



Evaluation Report

Lyttelton Farmers Market

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Executive summary

Purpose. The purpose of this report is to present findings from an evaluation of the Lyttelton Farmers Market undertaken by Project Lyttelton in partnership with Social Foci (Limited), an independent research company that specialises in evaluation. This report is part of a larger *Project Lyttelton Community Research and Evaluation* project funded by the Lottery Community Sector Research Fund.

Background. The Lyttelton Farmers Market was established in 2005 to support the growing and buying of local produce in Lyttelton. The Farmers Market runs from 10:00am to 1:00pm every Saturday in the Lyttelton Main School grounds on Oxford Street.

Evaluation objectives. The evaluation sought to identify Farmers Market vendors', local businesses' and Farmers Market customers' perceptions of aspects of the Farmers Market that work well, benefits resulting from the Farmers Market, and any areas for improvement. In addition, to identify Farmers Market vendors', local businesses' and Farmers Market customers' levels of awareness of, and knowledge about, Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage for vendors (the signage represents if a Farmers Market stall has food grown by the vendor, meets Project Lyttelton's environmental standards, is locally crafted and/or is within its 100km boundary).

Evaluation methodology. Evaluation activities included: (1.) a document review and analysis of two independent research projects on the Farmers Market conducted by Canterbury University students to access information relevant to the evaluation objectives and questions (2.) focus groups with Farmers Market vendors and regular customers, and (3.) focus groups with people from different age categories who had never been to the Farmers Market before.

Research limitations. As part of the evaluation, Project Lyttelton had planned to run a focus group with local businesses, but was unable to due to the disruption caused to local businesses as a result of the 2010/2011 Canterbury earthquakes. The earthquakes also meant that focus groups did not include as many participants as were planned for. The findings come from a small group of participants, therefore, they should not be generalised to the wider population.

Key findings - benefits for Farmers Market customers, vendors, and local businesses. Regular and first time customers like the access they have to a wide range of quality, local, fresh, seasonal produce in one venue. Customers also value the opportunity to try products before they buy, and the environmental (sustainability) benefits of the Farmers Market model. Vendors and customers like the atmosphere of the Farmers Market, and see it as a positive community meeting place. The opportunity to listen to music, have a coffee, and meet friends is greatly valued. The relationship that develops between customers and vendors is also seen as a key benefit. Customers value the opportunity to interact with, and buy directly from, producers at the Farmers Market, and vendors can generate return custom through their positive interaction with the buyers.

For vendors and businesses, the market provides economic benefits on a weekly basis (e.g. cash flow for Farmers Market vendors, employment to locals as musicians, and exposure to local businesses). Vendors value the fact that the market exposes their product to a wide audience and creates the opportunity for further business. The market is seen as a valuable way to bring people into Lyttelton and support local businesses.

Key findings - suggested improvements. Customers and vendors highlighted a number of activities that could occur that would improve the Farmers Market.

Vendors identified the need for (1.) clearer food safety regulations that are enforced; (2.) rules around competition and authenticity (e.g. vendors selling products that are organic, if they are organic); (3.) improved communication between Farmers Market management and vendors around Farmers Market rules and regulations; and (4.) general communication about the Farmers Market to people from Lyttelton and Christchurch.

Customers and vendors felt that the market could benefit from (1.) better promotion post-earthquakes (e.g. the location of the market needs to be well signposted when people enter Lyttelton from the Lyttelton tunnel and there needs to be clear signage outside of the Farmers Market); (2.) increased space (e.g. a change in site was suggested by some customers, because the current site is congested - space at Lyttelton Main School is restricted due to a safety wall around two earthquake damaged classrooms, and some vendors' vehicles in the space, and parking is limited); (3.) having seating near the music, so customers can linger at the market; (4.) Making sure someone is responsible for ensuring dogs are kept in the dog parking area; (5.) providing better toilet access; (6.) addressing waste disposal issues - several customers were unable to locate rubbish disposal on the site; (7.) making the Farmers Market zero waste, or plastic bag free; and (8.) putting up centralised signage, that provides information about vendors and their produce, and where they are situated at the Farmers Market.

Key findings - Knowledge and awareness of Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage. Vendors felt more promotion and education for customers on the accreditation issue was required (i.e. its purpose and how it works). Regular customers did not understand the need for accreditation signage, considering that they had already established good relationships with vendors and know where products come from. The accreditation signage was generally unnoticed by first-time shoppers. For some customers, the logo seemed unnecessarily complicated and needed better information to explain it. Others did not see the need for accreditation as they could ask the vendor about where their produce came from, or they trusted the authenticity of products sold at Farmers Market.

Recommendations. Based on the evaluation findings, it is recommended that Project Lyttelton undertake the following activities to support the success of the Lyttelton Farmers Market.

- Develop a Lyttelton Farmers Market Advisory Group, which will lead the future direction of market. The group would include representatives of Project Lyttelton, Farmers Market vendors and customers, and local business.
- Identify a suitable future site to meet requirements for size, parking, shade, easy access and central location for the market, and develop timeframes and a plan for shifting to this site.
- Develop a set of Farmers Market guidelines in consultation with vendors, based on the findings of this evaluation, and follow these guidelines through consistently. This would include site visits to ensure all vendors comply with New Zealand Food Safety regulations, and verification of where produce is grown.
- Improve communication of information from Farmers Market management about the Farmers Market (e.g. Farmers Market rules and regulations) to vendors and the general public via newsletters, email, and general meetings.
- Provide a directional sign to Farmers Market when entering Lyttelton from the Lyttelton tunnel, and place a sign at the entrance to the Farmers Market.
- Promote, and provide education about, Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage for vendors to customers. An central information board about accreditation and where stallholders are located at the Farmers Market should be considered.
- Provide seats and tables near the musicians in central part of the market.
- Provide a clearly signed rubbish disposal system for customers and vendors, which includes recyclables, compost and landfill waste (e.g. Christchurch City Council bins could be used).
- Develop improved information about and access to public toilets,
- Assign someone from Project Lyttelton with responsibility for ensuring dogs are kept in the dog parking area.
- Conduct a further evaluation in 2013 to measure the extent to which the recommended changes have improved and generally impacted on the Farmers Market experience, and to identify the impact of the market on other local businesses in the area.

1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present findings from an evaluation of the Lyttelton Farmers Market undertaken by Project Lyttelton in partnership with Social Foci (Limited), an independent research company that specialises in evaluation. This report is part of a larger *Project Lyttelton Community Research and Evaluation* project funded by the Lottery Community Sector Research Fund.

The Farmers Market was established in 2005 to support the growing and buying of local produce in Lyttelton. Around 30 regular stalls sell a range of local produce such as fresh fruit, vegetables, eggs, bread, meat, cheese, plants and condiments. Local musicians also perform at the Farmers Market each week. The Farmers Market runs from 10:00am to 1:00pm every Saturday in the Lyttelton Main School grounds on Oxford Street.

Project Lyttelton started the Farmers Market to secure and support local food production as key to building a resilient community¹. New stallholders have to live within 100 kilometres of the Lyttelton Harbour Basin, and can only sell fresh, locally produced food.

This report describes the type of evaluation and its intended use, the key evaluation objectives and questions, the evaluation methods used and their limitations, and evaluation findings, followed by a discussion, recommendations and conclusions section.

2 Evaluation type and use

The Farmers Market evaluation looks at processes and outcomes from the Farmers Market. It provides a qualitative assessment only. The purpose of this assessment is to provide Project Lyttelton with an in-depth understanding of vendors, local businesses and customers perceptions of aspects of the Farmers Market that work well and benefits resulting from the Farmers Market, any areas for improvement, and the level of knowledge and understanding of Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage for vendors.²

Project Lyttelton will use the evaluation findings to inform the way that they resource and operate the Farmers Market in years to come. In addition, they will use findings from the evaluation to inform wider audiences (e.g. other community groups) about (1.) what aspects of the Farmers Market vendors and customers enjoy the most, (2.) the perceived benefits for vendors and local businesses, and (3.) lessons learned about areas for improvement to the Farmers Market.

¹ Represents if the stall has food grown by the vendor, meets Project Lyttelton's environmental standards, is locally crafted and/or is within its 100km boundary.

3 What we wanted to find out

This section details the information this evaluation aimed to collect.

3.1 Key evaluation objectives and questions

The key objectives of the evaluation and related evaluation questions are as follows.

- **Objective 1: To identify customers perceptions of the Farmers Market and how it could be improved**
 - What aspects of the Farmers Market do customers like?
 - What aspects of the Farmers Market do customers think could be improved?
 - What developments could occur in the next one to two years to improve the Farmers Market?
- **Objective 2: To identify vendors and local businesses perceptions of the Farmers Market and how it could be improved**
 - What are the benefits to vendors and local businesses as a result of being involved in the Farmers Market?
 - What do local businesses and vendors think could be improved about the Farmers Market?
 - What developments could occur in the next one to two years to improve the Farmers Market?
- **Objective 3: To identify vendors, businesses and customers awareness and knowledge of Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage³ for vendors.**
 - Are vendors, businesses, and customers aware of Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage?
 - Do vendors, businesses, and customers know what Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage means?

³ Represents if the stall has food grown by the vendor, meets Project Lyttelton's environmental standards, is locally crafted and/or is within its 100km boundary.

4 Description - Lyttelton Farmers Market

The objectives for the Farmers Market, groups that the Farmers Market is intended to reach, and resources (people and financial) that support the management and running of the Farmers Market are presented below. For a logic model diagram showing the activities that are part of the Farmers Market and outcomes expected from those activities see Appendix A.

4.1 Farmers Market objectives

Through the Farmers Market, Project Lyttelton aims to:

- *Give the community access to a wide variety of fresh, local, seasonal produce and, “value added” products direct from the producer.*
- *Provide a centralised trading place in Lyttelton so locals can shop locally.*
- *Provide an informal, social gathering place in an open-air setting for the Lyttelton community.*
- *Provide work opportunities for local people and to stimulate the local economy and local businesses.*
- *Highlight and celebrate Project Lyttelton and other community organisations, with the goal of improving Lyttelton’s community appeal.*
- *Foster awareness and action in relation to environmental sustainability.*

4.2 Groups reached by the Farmers Market

Key groups that the Farmers Market is intended to reach are:

- All local people in the Lyttelton Harbour Basin.
- Local stallholders.
- Local musicians, and other local entertainers.
- Local businesses.
- People in the surrounding hill suburbs.
- People from Christchurch.
- Tourists.

Although Project Lyttelton does not currently collect information on the extent to which the listed groups access the Farmers Market, there is anecdotal evidence (verbal feedback from customers, businesses, and vendors) that all of these groups access and benefit from the Farmers Market. In the short-term, Project Lyttelton aims to identify and put processes in place to collect this information, but this will be capacity dependent.

4.3 Resources

The following resources support Project Lyttelton's Farmers Market⁴:

People

- Key Champions.
 - Three Project Lyttelton Board members (Farmers Market steering group) act as key champions for the Farmers Market (unpaid).
- Volunteers.
 - Market Manager (five and a half hours per week).
 - Project Lyttelton Information/Sales person (four and a half hours per week).
- Market Manager/Administrator (Paid role for six hours per week).
- Website support (volunteer hours, as needed).
- Stallholder Liaison person (unpaid).
- Market Committee (unpaid).

Financial

- Stallholder fees (\$35, and with power \$40 per week).
- Incubator: Small-scale home suppliers can sell their product through the Project Lyttelton's website. This requires a \$10 yearly membership fee, and 10% commission on sales⁵.
- Fundraising – dinners and raffle (store holders have opportunity to contribute goods).
- Surplus used to fund other projects.

⁴ This was the structure in which resources were allocated at the time of the evaluation. This structure has been changed since then.

⁵ If the venture is successful they can then move to become a regular stallholder, meeting all other requirements.

5 What we did - methodology

This evaluation aimed to give at least two Project Lyttelton team members *hands on* applied learning opportunities, with a key objective being to enhance their evaluation capability as part of a wider monitoring and evaluation project. As such, they were supported by Social Foci⁶ to undertake evaluation design activities, collection of qualitative information from fieldwork, and to undertake analysis of data, and reporting.

This section sets out the methodology for the evaluation of the Farmers Market. Qualitative methods were selected for this evaluation, because Project Lyttelton wanted in-depth information from key groups accessing and involved with the Farmers Market. Selection of focus groups allowed for better triangulation of information (i.e. equal input from all stakeholder groups: customers, vendors, and businesses), and allowed the same issues to be tested against each other.

5.1 Document review

Two external university publications provide information about the Farmers Market that relate to the evaluation objectives⁷. Project Lyttelton reviewed the two publications, and then summarised information relating to the evaluation. Key findings from the document review and analysis are included in Section 7.

5.2 Focus groups with vendors and regular customers

Project Lyttelton facilitated two focus groups with vendors and regular customers at the Farmers Market. The aim was to identify what aspects of the Farmers Market they like most, aspects that could be improved, perceived benefits for them, and their knowledge and understanding of Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage at the Farmers Market. Six people were invited to participate in each focus group⁸. Project Lyttelton completed the following processes.

1. **A topic guide⁹ and consent form were developed** for focus groups participants.
2. **Potential participants were selected.** Vendors were randomly selected from a list of all vendors. A snowball method was used to identify regular customers (i.e., starting with regular customers who the evaluators knew and asking them for the contact details of other regular customers).
3. **Potential participants were contacted.** The venue, date, and time for the focus groups were booked, and potential participants were phoned, or sent an email, inviting them to their focus group with information about (1.) the purpose of the evaluation, (2.) the intended use of evaluation findings, and (3.) information explaining that participation was voluntary. If potential participants indicated that they did not wish to participate, additional people were selected from the list of vendors, and regular customers were asked to select someone else that they knew that could be a

⁶ <http://www.socialfoci.co.nz>

⁷ These publications are: University of Canterbury (2008) *Farmers Market: Contributing to a Sustainable Future?* and University of Canterbury (2009) *Lyttelton Farmers Market: Bigger than Lyttelton*.

⁸ As part of the evaluation, Project Lyttelton had planned to run a focus group with local businesses also, but were unable to due to the disruption caused to local businesses as a result of the Christchurch earthquakes.

⁹ See Appendix B for an example topic guide – focus group with vendors.

potential participant. This process continued until two groups (one group of vendors and one group of regular customers) had been selected.

4. **A topic guide and consent form were distributed to focus group participants.** Once participants had confirmed that they were happy to attend, they were emailed a topic guide indicating (1.) general discussion topics that will be covered during their focus group, and (2.) the purpose of the focus groups, and (3.) use of information derived from the focus groups. They were also emailed a consent form for them to provide their informed consent regarding (1.) their participation (2.) understanding of the purpose of the focus groups (3.) that the focus group component of the meeting would be audio recorded (4.) and that respondent's would not be identified personally in reporting the evaluation findings.
5. **The focus groups took place.** A Project Lyttelton team member who had had no involvement with the Farmers Market facilitated the focus groups. The focus groups were audio recorded.
6. **Focus group data was analysed.** The focus group facilitator transcribed the audio recordings of the focus groups. Then the facilitator completed a thematic content analysis of information in the focus group transcripts, and documented key findings from each focus group.
7. **Key findings were emailed to focus group participants** for the opportunity to provide further comments about discussion topics, and to ensure that the key findings accurately reflected their thoughts. The key findings were amended, as needed, and finalised by the facilitator.

5.3 Mystery shopping technique and focus groups

People who had never been to the Farmers Market before were selected based on pre-specified age categories¹⁰, and provided with \$50.00 to have an experience at the Farmers Market for a minimum of one hour (10:30am -11:30am at the busiest market time). The mystery shopping process occurred on two different days (i.e. two people from each age group were selected (eight in total), and one person from each age category would shop on a different Saturday).

Two focus group sessions were held after the mystery shopping events to identify what aspects of the Farmers Market customers like and what aspects of the Farmers Market that customers think could be improved, and to assess their knowledge and understanding of Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage for vendors. Participants were required to come to the focus groups as a condition of taking part in the mystery shopping process. Project Lyttelton completed the following processes.

1. **A topic guide was developed¹¹** for the facilitator of the focus groups.
2. **A consent form was developed** for evaluation participants.
3. **Potential participants were selected.** Project Lyttelton selected people within their community in the age categories, who they knew had not attended the Farmers Market before. Project Lyttelton used a snowball method (i.e. starting with people they knew and asking them for the contact details of other people who had not attended the Farmers Market before) to select participants.

¹⁰ The age groups involved include ages 20 – 34, 35 – 50, 50 – 64, and 65+.

¹¹ See Appendix C.

4. **Potential participants were contacted.** The venue, date, and time for the mystery shopping experience and the focus groups were booked, and potential participants were contacted by phone, or by email, inviting them to their mystery shopping and focus group session.
5. **Vendors were informed about the project (who then notified their staff)** about what Project Lyttelton were doing (evaluation activities) and why, and how vendors would be involved/impacted on the day, via Project Lyttelton's *Farmers Market Newsletter*.
6. **A consent form was distributed to focus group participants.** Once participants had confirmed that they were happy to attend, they were emailed a consent form for them to provide their informed consent regarding (1.) their participation (2.) understanding of the purpose of the mystery shopping experience and focus groups (3.) that the focus group component of the meeting would be audio recorded, and (4.) that respondents would not be identified personally in reporting the evaluation findings.
7. **The mystery shopping events took place.** Two Project Lyttelton team members met with participants before they started their mystery shopping experience (two groups on different days, four people per group), gave participants \$50.00, reiterated the instructions for the evaluation, and confirmed the venue and meeting time for the focus group.
8. **The focus groups took place.** One Project Lyttelton team member facilitated the two focus groups. The focus groups were audio recorded.
9. **Focus group data were analysed.** A transcriber typed up the audio recordings of the focus groups. Then a Project Lyttelton team member completed a thematic content analysis of information in the focus group transcripts, and documented key findings from each focus group.
10. **Key findings were emailed to focus group participants.** Participants were given the opportunity to provide further comments about discussion topics, and to ensure that the key findings accurately reflected their thoughts. The key findings were changed, as necessary, and finalised by Project Lyttelton.

5.4 Research limitations

As part of the evaluation, Project Lyttelton had planned to run a focus group with local businesses, but was unable to due to the disruption caused to local businesses as a result of the 2010/2011 Canterbury earthquakes. The earthquakes also meant that focus groups did not include as many participants as were planned for. The findings come from a small group of participants, therefore, they should not be generalised to the wider population.

6 What we found - Evaluation findings

This section presents evaluation findings from the document review and analysis, focus groups with vendors and regular customers, and the mystery shopping technique and two focus groups.

6.1 Document review and analysis

The Lyttelton Farmers Market has been operating since September 2005. During this time, two independent studies of the Farmers Market have been undertaken. Both were completed by third year University of Canterbury geography students, as part of their courses, to give them applied research experience in a community setting¹².

In 2008, students completed research to identify the extent to which the Farmers Market was contributing to a sustainable future. In 2009, completed research to identify the extent to which the Farmers Market acts as a vehicle for community interaction and the stimulation of local business.

Table 1 below summarises findings from the research that pertain to this evaluation. Specifically, information relating to what aspects of the Market customers, vendors, and businesses like, aspects that could be improved, and perceived benefits for these three groups.

¹² These publications are: University of Canterbury (2008) *Farmers Market: Contributing to a Sustainable Future*, and University of Canterbury (2009) *Lyttelton Farmers Market: Bigger than Lyttelton*.

Table 1: Customer perspectives

Customers Perspectives of the Farmers Market	2008 study	2009 study
What aspects customers liked about the Farmers Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The range of fruit and vegetables ▪ The freshness of products ▪ That local products are available ▪ Good atmosphere ▪ Good mix of products ▪ Good value for money ▪ Close proximity of the Farmers Market for people in Lyttelton ▪ Relationships with producers ▪ The Farmers Market supports the local economy ▪ The taste of food bought at the Farmers Market ▪ Perceived reduction of food miles ▪ The Farmers Market encourages sustainability ▪ The Farmers Market serves as a meeting place ▪ Good place for visitors to Lyttelton 	
What customers think should be improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Farmers Market should be plastic bag free ▪ There should be zero waste at the Farmers Market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The number of vendors should be increased to encourage more competition amongst vendors and affordable food for customers ▪ Car parking options

Table 2 – Vendors perspectives

Vendors Perspectives	2008 study	2009 study
Benefits of the market for vendors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Farmers Market provides a place for vendors to promote and sell their products ▪ Vendors earn a profit from sales ▪ Direct sales occur ▪ The Farmers Market provides publicity and exposure to vendors products ▪ It is cheaper to run a business from the Farmers Market than a business premise 	<p>The Farmers Market:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has a positive impact on the local community and businesses ▪ Compliments existing businesses ▪ Helps create a vibrant Lyttelton ▪ Provides a meeting place for people ▪ Provides a positive space in the township ▪ Provides more economic opportunities for Lyttelton

Table 3 – Local businesses' perspectives

Local businesses' perspectives	2008 study	2009 study
Benefits of the market to businesses		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Existing businesses were stimulated and transformed (e.g. different customers) ▪ Provided a larger customer base for most businesses ▪ Acted as an incubator for many businesses ▪ Gives businesses confidence for more business growth ▪ Made businesses more profitable ▪ Diversified product ranges ▪ Made more days good trading days, due to return visits by market attendees on non market days

6.2 Focus Group with vendors

In June 2011, two Farmers Market vendors (two vendors did not attend – one had to leave the market due to illness and one did not attend due to vehicle problems) participated in a focus group to give their perspective on aspects of the Farmers Market they liked the most, aspects they thought could be improved, and their awareness and knowledge about Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage for vendors. The focus group findings are presented below.

6.2.1 What aspects do vendors like

Aspects of the Farmers Market that these two vendors liked the most are as follows.

- The cash flow that is generated for the vendors from the Farmers Market.
- Promotion of the vendors' products each week to a cross section of the Christchurch community - *It's a way to promote your products to, you know, the wider Canterbury community.*
- Exposure to and occasional business from, a shop or deli that is looking for new products. This can lead to further business opportunities.
- The opportunity for vendors to sell all their products in one day. The popularity of the Farmers Market and the number of regular customers who come along means that this occurs the majority of the time.
- Farmers Market customers appear to like sourcing a product directly from the producer. Through positive interaction with vendors and appreciation of products, there are a number of regular customers returning to the Farmers Market - *I would say about 80% would be return customers, and they would have to be satisfied for them to come back.*

6.2.2 Suggested improvements/future developments

Improvements suggested by these Farmers Market vendors are as follows.

Business opportunities

- Vendors have experienced a significant drop in business in 2011, which is likely a result of Christchurch earthquakes. Vendors feel that more focus on promotion of the Farmers Market would help bring customers back to the Farmers Market - *It does need to be promoted. You know, a lot of Christchurch people don't even know that the tunnel is open.*
- Improved signage at the tunnel exit, to direct casual *day trippers* to the Farmers Market, as well as helping to direct those people going to the Farmers Market for the first time to its location was suggested.

The location and set up of the Farmers Market

- For some vendors, being in the lower site at the Farmers Market results in less space, because of a wooden wall that is situated there. In addition, this makes it difficult for them to turn cars around - *That big sort of wooden wall that they have put up...that has taken up a lot of the site... made it smaller, which makes it not as good as the top one.*
- Because of the current layout of the Farmers Market, it would be beneficial for vendors if a process was in place for vendors to set up one after another, depending on access to their site - *The first one has to come first, then that one and then, it goes automatically, but now everybody comes at once.*
- The introduction of a set plan to direct where each vendor sets up each week, and which provides standardised same sized sites for vendors, could address issues caused by space constrictions at the Farmers Market.
- Vendors would like a larger site for the Farmers Market, with easier parking and with a particular type of set up. For example, instead of vehicles, tents, or gazebos sticking out at the Farmers Market, it could be like the *car park* behind the Lyttelton Port Company (LPC) Building whereby all the car parks were marked and because it was on the main road people could see it.
- The Farmers Market could be situated closer to the main street (London Street), because if people are shopping they are more likely to visit the Farmers Market. However, having the Farmers Market at the school in an enclosed area does contribute to the atmosphere at the Farmers Market.
- Vendors access to shade could be improved for some vendors. This would protect produce - *As stall holders...we will probably want less sun for the products.*
- The best location for music was in the middle of the Farmers Market, with tables and chairs set up as a place for people to sit and listen to the music.

Waste disposal

- There is confusion for vendors and customers concerning the issue of waste disposal at the Farmers Market. Some vendors took other stallholders rubbish home, which caused them frustration, and was seen by them as ultimately counterproductive (e.g. the length of travel in taking rubbish home (carbon miles) and then burning it) - *I travel three quarters of an hour out to Leeston with the rubbish from here and what do I do when I get out there? I burn it. Isn't that defeating the whole thing?*
- The waste disposal could be the job of some vendors who create the waste in the first place - *Well maybe the coffee merchant or the coffee seller takes the cups home, or there could be a rubbish recycling bin located at the Farmers Market - The coffee cup is recyclable. There just needs to be a city council recycling bin, in the market somewhere.*

Farmers Market rules and regulations

- There is a need for improved communication channels between Farmers Market management and vendors, as there are unresolved issues relating to the way the Farmers Market is run. For example, there is a need for firmer and clearer guidelines for vendors and others working at the Farmers Market, that clarify:
 - Rules for vendors around competing products - *Things like competition, there is lots of festering going on about that at the moment.*
 - The length of time that musicians play, as this impacted on the atmosphere of the Farmers Market, and therefore, indirectly on vendors - *Some of them only play for an hour ... It seems that they are supposed to play for two...There needs to be some monitoring of how long some of them do play.*
 - What constitutes bad weather on the day, and results in a reduced fee for vendors, to compensate for a likely reduction in sales of produce - *One time we had a meeting...We were saying when it was raining we don't have to pay the fee or only half fee... because [Farmers Market management] thought that it was not so rainy that day, we paid full fee. But we as stallholders did not agree. We were not happy about that.*
 - Waste disposal rules, which need to be shared with customers and vendors. For example, there are no guidelines for customers (e.g. where to put empty coffee cups) - *Again that needs to be explained to the punters, that that is the deal. There is nothing...They just can't find a rubbish bin.*
- Guidelines for vendors and others working at the market that have already been agreed upon needed to be followed through more consistently.
- The Farmers Market Committee should send out an email on Friday every week informing vendors if a vendor is not coming that week. This could provide an opportunity for vendors to sell the produce of that vendor without competing with them.
- There is concern that some vendors do not have a registered kitchen in compliance with New Zealand Food Safety regulations. There is a view that there is going to be more emphasis on permits from Food Safety New Zealand in the short term. Vendors felt that Farmers Market management should be discussing regulations with vendors to avoid fallout if an illness at the Farmers Market was to occur, and vendors were found to be not complying with legislation - *There are these rules, but nobody is enforcing them...every stall holder down there should be working out of a registered kitchen... I know that there are stallholders down there that aren't.*
- There should be further discussion regarding whether the Farmers Market should be advertised through the Farmers Market Association website, as it is not following some Farmers Market Association rules.

- There would be some value in having more stringent rules for vendors, to ensure that vendors who claim to produce products themselves, or stock actual organic produce (e.g. spray free tomatoes) are checked for authenticity (e.g. site visits). This would ensure that those who are authentic are recognised for this - *Also with growing vegetables I think that they should check. They should come over to your farm...they can see what we are growing and that it is ours and that we don't buy it in.*

6.2.3 Knowledge and understanding of accreditation signage

Vendors felt there needs to be more promotion and education for customers around Project Lyttelton's accreditation system for vendors, and that for it to be successful, the categories need to be stringently enforced - *We were all given our little signs to put up, but there was no follow up, there was no promotion. There was no, explaining to the public, to the customer, as to what it was about.*

An option suggested by vendors to address this issue, was a large map with a list of all the vendors, where the vendors are situated, and what their accreditation is. The map could be placed in the middle of the Farmers Market where customers could clearly see it.

6.3 Focus Group with regular customers

In June 2011, four people who were regular customers at the Farmers Market participated in a focus group to give their perspective on aspects of the Farmers Market they liked the most, aspects they thought could be improved, and their awareness and knowledge about Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage for vendors. The focus group findings are presented below.

6.3.1 Aspects regular customers like

Aspects of the Farmers Market that regular customers liked the most are as follows.

- The freshness and quality of the produce.
- That the produce is grown close by, and there is a good selection of organic produce.
- Having the opportunity to sample the produce at the Farmers Market - *I like tasting all the different hummus and things. I go around taste...and occasionally buy some when I can afford it. But I love the fact that you can just do this taste and try before you buy.*
- Seasonal produce is available, with different produce being available according to the changing seasons - *There are blueberries at a certain time and figs at a certain time.*
- The wide range of products, meaning that a lot of a customers' weekly shopping can be obtained at the Farmers Market.
- The opportunity to get to know the vendors at the Farmers Market and to talk with them about their products - *I really value the ongoing relationship with the vendors... they will give you tips about new information about what is coming out or...how to cook something and that sort of thing.*

- The social aspect of the Farmers Market - meeting up and talking with people from Lyttelton and vendors, and catching up on any local news - *It is a fantastic social hub, you meet all sorts of people from all around Lyttelton that you wouldn't necessarily meet. But you can keep connected with them [at the market] which is fantastic...If you haven't seen somebody you go to have coffee later and that is a very valuable aspect, so it is not a ten minute shopping expedition, it is a full morning experience.*
- The community connectedness that occurs at the Farmers Market, and its small space, which contributes to its *intimacy* and *character* - *It just gives me a real sense of the community of Lyttelton. You know...regular people...and people who are really involved in the community.... it gives me that sense of that connection with the community, with being a part of this community.*
- Local musicians being present, who help create an atmosphere where people feel comfortable to linger (i.e. to spend time a reasonable time at the Farmers Market).
- Local musicians being supported (i.e. they are exposed as performers) - *I really like that there are Lyttelton entertainers that entertain there, you know... it both gives them a venue and also just adds something to my market experience.*
- The Farmers Market has brought more people to Lyttelton, and that has been beneficial for local businesses - *I really value that it does bring a lot of people into Lyttelton... a lot more became aware of Lyttelton as a place to go, and I think that has been really good for the business.*
- The Farmers Market is successfully managed all the way through from its set up to its end - *The whole management of it is actually is exceptionally good, you know. It is up and running at 10:00am, and there is nobody still trying to set up.*
- The Farmers Market is in a location which is convenient for regular customers who live in Lyttelton - *Well it is just down a couple of flights of steps really and if I buy too much, it sometimes is a little bit of a struggle getting back again, but it is worth it. It is worth it and it is not far.*
- Using the school site for the Farmers Market is seen as a positive use of space for the community. Options suggested for an alternative site during the construction of the school were the supermarket car park, or London Street if it was shut down for several hours.

6.3.2 Suggested improvements/future developments

Improvements suggested by regular customers are as follows.

- A bigger variety of organic produce (as at the Riccarton Market), organic cleaning products (e.g. vinegar), or other shopping items that you would pick up at a supermarket (e.g. organic olive oil) could be made available at the Farmers Market, even if it were on a less frequent basis (i.e., a monthly basis).
- Turning the Farmers Market into a zero waste market - *Some of the stallholders have, for their convenience, this packaging arrangement...but it doesn't contribute to the bigger picture of sustainability, that many of us want to be contributing to...I think that is relevant for further discussion...taking that one further forward.*

- Biodegradable bags being the only bags used at the Farmers Market.
- Exploring an alternative site for the Farmers Market during winter. The lower site is appreciated in summer, due to more access to shade, whereas the upper site can be unpleasant in winter depending on what stall you are at - *I liked it on the lower site particularly in summer when there was more shade and trees around. In the winter...it can get a little bit vicious up on the upper site.*
- Identifying a place for customers to retreat to if there is a big downfall (e.g. the school hall) - *If we could just retreat to somewhere, when that big downfall really does come... that would be a potential improvement.*
- The lower site at the Farmers Market is smaller than the upper site, and although the dog parking at the gate is generally supported, the fact that everyone must walk past them to enter the lower site, could cause issues for some customers who are scared of dogs - *Everyone has to walk past the dogs. Whereas previously you could walk past them and there was another gate... perhaps it could be an issue for young children.*
- Options for bike stands, which would contribute to sustainable practice - *Some bike parking would be another thought, because I am not the only one coming [from a] distance.*
- Better access to toilets at the Farmers Market.

6.3.3 Knowledge and understanding of accreditation signage

Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage was not well understood by regular customers. They knew basic information about its purpose (e.g. it was indicating whether vendors were selling locally grown, or organic produce) but they did not know specific information about the criteria Project Lyttelton works off in giving vendors certain levels of accreditation.

Generally, because regular customers have established good relationships with vendors, they know where the produce comes from and if it is organic. If they do not know this information, they ask the vendors themselves - *That is a part of the relationship that we have with the stallholder...with the established stallholders we already know who comes from where and all that sort of business.*

6.4 Focus Group with Mystery Shoppers

Eight people who had never been to the Farmers Market before were selected based on pre-specified age categories¹³, and provided with \$50 to shop at the Farmers Market for a minimum of one hour (10:30am -11:30am; the busiest market time). The mystery shopping process occurred on two different days (i.e. two people from each age group were selected, and one person from each age category would shop on a different Saturday).

¹³ The age groups involved include ages 20 – 34, 35 – 50, 50 – 64, and 65+.

Two focus group sessions, with the same groups of people, were held after the mystery shopping events to identify what aspects of the Farmers Market customers like and what aspects of the Farmers Market that customers think could be improved, and to assess their knowledge and understanding of Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage for vendors. Findings from the focus groups are included as follows.

6.4.1 Aspects of the Farmers Market Mystery Shoppers like

Aspects of the Farmers Market that the mystery shoppers liked the most are as follows.

- The opportunity to chat and ask questions of the growers/producers and to sample the produce - *I really enjoyed being able to talk to the stallholders and it is nice, because it is their product. They can give you really good background information on the product.*
- How knowledgeable the vendors are about their products and learning more about the products they could buy, without experiencing any pressure to buy - *I found I could pretty much ask them any question that popped into my head and they were actually able to sit there and chat about it and then with no pressure of okay so now I have given you this information now you have got to buy something, which was nice.*
- Having coffee and a variety of produce available, and background music playing, provided a positive atmosphere - *It was quite nice walking in there and getting low-key background pleasant sound or music. It was atmospheric. But also, nice at the same time the smells were nice, you know the bread type smells, the flowery type smells, so you get those sort of sensations of sounds and smells.*
- The live music, which contributed to the friendly, relaxed atmosphere - *Well, I have to say the music, I loved it. Because I think that it led to that, to that fantastic atmosphere.*
- The range of products means that customers can get a lot of their weekly shopping done at the Farmers Market, and the convenience and the environmental benefits of this is appreciated - *The way I shop now, I would like to buy everything from the one experience, plus have a nice coffee and chat. I am spending a limited budget, but what I am buying is quality. And I want to buy it from as near as, like from the grower you know. All the people who have produced it or made it.*
- The quality and cost of produce and how fresh the produce looked - *I found the produce pretty amazing... the stuff there was just beautiful and fresh and really reasonably priced.*
- Finding produce at the Farmers Market that they could not find elsewhere - *I managed to find chorizo sausage, which was pretty amazing. It is pretty impossible to find over here... that definitely stood out.*

6.4.2 Suggested improvements/future developments

Improvements suggested by mystery shoppers are as follows.

Space and set up

- Increase the space in the Farmers Market - The small and intimate nature of the Farmers Market can feel a bit restrictive - *It is a little bit compact or compressed with people and stalls. You have to be careful moving around.*
- Have less vehicles in the market space - *If they [Farmers Market vendors] didn't necessarily have to have their vehicles there, then it would be good to do without them, for more space.*
- Increase the amount of seating so people have a place to sit and enjoy the music while resting, eating, or drinking - *A lack of seating means that some people are unable to relax and fully participate in the positive atmosphere of the market - You have got soup in one hand and the food in the other.... Juggling.*
- The lack of seating means people can end up feeling cramped and awkward and unable to relax and fully enjoy the music and their refreshments - *There was nowhere you could actually sit and be with it (the music) unless you went all the way back to the playground...There wasn't enough space... for people to be in the atmosphere with the music as well and just sort of chat to each other.*
- If there was more seating available for sitting and listening to the music, this would add to the *festive and community* atmosphere at the Farmers Market.
- Although the dog parking area is a positive initiative, it is obviously something that needs close management so as not to spread into other areas - *You have got a special dog section. But there was a cluster of dogs at the gate, which wasn't in the dog section. I don't know how you ask people to put their dogs in the dog section, without offending anyone.*

Signage and advertising

- Most participants did not notice any of the signage around Lyttelton and at the exit of the tunnel advertising the Farmers Market - *It is not really obvious, so it is kind of like that you are going blindly, or you are going by memory of where it possibly could be.*
- There was confusion by some participants regarding whether the craft market up the street was the Farmers' Market, or part of the Farmers Market.
- The signs not capturing people's attention contributed to confusion about it's location and whether it was where the craft market is - *I was confused and embarrassed for even taking the time to go up [to the craft market] and have a look [to see if the Farmers Market was there].*

Vendors and their produce

- The stalls that seemed less prepared, or too busy to engage fully with their customers detract from the otherwise positive atmosphere - *The coffee place I felt was just very busy and they needed perhaps an extra pair of hands and ... they were obviously rushed there.*
- Those stalls that only provided products in one price range, or didn't have opportunities to sample were disappointing - *You are gonna want to buy something more if you taste it.... I would've have liked to have tasted it before I bought it.*

Waste

- People need a place to leave their waste, and the solution of where this waste goes needs clear signage - *In fact I actually went back and I looked around for somewhere, like a rubbish bin. I couldn't see anywhere but there was a tiny space on the corner and I just put it down there.*
- There is a need for more information on what to do with waste from refreshments (e.g. where to put their empty takeaway coffee cup) - *When I finished my coffee I was looking for somewhere to put the cast off. I had to find somewhere to put the cast off.*
- People feel a lack of guidelines on what to do with their rubbish resulting in feelings of confusion and disorientation for some - *I was looking for a rubbish bin, to put my plastic cup in ... I did a wee circuit and I went back to where I bought it in the finish and said have you got a rubbish bin, and she took it off me...maybe I just didn't see it.*
- A simple notice board with key information as a solution to limit customers' confusion around things such as where to put waste, where toilets can be accessed would help the smooth running of the Farmers Market - *Just do something like a little map of the area... just have little sticky velcro bits on like laminated paper.*

Toilets

- Access to toilets in the school hall should be clearly sign posted.
- Concern over the lack of information about the availability of toilets - *A notice board. It would be kinda nice, to sort of know where the loo is.*

6.4.3 Knowledge and understanding of accreditation signage

Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage for vendors was generally unnoticed by participants, and they had only a slight interest in what it is about. There is a mixed level of interest in the concept as a whole.

The accreditation logo seemed unnecessarily complicated to some participants, who felt there needed to be better information explaining it. Some participants felt they had no need to be provided with further information about the products (i.e. their organic authenticity), because they gained enough trust about products it simply being at the market and from talking to the vendors - *No, it wouldn't particularly concern me whether they had it or not. The fact that they are here, and this market has such a good name, is enough accreditation for me.*

7 Discussion and recommendations

7.1 Key findings

Key findings from this evaluation relate to vendors, local businesses and customers perceptions of aspects of the Farmers Market that work well and benefits resulting from the Farmers Market, any areas for improvement, and the level of knowledge and understanding of Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage for vendors¹⁴.

Key benefits for customers, vendors, and businesses

- Regular and first time customers like the access they have to a wide range of quality, local, fresh, seasonal produce in one venue. Customers also value the opportunity to try products before they buy, and the environmental (sustainability) benefits of the Farmers Market model.
- The relationship that develops between customers and vendors is seen as a key benefit. Customers value the opportunity to interact with and buy directly from the producer, and vendors can generate return custom through their positive interaction with the buyers.
- Vendors and customers like the atmosphere of the Farmers Market, and see it as a community meeting place. The opportunity to listen to music, have a coffee and meet friends is greatly valued.
- For vendors and businesses, the market provides economic benefits on a weekly basis (i.e. cash flow for Farmers Market vendors, employment to locals as musicians, and exposure to local businesses.)
- Vendors value the fact that the market exposes their product to a wide audience and creates the opportunity for further business.
- The market is seen as a valuable way to bring people into Lyttelton and support local businesses.

Suggested improvements

- Respondents identified a need for clearer guidelines and regulations for market vendors, musicians, and Project Lyttelton employees and volunteers. Clearer food safety regulations that are enforced, and rules around competition and authenticity were identified as particular issues by vendors.
- There is a need for improved communication between Farmers Market management and vendors around Farmers Market rules and regulations, and general communication about the market to people from Lyttelton and Christchurch.
- A change in site was suggested by some respondents, because the current site is congested - space at Lyttelton Main School is restricted due to a safety wall around two earthquake damaged classrooms, some vendors' vehicles in the space, and parking is limited.

¹⁴ Represents if the stall has food grown by the vendor, meets Project Lyttelton's environmental standards, is locally crafted and/or is within its 100km boundary.

- The market could benefit from better promotion post-earthquakes. In particular, the location of the market needs to be well signposted from the tunnel.
- Waste disposal is a major issue for vendors and customers, and several customers were unable to locate rubbish disposal on the site. In addition, making the market zero waste, or plastic bag free were suggested as improvements.
- Seating near the music, so customers can linger at the market was suggested by respondents.
- Making sure someone is responsible for ensuring dogs are kept in the dog parking area, and providing better toilet access and market signage were also identified as areas for improvement.
- Centralised signage, that provides information about vendors and their produce, and where they are at the market, was suggested by vendors and customers.

Knowledge and awareness of Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage

- Vendors felt more promotion and education for customers on the accreditation issue was required (i.e. its purpose and how it works).
- Regular customers did not understand the need for accreditation signage, considering that they had already established good relationships with vendors and know where products come from.
- The accreditation signage was generally unnoticed by first-time shoppers. To some participants the logo seemed unnecessarily complicated and needed better information to explain it. Others did not see the need for accreditation as they could ask the vendor or trust the process of eligibility of products to be sold at Farmers Market.

7.2 Recommendations

Based on the evaluation findings, it is recommended that Project Lyttelton undertake the following activities to support the success of the Lyttelton Farmers Market.

- Develop a Lyttelton Farmers Market Advisory Group, which will lead the future direction of market. The group would include representatives of Project Lyttelton, Farmers Market vendors and customers, and local business.
- Identify a suitable future site to meet requirements for size, parking, shade, easy access and central location for the market, and develop timeframes and a plan for shifting to this site.
- Develop a set of Farmers Market guidelines in consultation with vendors, based on the findings of this evaluation, and follow these guidelines through consistently. This would include site visits to ensure all vendors comply with New Zealand Food Safety regulations, and verification of where produce is grown.
- Improve communication of information from Farmers Market management about the Farmers Market (e.g. Farmers Market rules and regulations) to vendors and the general public via newsletters, email, and general meetings.
- Provide a directional sign to Farmers Market when entering Lyttelton from the Lyttelton tunnel, and place a sign at the entrance to the Farmers Market.
- Promote, and provide education about, Project Lyttelton's accreditation signage for vendors to customers. An central information board about accreditation and where stallholders are located at the Farmers Market should be considered.
- Provide seats and tables near the musicians in central part of the market.
- Provide a clearly signed rubbish disposal system for customers and vendors, which includes recyclables, compost and landfill waste (e.g. Christchurch City Council bins could be used).
- Develop improved information about and access to public toilets,
- Assign someone from Project Lyttelton with responsibility for ensuring dogs are kept in the dog parking area.
- Conduct a further evaluation in 2013 to measure the extent to which the recommended changes have improved and generally impacted on the Farmers Market experience, and to identify the impact of the market on other local businesses in the area.

8 Conclusion

Lyttelton Farmers Market has provided an opportunity to connect customers (locals, those from greater Christchurch and visitors) with a wide range of quality, local, fresh, seasonal produce in one venue with customers valuing the opportunity to interact with and buy directly from the producer.

Vendors, in turn generate return custom through their positive interaction with the buyers thus providing economic benefits to the vendors of weekly cash flow and exposing their product to a wide audience and creates the opportunity for further business.

This relationship that develops between customers and vendors is seen as a key benefit.

The market is seen as a valuable way to bring people into Lyttelton and promote growth and is seen as a community meeting place. The opportunity to listen to music, have a coffee and meet friends is greatly valued. This also offers the opportunity of employment for local musicians and exposure to local business.

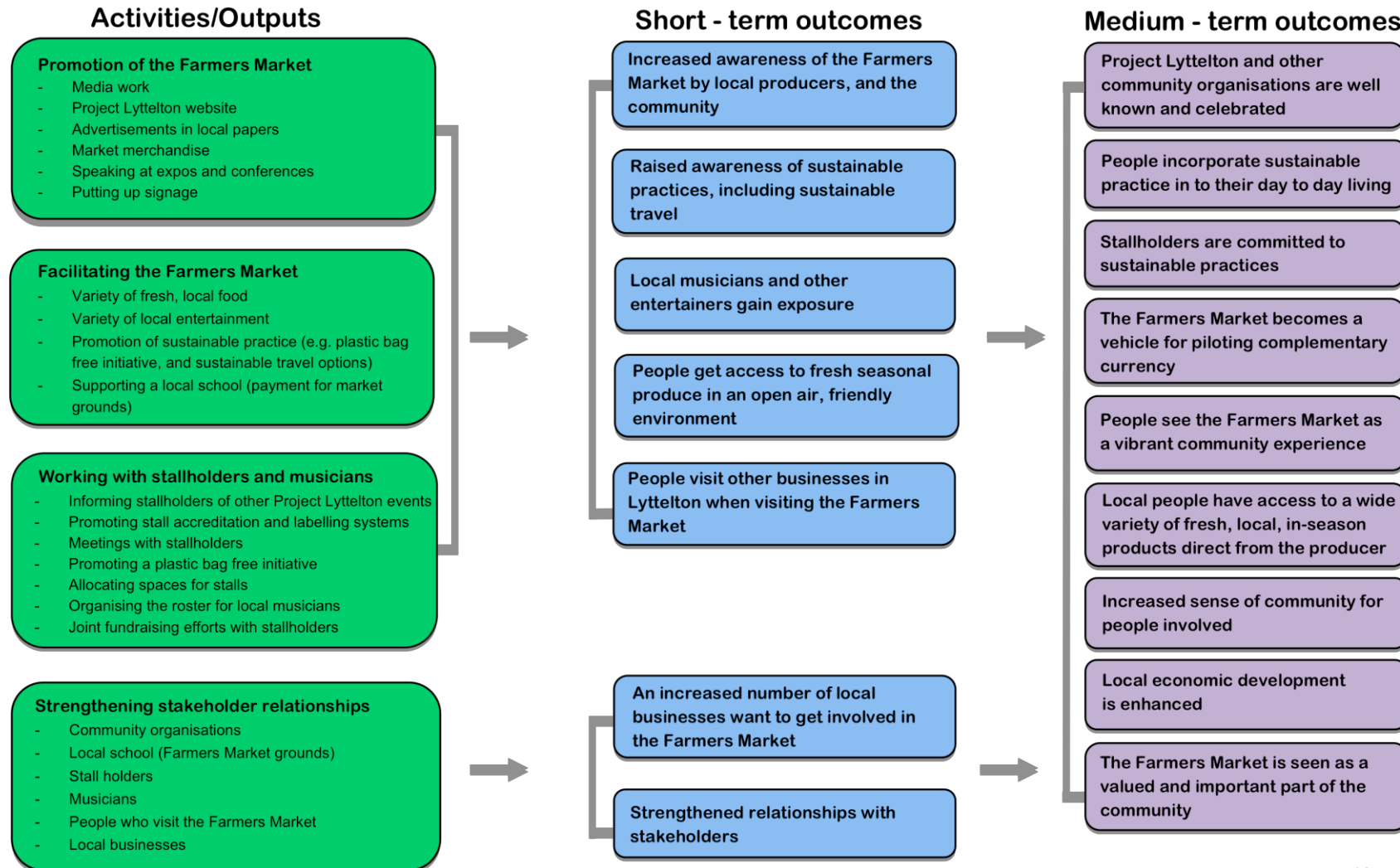
9 Appendices

Appendix A - Lyttelton Farmers Market Logic Model

A logic model diagram that was developed for the Farmers Market is presented on the next page. The logic model has was developed following information documented in a Logic Model Workshop held in March 2010, as part of Phase One of the *Project Lyttelton Community Research and Evaluation* project.

Logic Model - Lyttelton Farmers Market

Purpose: To secure and support local food production as a key to building a resilient community



Appendix B - Topic guide for vendors



Lyttelton Farmers Market Evaluation

Topic Guide – Focus Group with Farmers Market Vendors

Introduction

Project Lyttelton is currently evaluating six of its projects including the Lyttelton Farmers Market. As part of the Farmers Market evaluation, we are holding focus group sessions with a selection of vendors, businesses and regular customers to provide them with an opportunity to give us feedback about the Farmers Market. We appreciate that you have agreed to participate in the Focus Group session for vendors. Findings from the Focus Groups will be used by Project Lyttelton to inform the future development of the Farmers Market.

Focus Group

The Focus Group will include 4-6 market vendors and take **one hour and 15 minutes** to complete. During the Focus Group we would like you to enjoy some snacks and beverages with us as we explore the following topics:

- Perceived benefits of the Farmers Market for vendors.
- Aspects of the Farmers Market that could be improved for vendors.
- Development that could occur in the next one to two years to improve the Farmers Market.
- Project Lyttelton's accreditation for vendors.

The Focus Group session will be run by an independent facilitator. The proceedings will be tape recorded and transcribed so that we can provide you with key findings and an opportunity to provide more information, or to suggest changes to key findings.

Information Use

Project Lyttelton will report key information from Focus Group sessions in an Evaluation Report which will be completed by October 2011. To protect your anonymity, your name will not be used in the report. The report will be made available on the Project Lyttelton website. We hope that the findings will provide useful information that we can use to enhance the Farmers Market for customers and other stakeholders involved in the general running of the Farmers Market.

We look forward to your participation in the Focus Group session for vendors.

Kind Regards, Wendy Everingham, Project Lyttelton.

Appendix C - Topic guide for facilitators

Mystery Shoppers Focus Group topic guide (For facilitator only)

General Introduction. 11.45 -11.50 5 minutes

Thanks for coming. Hope you enjoyed the experience. Help yourself to tea and coffee and snacks. The session will run for a maximum of 60 minutes. We'd like to ask each of you individually to answer a series of questions about the experience you have had. We'll ask you one at a time so we can all hear one another's responses.

11.50am -12.05pm

Person 1 What did you do? (*Prompts – coffee, talked, sat, looked?*)

Person 2

Person 3

Person 4

12.05 - 12.20pm

Person 1 What did you enjoy the most/ what stood out?

Person 2

Person 3

Person 4

12.20-12.35pm

Person 1 What could be improved? (*Prompts - Facilities, entertainment, customer service, information in general. If time, any ideas about Market development?*)

Person 2

Person 3

Person 4

12.35-12.40pm

Show Project Lyttelton's accreditation logo for vendors

Person 1 Did you see this sign? What did it mean to you?

Person 2

Person 3

Person 4

12.40.12.45 Wrap up