

Where was entrepreneurship in post-war Britain? Freedom, family and choice in modern British shopping cultures

Sarah Mass

If British historians were pressed to name the archetypal entrepreneur of the post-war age, many would settle on John Bloom. Bloom was a pioneer of home washing machines in Britain. He started by selling discount models door-to-door in 1958, before moving to newspaper direct sales of Dutch-made twin tub machines in 1958 and 1959. The heights of Bloom's notoriety came in the early 1960s, when he transformed the failing Rolls Razor safety razor company into a modern consumer durable firm. The Rolls Razor business had factories in Swansea and Aycliffe, in addition to a demonstration-manufacturing hub in Cricklewood, London. Connected to these sites were 400 self-employed salesmen and an advertising budget of £2 million, much of it going to the *Daily Mirror*.¹ For these innovations and the modes of their implementation, scholars of enterprise culture point to Bloom as a 'pure case' of entrepreneurship. He not only occupied a stereotypically 'outsider' position in a business that was controlled by manufacturing interests and their retailer allies, but he also sold his own persona right alongside his product.² His 1971 autobiography, *It's No Sin to Make a Profit*, pioneered the genre of British entrepreneurial memoir, a tale of singular triumph over an inefficient and archaic marketplace.³

Depending on their methodological orientation, scholars of neoliberalism attribute different causal weight to the John Blooms of late capitalism. For those working in the vein of governmentality, the enterprising or entrepreneurial self is the mode by which neoliberalism becomes generalised within a society, linking functionally different

schools of economic thought.⁴ In management, organisational and workplace studies, scholars argue that the entrepreneurial driving forces of ‘competition’ and ‘excellence’ create distinct subjectivities in neoliberal societies; Margaret Thatcher’s 1980s enterprise culture and the post-2008 precarious labour market are two of the most trenchant research areas.⁵ Across these subfields, ‘entrepreneurs’ are always ideal types embodying private, possessive, competitive and enterprising values.⁶ The social atomisation of the entrepreneur is both the means and the end to neoliberalism’s scalar potential: all it takes is one visionary to break free of accepted ‘group think’ and transform non-market areas of life into enterprise arenas.

In line with ongoing critiques of these models that tacitly accept the entrepreneur as a cult of personality, this chapter turns to the social relations that undergird individualist narratives, paying particular attention to the roles played by gender, family and place in the ascendancy of ‘enterprise culture’ in post-war economic life.⁷ If, in the words of one obituarist of John Bloom, the washing machine magnate ‘launched two revolutions, one in the kitchen . . . and the second in the high street’,⁸ what happens when we frame this enterprise revolution of individual freedom and economic competition as contingent and fermenting in various arenas of British society?

For example, Bloom capitalised on wider political and social forces that were destabilising the balance of power in late 1950s and early 1960s economic life. The first was the rising demand for consumer durables and the proliferating ways in which ordinary families could make this dream of the ‘good life’ a reality. The mass diffusion of household appliances in Britain became possible by the late 1950s and early 1960s, when the country reached the real income per head attained by the US 30 years earlier.⁹ Yet, for many consumers, the cost of modern durables still outpaced their real wages, so purchasing items such as washing machines was as often dependent on credit as it was on ready cash. In 1958, a survey found that nearly two-thirds of under-45-year-olds approved of buying on credit. Bloom’s business model was built almost entirely on this increasing cultural openness to credit and hire purchase, as well as the (often controversial) legislative changes that allowed consumers to put smaller deposits down on items such as washing machines, refrigerators and televisions.¹⁰

The rationale of ‘price competitiveness’ was also becoming a consumerist cry in the 1950s and 1960s. The Tories partially demolished Resale Price Maintenance (RPM) in 1956, before it was completely abolished in 1964. For the first half of the twentieth century, RPM had

ensured that branded goods would be sold at a minimum price that was advantageous not only to production interests, but also to small retailers.¹¹ The demise of RPM is remembered by retail and business historians as the final blow to small shopkeepers and the moment when commercial interests in British retail swung from manufacturing to large-scale retail-distributors such as Tesco and Woolworth's.¹² John Bloom railed against RPM, employing iconoclastic advertising schemes and trading stamps as a way to subvert price minimums.¹³ All these bombastic initiatives reflected his belief that entrenched business interests could not and would not give consumers 'value for money'. Like hire purchase and RPM, trading stamps were fiercely debated in the Commons in the late 1950s and early 1960s, with the figure of Bloom hanging over disagreements about the freedom of the market.

In public, Bloom promoted himself as a 'friend of the family' whose methods suited the everyday consumer when entrenched business interests would not. In reality, he benefited from early, elite entanglements between Conservative politics and neoliberal policy influencers. Rolls Razor's board of directors included Tory MP Richard 'Reader' Harris, and the company counted among its allies Ralph Harris, director of the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA). Both Harris the MP and Harris the think-tank director helped deflect criticism of Rolls Razor in the early to mid-1960s, turning consumer choice and enterprise initiative against political and professional interest groups.¹⁴ For these reasons, media historian Adrian Johns found it unsurprising that the IEA tract 'Piracy as a media force' (1967) held up Bloom as an archetypal pirate of the 1960s.¹⁵ By revealing the self-interest of retail and distribution monopolies, Bloom undercut the moral high ground of entrenched commercial interests.

Historians frame the decade after rationing (1954–64) as the key moment when British politicians shifted their rhetorical appeals to the affluent consumer's pocketbook, often to the detriment of party bases.¹⁶ Scholarship has focused on this tension in the left, where a practice such as RPM drove wedges between wings of the Labour Party and between Labour and their Co-op allies, split as these groups were over workers' rights, wholesale interests and consumer protection.¹⁷ Yet the right faced their own unique challenges around price maintenance. The debate forced the Tories to reckon with 'private enterprise' as either a value that wedded them to their small business voting bloc, or a political economic worldview that might portend a more multinational, corporate future.¹⁸ Whether or not Tories' openness to consumer credit and relaxing of price regulations can be explained by a coherent and enthusiastic uptake of

distinctly neoliberal ideas is a live question.¹⁹ Yet there was no doubt that when Rolls Razor went into liquidation in July 1964 – three months before Labour won the general election – critics of Tory policy used Bloom as a cudgel against the freewheeling economic culture he had cultivated within pockets of the Conservative Party.²⁰ Harold Wilson used Bloom's downfall as a metaphor for Tory political insolvency, while the *New Statesman* prophesied that:

The rise and fall of Mr John Bloom, may well be regarded, by future historians, as a suitable moral tale to append to 13 years of Tory rule. Here was an ambitious young man who grew up in the Opportunity State and absorbed its atmosphere of unrestrained commercialism almost in the schoolroom.²¹

In the process of decentring the entrepreneurial self from histories of enterprise in post-war Britain, this chapter also seeks to trouble the common historical narrative explored above, where the axis of influence around politicised consumerism ran between figures such as Bloom and party self-fashioning. Rather, I introduce the more everyday idea of post-war 'flexible retailing' – the belief that buying and selling should be freed from political, economic and even temporal and spatial constraints. The rise of 'choice' was not merely taken up by factions of the two major political parties, emerging think tanks or self-service and discount retailers; 'choice' in shopping was integral to the more gradually unfurling politics of place in post-war Britain.²²

I will focus, therefore, on the material conditions that produced low-cost and, more importantly, flexible retailing activity on the margins of consumer culture from the 1950s to the early 1970s, examining in particular how this activity was driven by women's shifting relationships to the spaces and temporalities of consumer culture. American labour historian Emily LaBarbera-Twarog has recently explored how the late modern housewife became both 'a political constituency group and an imagined ideal'.²³ LaBarbera-Twarog excavates a rich history of consumer activism that pre-dated the conservative women's movement in the US, but whose calls ultimately served as the handmaiden of this political culture on the right. This chapter will take up a similar line of research questioning: how did a British shopping landscape forged in the social democratic ethos of family provisioning ultimately become a terrain of critique for state intervention in the consumer market?

Setting the market 'free' from state intervention is a core feature of neoliberal political economic rhetoric (even if, in reality, the creation and

stimulation of competition within markets often required forceful action from the strong state). This chapter argues that flexible retailing's focus on the needs and desires of the 'forgotten consumer' and, moreover, the 'forgotten seller' is an understudied aspect of where and why entrepreneurialism has become a pillar of Britain's late modern social and cultural formation. Mike French and John Davis have explored the deep fermentation of anti-collectivism among groups such as commercial travellers and mini-cab drivers, men who made their own schedules and were defined by their spatial freedoms.²⁴ Exploring the antecedents of what we now recognise as the 'gig economy', these studies help explain how the rise of individual mobility and the coming of a post-industrial economy fed one another in the mid- to late twentieth century. Yet they both largely overlook how individualist disruptors often succeeded by romanticising the small-scale, even communal, commerce of the past. Scholarship on direct sales and club trading in the Americas and the rise of Walmart as a form of regional commercial populism helps us understand how retail entrepreneurs squared the freedom of the market with nostalgia for family and community in the mid- to late twentieth century.²⁵ While the religious and political landscape of Britain and Europe at this moment does not facilitate easy comparisons with the US case, this chapter argues that flexible retailing did engender a politics that pitched the 'hard working family' against the excesses of state planning and public spending. John Bloom did not emerge on the consumer market in a vacuum; his success was predicated on a set of demands and needs in the shopping landscape that emerged from the domestic budget and the politics of place.

My focus will be on two moments before and after the early to mid-1960s, when debates around consumerism, credit and affluence clashed in the public sphere. The first case study is the popularity of mobile trading in 1950s Harlow New Town; the second is the growth of Sunday open-air market trading around the Home Counties in the 1970s. Both of these flexible retailing trends were celebrated by their backers as simple solutions to consumer problems created by the local state. In Harlow, residents' associations critiqued the Development Corporation for failing to build enough brick-and-mortar shops to keep the cost of living in the New Town affordable. In the state's absence, mobile shops provided the retail competition and convenience that local authorities had failed to provide. Twenty years later, in the Home Counties, the issue revolved around local authorities' undue policing of open-air markets, ventures that capitalised on consumer demand and underused land. More so than the debate over mobile trading in the 1950s, the debate over open-air

markets in the 1970s bled into local political life, and the chapter will end with a biographical survey of market organiser-turned-civic activist Wendy Hobday. As a small business owner, Hobday developed a two-pronged critique of state intervention in retailer–consumer relations (as an entrepreneur) and profligate spending (as a ratepayer). On the surface, Hobday appears to combine the radical retailing of John Bloom with the conservative values of Margaret Thatcher; yet this chapter will show that Hobday is much more than a curious amalgamation of impulses that animated individuals on the British right: her commercial and political causes tapped into the very way that shopping choice was built into the ordinary landscapes of post-war Britain.

Mobile shops and Harlow New Town

The early days of Britain's New Towns have been extensively covered in social and cultural, political, architectural and economic histories.²⁶ Scholars have predominantly focused on the intertwined debates over the politics of rehousing and the visions of architect-planners: to what extent did New Towns make a conscious break with the past styles and familiar rhythms of British urban life in order to fit the post-war ideals of social democracy? Less studied, however, have been the stopgap measures that Development Corporations developed for provisioning these new communities, in particular the question of how far the state should control business enterprise in order to direct commercial growth.²⁷

On paper, the building of brick-and-mortar shops in New Towns was part of the planned socio-economic landscape: the Final Report of the New Towns Committee declared one shop for every 100–150 residents as the ideal ratio.²⁸ However, the high cost of labour, building materials and licensing restrictions meant that Development Corporations fell far below this number, especially in the first stages of building. The same was true in new council housing developments. When Peter Wilmott and Michael Young travelled to the new estate of Greenleigh, Essex, in the early 1950s, they found one shop for every 300 residents, a far cry from the one shop for every 44 residents to which the former Bethnal Green dwellers were accustomed.²⁹

Enterprising mobile shops travelled to these New Towns and new estates – as well as to rural or bomb-damaged areas – in these initial days of constrained central funding for non-essential construction. The National Chamber of Trade estimated that by 1963 there were 11,700 mobile shops with an annual turnover of nearly £100 million, which

trebled their profits at the outset of the decade.³⁰ *The Guardian* referred to these kitted-out vans carrying groceries and other essentials as ‘the new pedlars’, an economic force that at once harkened back to a world of peripatetic trading while also acknowledging the new retail geography of post-war Britain.³¹ While these traders conjured up images of retailing practices gone-by, mobile shops were often offshoots of modern companies that had to adjust to the contemporary realities of working-class residential dispersal. For example, the Co-operative was the largest player in mobile shop activity; by 1958, they owned half of the mobile shops in operation, their growth far outstripping the building of Co-op permanent stores.³² The viability of mobile shops, in fact, created a feedback loop of growth between chain stores and British automobile manufacturing: along with the Co-operative’s own manufacturing arm, firms such as Smith’s Delivery Vehicles, Austin Crompton Parkinson and Midland Vehicles tailored their commercial vehicle production to vans, a development that ensured Britain would ‘far [outstrip] the rest of Europe in making “the shop that comes to you”’.³³

Mobile shops were sites of retail innovation, but they also tethered their users to older forms of shopping. The Co-operative was one key operator in this subsection of the retail economy, joined by a fleet of Women’s Institute (WI) retail vans.³⁴ In addition, there were links between mobile trading and the deprivations of rationing during and after the Second World War.³⁵ Many ‘shops on wheels’ – like John Bloom – initially launched as distributors for army surplus goods.³⁶ On a more affective level, the feeling of trust and loyalty that residents held towards these itinerant traders was often quite strong. In the Scottish New Town of Glenrothes, residents were particularly loyal to the mobile traders who had seen them through the difficult period in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when the last days of rationing overlapped with a lack of shops. In residents’ words, it would be ‘plain thankless’ to disregard the service that mobile shops had provided by reregistering with the new permanent shops slowly taking shape in the New Town.³⁷ By the 1960s, the affective value of the mobile shop existed in relation to a stark new world of supermarkets, with the National Chamber of Trade identifying the ‘great intangible in the mobiles’ success’ as the ‘value’ that ‘housewives put on the personal contact with a roundsman as an alternative to helping themselves among the anonymous, jostling crowd in a confusing neon-lit store’.³⁸

Due to low-cost, quick start-up features of mobile shops, many local authorities treated their licensing with indifference. If enterprising traders could fill a consumer need that the cash-strapped state could not,

there was little point in regulating their activity in the cul-de-sacs and half-built sites of New Towns and new estates. In Newport and Glasgow, for example, authorities integrated mobile shops into the economic scheme of their new housing estates, encouraging mobile shops as competition drivers and factoring these outlets' usage into their calculations of how many brick-and-mortar shops to provide for residents.³⁹

Small shopkeepers – squeezed between these popular informal solutions and the ascendant chain stores – greeted the indifference of local authorities with condemnation. Shopkeepers accused the state of supporting 'unfair competition' from mobile shops, referring to the 'poaching', 'pirating' and 'invasion' that these units brought to new communities.⁴⁰ While shopkeepers were subjected to the 'handicap' of shop licensing alongside high labour and material costs, mobile traders could commit minimal capital and meet low overheads by moving from site to site. In the Scottish New Town of East Kilbride, brick-and-mortar traders complained to the Development Corporation about the influx of mobile traders who took advantage of a captive market; one notorious mobile shop commuted every day from neighbouring Ayrshire because the potential profit outweighed the travel costs.⁴¹

Mobile retailers thus capitalised on a moment of weakness and indecision by small shopkeepers, larger firms and the local state. They met a neglected demand within the market, right when the era of rationing gave way to a period of plenty, when 'enterprise [was] finding outlets in a number of hitherto unattempted directions'.⁴² Advertisements for mobile vans in national newspapers reminded prospective mobile traders to 'follow the housewife', not to let trade 'slip through your fingers' and to 'be prepared for increased business'. Van manufacturers – dependent on these outriders for their own business success – therefore focused on nimbleness and alacrity as the traits that would set 1950s retailers in good stead with their imagined consumers. These advertisements, taken alongside the inaction by many local authorities, suggest if not cooperation, then at least an early detente between the freedom of the market and the economic planning of the state. Although Lord Beveridge had imagined the New Towns as a 'housewife's paradise', where the Development Corporation would play a key role in providing amenities for young families, the widespread use of the 'shop on wheels' shows that the fixity of new economic space was shaken from these new communities' inception.⁴³ In the press, the 'enterprising trader' was referred to multiple times as a figure not to be hindered by vested interests; nor could the mobile shop be held back by building licences,

rates and hours legislation that applied to brick-and-mortar shops.⁴⁴ The mid-1950s was, therefore, a moment when the role of the state in shaping the physical landscape of the retail economy was insufficient and flexible. Mobile shops capitalised on this insufficiency by compelling both entrenched business and the state to reconsider the relationship between consumer demand and the fixity of the built environment.

From the inception of Harlow New Town, its founders imagined this community in the north-east of London's metropolitan green belt to be a self-contained commercial unit, one whose shopping core would suit the practices and budgets of its new residents. Part of this plan was the support for more informal and low-cost retail outlets. In the internal correspondence of the Development Corporation, officials commented on the common sense of allowing stall-holding to take place in the Market Square *before* brick-and-mortar shops moved in, as this would attract a cheaper trader and a shopping crowd.⁴⁵ In the early days of town construction, the Corporation received interest from prospective mobile traders in Ilford, North Finchley and Clapton, all London traders eager to follow their customers into the New Towns around the capital.⁴⁶ For those planners tasked with developing networked amenities from scratch, these mobile entrepreneurs were viable alternatives to the larger stores, which were not only constrained by high licensing, labour and material costs, but also tended to refrain from committing to a new consumer market before a steady resident demand was guaranteed.

The openness to flexible retailing, however, was not driven solely by planner-retailer relationships, but by the everyday demands of Harlow's new housewives, overwhelmingly drawn from the working-class districts of London. For shopkeepers in the 1950s, mobile shops had become a catch-all symbol of housewives' passiveness in the consumer market: those who relied on these outlets were 'bone idle', seeing as they did not even need to 'comb their hair' to do the family shopping.⁴⁷ Angry housewives responded to these comments from the President of the National Union of Small Shopkeepers by espousing their own agency: 'running a house efficiently is a housewife's business, and, as with any other business, she buys in what she considers to be the best market'.⁴⁸ In Harlow, local journalists referred to shopping facilities as the 'single greatest factor' in the lives of Harlow's women, an issue around which they engaged the state and the press. The slow development of the central shopping precinct and the uneven growth of neighbourhood sub-units such as The Stow generated petitioning from local Labour women.⁴⁹ While affluent out-of-town shoppers came to use the facilities at The Stow, its pricing and selection did not suit the recent transplants to Harlow

itself.⁵⁰ To fill this retail void, the Essex WI established the first WI branch market in a New Town, in 'recognition of the needs and difficulties of housewives moved from their own environment to form a new community'.⁵¹ Along with the stopgap solutions that linked country to town, many of these housewives wanted to travel closer to bustling market areas they knew from their childhood. Women demanded bus services to the nearest market centre in Romford, or in some cases travelled all the way back to London street markets in efforts to convince traders to commute and sell cheap consumer goods in Harlow from vans and barrows.⁵² Post-war sociology has tended to reinforce the belief that urban dispersal and the lack of a local shop or pub made the lives of women and families more insular and isolated.⁵³ We should attend, however, to the interventions that housewives made in their local retail markets, organising and advocating for low-cost shopping opportunities that joined together their tight-knit urban districts in London with their new life in overspill and purpose-built communities.

In the mid-1950s, the Development Corporation and the Harlow housewife who suffered 'queuing . . . far beyond moderation' were locked in a battle over the role of enterprise in the socio-economic development of the town. In a shift from their earlier policy, the Development Corporation would *not* sanction a temporary market until their 'official' informal shopping outlet – the Market Square – opened in spring 1956. Consumers and traders alike found ways to work around the local state. In the year before the Market Square opened, there was an increase in trading from private homes, as well as concern around the rising numbers of mobile barrow traders who congregated on Corporation-owned land, in effect creating unsanctioned markets.⁵⁴ Consumer demand on these retail fringes built up to such an extent that, when the municipal retail market did open in May 1956, the market department was compelled to reach out to these occasional barrow sellers, asking them to become licensed traders and thus bring their existing customer bases into the official market space.

Mobile shops began on the fringes of the post-war built landscape, but over time they became part of the metaphorical and material core of retail life. Whether individual traders or known names in the world of collective commerce (the Co-op, the WI), mobile operators sold in-demand items and the promise of shopping choice to post-war consumers. Mobile shops' success in locales such as Glenrothes, Glasgow and Harlow shows how retail flexibility disrupted the built landscape of post-war provisioning, with 'forgotten' shoppers and enterprising sellers counterbalancing the planning eye of the British state.

Sunday markets and Wendy Hobday

Harlow in the mid-1950s shows us how the citizen-consumer demand for flexible retailing became a built-in feature of post-war society, to which the state responded unevenly and to which select mobile shops responded enthusiastically. The case of Sunday markets in the 1970s demonstrates how citizen-entrepreneurs politicised this practice to critique the very efficacy of the state in shopping cultures. Two related developments from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s redoubled the focus on shopping as a flexible component of everyday life. The first was the continuing rise of the 'working family' as a dynamic actor in the British political economy. By 1971, over half of married women were employed outside the home. Dolly Smith Wilson has attributed the growth of this demographic group to 'the material and emotional attractions associated with affluence'.⁵⁵ The shifting terrain of female employment affected how political parties discussed not only how housewives brought money into the home, but how and when they spent money outside the home. For example, the Conservative manifesto of 1964 did not merely include the abolition of RPM as a policy that would gear the market towards consumers' interests; the party also vowed to review shop hours which were 'particularly inconvenient for the growing number of women at work'.⁵⁶ From the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, Conservative and Labour governments tapped trade organisations and the ever-expanding network of consumer groups in efforts to understand the pros and cons of tailoring shopping to favour the schedules of working women, particularly extending hours past 7.00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and liberalising some forms of Sunday trading.⁵⁷

The continuing breakdown of gendered divisions of labour and temporal divisions of consumption facilitated the second development of this period: the recognition that non-work shaped the late modern British landscape.⁵⁸ John K. Walton, for example, has pinpointed the early 1970s as the moment when the industrial weekend essentially 'broke down' under the demands for family leisure and the ubiquity of car culture.⁵⁹ By the early 1970s, the freedom of the average British family to spend weekend time together outside the home put pressure on urban and suburban green belt locations: in 1973 one survey estimated that on a summer Sunday, there were nine million countryside day trips made in Britain.⁶⁰ As time and mobility became markers of freedom and choice, underdeveloped areas of land along Britain's town and city fringes became sites of concern among policymakers and planning officials.

Quasi-legal Sunday markets emerged at the metaphorical intersection of these shifting tastes and demands in the consumption and leisure arenas. Sunday markets were technically made legal with the 1969 repeal of the 1448 Sunday Fairs Act, which had forbidden these types of commercial gatherings on the Christian Sabbath.⁶¹ Like the mobile traders discussed in the first half of this chapter, Sunday market traders in the 1970s grew their business models in spaces of the built environment that went overlooked or unregulated by the local state. Markets were predominantly held on the 'urban fringe' of towns or cities, where planning regulations were neglected and competing retailers were sparse.⁶² Many traders congregated on underused football car parks and greyhound racing stadiums, sporting sites where owners needed to maximise land-use revenue to compensate for shifting leisure tastes.⁶³ Other Sunday markets were more rural in character, taking place on farms or disused RAF fields across England that were reachable only by private car or hired coach. As cultural and economic innovations, Sunday markets were part of the retail landscape that included supermarkets, discount warehouses, do-it-yourself stores and other forms of out-of-town shopping that appealed to the car-owning family.⁶⁴ Open-air Sunday markets resonated with consumers in the 1960s and early 1970s on two levels: they were an outlet for Britons' simultaneous unparalleled leisure spending power and the impulse to 'make ends meet' in an era of rising prices.⁶⁵

This consumer demand for more varied and accessible shopping underwrote 'Wendy Fair', the market firm owned and operated by Ken and Wendy Hobday. Wendy Fair began making headlines in the local and national press in summer 1973. It joined the scrum of Sunday markets that had been growing in competitiveness and popularity since the late 1960s, attracting hundreds of stalls and tens of thousands of customers during their busiest seasons. The Hobdays, owners of a lighting store in Hillingdon, opened Sunday markets near Heathrow Airport and on disused RAF airfields in Buckinghamshire and Hampshire in the early to mid-1970s.⁶⁶ Almost immediately, these enterprises attracted the ire of local authorities and local shopkeepers, who argued that holding an open-air market on a Sunday not only contravened trading laws but, in the case of Buckinghamshire, also interfered with county-wide proposals to protect green belt land and slow the environmental degradation brought on by changes in land use and the growth of motor traffic.⁶⁷ Wendy Fair, like other market firms, worked through a variety of planning and legal loopholes to keep their rogue business open to eager buyers and sellers. This included rotating the location of the market, employing stallholders as 'department managers' to contravene labour law, and even

attempting to register as a 'Jewish company' in order to receive Sunday trading exemption. After incurring fines of more than £1,000, the Hobdays 'took the best legal advice' and decided to transform Wendy Fair into a club trading firm, meaning that customers would pay a nominal fee (between 10 and 20 pence), thereby protecting the company from the regulations of the Shops Act.⁶⁸

More than any other Sunday market firm, Wendy Fair and the Hobdays relied on the club trading model as a method of circumventing shopping hours and labour legislation. They also built up their retail outlet to be far more than a space of simple buying and selling; it was a space of collective non-work. Alongside the stalls selling discount or second-hand home goods, toys and food, Ken and Wendy Hobday also provided steam organs and hot-air balloons, appealing to pleasure-seeking families.⁶⁹ The Hobdays dotted their markets along the semi-rural and rural London green belt locales; these choices took advantage not only of underdeveloped land, but also of car-owning young couples who wanted to shop for pleasure together on the weekend, and of young families seeking outdoor leisure. The *Sunday Telegraph* described this new retail environment 'on the runways built for war' in positively Dunkirk-esque terms: 'traders were fighting the archaic laws that forbid the sale of . . . goods on a Sunday and defending the principle of free trading, working when you want to and not when you are told to'.⁷⁰ The Hobdays, thus, were the plucky entrepreneurs versus an overbearing state, whose land-use planning regulations and army of shops inspectors were needlessly interfering with the modern needs and desires of hard-working families. At one Hobday market, where 'a lot of the women work[ed] during the week' and left the weekend for housework and shopping, the appeal of Sunday markets was their capacity to bend to the modern working family schedule.⁷¹

Although the Hobdays were equal partners in the running of Wendy Fair, it was Wendy who elevated independent market trading to a political cause. In addition to her roles operating the string of Wendy Fair markets and running the family lighting shop, Hobday was an active participant in local Hillingdon civil society. She was a member of the Hillingdon Residents' Federation and the Ruislip Residents' Association. In the press coverage of Hobday's amenity activism, her role as a 'local mother' or 'mother of seven' was always at the core of her public persona.

In February 1974, Hobday made her initial entry into national politics when she ran as an independent Conservative candidate for Ruislip-Northwood. One of 143 women running for Parliament (up from 80 at the previous general election), Hobday had defected from the local

Conservative group, marking the first time that the Tories had ‘broken ranks’ since the Ruislip-Northwood constituency was created in 1950.⁷² Running on a broadly ‘power to the local people’ campaign, Hobday focused on causes that had animated her civic activism in her previous political life: protesting against Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) by the council in the name of public housing and opposing incursions on the green belt. Scaling up to national and international issues, Hobday subscribed to a largely popular consumerist platform that included better protections and prices for consumers, a critical investigation of Common Market membership and the exploration of North Sea oil for the ‘benefit of the nation’.

Hobday lost her deposit that February when the establishment Tory MP, Petre Crowder, was returned. This initial setback did not dampen her political ambitions. When a second general election was called in October 1974, Hobday joined with the newly formed United Democratic Party. Comprising disaffected Tories – many of whom had likewise run in the February election as independent Conservatives – the United Democratic Party had its roots in the Conservative heartlands of the South of England (primarily around Somerset and East Anglia).⁷³ Candidates ran on opposing existing Tory policy, especially Britain’s entry into the Common Market. For example, one of Hobday’s promises as candidate and south-eastern region chairperson-organiser was to ‘set the British people free from bureaucrats’ control, whether it be from Brussels, Whitehall or County Hall’, in a nod to her roots in local residents’ activism.⁷⁴

Hobday was among those small businesspersons whom Andrew Gamble called the base of the Enoch Powell-led Conservative rebels in the late 1960s and early 1970s.⁷⁵ Just as the economic facets of Powellism eschewed all state intervention for the benefit of small capital, the primacy of ‘freedom’ and ‘choice’ repeatedly returns in Hobday’s everywoman political outlook. Whether it was a focus on cutting down bureaucratic institutions, the rights of the homeowner to oppose a CPO, or the importance of grammar schools and school choice, Hobday made the ordinary person railing against the structures and institutions of post-war life the key voter in her campaign. When her share of the vote moved little from its February levels, Hobday then threw her political efforts back into the local realm. As a critical player in ratepaying campaigns in the mid-1970s, Hobday drew on her background in small business and her persona as a ‘common sense’ housewife to protest the increase in homeowners’ and business rates against the spending habits of Hillingdon Council. In methods that mirrored her tactics at Wendy Fair, Hobday helped organise subscriptions to mitigate the legal costs of withholding

rates, constantly searching for stipulations in local government acts that would allow a private citizen to protest against state policy and spending.

In 1978 borough elections, Hobday combined her small business background with her ratepaying activism by launching a hyper-local organisation in Hillingdon, the 'We Mean Business' group, backed by the National Federation of the Self Employed.⁷⁶ The group members came from eclectic backgrounds: small business owners like the Hobdays, but also trade unionists, tradesmen and professionals. The cause that united the group was, again, the belief that standard party politics no longer represented the views of constituents. Profligate spending and obfuscated council deals had increased the distance between the electorate and political power; only by 'taking the politics out of government' would there be a local council that worked for the many. Although 'non-party' in name, the manifesto of the group previews many of the tenets of the Thatcherite national project that would enter Downing Street in less than a year: 'pruning out of all dead wood' and 'removal of political animals', the encouragement of home ownership in 'all its aspects', curtailing closed shop trade union policies, reducing the borough debt, law and order policing, and the stimulation of small businesses as the root of tackling unemployment.⁷⁷

Hobday was an entrepreneur in the mould of Bloom: she claimed the British state's anachronistic interference in retail markets was a hindrance to the freedom of the British shopping family. Linking her tactics and politics to an earlier history of enterprise culture rooted in alternative uses of lived space, however, reveals new facets of the development of neoliberal logics in everyday life. By starting this story with retail provisioning in late 1940s and 1950s New Towns, we see how, from their inception, proposals to plan and rationalise shopping space often clashed with the immediate, day-to-day needs of consumers. The mobile shop, the self-proclaimed saviour of the under-provisioned family, was thus a curious case of anachronistic retail that had contemporary purchase. Fast-forward to the 1970s, when support for state intervention in economic relations and the built environment was fraying at the national and local political level. Wendy Hobday harnessed her dual identity as retail disruptor and concerned housewife to galvanise a renewed vision of 'collective' consumerism and leisure outside social democratic structures and in opposition to outdated laws. Figures such as Wendy Hobday expand the actors who count as entrepreneurs in the post-war period. She leveraged 'freedom' and 'choice' not merely as free-market signals, but as values that had their roots in the spatial and temporal autonomy of family life in late modern Britain.

Conclusion

This chapter opened with the iconoclasm of John Bloom, a retail hero in Britain's 'age of affluence'. From a twenty-first-century perspective, Bloom's entrepreneurialism both embodies and anticipates many of the accepted timelines of post-war Britain: the short life of social democracy, a national polity comprised of 'consumers' rather than 'producers' and, most germane to the contents of this volume, the implication of proto-neoliberal thought within various corners of the political and social right. Bloom was a pioneer of direct sales in Britain, a model of retail that depended on disrupting the very spaces of buying and selling in order to keep overheads low and sales buoyant. The art of the 'deal', then, was not made in the high street, the shopping precinct or the showroom; it was closed through the newspaper advertisement, the catalogue and the parlour. Bloom's focus on *choice* in his business model was one instance of a larger trend in diffuse methods of sale in the 1950s through the 1970s: the modern British housewife should have the best products and best prices available without the interference of state or vested interests.

The posthumous evaluations of Bloom's legacy tend to draw a direct line between his disruptive vision in the 1950s and 1960s and today's discount retail entrepreneurs,⁷⁸ whether those are pound shop fixtures on the high street or the 'anytime, anywhere' methods of Amazon. I have told a different story in this chapter, one that places emphasis on how a market for 'freedom' and 'choice' in retailing was collectively created, not individually invented. Even the self-promoting Bloom could see that change in the consumer market was made through infiltrating its pre-existing communal spaces. His prodigious *Daily Mirror* advertisements rely, often, on appealing to the lone housewife or the married couple. In the second half of 1962, Rolls Razor's *Daily Mirror* advertising chose to target the British housewife in those moments of community and exchange that defined her larger homosocial network.⁷⁹ Quarter- or half-page advertisements include groups of women discussing Rolls Razor's merits across hedges in their interwar suburban housing, or while sitting in a row opposite prams with babies who remind the reader that 'Mummy did not have to drag off to the shops. She just saved oodles of boodle by buying DIRECT FROM FACTORY and by-passing all middlemen's costs.'⁸⁰ Advertisers didn't always imagine that their consumers stayed within the confines of the residential neighbourhood; other versions show women discussing the merits of twin-tub washing machines in their local hairdresser or while being waited upon in a shoe shop.⁸¹

The most striking pages, however, are those that place Rolls Razor at the heart of women's sociable, non-shopping lives: a women's choir reading off the literal 'praises' of Rolls Razor from the hymn books, or a collective of smartly dressed women, gathered with placards, who appear to be marching for the company. Women's calls to 'Join Us! Join Us!' are, on one level, group-think marketing. Yet read on a different rhetorical level, this message evokes the ordinary networks and landscapes through which demands for 'flexible' retailing grew in voice between the 1950s and the 1970s. By integrating the lesser-known activism of the housewives of Harlow and the causes of Wendy Fair into the familiar story of the heroic entrepreneur, we are better equipped to see how demand for commercial flexibility in post-war retail and shopping life was generated through collective action, not just through an outriding disruptor.

Notes

- 1 Margaret Laing, 'The electric man', *The Sunday Times Colour Magazine* (22 March 1964).
- 2 Peter Armstrong, 'Entrepreneurial competition in the pure case: John Bloom and Jim Elkins', in Peter Armstrong, *Critique of Entrepreneurship: People and policy* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 45–60.
- 3 See memoirs of Jack Cohen, Richard Branson, James Dyson and Chris Edwards for legacies of the genre.
- 4 Nikolas Rose, 'Governing the enterprising self', in Paul Heelas and Paul Morris (eds), *The Values of Enterprise Culture: The moral debate* (London, Unwin Hyman, 1992), 141–164; and Ulrich Bröckling, *The Entrepreneurial Self: Fabricating a new type of subject* (Los Angeles, SAGE, 2016).
- 5 Paul Du Gay, *Consumption and Identity at Work* (Los Angeles, SAGE, 1996); and Christina Scharff, 'The psychic life of neoliberalism: Mapping the contours of entrepreneurial subjectivity', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 33 (2016), 107–22.
- 6 Du Gay, *Consumption and Identity*, 62.
- 7 John Patrick Leary, *Keywords: The new language of capitalism* (Chicago, Haymarket Books, 2018), 138; Friederike Welter, 'Contextualising entrepreneurship: Conceptual challenges and ways forward', *Entrepreneurship, Theory & Practice*, 35 (2011), 165–84; and Tony J. Watson, 'Entrepreneurial action and the Euro-American social science tradition: Pragmatism, realism and looking beyond "the entrepreneur"', *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 25 (2013), 16–33.
- 8 'Obituary: John Bloom', *Daily Telegraph* (6 March 2019), 29.
- 9 Sue Bowden and Avner Offer, 'Household appliances and the use of time: The United States and Britain since the 1920s', *Economic History Review*, 47 (1994), 725–48, at 730.
- 10 Stuart Aveyard, Paul Corthorn and Sean O'Connell, *The Politics of Consumer Credit in the UK, 1938–1992* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018), 72–92.
- 11 See Janice Winship, 'Culture of restraint: The British chain store 1920–1939', in Michelle Lowe, Daniel Miller, Frank Mort and Peter Jackson (eds), *Commercial Cultures: Economies, practices, spaces* (Oxford, Berg, 2000), 15–34 for an overview of the British case. For international examples of the importance of fixed prices for diverse varieties of economic populism, see Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Walmart: The making of Christian free enterprise* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2010), 6–23; and Jan Logemann, *Trams or Tailfins? Public and private prosperity in postwar West Germany and the United States* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2012), 48–9.
- 12 Helen Mercer, 'The making of the modern retail market: Economic theory, business interests and economic policy in the passage of the 1964 Resale Prices Act', *Business History*, 59 (2017), 778–801, at 793; and Helen Mercer, 'Retailer–supplier relationships before and after the Resale

- Prices Act, 1964: A turning point in British economic history?', *Enterprise & Society*, 15 (2014), 132–65, at 152.
- 13 Originating in the US, trading stamps were tokens given out by retailers to establish customer loyalty. They could be collected and exchanged for a wide range of consumer durables from the stamp-issuing company. In Britain, Green Shield controlled over 60 per cent of the trading stamp business in the early 1960s. See Carlo Morelli, 'Constructing a balance between price and non-price competition in British multiple food retailing, 1954–1964', *Business History*, 40 (1998), 45–61, at 54.
 - 14 In the case of backbencher Reader Harris, this meant going against members of his own party. See his response to Philip Goodhart (C, Beckenham) where Harris states that Goodhart is in the pocket of the Retailing Trading Standards Association, organisations that are unprepared for the fact that 'methods of selling in this country are changing. The old method of selling through a small retail shop in each town is disappearing. The supermarket is coming, and the small shopkeeper is being pushed out . . . Direct sellers are here to stay, and I think that the new methods of selling are, by and large, to the advantage of the public.' Commons Sitting of Friday, 8 December 1961. Fifth Series, Volume 650, columns 1796–7; and Ralph Harris, 'Letter to the Editor: A Competitive Market', *The Times* (22 July 1964), 11.
 - 15 Adrian Johns, 'Piracy as a business force', *Culture Machine*, 10 (2009), 53–4.
 - 16 The literature here is vast; see Lawrence Black, *Redefining British Politics: Culture, consumerism and participation, 1954–1970* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) for a definitive account.
 - 17 Black, *Redefining British Politics*; and David Stewart, "'The people's main defence against monopoly'? The Co-op, the Labour Party and Resale Price Maintenance, 1918–1964', in Emmanuelle Avril and Yann Béliard (eds), *Labour United and Divided from the 1830s to the Present* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2018), 101–21.
 - 18 Richard Findley, 'The Conservative Party and defeat: The significance of Resale Price Maintenance for the general election of 1964', *Twentieth Century British History*, 12 (2001), 327–53; Stuart Mitchell, 'Resale Price Maintenance and the character of resistance in the Conservative Party: 1949–64', *Canadian Journal of History/Annales canadiennes d'histoire*, 40 (2005), 259–88; and Mercer, 'Making of the modern retail market'.
 - 19 Christopher Payne is one of the few scholars who draws direct lines between the language of consumerism and credit during this period and the rise of neoliberalism. See Christopher Payne, *The Consumer, Credit and Neoliberalism: Governing the modern economy* (London, Routledge, 2011).
 - 20 The failure of Rolls Razor was due to a combination of a postal strike disrupting orders, big retail competitors adapting to price cutting and bankers losing confidence in Bloom's hire purchase scheme.
 - 21 'The Blooms and the Bowgroupers', *New Statesman* (24 July 1964), 105.
 - 22 For a critique of top-down approaches to the New Right, see Lawrence Black, '1968 and all That(cher): Cultures of conservatism and the New Right in Britain', in Anna von Der Goltz and Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson (eds), *Inventing the Silent Majority in Western Europe and the United States* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017), 356–76.
 - 23 Emily E. LaBarbera-Twarog, *Politics of the Pantry: Housewives, food, and consumer protest in twentieth-century America* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017), 2.
 - 24 Mike French, 'Slowly becoming sales promotion men? Negotiating the career of the sales representative in Britain, 1920s–1970s', *Enterprise & Society*, 17 (2016), 39–79; and John Davis, 'The London cabbie and the rise of Essex man', in Clare V. J. Griffiths, James J. Nott and William Whyte (eds), *Classes, Cultures, and Politics: Essays on British history for Ross McKibbin* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011), 102–20.
 - 25 Jessica Burch, "'Soap and hope": Direct sales and the culture of work and capitalism in postwar America', *Enterprise & Society*, 17 (2016), 741–51; Jessica Burch, *Door-to-Door Capitalism: Direct selling in America from the New Deal to the internet age* (New York, Columbia University Press, forthcoming); Peter S. Cahn, *Direct Sales and Direct Faith in Latin America* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); and Moreton, *Serve God and Walmart*.
 - 26 Mark Clapson, *Invincible Green Suburbs, Brave New Towns: Social change and urban dispersal in postwar England* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1998); Andrew Homer, 'Creating new communities: The role of the neighbourhood unit in post-war British planning', *Contemporary British History*, 14 (2000), 63–80; and John Boughton, *Municipal Dreams: The rise and fall of council housing* (London, Verso, 2018), 61–138. For more recent global and

- post-colonial treatments, see Rosemary Wakeman, *Practicing Utopia: An intellectual history of the New Town movement* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2016); and Jesse Meredith, 'Decolonizing the New Town: Roy Gazzard and the making of Killingworth Township', *Journal of British Studies*, 57 (2018), 333–62. For contemporary studies, see Peter Wilmott, 'Housing density and town design in a New Town', *Town Planning Review*, 33 (1962), 115–27. For a new perspective that shifts the politics of housing to a grassroots perspective, see Helena Rivera, 'Political ideology and housing supply: Rethinking New Towns and the building of new communities in England' (Ph.D. thesis, University College London, 2015).
- 27 Although technically about overspill estates and not New Towns, one exception has been the recent work from James Greenhalgh, particularly chapter 3 in James Greenhalgh, *Reconstructing Modernity: Space, power, and governance in mid-twentieth century British cities* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2018).
 - 28 Anthony Goss, 'Neighbourhood units in British New Towns', *Town Planning Review*, 32 (1961), 73–4.
 - 29 Michael Young and Peter Wilmott, *Family and Kinship in East London* (London, Routledge, 1957), 116.
 - 30 'Modern forms of retailing', *The National Chamber of Trade Journal* (January–February 1964), 8. In comparison, the Census of Distribution for 1961 shows that the Co-operative as a whole had a turnover of £959 million, multiples with more than 10 branches £2,586 million. However, the rate of increase over the decade fell short of the mobile shop phenomenon. The Co-operative grew at a rate of 70 per cent, larger multiples at 136 per cent. 'First Results from 1961 Census of Distribution', *Financial Times* (8 February 1963), 18.
 - 31 'The new pedlars', *The Guardian* (28 January 1955), 8.
 - 32 'Shops on wheels', *Financial Times* (12 February 1958), 6.
 - 33 'Shops on wheels – and Britain leads the way', *Lancashire Evening Post* (20 September 1956), 9. Smith's of Gateshead made a splash in the mid-1950s by exporting mobile shops to the Turkish and Puerto Rican markets in efforts to 'bring down retail prices by increasing efficiency and cutting distributive overheads' in those countries. *Shields Daily News* (9 September 1954), 6; and 'Puerto Rico buys mobile shops', *Coventry Evening Telegraph* (23 July 1956), 7.
 - 34 See Nicole Robertson, *The Co-operative Movement and Communities in Britain, 1914–1960* (London, Routledge, 2016); and Maggie Andrews, 'The WI's rural retailing and markets 1915–1939: A First World War legacy', *History of Retailing and Consumption*, 1 (2015), 89–104, on the tensions between community and consumerism in the Co-operative movement and the WI.
 - 35 See 'Britain's "shadow larder": Food ministry is ready to meet any emergency', *Shields Daily News* (15 August 1941), 4; and 'Mobile meat shop: Birmingham's lead to the country', *Birmingham Mail* (16 February 1942), 1.
 - 36 'Travelling shops: An Irish point of view', *The National Chamber of Trade Journal* (January 1952), 7.
 - 37 *Fifeshire Advertiser* (24 May 1952), 5. See a similar story for the 1960s in Kirkby New Town: N. L. Chapple, 'Community–police relations in Kirkby New Town', *The Police Journal* (1976), 294.
 - 38 'Modern forms of retailing', 8.
 - 39 *The National Chamber of Trade Journal* (April 1957), 66; The Survey Report – The First Quinquennial Review of the Development Plan – 1960, 9, Glasgow City Archives, D-AP 1/4a; and D. R. Diamond and E. B. Gibb, 'Development of new shopping centres: Area estimation', *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, 9 (1962), 130–46, at 144.
 - 40 'What our readers say – a new UNO pact', *Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette* (8 October 1948), 2; 'Mobile shops', *Harlow Citizen* (14 May 1954); 'Leeds grocers hit out at "Buccaneers"', *Yorkshire Evening News* (23 July 1958); and 'Leeds move against pirate mobile shops', *Yorkshire Evening News* (2 September 1958).
 - 41 'Mobile shops', *Harlow Citizen* (14 May 1954).
 - 42 *Sixty-second Annual Report of the Board of Management, The National Chamber of Trade* (London, 1959–60), 23.
 - 43 Boughton, *Municipal Dreams*, 78–9.
 - 44 'The new pedlars'; 'Mobile shops', *The Guardian* (27 May 1957), 2; and 'Shops on wheels', *The Guardian* (24 September 1958), 6.
 - 45 Copy to General Manager for information, 3 January 1950, Essex Record Office (ERO) ERO A6306 Box 330, Town Centre.

- 46 Letters from J. H. Burke, Theresa Hart and D. Sople to Harlow Development Corporation, ERO A6306 Box 330.
- 47 “‘Housewife is getting lazier every day’”, *Birmingham Daily Gazette* (21 June 1956), 3.
- 48 ‘Letter from Mrs. Winifred Evans’, *Birmingham Daily Post* (10 December 1957), 6; and Joyce Chesterson, ‘So he thinks we housewives are lazy’, *Daily Herald* (4 July 1956), 6.
- 49 ‘Labour women want market’, *Harlow Citizen* (12 March 1954), 7; and Memorandum from Liaison Officer to General Manager, 13 August 1954, ERO A10417 Box 10.
- 50 ‘Two-year wait for town centre shopping’, *Harlow Citizen* (13 August 1954), 1.
- 51 ‘Congratulations to Harlow New Town market’, *Home and Country* (January 1953), 9.
- 52 ‘Residents want shopping trips to Romford’, *Harlow Citizen* (20 August 1954), 1; and ‘Feathers fly in Harlow in court’, *Harlow Citizen* (29 April 1955), 11.
- 53 Young and Willmott, *Family and Kinship*, 126.
- 54 ‘Barrow boys come to town’, *Harlow Citizen* (9 September 1955), 1, 6.
- 55 Dolly Smith Wilson, ‘A new look at the affluent worker: The good working mother in post-war Britain’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 17 (2006), 206–29, at 210.
- 56 ‘The Conservative Party’s manifesto for “prosperity with a purpose”’, *The Times* (18 September 1964), 16.
- 57 ‘Report of the Crathorne Committee’ (London, HMSO, 1964); ‘Retail trading hours: Suggested provisions for amending the Shops Act, 1950’ (London, HMSO, 1965); ‘Shopping habits and attitudes to shop hours in Great Britain’ (London, HMSO, 1975); and Economic Development Council (EDC), *The Future Pattern of Shopping* (London, HMSO, 1971).
- 58 For an overview of this moment, see Chris Rojek, ‘The leisure society thesis and its consequences’, in Chris Rojek, *The Labour of Leisure: The culture of free time* (London, SAGE, 2010), 21–52.
- 59 John K. Walton, ‘From institution to fragmentation: The making and unmaking of the British weekend’, *Leisure Studies*, 33 (2014), 209–10.
- 60 Nigel Curry, *Countryside Recreation, Access and Land Use Planning* (London, E & FN Spon, 1994), 85; Michael Dower, *The Fourth Wave: The challenge of leisure* (London, The Civic Trust, 1965); and Kenneth Roberts, *Contemporary Society and the Growth of Leisure* (London, Longman, 1978), 19.
- 61 According to the 1950 Shops Act, however, most items sold at a general goods market would still be barred.
- 62 J. Davidson, ‘The urban fringe’, *Countryside Recreation Review*, 1 (1976), 2–7.
- 63 The aggregate attendance at football matches halved between the early 1950s and the 1980s. Richard Holt has attributed this decline to the rise of Saturday afternoon as ‘family’ leisure time. Richard Holt, *Sport and the British* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989), 335.
- 64 For a summary of these trends, see EDC, *Future Pattern of Shopping*.
- 65 Mark Dunton, ‘Public relations and the Price Commission, 1973–74’, *Archives*, 52 (2017), 12–25.
- 66 Roland Adburgham, ‘Market men fight Never on Sunday law’, *Sunday Times* (15 July 1973), 54.
- 67 Linda Millington, ‘Why can’t I sell it if they want it’, *Birmingham Daily Post* (10 August 1973), 8; and Minute Book of Finance, Planning, Staff and Salaries Committees, Buckingham Rural District Council. Application no. BR/80/73 (23 May 1973), Wendy Fair Market Operators, Ruislip, Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, DC 5/1/33.
- 68 Robert Millar, ‘Why some faiths make big profits on a Sunday’, *Daily Express* (19 July 1976), 8.
- 69 Adburgham, ‘Market men fight Never on Sunday law’.
- 70 John Smalldon, ‘Where Sunday is market day’, *Sunday Telegraph* (8 May 1977), 7.
- 71 ‘Coventry faces market “war”’, *Coventry Evening Telegraph* (24 May 1976), 1.
- 72 ‘The would-be women MPs . . . all 143 of them’, *Daily Mail* (25 February 1974), 16–17; and ‘Surprise rebel candidate splits Tory workers’, *Ruislip-Northwood Gazette* (21 February 1974), 1.
- 73 David Boothroyd, *The History of British Political Parties* (London, Politicos Publishing, 2001), 325–6.
- 74 ‘Candidate helps in new party’, *Ruislip-Northwood Gazette* (30 May 1974), 13; and ‘Wendy Hobday, United Democrat’, *Ruislip-Northwood Gazette* (3 October 1974), 11.
- 75 Andrew Gamble, *The Conservative Nation* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), 117.
- 76 “‘We mean business” pledge to voters’, *Ruislip-Northwood Gazette* (13 October 1977), 13.

- 77 'We mean business' – Candidates for Local Council Elections, LSC/ELL, Local Elections.
- 78 See obituaries in *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Financial Times*.
- 79 For more on the relationship between mail order and female sociability, see Sean O'Connell, *Credit and Community: Working-class debt in the UK since 1880* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009), 101.
- 80 *Daily Mirror* (3 July 1962); and *Daily Mirror* (10 December 1962).
- 81 *Daily Mirror* (24 September 1962); and *Daily Mirror* (2 October 1962).