



FEDERATION of  
Amenity Societies

KEN WRAIGHT

## *The KFAS Autumn Conference*

WITHERSDANE HALL, WYE COLLEGE — 12th-13th SEPT. 1992

THIS year's Conference entitled "Rails, Roads and Reservoirs for Kent" was chaired, and largely organised, by Jack Woolford.

Robin Thompson, Chief Planning Officer of the KCC, opened with a talk on 'Kent and the East Thames Corridor', an area extending from East London to Sheerness and Sittingbourne, presenting a huge challenge to any potential developer. He stressed the vital importance of the proposed Rail Links and a Station in North Kent. He thought East Kent should have Assisted Area status and the new golf courses should be small and have a 'Kent' feel.

The next speaker should have been Tony Gueterbock of Eurotunnel, on 'Eurotunnel; Environmental Audit', but he failed to turn up, having been told (we discovered) that the Conference had been cancelled!

After lunch there was a tour of Eurotunnel's Cheriton Terminal and Folkestone's Shepway developments, led by Dennis Astridge, Chief Planner for S.D.C. A walk around The Bayle, the Old High Street and Grace Hill Areas showed how this once-thriving locale had fallen into decay. Ideas for its rejuvenation were discussed.

Later Bernard Gambrill gave the Conference an up-date on the Rail Link. 79% of freight using the Link would be for areas North and West of London; 50% would go via Redhill and Reading; £1.7 billion was needed to carry Channel Tunnel traffic and BR (Union Railway) were looking to developers to assist with finance; it was still not clear where the Government stood in relation to the Link.

The after-dinner speaker, Fred Lansberry, a former lecturer at Kent University, gave an interesting talk on 'The Demise of the Formal Garden in Kent.'

Sunday morning started with a demonstration by John Ward of Whitstable of what can be done with a video film unit to assist in Planning Objections. The film, concerned with the objections to the proposed route around Whitstable of the upgraded Thanet Way, was made by Video-Video Productions and gave a graphic illustration of the pros and cons of the development.

Jerry Noble of Southern Water services and Lilli Matson of CPRE debated 'the pros and cons of Broad Oak Reservoir'. Mr Noble said demand would exceed supply in East Kent some time between 1997 and 2010, depending on population growth and drought conditions. A lot of work had been done on control of leakage and metering trials were taking place but these measures alone would not be the answer. The movement of water

from West to East, ultimately via a National Grid, would be very expensive. Miss Matson argued the case for control of new development/demand and the desalination of mine water.

Mr Tony Every-Brown, a Director of Blue Circle Properties, next talked about his Company's hopes for the development of the East Thames Corridor. They owned some 15,000 acres of land in North Kent and were looking for a partnership between the Local and County Authorities, the Health Authority (owners of a lot of land) and themselves jointly to develop the area. He said he thought use of extraction sites within the Green Belt was preferable to greenfield sites elsewhere. However waste fill for quarries was now restricted and some sites, once thought of as derelict, were now the subject of conservation orders due to their flora and fauna. He nevertheless thought there was plenty of room for development, including the Rail Link and a station thereon.

Lastly, Allan Mowatt, Director of Highways and Transportation, KCC, speaking on 'Roads for Kent' said Kent currently had three times the amount of road construction of any other county and there were considerable pressures for more; the Lower Thames Crossing, the East Thames Corridor, new access to Surrey and Sussex to name a few.

A new transport plan for Kent would be published early next year. The KCC were seeking to implement a tax on Ferry (and E/T) passengers to help mitigate the cost of their travel through Kent: the County was hoping for Government help in bringing this about. The County was making a massive investment in infra-structure and it was unfair that the whole cost should fall on Kent rate-payers. There needed to be:

- full co-operation between the KCC and the larger Districts
- an increased rôle for public transport
- a decrease in dependency on the private motor car
- a requirement to manage demand rather than to chase supply.

Mr Mowatt concluded by saying that in the electronic age more people would be able to work from home and in the future travelling a distance to work may be looked at in a new light.

So ended this 20th KFAS Conference — noted by all as a great success.

## LOCAL ISSUES UPDATE

# Planning Matters

KEN WRAIGHT

*Chairman of the Planning Committee*

The planning scene has lately been dominated by the proposal of the Dover Harbour Board to build a Petrol Filling Station next to Marine Court on Marine Parade.. An objection was raised on behalf of the Society, listing some ten or more reasons why we thought this was not a very sensible scheme.

Others, including, we understand, The Department of Transport, were of the same persuasion.

The plan was withdrawn prior to the D.D.C. Planning Committee meeting. However, a press release at the time seems to leave open the possibility that it could be re-submitted under a different guise. Watch this space!