



## WHITE CLIFFS COUNTRYSIDE PROJECT



**MELANIE WRIGLEY**  
*Senior Project Officer*

# Award-winning Countryside Team

Members may have noticed the various articles in the local newspapers reporting the success of the White Cliffs Countryside Project.

Staff and volunteers of the seven-year-old WCCP were praised in an official report. Kent County Council planning Officer Robin Thompson compiled a special report for the authority looking at the WCCP's work since its launch in 1989.

He said: "The Project has achieved a standard of excellence in countryside management".

Mr Thompson outlined the successes of the award-winning project, including its work with over 600 local volunteers helping with practical 'green' projects through Shepway and Dover District areas, its environmental education through extensive guided walks and bicycle ride programmes, and its countryside interpretation through outdoor information panels and various publications.

Countryside management is about helping local people care for the countryside and wildlife on their doorstep. *Countryside News* magazine is the volunteer programme of events for the White Cliffs and Romney Marsh Countryside Projects.

The White Cliffs Countryside Project was chosen to feature in a Countryside Management educational video commissioned by the Countryside Commission. Out of about 100 countryside projects around Britain the WCCP was one of three chosen to be filmed as an example of good practice.

In 1995 the WCCP were winners in the Welcome to Kent Tourism Award 'Best New Tourist Initiative' for its wide programme of guided walks, cycle rides and 'Green Adventures'.

In April 1996 the Romney Marsh Countryside Project managed by the WCCP was launched. This, too, won a place in the Welcome to Kent 1996 Hospitality Award for the range of guided walks and activities offered.

Returning to the report from KCC, Mr Thompson also highlighted the steady increase in the WCCP's work.

There was a record attendance on guided walks organised by the WCCP in 1996. More than 13,000 people took part in 330 guided walks, an average of 39 people per walk compared to the previous year's 31.

One of the successes of the White Cliffs Countryside Project is its combined enthusiasm and input from staff, volunteers and sponsors.

Volunteers range in age from seven to eighty-two. There is something for everyone.

Schools, colleges, work experience students, land owners, parish councils, the sponsors, volunteers and staff all play their part in making the White Cliffs Countryside Project such a success in countryside management.

Finally, this year the WCCP is looking to build on its success with a series of new environmental and tourism initiatives.

WCCP is currently funded by a partnership of Dover and Shepway District Councils, Kent County Council, the Countryside Commission, English

Nature, Eurotunnel, Folkestone and District Water Services and the National Grid.

Thank you to all the people who take part in the WCCP in some way. We look forward to meeting members at future events – maybe to join us on WCCP events in the Dover Festival programme in May.

## The Cruise Welcome Group

MERRIL LILLEY

**T**HE CRUISE WELCOME GROUP held its first meeting of 1997 at the Council Offices, Whitfield on 20 February. The meeting was chaired by the Town Centre Management Co-ordinator, Kevin Gubbins.

The Group is now firmly established with regular attenders from various local societies and businesses.

There are enough brochures remaining from those printed last year to last for the 1997 season. It was decided to use the remaining funds, held by the Chamber of Commerce from the money raised in 1996, to provide two top-quality map panels in sites at the Cruise Terminal.

In addition to the brochures there will be other publications available. Colin Sawyer, of *What, Where, When Guides* will be producing a monthly guide to Dover, which will include up-to-date information and will incorporate the whole of the White Cliffs Country area. The first issue will be available at the end of March for

April/May. Other issues will be for June, July, August and the last one for September/October. Colin said he would investigate various methods of distribution and report back to the next meeting.

The idea of a promotional video should be explored but it was not possible to produce it for use in 1997. The cost would be in the region of £3000.

Keith Southey, of Dover Harbour Board, distributed a list of cruise ships for 1997.

Other topics debated included provision of taxi ranks (long discussion), shuttle bus stops, the problem of left-luggage facilities at the terminal, foreign exchange provision and the printing of brochures in languages other than English.

The next meeting will be on 8th April.

## *Subs. Please remember*

that subscriptions are due on 1st April and that early payment helps to keep the Society's finances on a firm footing.

The Treasurer will be delighted to receive your subscriptions NOW and will be even more delighted if you will use the Standing Order Mandate enclosed.

Please fill in the Renewal Form printed on the last page of this *Newsletter* and *please* tick all those little boxes that are applicable to you