House of Commons

Committee on the City of London (Markets) Bill

# Special Report on the City of London (Markets) Bill

First Special Report of Session 2026–27

HC 539

# City of London (Markets) Bill

Under Standing Order 111(1), all opposed private bills are referred to a committee consisting of four Members without a personal or local interest in the bill. The Committee hears from the promoter of the bill and any petitioners against the bill, before reporting the bill, and any amendments, to the House.

## Current membership

Matt Turmaine (Labour; Watford) (Chair)

Edward Argar (Conservative; Melton and Syston)

Mr Alex Barros-Curtis (Labour; Cardiff West)

Jenny Riddell-Carpenter (Labour; Suffolk Coastal)

## Publication

This Report, together with formal minutes relating to the Report, was Ordered by the House of Commons, on 15 July 2026, to be printed. It was published on 16 July 2026 by authority of the House of Commons.


Committee Reports are published online at https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/760/City-of-London-Markets-Bill/ and in print by Order of the House.

## Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of Private Bills, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 3250; the Committee’s email address is PrBOHOC@parliament.uk.

# Contents

# Consideration of the City of London (Markets) Bill

**1.** The City of London (Markets) Bill ('the Bill') is promoted by the City of London Corporation ('the promoter') and seeks to repeal legislation relating to Billingsgate and Smithfield Markets (the latter formally known as the London Central Markets), as well as to provide for the cessation of market activities at those sites.[1] Although it is the intention of the promoter to relocate the existing markets at a new site, the Bill does not provide for this itself.

**2.** The Bill was deposited in Parliament in November 2024 and introduced into the House of Commons in January 2025. The Bill received its Second Reading in January 2025. Three petitions were submitted against the Bill, of which two were subsequently withdrawn.[2] Following consideration by the Court of Referees of a challenge to the right to be heard of certain signatories to the remaining petition,[3] Makhdoom Foods, PM Prime Fish and L&A Fishmonger—fishmongers based on Ridley Road who source their fish from Billingsgate Market—were found to have a right to be heard on the petition.[4] The Bill was therefore referred to an opposed bill committee.

**3.** The role of our committee was to consider:

**a.** whether the need for the bill ('the preamble') had been proven;

**b.** whether the measures included in the bill were appropriate and proportionate for the purposes of achieving the promoter's aims; and

**c.** whether any amendments should to be made to the bill,[5] or whether any further action was required to address any concerns raised or issues identified in relation to the bill.

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1 City of London (Markets) Bill, as introduced

2 Petitions submitted against the Bill can be found on the Bill's page on the Parliament website

3 Petition MAR-MAR-002 - Bags of Taste et al

4 Court of Referees, 3 March 2025

5 The promoter proposed three amendments to the Bill, which would have the effect of replacing "cessation of the operation of a market at an existing site" in Clause 3 with "termination of a lease in respect of relevant premises" (with an equivalent change to the description of Clause 3 in the Explanatory Memorandum) and exempting section

4. We met to consider the Bill on 23 June 2026, hearing from both the promoter of the Bill and from Mr Choudhry Zahaab Amjad on behalf of the petitioners.[6]

5. We concluded that we were content that the preamble of the Bill had been proven and that the measures included in the Bill were appropriate and proportionate, and that we were content to make the amendments to the Bill proposed by the promoter.

6. Following the representations of Mr Amjad, and to address the petitioners' principal concern of there being a gap between the cessation of trading at the current market site and the commencement of trading at a new site, we considered that the promoter should undertake, in the event of such a delay to the opening of the proposed new market, to work with the petitioners to attempt to support them and mitigate any impacts the delay might have on them. Counsel for the promoter suggested that the promoter would be amenable to the giving of such an undertaking, and a final form of the undertaking was subsequently agreed between the promoter, the petitioners and Speaker's Counsel.[7]

7. **CONCLUSION**
**We are content with the undertaking offered to the Committee by the promoter of the Bill. We therefore bring the final form of the undertaking—which can be found in the Annex to this report—to the attention of the House, and report the Bill as amended.**

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11 from the proposed repeal of the Metropolitan Meat and Poultry Market Act 1860, as listed in the Schedule to the Bill; see the filled-up bill, showing the promoter's proposed amendments in tracked changes.

6 Transcripts of proceedings before the committee and evidence submitted by the promoter and by the petitioners can be viewed under 'Transcript of evidence' and 'Written evidence' on the Bill's page on the Parliament website.

7 Letter to the Committee from Paul Double on behalf of the City of London Corporation can be viewed under 'Additional Committee documents' on the Bill's page on the Parliament website

# Annex: Promoter's undertaking to the Committee

Below is the text of the undertaking given to the Committee by the City of London Corporation as the promoter of the Bill following the Committee's consideration of the Bill on 23 June 2026. The form of the undertaking was agreed following discussions between the promoter, the petitioners, the Clerks to the Committee and the Office of Speaker's Counsel, and was accepted by the Committee at its meeting on 15 July 2026.

**Undertaking**

The City of London Corporation undertakes as follows:

> If there is a significant risk of a delay to the opening of a new Billingsgate market site, with the effect being that there will be a delay between the cessation of market trading at the current site and the commencement of trading at a new site, it will promptly engage in discussions with the proprietors of Makhdoom Foods Ltd, L&A Fishmonger and PM Prime Fish Ltd to explore any steps that can be agreed, including but not limited to any support that can be offered, to mitigate any negative impact on them.

# Formal Minutes

## Tuesday 23 June 2026

## Members present

Matt Turmaine, in the Chair

Edward Argar

Alex Barros-Curtis

Jenny Riddell-Carpenter

## 1. City of London (Markets) Bill

The Committee considered this matter.

## 2. City of London (Markets) Bill: Oral Evidence

Alex Barros-Curtis declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to the Committee's consideration of the Bill as a joint owner of a flat in Dalston.

Richard Turney KC, Counsel, and Kimberley Ziya, Counsel, Landmark Chambers, Paul Double, Counsel, City of London Corporation, and Paul Wright, City Remembrancer and Parliamentary Agent for the Bill, appeared on behalf of the promoter of the Bill.

Chris Bonner, Director of Regeneration and Development, City Surveyor's Department, City of London Corporation, Sharon Ament, Director, London Museum, Theresa Grant, Consultant, City of London Corporation, and Gregory Lawrence, Trader at Smithfield Market and Chair of the Smithfield Market Traders' Association, gave oral evidence.

Mike Eglin, Trader at Billingsgate Market and Vice-Chair of the London Fish Merchants' Association, gave oral evidence.

Choudhry Zahaab Amjad appeared on behalf of the petitioners PM Prime Fish, L&A Fishmonger and Makhdoom Foods Limited.

## 3. Consideration of the City of London (Markets) Bill

The Committee considered this matter.

*Resolved*, That the Committee has examined the allegations contained in the preamble to the Bill and found the same to be true.

*Resolved*, That the Committee is content to make the amendments to the Bill proposed by the promoter.

*Resolved*, That the Committee is content for the Bill to proceed, subject to the promoter working with Speaker's Counsel, in consultation with the petitioners, on options for support for the Ridley Road fishmongers or mitigations in the event of a delay to, or the risk of a delay to, the opening of or relocation of the proposed new market.

## Adjournment

The Committee adjourned till Wednesday 15 July at 2.00 p.m.

## Wednesday 15 July 2026

## Members present

Matt Turmaine, in the Chair

Edward Argar

Alex Barros-Curtis

Jenny Riddell-Carpenter

## 1. City of London (Markets) Bill

Draft Special Report (Special Report on the City of London (Markets) Bill), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

*Ordered*, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 7 read and agreed to.

Annex agreed to.

*Resolved*, That the Report be the First Special Report of the Committee to the House.

*Ordered*, That the Chair make the Report to the House.