

# Waitrose & Partners announces plans to close four shops

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The announcements form part of an ongoing review of the Waitrose store estate, which began in 2017. We have found trading challenging in these four shops and, despite the best efforts of Partners, we have not been able to find a way to make them profitable in the long-term.

It is expected that Caldicot, Ipswich Corn Exchange and Shrewsbury will all close at the end of trade on 6th December and Wolverhampton will close at the end of trade on 31st December. All four locations will continue to be served by [Waitrose.com](https://www.waitrose.com). Our Ipswich supermarket in Futura Park will remain open.

The 140 Partner roles at Wolverhampton transfer under TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment) to Tesco. The 124 Partners that work in the three other shops are at risk of redundancy. All affected Partners will now enter a period of consultation.

As part of this, Waitrose will explore opportunities within the Partnership for those who wish to remain with the business, including transferring to local Waitrose shops or working for [johnlewis.com](https://www.johnlewis.com) and [waitrose.com](https://www.waitrose.com) as they continue to grow.

Despite today's news, Waitrose shops remain very important to our customers and will also be some areas where we see opportunities to open new Waitrose shops.

The John Lewis Partnership has also made a commitment to provide support to those Partners at Caldicot, Ipswich Corn Exchange and Shrewsbury who are at risk of redundancy through a unique Retraining Fund. This will contribute up to £3,000 towards a recognised qualification or course for up to two years for any of the 124 Partners with two years' service or more. They will also be given access to a three month support programme with an outplacement specialist to help with CV writing and interview skills.

In addition to statutory redundancy payments, Partners who have worked with the business for more than a year will be entitled to Partnership redundancy pay, which equates to two weeks' pay for every year of service, regardless of age. Those with less than one year's service who leave on grounds of redundancy will receive an ex-gratia tax-free payment equivalent to one week's contractual pay.

Bérangère Michel, Partner & Executive Director, Customer Service for the John Lewis Partnership, said:

"Closing any of our shops is always a last resort and is not a reflection on the dedication of our

Partners in Caldicot, Ipswich Corn Exchange, Shrewsbury and Wolverhampton. Sadly, we have not been able to find a way to make these shops profitable in the long-term, despite the hard work of everyone involved.

“Our priority now is the wellbeing and future of our Partners in these shops. We will do everything we can to support them and explore opportunities wherever possible for those who may wish to remain with the Partnership.”

The John Lewis Partnership has committed more than £200k from its Partnership Community Investment Fund to help support those communities affected by the closures. The fund is designed to help projects that support re-training and further education of local people and local projects that drive economic growth and support young people through training and helping to find employment. Further details on how to apply will be provided in the coming weeks. As Ipswich would still have a large Waitrose and John Lewis in the town after the Corn Exchange shop closes, the fund will only be available in the three other locations.

Contacts:

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