

A Personal Letter From Village Shopkeeper-In-Waiting – Tom Larkin

Hello!

Some of you will already have heard the fantastic news that the future of Tywardreath's village shop has been secured. Contracts were signed and exchanged on Friday (29th July), with a completion date set for a maximum of 8 weeks time. We still need to raise the last bit of money from community pledgers, and if we can get this in before then we will be able to move in sooner.

I wanted to write to you personally, as I will soon become the first new shopkeeper in Tywardreath for over 50 years.



A Bit About Me

Many of you will know me from the pub or other areas of village life. But for those who don't, I wanted to introduce myself. I was raised in Brentwood, Essex, but moved to Tywardreath with my partner, Laura, 10 years ago. Moving here was the best decision we ever made – we instantly fell in love with the people and the area, and we can't see ourselves living anywhere else.

Since moving to the village I've worked as a freelance writer & editor, run a local food company, plucked organic Christmas turkeys in Golant, and even put in a fair few shifts at the New Inn. However, I see running the village shop as a perfect next step for me, and something I can dedicate myself to for many years to come. I can't wait to get started and I'm confident I will be able to offer the valuable services that this great community needs and deserves.

Aside from my working life, I'm a huge music fan and would choose camping at a muddy summer festival over a luxury holiday any day. I also love sport. I spend a lot of my spare time rowing for River Fowey Gig Club and am a keen follower of football, cricket and tennis. Despite living in Cornwall for 10 years, I remain a huge West Ham United fan and try and get up to watch them at least once a season.

2016 is a huge year for me personally. Not only does it mark 10 years since moving to the village and I'm taking over the village shop, but after 13 years together, Laura and I are getting married later this month. Trudy and Josh have been kind enough to let us have our reception at Newhouse Farm, and the help we've received from local people has been just incredible – everything from the food, to growing flowers, to making decorations, to lighting and even live music. It's all just reinforced our feeling that we live in a truly special place.

The Shop

Keith & Julie Smith have worked hard for over 50 years, running the village shop and providing an essential service for local people. To lose the shop would have been devastating for Tywardreath, so to have saved it with the help of the community is a great achievement for everyone involved.

With the support of Trudy and Josh from Hunter Grange Investments, who are buying the property with money pledged by local people via peer-to-peer loans, I will essentially be running the shop as my own business.

There will be a number of changes, most of which will be in place as soon as we move in. Some of the new features and services include:

- Card payments
- Cash machine
- Electronic till using latest technology
- Longer opening hours (7am-8pm)
- Wider product range, including more local, chilled and fresh produce
- New 'Tywardreath Village Shop' sign and interior refit
- Click & Collect and Home Delivery service (including to Golant)
- Excellent prices and bulk discounts for Community Buying Group members/pledgers

What Next?

To be able to buy the shop purely with money raised through loans from the community (which will earn 6% annual interest), we still need to raise a bit more money. If you haven't pledged yet, or if you have pledged but want to top-up your investment, you can do so by visiting www.tywardreath.co.uk, calling 01726 339540, or dropping in to see to Trudy or Josh at Newhouse Farm.

I will write to you again once we have a definite date for moving in. Also, once the purchase is completed, there will be a handover period in which I will be working alongside Keith & Julie. This would be a great opportunity to come and meet me and to discuss any ideas you have for the shop.

Thank you for all your support, and I look forward to becoming your new shopkeeper in the next few weeks.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Larkin', written over a horizontal line.

Tom Larkin