

IMPACT

ACTION IN LOCAL IMPROVEMENT

Update: Spring 1994

JULIAN OWEN

For the past year the IMPACT design team has been working with Dover District Council, Dover Harbour Board and others – including the Dover Society – to identify the right targets for environmental improvements. This is an important stage, to get the preparation right. Now things are beginning to shape up and 1994 will see more parts of the jigsaw beginning to slot into place.

THE SEA FRONT

Probably the most important project on the stocks is the improvement of the promenade in front of Waterloo Crescent, where Impact is working with the Harbour Board's architects. The work needs to complement whatever happens at the Western Docks, but also to stand alone if necessary. So Impact has taken a hard look at the traffic arrangements and has taken on board the comments of the Dover Society's planning committee. It sees this as a project for the winter of 1994/95 so as not to interfere with summer events and celebrations. It is therefore still very much in the preparation stage. Impact is also working with the water sports users and the County Council's Sports Development Unit to maintain the vitality of the area.

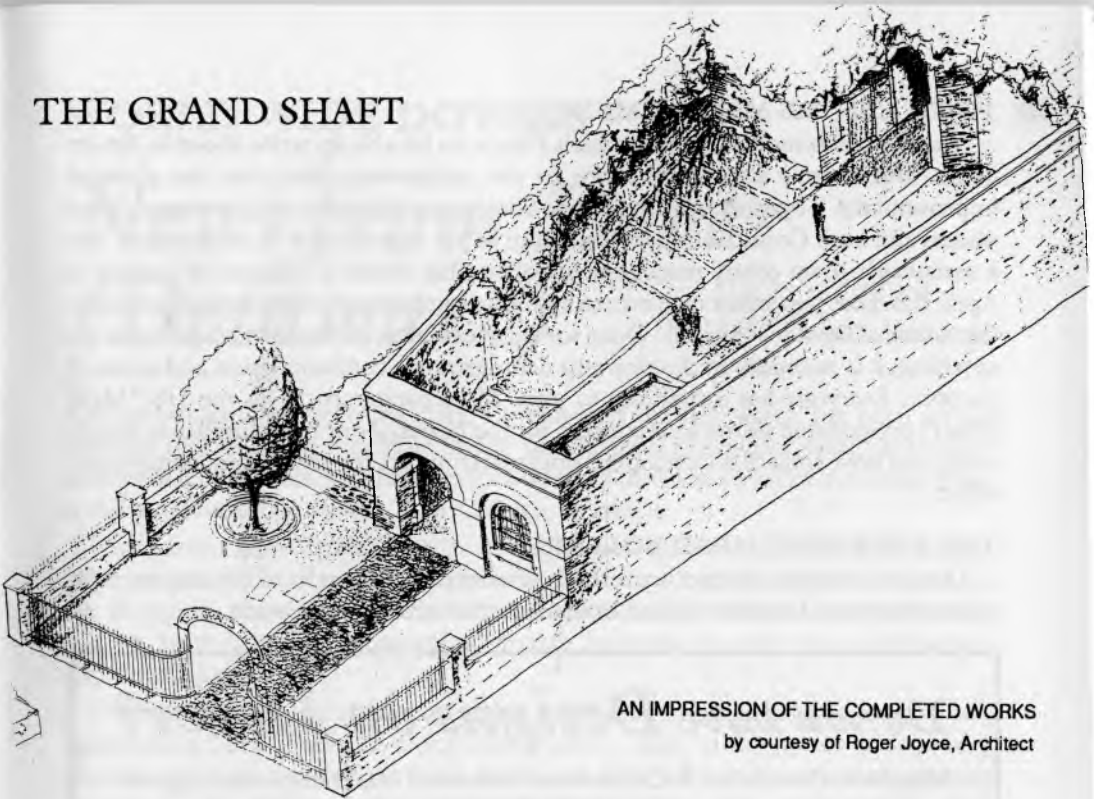
A PLACE FOR ART

Impact is working with Dover Harbour Board to develop, in partnership with local people, the brief for an art-work on the seafront, on the important axis of Bench Street/New Bridge. This would be the subject of a professional art competition, to attract a work of real international quality. Just as important, however, is to improve the setting of some of the monuments and plaques which already feature on the promenade. Alastair Snow, a professional public arts consultant employed by the County Council on a project for arts in town centres, is advising IMPACT on this project.

THE GRAND SHAFT

Work is due to start this summer on the faithful reconstruction of the entrance arch which once stood at the foot of the Grand Shaft. This is a vitally important site, not only from an historical point of view but also because it is situated at what is now Dover's front door. Careful research by Dover Museum, combined with investigative work commissioned from Canterbury Archaeological Trust, has helped Impact's specialist consultant architect to draw up exciting plans – which will give this precious monument a more dignified setting and aid its interpretation.

THE GRAND SHAFT



AN IMPRESSION OF THE COMPLETED WORKS
by courtesy of Roger Joyce, Architect

SNARGATE STREET

Still on the theme of the “front door”, it is expected that an extensive facelift of Snargate Street will be going ahead in April/May. Working with Jeff Reynolds and the Snargate Street Residents and Business Association grants have been offered to them for a repair and redecoration scheme. The improvements to the Grand Shaft, the completed installation of traditional lighting and the plans for more seats, bins and planting all make for a much improved appearance of this undervalued but very historic, street.

STEMBROOK

Moving into the shopping area, but still concentrating on points of arrival, the next major scheme is the further improvement of the Stembrook car park and Church Street, to complement the Market Square and Castle Street. This is also planned for early summer. There will be little disturbance to the car park itself, except for changes to make the entrance and exit more attractive and to provide safer space for pedestrians around the toilets. The District Council will soon be installing closed-circuit television in the car parks. Church Street and St. Mary’s Passage will be repaved to complement the path to the north door of the church, already paved with higher quality materials.

32 TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT

There's much more to come, which I hope to be able to write about in future issues. But there's also much more to the programme than just the physical improvements. Together with the Dover Society, the Chamber of Commerce, local traders and both Councils Impact has begun to put together the "business plan" for a sustainable town centre management partnership which it is hoped to launch in April. It is more important than ever to be able to put out very positive messages about the future of Dover – "Dover – Open for Business". But for these messages to mean anything, it is necessary to develop and demonstrate a common vision and sense of purpose. Everyone has something to give. My separate article on the US "Main Street" programme shows how concern for the hearts of our communities is world-wide, and how Impact is developing similar techniques for structuring community effort.

THE LEOPARD'S HEAD BOLLARDS

Last, but not least, Impact has recently obtained additional KCC funding to make a pattern from a Leopard's Head Bollard, so that more can be made. ◇

Do you have Designs on Dover?

Members of the Dover Society who are interested in architectural design are invited to take part in a **ARCHITECTURAL WORKSHOP** to be held on **Monday 16 May 1994**.

IMPACT, in partnership with the South East Region of the Royal Institute of British Architects, is organising an architectural workshop on Monday, 16 May. The day will form part of the Dover Festival programme and will take place at Images Night-club in Castle Street.

Working in teams, participants will look at a specific site in Dover and put forward conceptual ideas for its improvement and development. Other groups taking part will include local architects, urban designers, students of architecture, French colleagues from L'Ordre des Architectes, Lille, and students from local secondary schools.

Design ideas may be as practical or fanciful as each team wishes, and they may be presented by means of drawings, writing, pictures, models, etc.

The Workshop promises to be a most informative and enjoyable day and you are asked to contact Linda Wade at the Impact offices in Castle Street (tel. 0304 214141) if you would like to take part.