

## Memories of Wednesfield by Ray Fellows (published in the Wednesfield Magazine, 2023)

### The Market

**“Wednesfield Market off to a flyer”** those were the headlines in our local paper in the early 1960s.

After some delay - unavoidable, but none the less frustrating - Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> December 1960 saw the long-awaited opening of the market. The orderly rows of little stalls with their gaily striped awnings lent an air of bright cheerfulness to the atmosphere of Christmas. The market site was across the road from the Regal Cinema (now The Heron supermarket) in Alfred Squire Road.

Some traders at the time were:- F. Bonser & Son, hardware glass and china; Hilda Peach, curtains and dress materials; Birch’s footwear; O. J. Edwards, high class butcher; O. Downes, fruit and veg; Holyhead soap powders and detergents; W. H. Jervis, poultry, eggs and farm produce. If you were looking for top class meat with good service and reasonable prices Brian was the man.



Other traders from the time were:- Pauline’s, toys and fancy goods; Fred’s for groceries and toilet requisites; F. Wesson, children’s wear; Irene Marsh, sweets, chocolates, fancy goods and handbags; Doug Holden, groceries and pet foods; Braziers home grown produce, eggs and poultry; and finally A. H. Painter nurseryman and florist.

In the 1970s the market moved to a new site on land by the Council Offices (now Clinic services).

In the 1990s the market moved yet again. This time into the High Street and people were of the opinion that this would increase the number of traders and more shoppers would use the market. Initially it did work, but the market today is sadly in decline. In January of this year, 2023, on one of the Saturdays only 3 stalls were occupied, the same happened in February.

Penkridge market does well, plenty of trader’s lots of shoppers and it is the same with Bridgnorth market. Bilston market celebrates being open for 50 years on March 12th of this year.

One of the markets main traders is John Allen, his key cutters stall is there in all weathers so he is dependable and you get a good friendly service from someone who has been on the market for years.