

The Objectives of the Dover Society

founded in 1988.

- 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 area we cover comprises the parishes or wards of Barton Buckland, Castle, Lydden, Temple Ewell, Pineham, River, St. Radigund's, Town & Pier, Maxton and Tower Hamlets.

All Members receive three News-letters a year and in each year the Committee organises about ten interesting events - talks, tours, visits, Members' Meetings and usually a Christmas Feast.

The Society gives Awards for improvements to the area, monitors planning proposals and supports, joins in or initiates civic projects and arts events.

Editorial

Once again, Seasonal Greetings to all our members. Our Autumn-Winter season started well with two very interesting talks at the Members' Meeting on 23 October, reported in this issue by Mr G. N. Harby, one of our new members.

The new format of the application form has already proved very useful for me, as five of our new members expressed an interest in contributing to the *Newsletter* and I was thus able to recruit some new contributors. Many thanks to those who have offered help in this way.

The Social Calendar, as you will see, follows a similar pattern to that of previous years. We have given dates for the whole of next year, with details of all meetings and trips up to the end of June 1996. More details of all the summer outings will appear in the April *Newsletter*.

The next event, after the distribution of the December *Newsletter*, will be the Christmas Feast in Dover College Refectory and there will just be time to still book for this, if you have not already done so by then. Some members may remember that after this event in 1992 there were a few complaints and we moved to a different venue in 1993 for the Christmas meeting. Then in 1994, at the request of members, we went back to Dover College Refectory and we were very pleased to find that all our minor problems had been solved and we had no criticisms to make. The new arrangement of serving the buffet from two points of the hall simultaneously meant that there was very little waiting time and plenty of choice of food for everyone. The buffet at Dover College has always been acclaimed by members as excellent value and is recommended to our new members who may not have tried it yet.

We have chosen as our cover picture for this issue the approach to the sea from the town via New Bridge, the latest of IMPACT's enterprises. As I write this the trees are in place and the aspect is already a pleasing one.

Time passes quickly, it is said, and it seems incredible that the members of the IMPACT team are now at the end of their three-year assignment in Dover and will soon be leaving us. The project ends in March 1996 and Julian Owen will be talking at the AGM in April about the work of

IMPACT in Dover. As Linda Wade mentions, in her report in this issue, their work is on target and on-going projects will all be finished by March. But IMPACT has been asked to leave behind a "shopping list" of ideas and Dover Society members may like to contribute their views to this list. So put on your thinking caps and, once again, be prepared to voice your ideas in one of the Society's annual brain-storming sessions in March, when members have a chance to participate in discussion groups and give their opinions on local matters.

Talking of collecting the views of members brings me to the main feature of this *Newsletter*, The Future of Connaught Park. When Mike McFarnell asked me to collect members' views on this matter, and we collaborated in designing a questionnaire, we did not know what kind of response we would get. Questionnaires were distributed at the meeting on 23 October and many members took copies for friends and neighbours who were not able to attend. The questionnaires were not sent to the full membership list, as it was felt that they would be of concern only to Dover residents. Thank you to all who contributed their views. Completed forms are still being received. If any member who did not complete a form would still like to do so, please let me know and I will send one to you, post haste!

Whenever we embark on one of these information-collecting exercises, I wonder, firstly, what response we will get, and, secondly, whether this material will be of any use to the "powers that be". However, as time goes on and we engage more frequently in this kind of exercise, it seems more likely that we, the Dover Society, have a voice in the town and that the views of members may play a vital part in this collective voice.

It is pleasing, for instance, to note how many of the completed IMPACT projects were listed in the Society's brain-storming session in March 1993, when we met Julian Owen and Linda Wade for the first time. Ideas put forward by members on that occasion included the improvement of Priory

Station, The Grand Shaft, Bench Street, Snargate Street, Stembrook, the Sea Front, and many others which have been incorporated in the Impact three year project.

Members also had very firm ideas, at that time, about the future of the Russell Street car Park area. Now this whole area is under discussion as part of the Dover District Council Master Plan for the St. James's Street area. Details of this plan are given in this issue by Terry Sutton, who was amongst the many Dover Society members present at the public meeting in Dover Town Hall in October. The Planning Sub-Committee has discussed the plans and sent its comments to Dover District Council. We will follow further developments with great interest.

In the New Year there are four meetings at St. Mary's Parish Centre, one each month from January to April. These are a slide show of Dover, a Wine and Wisdom evening, the Members' Meeting and the Annual General Meeting.

Incidentally, members may be interested to know that, after Jeremy Cope's account in *Newsletter* 23 of the A.G.M. this year, our chairman, Jack Woolford, sent a copy of the *Newsletter* to the speaker, Sir Richard Knowles, who cheerfully replied *"Thank you for your letter and for the Society 'Newsletter' and the criticism is justified! You cannot make a leopard change his spots. (Anne said I was woefully political)."*

Dates and details of the four meetings mentioned above are, as usual, on the inside back cover of the *Newsletter*. Please note that at three of these meetings there will be a collection for the Emmaus Community at Archcliffe Fort. (Details are on page 147).

1995 has been an eventful year for the Dover Society. Thanks to all members who have given help to projects, at meetings and in discussion, to all members of sub-committees for their work throughout the year and to all who have contributed to the *Newsletter*. Keep up the good work.

With best wishes for a prosperous 1996,

THE EDITOR.