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All aboard! Doc Martin's in town

... AND, ACTION!

Okehampton was again in the presence of great talent, when actor Martin Clunes was in town filming an episode of the popular television series Doc Martin, writes Claire Hallett.

Filming took place all day Wednesday at Okehampton Railway Station, where a packed train of cast and crew filmed scenes as the train travelled from the station to Meldon Quarry.

The episode shows former Eastenders actor Dave Hill, who plays a gruff farmer and former patient of the doctor. He is seated next to Doc Martin on the train while the GP is on his day off.

Speaking during a break in filming, Martin

said it was lovely to see so many families enjoying the sunshine.

He said: 'The view from Okehampton Station is really lovely. I haven't had any time to have a proper look around but from what I have seen, it is a very beautiful place.'

'It's great to see so many families out cycling near the station — it's a very pretty station.'

'I am thrilled to spend some time here as so often I have driven past, going between my home in Dorset and Cornwall.'

The team spent one day filming in Okehampton and the episode will be shown during the end of September, beginning of October.

RIGHT: Martin Clunes and Dave Hill — happy to be in Okehampton.



Aiming to end jams on town road

by Claire Hallett

DOUBLE yellow lines are just one of the options being looked at to try and ease traffic congestion in a major problem area in Okehampton.

The need for action came at a meeting last week, which highlighted traffic problems on Station Road.

Town councillors are concerned at the lack of space available for larger vehicles, which are unable to pull in so that traffic can pass.

In 2004 a survey was given to all residents in Station Road, which offered possible suggestions for improvement.

Some of the options suggested were:

● Demolish parking on the right hand side of the road, to allow more space for passing vehicles

● Residents to buy permits to guarantee them a parking space on the road, but not necessarily outside their

houses

● A cyclepath to be put in along the road.

The survey showed the majority of residents were against change — however, white lines were put in to mark their driveways.

West Devon Borough Councillor and chairman of West Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC), Christine Marsh, said options being looked at for the road were concentrating on safety measures.

She said: 'There is greater pressure with buses, army lorries, camper vans and cars towing caravans going up and down the road.'

'The spaces outside people's driveways are not wide enough for larger vehicles to slip into and allow others to pass.

wider for vehicles which need to pass but not park.'

Cllr Marsh said everyone's needs had to be considered if action was to be taken.

'We have to be very conscious of the amount of cyclists who go up and down the road, some in large groups and often families.'

'This is something which has been raised by the town council, the hamlets council and some residents.'

She said HATOC was looking to address the issue and listen to what people were saying.

'We have recognised the problem and are now looking to see what can be done about it.'

Mayor of Okehampton Cllr David Weekes said it was important to address the needs of the residents, pedestrians and car drivers.

'Something certainly needs to be done with regards to the congestion.'

'On numerous occasions there have

been incidents where you could sit and finish your lunch by the time the traffic had cleared.

'Recycling lorries need to be in the middle of the road to pick up rubbish. But when other vehicles can't get past because the road is blocked, resulting in a line of cars unable to move, then there is a problem.'

Cllr Weekes said the traffic issue would only get worse unless something was done.

'With the railway station about to open, there will be more buses and coaches travelling to the station frequently, which will add to the traffic.'

'A lot of the bigger houses are now flats and where there was once one or two cars parked outside, there are now five or six.'

'Although having parked cars does slow the traffic down, if emergency services were trying to get through, there would be serious delays if they met an oncoming vehicle.'

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