

Kempton Park Racecourse Market

Midweek markets can often be a thorn in the side for many market operators, but not so at Kempton Park Racecourse Market, which claims to be the largest out of town midweek market in Southern England



Article: **Kirsty Flatt**

Operated for many years under the guidance of market management specialists Hughmark, on behalf of The Jockey Club, the market based at Staines Road, East Sunbury was certainly thriving during my visit on the Thursday before Easter.

Some might think its out of town location might be to its detriment, but that couldn't be further from the truth. It boasts its own mainline station, the front gates are on six major bus routes and is easily accessible from the M3 and M25

motorways. As a large proportion of its patrons travel by car, they are able to take advantage of three large free car parks, situated at either end of the market.

The trading area is vast and during the quieter winter months, when some traders take a break, the area is condensed so that there are no gaps. From April, this has been expanded to its full size and due to many casuals converting to being regular traders and extra footage taken it is still looking full.

The area is all hard standing and traders bring and erect their own pitches. In most of the locations, it is possible to house their van directly behind the stall, allowing for swifter loading

and unloading and allowing stock to be accessible and kept in a premium condition during inclement weather.

With one exception, Mark Curran, or 'The Hoover Man' as he trades as, all pitches are outside. Mark inherited the one inside pitch when the previous tenant left as his dust bags were getting damaged. He's been trading at Kempton for 14 years selling vacuum cleaners and accessories and has built up a regular trade.

On the day I visited, dark clouds were looming, but the rain held off and trader and visitor levels were high. In fact, I was astonished by the volume of people around and I was told that people travel