

# In-spired: Exmoor team has idea for Notre Dame

MARTIN HESP

martin.hesp@reachplc.com

**I**N the month since Notre Dame caught fire all manner of bizarre proposals have been suggested for the burned-out cathedral - from swimming pools to multi-storey car parks - but now a team from Exmoor is putting forward a concept that they believe is perfect for the iconic building.

The idea for a temporary tricolour laser spire, powered by the pedalling activities of Notre Dame's visitors, is the brainchild of Witheridge-based landscape architect Toby Diggins.

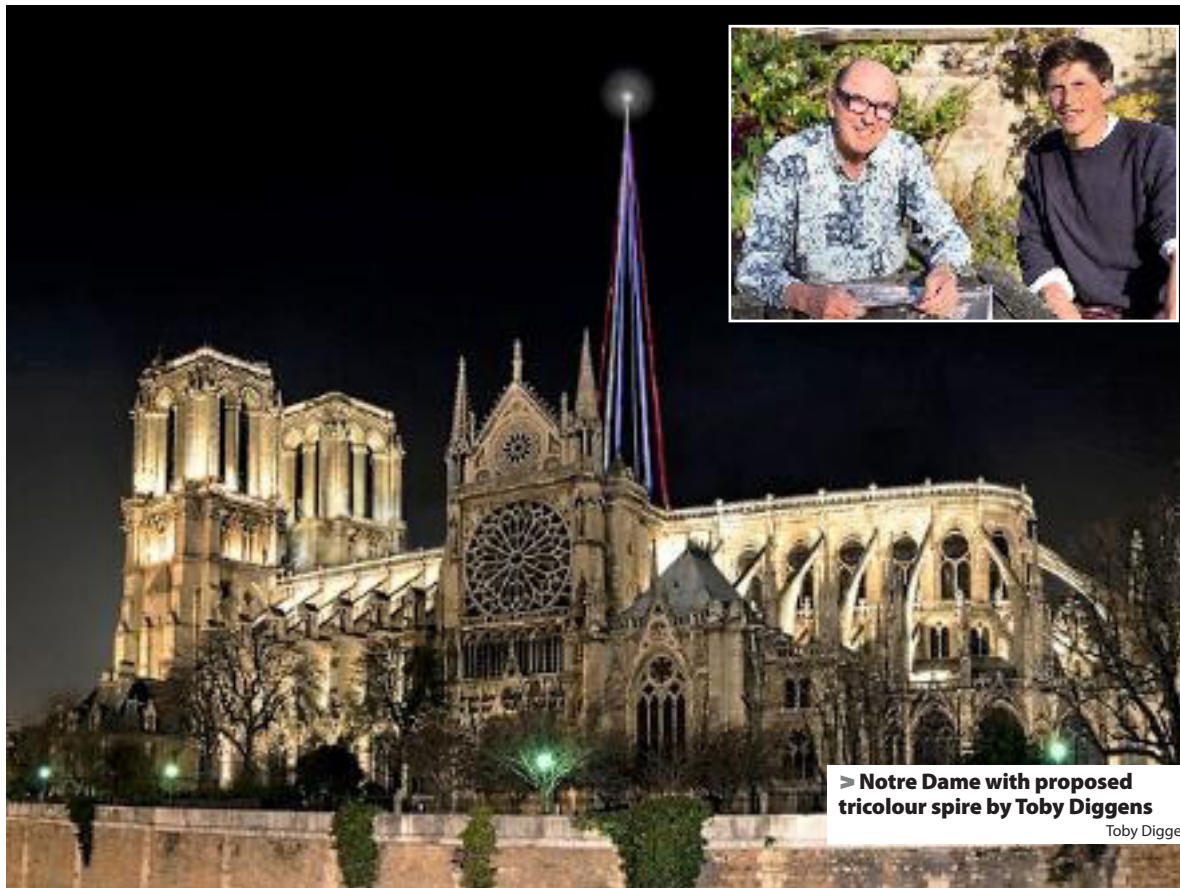
The brilliant concept may have gone no further, but Toby dreamed up the idea while working on another project for one of Europe's most influential marketing gurus.

Robin Wight, described by BBC TV recently as an "advertising legend", has spent more than 40 years in the marketing industry, and he told the WMN: "The tricolour is more than a flag, it is the most famous branding device that France has ever created."

"Notre-Dame is also one of the great brand icons of France. Connecting the two together in a laser tricolour spire will have huge branding power," added Robin, who has recently retired from his international marketing company to set up a project called Exmoor Branding from his Brendon Hill home.

"We were dreaming up ideas once we'd heard there was a competition about what you could do with Notre Dame," explained Toby, whose Digg & Co design business has been working for Robin. "We thought how interesting would it be to put up a temporary structure that embodied France - that embodied the rejuvenation of a building that is so well known across the world."

"It needs to be something that could be iconic even during the peri-



► Notre Dame with proposed tricolour spire by Toby Diggins

Toby Diggins

*Connecting the two brands together in a laser tricolour spire will have huge branding power*

**ROBIN WIGHT**

od while they were deciding what to do permanently. So we came up with the idea of a tricolour laser spire with the patriotism of the French flag embodied within.

"I am a landscape architect and

formally a marine biologist," he continued. "So my thinking comes from ecology and biology... The spire would be powered by people - so in the daytime you could have people cycling on bikes charging up batteries so at night it is powered by the people of Paris."

"What I do as a designer is rethink the way we interact with our environment - to make it harmonic rather than destructive. What cooler way to embody this than have the people of Paris powering the laser that shows off their fortitude against bad

times?" Robin commented: "Sometimes it takes someone outside the immediate arena to see such an obvious solution. Looking at the ideas of all the great architects I am staggered none of them have thought of this."

"I've been in advertising for 40 years building brands like BMW, Orange, 118 118 and so on. So I know a lot of marketing people. We are going to launch this idea through the architectural press and then we are going to find out how we can get this idea considered in France."

## Jamie's Italian collapses but Cornwall's Fifteen saved

JAMIE Oliver has said he is "devastated" after his restaurant chains appointed administrators, putting more than 1,000 jobs at risk.

The business, which includes Jamie's Italian, Barbecoa and Fifteen, has appointed KPMG to oversee the process. But Fifteen Cornwall - which operates under a franchise - will not be affected. Owner Matthew Thomson said it was a "desperately sad day" for the Jamie Oliver brand, but said Fifteen Cornwall remained the "silver lining".

He said: "We are proud to be Fifteen Cornwall standing as an independent social enterprise, still trading as normal. I was with Jamie yesterday. All of the restaurants in the Jamie group are in administration but the licence agreement we have is with Jamie Oliver's holding company and that is intact."

"We are still trading and the message to customers is to keep coming. It's beautiful here."

"But we are not gloating. This is painful. I've just briefed the staff and there are tears here."

"But we are the social enterprise and the silver lining in this cloud."

Mr Oliver - whose Jamie's Italian in Exeter has already closed - took to Twitter to say he was "devastated" at the closures and thanking those who "put their hearts and souls into this business over the years".

In a statement, the chef added: "We launched Jamie's Italian in 2008 with the intention of positively disrupting mid-market dining in the UK high street, with great value and much higher quality ingredients, best-in-class animal welfare standards and an amazing team who shared my passion for great food and service. And we did exactly that."

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