



## Beauty spot homes verdict

North Hill planning decision – page 3

## Minehead to Los Angeles

Story of antiques shop find – page 11

Pressure grows to have it withdrawn

# Town split on film dubbed ‘upsetting and insulting’

A CONTROVERSIAL film featuring Watchet and viewed more than 160,000 times online, has sparked a bitter war of words in the town and led to the makers being asked to withdraw the film from the internet. Declaring that they find the video ‘deeply upsetting and insulting to Watchet’, the directors of the town’s community interest company, the Onion Collective, who are the subject of the video, this week retracted their permission for it to be shown and are pressing the makers to remove it from YouTube and other websites.

By TONY JAMES

The video features the Collective and Biohm Ltd, partners in a project to develop mycelium insulation from fungi at a site on the former Watchet paper mill. A total of £700,000 has already been spent on the scheme which, it is hoped, will provide jobs for the area.

But controversy has raged over the beginning of the film, part of a longer episode made for a science channel by Razor Films for CGTN Europe, and which some claim

depicts Watchet as a wasteland and a depressed and empty town.

Many of the 200 posts on social media slam the film as a ‘travesty of the truth’ and ‘a deeply offensive portrayal’.

This week, Onion Collective director Georgie Grant told the Free Press: “The film portrays Watchet in a very unflattering way and we acknowledge that. We understand entirely how people feel.

“We had no control over the making of the video. We made it with Razor Films in good faith that they

Continued on page 7



EXCLUSIVE

The Onion Collective team: Georgie Grant, Cat Smith, Fiona Payne, Sally Lowndes, Kiri Carter, Jessica Prendergrast, Rachel Kelly and Naomi Griffith. Not pictured Tim Robb and Alison Hoare.

## Car crash victim named

A POPULAR local rugby player suffered fatal injuries last Saturday when the car in which he was travelling crashed into a tree.

Trevor Coates, 23, of Brompton Regis, died after the incident on the B3227 near Blackerton Cross, East Anstey, when a silver Volkswagen Bora appeared ‘to have lost control on a bend’ before hitting the tree at about 5.20pm.

He was a key member of Wiveliscombe RFC and had previously played for Minehead Barbarians. Yesterday (Thursday) a spokesman for the Minehead club said: “A wonderful young man. Our condolences and our thoughts go

to Trevor’s family, friends and all at Wiveliscombe RFC. Trevor will be sadly missed but never forgotten.”

This was echoed by a Wiveliscombe club spokesman who said: “A friend to all members of the club, Trev would light up the clubhouse with his infectious grin and all-round sunny disposition.

“He was a ‘one of a kind’ player, who had the ability to completely change a game, and it wasn’t uncommon to see him bursting from the back of a lineup through many defenders – and even carrying a couple along the

Continued on page 11

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