

## Save Red Lion campaign gathers pace

**CAMPAIGNERS** hoping to save Sidbury's last pub moved a step closer to their goal after a 'constructive' meeting with its owners.

Members from Save the Red Lion met with representatives of owners Punch Taverns last week, who confirmed they had taken the pub off the market to give the group time to put a financial package together.

The campaigners argued that they were the only buyers to have shown any real interest in the pub when it was on the market, and urged the owners to negotiate a realistic price.

Fred Burnett, chair of the campaign, described the meeting as 'extremely helpful'.

He added: "The campaign looks forward to working with Punch Taverns to conclude a mutually agreeable outcome for the future of the Red Lion."

"And we will continue to work towards the point where it can identify what it believes is a realistic valuation for the pub."

A spokesperson from Punch Taverns said: "We had a positive and constructive meeting with the campaign group last week."

"We are happy to consider an offer from the group and we look forward to receiving this."

## Coffee charity aid

**EXETER'S Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre will receive a boost from a coffee morning in Sidford's St Peter's Church Hall tomorrow (Saturday) from 10am to noon. Entry is £1.**



▲ Legacy - Keith Owen.

## Peak Hill bulb planting spree

**SCORES** of volunteers are expected to join a bulb planting tomorrow (Saturday) to help realise the dream of Sidmouth's most generous benefactor.

The Sid Vale Association's (SVA) goal is to fulfil the dying wish of Keith Owen, who left the town a £2.3million legacy, and see a valley covered in flowers.

Sports teams, schools and community groups have all been backing the million bulb project, planting more than 100,000 since September.

SVA chairman Handel Bennett

said: "We are inviting the community to help by joining with others to plant bulbs together."

"Everyone is invited to visit Peak Hill to play a part in this historic event. We intend to plant 20,000 bulbs in a single day!"

Over the last year the small working party has contacted land owners for planting consent and selected more than 50 sites.

They have met with some 20 voluntary groups and ordered 150,000 bulbs from British nurseries, so the project is already well under way.

Handel added: "We are a com-

munity engaged in a single purpose - to play its part in creating the Valley of a Million Bulbs. We hope it will fulfil Keith's hope of an iconic spectacle to be enjoyed by both residents and visitors."

Registration for tomorrow's mass planting is at Peak Hill or via [www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk](http://www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk). Planting will take place on Peak Hill and at Jacob's Ladder.

Anyone taking part should wear stout shoes and suitable clothing, and if possible should take a small gardening spade, gloves and a drink.

## New vets' practice might incorporate post office

**THE owners of Woolbrook's post office have assured users services will not be disrupted as it is incorporated into a vets' practice - but it could still go to a mystery new applicant.**

Bob and Doreen Cummins plan to leave their shop and retire, but have been left in limbo for months while a new taker for the post office is found.

It was set to be taken on by a neighbouring newsagents until the proprietors pulled out, and could now

be incorporated into a veterinary surgery - or taken on by another nearby business yet to be revealed.

Subpostmistress Doreen said: "Woolbrook post office is not closing - it's not even on the cards, and that's government policy. There are no plans to close them."

"The Post Office has agreed in principle that it could be a vets' and a post office, and it wouldn't be the first."

Users gave the nod to a move to Woolbrook News

where the post office would have opened as a 'new-style' branch with extended opening hours and improved accessibility.

But owners Benedict and Lydia Mansi decided against taking it on after saying their business would have run at a loss.

Veterinarian Peter Martin submitted two applications for a practice, one with a post office and one without, both of which were approved.

He now hopes to take on the post office and run it

alongside his small animal surgery, but had originally hoped to run it with a sole purpose.

"It's not gone ahead as we would have liked but I'm still optimistic we'll get there."

"We're still determined to get into that space - it's a great location for a vets' and we've already got a following building."

Peter said the move would probably happen in the new year, but he first has to apply to the Post Office.

A Post Office spokesman said: "We are progressing an application from a prospective new agent interested in operating Post Office services in Woolbrook."

"We are currently working with the interested party to progress their application, and if successful, we will publish a new proposal for the provision of Post Office services in the area. Any new proposal will be the subject of a further period of public consultation."

# Opinion

## One to remember

**A BIG thank you to all who made the 16th Beer R&B Weekend one to remember!**

We undoubtedly have the friendliest and best small festival.

Next year's will start on Friday, October 10, 2014, with The Big Blue.

Sheila Riley (via email)

## Why so defeatist?

**COUNCILLOR** Mrs Liverton commented at the town council that: "People in town centres choose to live there for the convenience - you also have to put up with what happens."

What a defeatist attitude! While I agree that gated areas should only be considered as a last resort, it is totally unacceptable to suggest that the local residents 'have to put up with it'.

An ex-policeman in East Devon assured me that after World War Two the clear-up rate for crime was 50 per cent in Exeter.

I doubt if it is anywhere near that now. The theft of a bottle of milk from the doorstep was treated as just that: theft.

We need beat policing at least on Friday

and Saturday nights to prevent this disgusting behaviour.

Bill Bratton, the New York cop who cleaned up the city decades ago, did it by the "broken windows" policy - ie concentrate on the petty crime at the bottom with more police on the streets. It worked: NY is now one of the safest cities on earth.

We have plenty of police, but we need their presence on the streets.

Lawrie Brownlee  
Station Road  
Sidmouth

## Scouts have field

**I READ** with interest Mr Braithwaite's proposal to move the folk festival activities to Salcombe Hill (*Herald*, October 18, page 1).

As it would involve the use of the Salcombe Regis recreation ground I trust he has consulted with the scouts; not to have done so before going public would be a grave discourtesy.

It may not now be generally recognised that with the agreement of the trustees (the town council), the scouts were given the use of the field for 361 days a year, with the country fair having it for one day.

The reason for this was that the scouts took

over a derelict field that nobody wanted - it was covered in molehills, deep ruts, and some scrubby grass, and had been used for very rough grazing; there was a broken down hut.

Now that the scouts have created, and maintain, a lovely flat field, in first class order, there is bound to be a tendency for others to want to get in on the act.

By next August it is to be hoped that the scouts' new building will be going up and that those dedicated people who give so much of their time to the scouts will be able to give an even better service to the young people of our town.

CKM Smith  
Barton Close  
Sidmouth

## In the Knowle...

"CAN I commend to your readers the outstanding new book *The Knowle, Sidmouth: A Stately Pleasure Dome - a House and its History* by Chris and Rab Barnard for Sidmouth Museum?"

It gives a first rate account of the history of Knowle, which is fascinating.

The book illustrates what a unique place Knowle and its gardens are; it really does dem-

onstrate the special place Knowle holds in the history of Sidmouth.

As Christmas is beckoning (and in the spirit of goodwill to all persons) might I suggest that Save Our Sidmouth send a copy to each one of our EDDC councillors, with a special copy (perhaps signed by the authors?) for Mr Diviani?

This would not only provide them with an interesting and worthwhile read, but help develop their cultural knowledge and understanding.

G Clarke  
Cotmaton Road,  
Sidmouth

## Under pressure

**I HOPE** this letter is not too contentious. Our local Woolbrook bakers' shop is being put under great pressure with the local supermarket's new bakery.

I fear we will lose it. The issues I mention are the bakers' jobs. All experienced tradesman.

Times are changing - we'll never stop them, but we need to think.

Joyce Crabtree  
Sidmouth

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