever they need it."

Sadly, Sham and Kevin are no longer with us, but the D.D.P name and their work ethic live on.

Toyin & Funke on NCGM & jollof

Meet Toyin Allen and Funke Ajibola, who work at Covent Garden Market Authority. They discuss their experiences so far with the market and kindly gave us an insight into Nigerian and African Culture in honour of Black History Month.

Tell us about your roles within CGMA?

Funke: So, I am the finance manager, my role focuses largely on day-to-day finance related tasks such as year-end, reporting, budgeting and so on as well as having a team that I look after. I report to our head of finance Cassandra Glavin.
Toyin: Well, I focus on looking after all our staff within CGMA, as well as helping to manage the CGMA chart of organisational processes and strategy implementation. I promote wellbeing throughout the organisation and ensure that everything is compliant with HR procedures.

How long have you both worked at CGMA?

Toyin: I am very new to CGMA, I have only been here for 6 months.
Funke: Since October 2021, 25th October to be precise, so coming up to a year now already.

Were both of your industries career targets from a young age or did you naturally fall into them through life experiences?

Funke: For me, from the end of primary school I became really intrigued with finance related matters and then later the world of finance as a whole. So I studied accounting at university and then later expanded my professional development by doing my ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) qualification.
Toyin: I always knew that I wanted to be at the heart and centre of a business and earning money doing what I love. I decided to pursue a degree in Business Administration and fell in love with HR. Then I embarked on a post-grad diploma in Human Resource Management and furthered my professional studies by attaining associate membership through CIPD.

How does it feel to be based at London’s biggest and finest Fruit and Veg Market?

Toyin: It’s a great place with a buzzing atmosphere, I am an avid user of the market - I grew up in Battersea, so the market has been on my doorstep for over 30 years of my life.
Funke: I think it is so dynamic and a unique set up, and nice to be a part of something that brings so many different people together. It’s really diverse.

It’s Black History Month, and the theme for 2022 is Time for Change: Action Not Words. What positive changes have you seen over the past 5 years in the workplace in regards to- cultural integration and the development of diversity?

Funke: I would say there has definitely been a change in the right direction. I can see progress in this and my previous roles- diversity and inclusion is embraced, and it is strongly present within CGMA. In one of my previous roles, I was part of the diversity and inclusion network, and since then it has been great to see more integration in thought processes. So, things are progressing.
Toyin: I agree, I think things have gone from being brushed under the carpet, to now being addressed and developed.



Movements like Black Lives Matter had a ripple effect. I also wouldn’t work for an employer if they didn’t embrace diversity.

What advice would you give to job seekers within the black community and local area about the opportunities at the market?

Funke: To be focused, to be bold, and brave and to not limit yourself - what you want is achievable.
Toyin: Exactly that, and to also persevere and have an idea as to what you want achieve.

You are both from Nigeria, tell us about the competition between Ghana and Nigeria’s infamous jollof rice?

Toyin: Simple answer - Nigerian Jollof is the best.
Funke: There has been ongoing competition, it’s still ongoing, but yes Nigerian Jollof for me is better, it could just be that I am accustomed to the taste.
Toyin: True, we probably are accustomed to our way of making it, and maybe our palettes just favour the Nigerian style of making it. It just tastes better, it’s got a sweet kick amongst the spices.
Funke: Yes, it comes down to the ingredients that we use.

Food is a hearty part of African culture, from your own perspectives first hand, how important is food when uniting communities and bringing people together?

Toyin: Very important, for Nigerian and African families overall, food is an important aspect of our gatherings. It’s the focal point.
Funke: Precisely, food is like our blue blood. It makes everybody happy, there’s an expectation for it at events, it uplifts everybody and it basically is the life of the party.
Toyin: If African families came to a party and there was no food – well, they wouldn’t stay for long! Food is basically part of our communication and connection.

If you were both to merge together in the kitchen, what ingredients would you use from the Market and what dish you both create?

Funke: We would have to make Jollof, with a nice salad on the side. So, we would buy sweet red peppers, scotch bonnets, onions, spinach, tomatoes for the Jollof, and apples to put in the salad.
Toyin: They also sell plantain, which accompanies jollof nicely.

Market Times – a sustainable future

Market Times is no longer posted out to subscribers outside the Market. You can still pick up a copy when you are at NCGM, at one of the cafes or from the CGMA office in the Food Exchange. We will continue to email our extensive database and attach a PDF version when each issue is published. If you are not on our mailing list, send your name and email details to hello@cgma.co.uk and if you would prefer not to receive Market Times, you can also unsubscribe. Thank you.