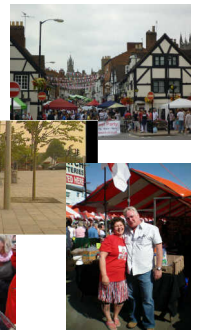




Autumn/Winter 2011/2012



click image to find out more...

## Birmingham's First Chilli Festival attracts 15,000+ people

Brindleyplace was recently turned into a hotbed of activity - with Sketts help - at the first ever Birmingham Chilli Festival. With a background of steel bands, fiery music and dancing, the festival featured a chilli eating competition that captured the interest of visitors and the press alike.

Children's entertainment, live cookery demonstrations with a chilli theme from chefs around Brindleyplace including Bank Restaurant, Thai Edge and Edmunds and a "Ready, Steady, Shake!" cocktail demonstration from the popular bar, Nuvo, added to the attractions.



A wide range of stalls (including the grower who claims to supply the hottest chilli in the country) offered chilli-related produce such as jam, chutneys, breads, oils and chocolate.

**It was a conversation some time ago between Paul from producer/traders Holly and the Ivy and Russell Dean of Sketts that convinced them both that this particular market theme would be 'a sizzler', and judging by its success, they were right. Traders who have an idea for markets and market trading**



**should talk to Sketts: like the Chilli Festival, it could be start of something hot!** For more information about the Birmingham Chilli Festival visit the [Brindleyplace](http://Brindleyplace) website or email [Russell Dean](mailto:Russell Dean).



Russell and Jake (Sketts) and Ailsa (Brindleyplace)

**Twelve brave contestants** - eleven men and just one woman (Eroney Pinnock from Edgbaston) - pushed their taste buds to the limit by attempting to eat 12 raw chillies of increasing strength including a scotch bonnet and infinity chilli, hotter than the type reputedly used in anti-terrorist hand grenades by the Indian military.

Contestants sailed through the first three rounds cheered on by hundreds of onlookers. Contestant Max Naughton who works at RBS in Brindleyplace, commented "That's still pretty mild!". But by round four, the Bulgarian carrot, eyes were watering and one by one contestants dropped out as Scotch bonnet, chocolate bhut, Naga chilli and yellow seven pot chilli took their toll. The last chilli was the infinity - until three months ago recorded as the world's hottest. Max Naughton survived (looking and feeling 'green'\*) beating Eroney at the final 'trial by fire' and winning afternoon tea at the Hyatt, a spa voucher and dinner at Thai Edge. (\*Members of the Red Cross were on standby along with buckets and tissues!)

**Traders - have you booked your stall for these Autumn/Winter Events? If not, email [info@sketts.co.uk](mailto:info@sketts.co.uk) or telephone: 01789 267000.**

Sundays, 20th November to 18th December: **\*Royal Leamington Spa: Autumn Fair and Yuletide celebrations in the heart of town**

Thursdays, 24th November to 22nd December: **\*Stratford-upon-Avon : lights, music, action**

Friday/Saturday, 25th/26th November & Friday/Saturday, 16th/17th December: **\*Solihull High Street: Christmas shoppers in best town location**

Sunday, 27th November: **\*Banbury - lighting up the town**

Friday, 2nd December: **\*Kidlington Craft Market and street entertainment: follow up to successful 2010 launch**

Saturday, 3rd December: **\*Bicester: craft market and festivities**

Friday, 9th December: **\*Bristol: launch of Temple Quay prime business and leisure development**

Saturday, 10th December/Friday 23rd December: **\*Sutton Coldfield: Christmas crafts in pedestrianised Parade**



## Apps and downs

(not to be confused with the title of our new [video!](#))



The QR (quick response) barcode is a neat little tool designed, it says, to "engage with the consumer - especially for brands with a mobile savvy demographic...". In other words, for typical users of the current generation of smartphones (for whom **Apps** doesn't necessarily mean a date with the doctor), they're a

great way of quickly connecting and **downloading** information about the markets and our traders.

With Sketts' young employees, Leigh, Jake, Aby and Amy, influencing the way the business attracts new customers, there's now a 10% discount scheme for students, encouraging them to take advantage of the great value offered by our market traders. We've been keeping in touch, too, by attending Freshers' Fairs at local colleges. Encouraging the younger generation into our markets ensures a successful future and benefits us all.

### Prize Draw : efforts to find winner 'hampered'



When Warwick Town Crier announced the draw for the **prize hamper voucher** at Warwick Farmers Market, we had no idea we'd have trouble finding winning ticket holder M. Dominique Maury. Following a few

dead-end trails seeking our elusive winner, happily, with the help of Fran at Drinkwaters, he was finally tracked down and received his £60 voucher in June. Drinkwaters knew M. Maury by sight - particularly as he'd told them he very favourably compared our Farmers Markets to those in France!



### Farmers Markets Monthly Calendar

Birmingham New St:	1st & 3rd Wednesday
Coventry:	2nd Thursday
Harborne:	2nd Saturday
Leamington Spa:	4th Saturday
Oxford:	1st & 3rd Thursday
Solihull:	1st Friday
Stratford:	1st & 3rd Saturday
Sutton Coldfield:	2nd Friday
Warwick:	5th Saturday

[www.skettsfarmersmarkets.co.uk](http://www.skettsfarmersmarkets.co.uk)

- a website as fresh as the produce -

## Short Stories

Very good wishes to stallholder Lizzie Newey (Curley) on her recent marriage

Farmer and retailer Mike Wilkes selected a drawing of colourful veggies by 3 year old Olivia Ballentine, pupil of a local nursery school, to win the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Challenge - a mini classroom project organised by Sketts.

Joy Clarke, volunteer charity worker for Acorns Childrens' Hospice and Midlands Air Ambulance, collected over £340 at the Plum Market in Pershore. Joy wrote to thank Sketts for the free stall provided.

Richard Wincott of Woodhouse Farm, stallholder for more than ten years, sadly passed away earlier this year. Richard was an original trader at the first Stratford Farmers Market. Son Andrew and daughter Caroline will continue the market tradition with the celebrated Woodhouse range of pork products.

A helping hand: a gentleman slipped and fell near Leamington market. Sketts team member Dan reassured him and accompanied him to his home.

Over £500 collected for Help for Heroes at Banbury Retail Market "...thanks Aby, we had a fantastic day.." (from H4H fundraiser Lorraine).

Congratulations to Michael Oakley on bringing his own individual style to Stratford's Friday Market for 50 years.

A Kettlebell Swing Challenge organised by James Rogers was given a pitch free of charge at Stratford's Food Market on Waterside. James wrote "...delighted with the 'fantastic' position... raising over £1100 for charity including a hefty donation to Royal Marine C Group supporting rehabilitation of injured Marines."

Reminder: At the end of a busy trading day, make sure you pick up the takings! One of our stallholders forgot to do just that recently, but the Sketts team made sure the cash was safely returned to them!

We'd love to hear your news! Share your market stories, tributes, achievements, anniversaries and special celebrations for publication in our next newsletter!

..and catch up with the latest. from

Sketts Farmers Markets



Sketts Retail Markets



## Sketts Stall Hire: leading the way to a successful event.

When National Trust property Clumber Park, in the northernmost part of Sherwood Forest, need to hire market stalls for their events, it's good that they can rely on Sketts to provide a super-efficient service. Feedback from Clumber Park staff says ..."Aby was great (dealing with enquiry)" ... "staff doing setting-up were top notch"... "everything cleared by 8.00 a.m. following morning".



Check our 1m.49s. **video** (below) to see just what a great job the Sketts team can do in setting up and clearing down stalls for your next high-profile event.

## Photographic Competition

Sketts **love** a competition (see Prize Draw [page 2] and St George's Day [page 4]) the newest is one for photographers, amateur or professional. With a closing date of 31st December, and four categories of photographs to choose from, there's plenty of time and opportunity to enter.

The winner will get at least £250 of photographic equipment, and the other eleven runners-up will see their artwork published in a Sketts Calendar.

Get down to Stratford's Rother Street - either the Antique Market or the Retail Market and click away to capture an image of people or products, or an amusing or original take on the market scene.

Rules and full details will be published on the [website](#) with reminders (and encouragement) on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



Here's a link to **Sketts new video "Ups and Downs"** showing the erection and dismantling of stalls on Waterside in Stratford-upon-Avon - and of course, the bit in the middle with plenty of customers enjoying the market.

The RSC kindly allowed us to get some great shots of the market from the new Royal Shakespeare Theatre tower. **It's worth watching the action right through to the cheery end!**



## Happy 1st Birthday to Stratford's Antiques Market [now twice-monthly!]

The Rother Street Antiques Market has been bringing in serious collectors as well as casual buyers for over a year. Beginning life as a monthly market, since September its popularity has meant healthy twice-monthly trading for stallholders.



Amongst the regular buyers are people like Alan Fowler from Coventry: as a dedicated Cigarette Card collector he thinks Stratford is a great market and quite often a

treasure-trove for something really interesting and unusual.



The antique traders set up their stalls on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month.

**BBC's Christmas Songs of Praise** is coming to Stratford-upon-Avon market and their production team has asked us to help find a market trader who would be confident enough to take on one of the Bible Readings and be filmed. (They say that perhaps someone with a background in amateur dramatics could be suitable). The BBC will be sending more information to us soon.

## Stand-alone websites for Retail Markets in Kenilworth, Banbury, Southam, Stratford and Warwick

Easily located on the internet, the websites are designed to give a straightforward overview of each market, opening times and location and a few details about its background and range of traders. Providing clear useful information for traders, the websites will help visitors to ensure their plans include a visit to the neighbourhood market.



## Sketts Retail Markets

**Banbury**, Market Place  
**Southam**, Wood Street  
**Kenilworth**, Abbey End  
**Stratford**, Rother Street  
**Warwick**, Market Place  
Gt Bridge, Indoor Market

Thursday & Saturday  
Tuesday  
Thursday  
Friday  
Saturday (2nd & 4th)  
Saturday  
Wednesday, Friday,  
Saturday & Sunday

**Attracting more than 13,000 visitors over a weekend in late September** with over 140 exhibitors



and celebrity chefs on the riverside site, Sketts street markets - Normandy, Italian and the Farmers Market - drew the crowds out into the streets of the town centre. Darren McCrorie, of Italian restaurant Carluccio's, reported that people 'couldn't get enough of our mushrooms and risotto'; Thornton's ice

## Stratford Food Festival

cream, too, did a very good trade in the sunshine.

Careful year-round planning as

part of the organising team that includes Stratford BID and Showplace, pays dividends. The town's retailers and attractions and of course Sketts stallholders are all winners. This Stratford-upon-Avon event looks set to grow and become an important highlight in the foodies' calendar.



### FARMA: "...Congratulation to Sketts Farmers' Markets on achieving Certification...."

Farmers' markets run by Sketts have been independently certified as applying the National Farmers' Retail and Markets Association (FARMA) recommended criteria. Sketts can now proudly display the distinctive logo for FARMA, whose patrons include *Clarissa Dickson-Wright*, *Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall* and *Delia Smith*. FARMA Standards Adviser, Sue Thomson, says "Certification only goes to farmers' markets that work within the criteria that underpin core principles. Our national and local publicity encourages customers to look for the logo as a sign of a well-managed market. It is an assurance of quality, value and a fair deal for all."

### Warwick Folk Festival

The Festival - a three day celebration held in July and based in the grounds of Warwick School - also takes to the streets bringing entertainment right into Warwick town. A colourful and popular event, attracting some of the best folk musicians, Sketts market traders play an important role on the Saturday of the festival by providing the attractions of the Craft, Retail and Farmers Markets.



### An even better year for plums

2010 - 17,000 visitors

2011 - 19,000 visitors

2012 - ???



Pershore, a small town in Worcestershire, was the target for mass invasion in late Summer, with record numbers of visitors checking out the plum-themed events at the internationally famous Annual Plum Festival.

Naturally, the event once again attracted serious shoppers to our well-stocked market stalls.



### St Georges Day celebrations

The English patron saint may have challenged a dragon to a duel but, on his special day, Sketts threw down the gauntlet to our less scary, in fact very enthusiastic, stallholders: "...the best themed stall wins free site rental for a day!"

The winner was William Amos who runs a very popular refreshments business at the market.

A picture of the very crowded Warwick Market Square gives an idea of just how popular the event was.

**The team from E. G. Skett & Company is on hand to answer your questions. Sketts are the UK's leading market operators and consultants, stall and equipment hirers, contractors to local authorities and specialists in themed events. Check the website or email us with your contact details and we'll get right back to you.**