

7.2.14 SIDMOUTH HERALD

THE end is at last in sight for residents of a Sidmouth courtyard plagued by antisocial behaviour – as gates are built to block revellers who treat it as a bathroom and a boudoir.

Sergeant Andy Squires has secured funding for a barrier at the entrance to Ebdon Court, off Church Street,

Gates to block revellers

from the district council and a town business.

Residents have long complained of sleepless nights due to people taking drugs, having sex and going to the toilet outside their homes – owing to their proximity to

town centre pubs and clubs.

The gates, predicted to be ready by the end of March, are intended to keep the revellers at bay.

The town council rejected a request for funding in October, fearing that the

gates would displace the problem elsewhere in the town.

But Sgt Squires said he has other powers at his disposal to deal with troublemakers.

He added that incidents in the courtyard inflate Sidmouth's crime figures and paint an inaccurate picture of the town.

Community revamp plan for Red Lion pub

REGULARS at a Sidbury pub have laid out their vision of how it will look in the future – as they put together a bid to buy it.

The Red Lion will undergo 'significant' work as it is transformed into a community hub, offering everything from cask ales and accommodation, to coffees and skittles.

Campaigners – now formalised as Sidbury Community Enterprises Limited – have drummed up pledges of support to

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help its purchase and a business plan to ensure it is able to make a profit.

They hope to see it become a traditional village pub with a warm and welcoming atmosphere, excellent service, offering good food, drink and accommodation.

"But we want the Red Lion to be far more than just the pub in the village,"

said chairman Fred Burnett.

"Sidbury Community Enterprises Limited will create it as a key social hub for the local community, at the heart of the village.

"The Red Lion will be owned by many local people who will have invested in it as a business.

"It has been listed by East Devon District Council as an Asset of Community Value.

"We intend to make it live up to that listing by inviting our community to use the Red Lion as a base for many community activities."

The bar is set to be redesigned, accommodation will be upgraded to reflect the pub's grade-II listed status and the courtyard opened up as another place to relax.

A restaurant will be developed to offer locally sourced, varied meals, while in the daytime users will be able to buy a cup of coffee and a cake.

The vision statement says there is opportunity to offer facilities such as parcel and postal services, and dry cleaning collections and deliveries, but there will still be space for the skittles and darts teams, which will be sponsored.

Once a sale has been agreed, Sidbury Community Enterprises Limited will begin raising capital by selling shares, available in £50 denominations up to £20,000.

They have this week put in a bid with owners Punch Taverns, which put it on the market to help service a multi-billion pound debt.

The campaign attracted support from the likes of Sir John Cave, East Devon MP Hugo Swire and the Reverend Susie Williams.



▲ Members of the Sidbury Into Drama group outside the Red Lion Inn. Photo by Terry Iff ref shb 2351 20-1311.

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