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## DOWNHAM MARKET: 40 years of setting the records



*Lewks record shop celebrating their 40th anniversary Danielle Welham-Smith and Lawrence Welham*

Published on **25/03/2013 09:00**

One of the UK's last remaining independent record shops will celebrate its 40th anniversary this spring with a special event at Downham Town Hall.

Lewks Music and Movies, a family business, opened at Downham in 1973 and is now the longest established independent music store in West Norfolk.

Owner Lawrence Welham said: "It's all changed over the years but we've changed with the times. There are a lot of record shops that haven't survived and now we see how high street chains like HMV are clinging on to their customers.

"We've seen how music has changed over the years from records, to cassettes and eight-tracks, to CDs and now digital downloads.

"It's interesting that after all this time, we still stock Pink Floyd's Dark Side of the Moon 40 years after its release and that we are still selling it on [vinyl](#)."

The record store has been serving customers locally for 40 years and during that time has attracted visitors from across the country with the range of music on offer.

He said: "Despite things all being digital now, people, especially those over 30, still like to have a physical product. They like to buy CDs for a better quality of music and to have something they can keep.

"We stock everything across the board, from classical, to country and western music, to 50s, 60s and 70s rock and roll, to the very latest chart stuff."

The store is part of Record Store Day, a national celebration which sees independent record stores come together with artists to celebrate the art of music by releasing special one-off [vinyl](#) and CDs which become collector's items.

Mr Welham said: "Last year there were people queuing outside the door from 3.30am, some of them had travelled from as far as Southend just to come to the store and get a limited edition record."

To celebrate the anniversary, Mr Welham will be holding a special event at Downham Town Hall on April 12. A special screening of Last Shop Standing – The Rise, Fall and Rebirth of the Independent Record Shop, which was inspired by the book of the same name, by Graham Jones.

The film charts the rapid rise of record shops in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, the influence of the chart, the underhand deals, the demise of vinyl and the rise of the CD as well as new technologies.

With appearances from over 20 record shop owners and music industry leaders such as Tony Wadsworth, and musicians including Paul Weller and Johnny Marr, the film is more than a piece of nostalgia – it is a look into the future of music stores everywhere.

Writer Graham Jones will also be attending the screening to hold a question-and-answer session after the film, before James Clarke Five, the band whose music appears on the film trailer, perform a solo set.

Tickets are now on sale for the event, which will run on the Friday evening from 7.30-10pm, from Lewks for £5 or on the door for £7.

For the next Record Store Day, the [film makers](#) are releasing a special deluxe version of the film with 20 minutes of extras and outtakes and this will be available in store on April 20.

Mr Welham will also be holding a 40th birthday disco for the store on June 1 at Downham Town Hall.

He asks that guests dress up in their finest disco clothes from the 60s, 70s and 80s and join him for the night.

Tickets are now on sale for the event, they cost £7.50 and are available from the store, or online at [www.lewks.co.uk/40thBirthday](http://www.lewks.co.uk/40thBirthday)

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