

Shop Front Award 1989

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Dover Society are:-

- To promote high standards of planning and architecture.
- To interest and inform the public in the geography, history, archaeology, natural history and architecture of the area.
- To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest.
- And commitment to the belief that a good environment is a good investment.

The specific objective of making Awards for shop fronts are:-

- To improve the image of Dover and enhance the environment generally.
- To alert shopkeepers and the public to the contribution to the appearance of the Town made by its shop fronts.
- To help in making Dover and its villages an area in which people will enjoy shopping.
- To encourage the smaller shopkeeper to invest in a good image.

RULES

1. Eligible for the Award will be any premises in the area served by the Society (see Rule 2) in which goods or services are offered to the public by display in a shop window.

2. The area served by the Society comprises the Parishes or Wards of Barton, Buckland, Castle, Lydden and Temple Ewell. Maxton, Pineham (Guston), Priory, River, St Margaret's-at-Cliffe, St Radigund's, Town and Pier and Tower Hamlets.

3. Any premises which comply with Rule 1 may be nominated for consideration by the judges. Nominations may be made by the shopkeeper, his or her customers or by any member of the public.

4. Arrangements for making nominations will be announced at an open meeting of the Society to be held at St Mary's Parish Hall on Tuesday, 30th May 1989 and will subsequently be published in the local press. A form is also included in this Newsletter. Nominations made be made by not later than 15th August 1989.

5. Nominations will be considered by a panel comprising three independent judges and two members of the Dover Society Committee. The judges' decisions in all matters, including the interpretation of the Rules, will be final and no correspondence about their decisions will be entered into.

6. The Society reserves the right not to make an Award or to make more than one Award if the judges so recommend.

7. The Awards will be presented at an open meeting of the Society to be held at St Mary's Parish Hall on Monday, 16th October 1989.

Some notes regarding shop fronts and the important part they play in the environment follow. These are given for guidance to those nominating premises for the Award and they set out some of the criteria which the judges will have in mind in the course of their deliberations. They do not, however, impose any limitations on the judges' discretion when reaching their conclusions.

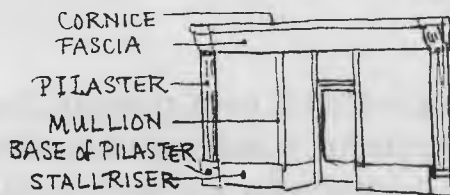
Shopfront Award

Points to consider:

PROPRIETY or GOOD ARCHITECTURAL MANNERS: Shops in Context
Is the area under consideration predominantly Early Victorian, Thirties, Post-war? Is it a Conservation Area? (see Newsletter no. 3). What is the general size and scale of the buildings and what materials are used?

A sensitivity to the area around the shop and to the period and design of the building is essential. Good designs of various periods, which take account of their neighbours, can sit happily side by side. New conversions of older properties can often incorporate some earlier features without incongruous nostalgia.

PROPORTION & ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL



- The areas of fascia, window and stallriser should be well-proportioned. A very deep fascia with weighty lettering on it over a shallow stallriser can look top-heavy, even threatening.
- Large areas of glass, unrelieved by mullions, can be inappropriate in older settings.
- Vertical divisions should reflect those of the façade above.
- Space should be left between the fascia and first floor windows.
- Architectural features, e.g. pilaster bases, should not be chopped off or obscured.
- Proportions of shop windows and doors should be linked.
- Projecting fascias and other extensions over the street can sometimes disrupt the line of the façades.
- Recessed entrances can be inviting and encourage the shopper to enter.



LETTERING

Obviously lettering is used to advertise and draw attention to goods and services on sale. It may be:

- Good in style and colour, well-proportioned, appropriate to its setting and purpose.
- Too large for its setting or for the fascia. Crude and garish in colour.
- Badly SPACED, usually by an incompetent signwriter.
- Poor in style e.g. semi-legible forms based on poor handwriting, 'olde Englishe Gothic' (especially when capitals only are used), 'fancy'. Eccentric spelling doesn't help.
- Slanting forwards or sloping upwards which contradict the verticals and horizontals of the building. (The former can sometimes work if contained in an outline).

COLOUR

Bright colours are used to attract attention and please the eye. When they are ill-considered and gaudy they are irritating and cheapen the streetscape. Bright or subtle, well chosen colours enhance the environment. Choice of paint or gilding for period details is important.

SURFACES AND TEXTURES

Wood is usually the most sympathetic material for fascias etc in older properties. Shiny plastics usually look cheap. Reflective tiles can be harsh. Self-coloured aluminium is unsuitable on older buildings but may be an effective material in modern constructions. Floor surfaces in recessed doorways should be carefully chosen.

BLINDS & SHUTTERS

Traditional fabric blinds can add visual interest and provide shade or shelter. Poorly-designed, non-retractable, plastic blinds are unattractive especially on older buildings. Solid metal shutters offer an unfriendly face to the street when the shop is closed and, unless necessitated by insurance requirements, lattice shutters are preferable.

CORPORATE HOUSE STYLES

Chain stores' designers are prepared to modify their corporate images, which are sometimes very aggressive, to suit local conditions when required to do so by local Council's planning regulations.

SIGNS

Signs help the shopper to locate stores. They can be visual attractions when well-designed. They should not obscure architectural details.



No awards for this lot!

WINDOW DISPLAYS

The aim is to sell the goods; displays should also be pleasing. Shop windows plastered with crude posters in day-glo colours are not an asset to any street.

MAINTENANCE

Peeling, dingy paint, ancient posters, uncared-for displays, litter in the doorway and on the pavement outside and graffiti do nothing for the area. If the building above is owned or rented by the shopkeeper upper windows look better if not filled with cardboard boxes etc.

UNITY OF DESIGN

We suggest that you stand back and look at the shop as a whole. Is the design all of a piece? Is it in harmony with its surroundings? Is it an asset to the town or village?

Suggested Reading

DESIGN IN THE HIGH STREET by Gordon Mitchell. Architectural Press.
SHOP FRONT by Neville Whittaker. The Civic Trust for the North East.

THE AWARD will take the form of a framed certificate or plaque which can be displayed on the premises.

NB. Anyone - member of the public or shopkeeper - may make a nomination.

SHOP FRONTS MAY BE NOMINATED on the form below or on a plain sheet of paper containing the same information.

NOMINATION FOR THE DOVER SOCIETY SHOP FRONT AWARD

Your name (PLEASE PRINT)

Your address (PLEASE PRINT)

Name of shop (please PRINT)

Address of shop (please PRINT)

It would be helpful if you could enclose a photo but the Society regrets it cannot be returned.

Please send completed form to LIN CLACKETT, 3 MAISON DIEU ROAD, DOVER to arrive by 15 August at the latest.