

Dr Beeching unfairly criticised

WITH reference to the article by Tim Steer and the long service given by members of his family to our once great railways, I would like to correct the comment about Dr Beeching and his 'axe'.

The Minister of Transport at the time was Ernest Marples, whose family had a little civil engineering business called Marples Ridgeway that built things like motorways which were one of the great new innovations that were supposed to make our lives better!

Dr Richard Beeching was commissioned by the government of the day to write the report to look at uneconomic lines that should be closed and that is all he did - but he gets the blame when really the person who should be blamed for this is Ernest Marples.

I am a great believer in the country having a good rail network, which is one of the safest and most relaxing ways to travel, and much more environmentally friendly given the amount of energy expended to pull a large freight train.

Colin C Brown
Fremington

Double standards from the Lib Dems

A WEEK ago we were delighted to attend the LibDem Barnstaple Mayor's charity ball and it was a lovely event.

However, where were all the LibDem councillors and their parliamentary candidate supporting her? I was surprised and disappointed for her though it's the quality that counts at these things!

Yes, we have supported other LibDem mayors over the years too and bury hatchets of differences of opinions to work together for good causes.

There seem too many fair weather politicians out there who support themselves first and not their colleagues, whose support no doubt they want when it comes to elections.

I have noted Cllr Ian Roome's attacks against our MP, Selaine Saxby, over the fact that Ilfracombe did not receive '£24million of funding'. From what I understand, it was never an assured thing anyway, so the assumptions about success promoted by him were misguided in the first place but I have to ask - was the application which he oversaw and filed badly flawed? Did it not do enough to satisfy those assessing them all, so actually a failure on his part, as the responsible signatory to the bid and nothing to do with why it was not selected?

He failed to mention that the LibDems have been in charge of North Devon Council for many years and this also means its spending and ever since I can remember, Ilfracombe has always been relegated by the LibDems who love concentrating their energies and attentions upon Barn-

Blue is the colour



Bluebells at Brownsham Wood captured by Dawn Ensor

staple, which is where most of their councillors live. Remember the ease with which it spent £8.2 million buying Green Lanes and then significant refurbishment costs on top?

There have been some great LibDem Ilfracombe councillors working with others for their community in the past but they don't hold sway there now and haven't pulled the purse strings for a long time, so Ilfracombe folk have to consider who is really looking after them.

Indeed, it was a known fact at the time of our LibDem MP (23 years in office) that Ilfracombe was always the poor relation when North Devon

priorities were being considered - and he didn't live there either.

Indeed, the Watersports Centre, the latest multi-million pound investment in the town, has come from this Government's initiatives and not benevolence from the LibDem council and isn't it great that our MP has attracted such real interest and funding attention to North Devon since she has been working so hard for us.

So, the LibDems ought to quieten-down a tad on the failure to attract these funds for Ilfracombe, as people might realise they have to ask what was so poor with the bid ap-

plication that the council leader (the LibDem parliamentary candidate) submitted.

After all, Barnstaple was awarded £6.5million from the Future High Streets Fund so why couldn't Ilfracombe have been given as much attention as Barnstaple, councillor? Also, why are Ilfracombe's problems he has listed still the 'same' problems that I can remember they always seemed to be, despite them being at the helm of being able to change things there for most of the last quarter a century?

Philip J Milton
Trimstone

Do not vote for attacks on welfare

MP Yvette Cooper of the Blair-Brown government said her proudest achievement was setting up the Sure Start centres for parents and early years children.

People who were young parents in those days have spoken about how much the centres helped them and that they considered it was a great crime of the Cameron government and their Tory successors to launch a major attack to shut them down because their ideology is hostile to the whole principle of any such services to benefit UK people regardless of income.

That tells you everything you need to know about why not to vote Tory.

Thatcher's de-industrialisation, wide-ranging attacks on the NHS and public welfare in every shape and form, there are too many to name in a short letter.

Meanwhile, a billionaires' boom has been going on in recent years against a background of pressing civilian needs everywhere.

Who in this government cares about the mass murder of Gaza non-combatants?

The 'two state' Israel-Palestine solution needs to be implemented. Even if Netanyahu doesn't like it!

A D Gill
Ashford, Barnstaple

Cedars roadworks: councillor's project

I NOTE your comments on the Cedars roundabout and take exception to councillor Biederman's comments with regard to our MP Selaine Saxby, inferring she is politicising this.

In fact this is councillor Biederman's project. He is responsible for this rather bizarre scheme in the first place. In fact I believe some highways engineers distanced themselves from this project.

I was astounded to see the councillor on TV trying to distance himself from this in the beginning of the chaos.

This is the councillor, metaphorically speaking, starting a fire and then trying to put it out.

As for placing a crossing on the A3125 that will go off intermittently even when no wants to cross so that the councillor can get to Barnstaple quicker, I wonder what this folly is costing us taxpayers?

This scheme has resulted in additional pollution, extra fuel costs, missed appointments and lost work time, just to mention a few items.

The area that really requires a crossing is on the Old Bideford Road on the industrial side where Aldi resides.

People who cross that road do so often and they need to have some protection.

Des Brailey MBE