



Sutton Veny

PUB TO REOPEN AFTER TWO YEAR CLOSURE

WHILE village pubs across the county are shutting down thanks to the bleak economic climate, a village inn near Warminster is reopening after a two-year closure.

With 25 years of experience in the pub trade between them, Tim Smith, 39, and his wife Abbie, 32, are keen to turn The Woolpack Inn in Sutton Veny, near Warminster, into a thriving business.

Mr Smith is from a family of landlords and caterers and worked alongside his mum Sue, of The Cordon Bleu Catering Company at the Angel in Heytesbury in the early 1990s and later at The Lamb on the Strand in Seend, before going back to the Angel.

Meanwhile, Mrs Smith worked as head chef at The Boot in Berwick St James, and The Black Horse, Hurdcot, both near Salisbury.

“The Woolpack used to be a sports bar but it didn’t attract the villagers at all,” said Mr Smith, who won a Michelin Award in 1998 for his food at the Angel.

“I decided I would grab the bull by the horns and my wife and I decided to buy it.

“We have had huge support. Everyday there are people knocking on the door saying they can’t wait for it to open.”

The couple have bought the freehold of the pub from Enterprise Inns.

Mr Smith, who has relied on private investment to kick-start the venture, said he will be offering ‘locally-sourced, wholesome, affordable food’ when they open at the beginning of April.

Work began this month to renovate the pub’s interior, taking down walls to make it more open-plan and welcoming for diners.

Sutton Veny Parish Council clerk Jacqueline Smith said: “It’s good news - we are thrilled to bits.

“I get the message from people that what they really wanted was a pub that does nice food and they have got a very good family history when it comes to that.

“I just can’t wait for it to open - I will be the first one there.”



Tim Smith , who is currently renovating the Woolpack pub in Sutton Veny, which has been closed for some time. (37423-1)

(*This is Wiltshire* – Friday 23 January, 2009)