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Pub staff shocked by Bowd closure

PUB staff are fuming after arriving at their Sidmouth workplace to find it had closed down.
Restaurant manager Tony Hulse left the Bowd Inn on Sunday afternoon and returned for his shift on Tuesday to discover the news.
Leaseholders Paul and Belinda Coe had posted messages through some of their employees' doors, but others had to hear by word of mouth.
"I am totally annoyed, frustrated and

shocked - they didn't even have the decency to tell us face to face," said Tony.
"I was due to start work, but had a note through the door to say they were handing over the keys and they hoped we'd understand."
"One lady left her job to start here last week. It's disgusting to let that happen."
The three full-time and 10 part-time staff - some of whom stayed at the pub after it recovered when Belinda was declared bankrupt in

April - are believed to have been left without their week's pay.
He added that the Coes, originally from Essex, took on the Bowd Inn four years ago after running a café in Bude.
The pub is operated by Enterprise Inns through a lease agreement, so a spokesman said any matters of pay would have to be dealt with by the leaseholders.
Mr and Mrs Coe were unavailable for comment.

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▲ Action from this week's famous tar barrels at Ottery St Mary. Picture by Alex Walton. Ref sho 8154-4513aw.

'Let's lose our God's waiting room tag'

Report by **STEPHEN SUMNER**
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SIDMOUTH businesses should lead the way and cater for all ages and disabilities if the town wants to shake off its 'God's waiting room' image, say civic leaders.
The town is campaigning to be more dementia friendly, but councillors fear tourists could be alienated - and say everyone should be welcomed.
They said cash they are bidding for would be better spent on broader awareness training for all disabilities - and it would set the standard across the country.
Speaking at Monday's meeting, council chairman John Hollick said: "We are a family-friendly town, we are a visitor-friendly town - but being a dementia-friendly town may do damage to tourism."
"Everybody says we're God's waiting room already."
Cllr Peter Sullivan said he was happy to support an initiative to make Sidmouth more accessible,

but that was not the proposal before them. We should be looking at all people with all disabilities, not just dementia," he said.
"Some businesses do their own training, but smaller companies don't have the funding."
"We should be looking at how this council can help - I don't think there's anywhere else in the country that does it."
He said some local authorities might offer specific training with guide dogs or sign language, but nowhere else had such a broad scope.
Cllr Chris Wale said: "You've hit the nail on the head. People would realise there is a compassion and understanding here towards those with disabilities."
"It would be a great initiative to take this forward."
The idea developed from a single agenda item.

Discussions on how to spend the town's £12,000 share of the Parishes Together Fund - a pot of cash that communities team up to bid for - spiralled into plans that could make Sidmouth a national trailblazer.
Cllr David Barratt backed the proposal, but said: "Alarm bells are starting to ring - it's turning into some giant project."
He said it was likely to require a greater level of investment than would likely be available, even after pairing with another parish, and would need a lot of work to succeed.
Town clerk Christopher Holland said there were other sources of funding available if other parishes were unwilling to cooperate, but he would take it to the next meeting of town clerks to gauge the level of interest.

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