

# An Award-Winning Locksmith with Pride for Ethics: Indy Locks

We captured the career of Ben Murray, from Indy Locks South Wales, in an interview that tells the tale of the ups and downs of his journey and passion for locksmithing. An award-winning locksmith proud to serve his community he naturally operates with integrity and has the utmost compassion for people.

## From Franchises to Independent Trading

In 2007, after being made redundant, I decided a career change was in order, so I did a locksmithing course through the British Locksmith Association. However, it wasn't until 2014 that I began considering trading in this field. Before that, I spent four years running an independent cleaning franchise, with WashForce, working with well-known clients in retail like Marks & Spencer.

My brother-in-law was involved as a silent partner in the Lockforce franchise and offered me the opportunity to manage the South Wales territory. To take on this role, I had to buy a van, get insurance, training and equipment, and the franchise would sort out my website, branding and SEO.

To further my skills, I attended the Hickley's Automotive Academy in Taunton for a two-week course in auto locksmithing. This was followed by two weeks in Leeds with the Lockforce team, where I focused on property locksmithing and gaining entry to properties.

After spending eight months with Lockforce, I felt the need to pursue something truly my own. A significant turning point came when I landed a £15,000 pressure washing job and completed it in just two weeks. This experience motivated me to break away from the franchise model and create my own brand, as I noticed a general dislike for national franchises.

With the help of two marketers from Carmarthen, who

believed in my vision, I created 'Indy Locks' meaning 'Independent Locksmith'. They sorted my branding and website development, with a primary goal of achieving strong website rankings to eliminate the need for paid advertising. Now, after ten years of trading, I've established myself independently in the locksmith industry.

## Marketing My Business: Showing My Passion in Action

As the owner of Indy Locks, I've always been hands-on with my business, keeping my community updated on how things are going through Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp. I enjoy creating videos where I share insights into my work, often featuring my loyal bull terrier, who has become a bit of a local celebrity.

I like to show off the nice jobs I do and the challenges I tackle, especially when it comes to unlocking cars—a skill I've been passionate about since my first experience at Hickley's Automotive Academy.

## Award-Winning Locksmith

Over the years, my dedication has paid off. I've been honoured as the "Locksmith of the Year" for Wales for four years in a row (2021-2024) and received the Prestige Awards for 2022 and 2023. I've also been a multi-award winner from 2021 to 2023 and entered the Hall of Fame as a multi-award winner from 2022-2024. Recently, I was selected as the best locksmith in Carmarthen for 2024 with the Quality Business Awards, achieving an overall quality score of 95% or higher. I'm genuinely humbled by these recognitions, especially since I don't know who nominates me.

## What Inspires Me: Helping People in Need

Beyond the accolades, what truly drives me is helping people in need. Whether it's someone locked out of their car or a parent panicking because their baby is trapped inside, I feel a deep connection to those I assist. This is what keeps me going, and I always have a smile on my face, ready to tackle the next challenge. Last summer alone, I unlocked vehicles for around 10+ babies and toddlers locked inside—one car (and baby!) even got locked twice in the same week.

## Life Can Be Demanding & Luckily Locksmithing is Flexible

Life has been busy, especially over the past four months, as I've taken on the responsibility of caring for my brother, who has disabilities. Balancing my locksmith work with caring for him is like spinning a lot of plates, but it's all part of the journey. My daughter, now 11, has grown up in the van with me for the past 10 years, and I'm proud of how I've managed to build my business while being there for my family.

There have been bumps in the road, like when my van's engine blew up with no warning—Transits are notorious for burning holes in pistons. But I've learned to adapt and keep going, whether it's finding new ways to finance and lease the latest equipment or navigating the loneliness that can come with being a locksmith. Thankfully, my dog keeps me company on those long, solitary hours on the road.

## Marketing & Ethics

As a self-employed locksmith, I've learned to manage everything, from marketing my business through to developing a great work ethic. I don't do work for call centres because they often undervalue locksmiths, pushing down prices while charging customers more. I believe in treating people fairly, whether it's leaving them secure in their homes after a job or being cautious about the work I take on. Some warrant work can be traumatic, especially when it involves vulnerable people, and I refuse to contribute to their distress, so I only work on the commercial side of the business.



## The Challenges & The Pride of Locksmithing

Locksmithing is an ever-evolving trade, especially with the rapid updates in car technology. While I don't work on safes, I'm always prepared to invest in the latest kit, even if it means leasing equipment over a few years. The work has its challenges, but I wouldn't trade it for anything. My bull terrier, my approach, and my dedication to my craft are all part of what makes Indy Locks unique. It's more than just a job—it's a reflection of who I am, and I'm proud to serve my community with integrity and heart.

## My Love of The Locksmith Journal

Since day one, I've been closely following The Locksmith Journal, because I don't attend the shows due to not having the time to travel the country and it enables me to stay updated with the latest products and tools; I look forward to receiving the magazine every month.

I know who's who in the industry and, despite not physically attending events, I never feel isolated—I always have my ear to the ground. Being interviewed by The Locksmith Journal is a huge honour for me. I never imagined that I would win awards or be recognised in this way, and

it's humbling. I'm incredibly proud of my achievements, and I'm grateful for the help I've had along the way. A big thank you to everyone who has supported me.

## Helping Troubled Youths – Perhaps Future Locksmiths!

My journey hasn't been straightforward. When I was younger, I was a bit of a troubled youth. But life has come full circle in a meaningful way. Recently, a teacher friend asked me to give a motivational talk to children with behavioural issues at a local school. I shared my story, and it resonated with them—they were really engaged. The experience was so positive that I've been invited back and even to another school. I even had some of the kids in the back of my van, cutting keys, which they absolutely loved. It's a powerful reminder that no matter where you start, you can always find a path forward.

As an independent locksmith, I handle everything myself—from taking calls to doing the job and providing aftercare. It's all me, and I take pride in that personal touch. Every step of the way, I strive to do my best for my customers and my community.

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