

Update on Dover's Emmaus Community

TERRY
SUTTON

Progress continues to be made at the St. Martin's Emmaus community at Archcliffe Fort, Dover, where at the time of writing (January), six Companions are living and working. More than twenty men and women have been accommodated there since the doors opened in December 1995.

The fund-raisers – led by founder and trustees' chairman Francis Watts – have almost reached the three-quarters stage in efforts to raise the overall total of £400,000. The £285,450 so far raised includes £71,000 received in January from the National Lotteries Charity Board. So there's only (only!) about £114,000 to go before the target is reached.

As at January 1997 work is expected to start on the adaptation and conversion of the ground floor of the large barrack block at the fort. It was derelict – with rain pouring in through holes in the roof – when the group took over Archcliffe Fort, but the block is now wind- and water-tight.

This task will provide, on the ground floor, more flats for Companions, a dining hall and a common-room, vital for such a community. When that floor is completed and paid for, and more money raised, the upper floor of this large block will be converted to provide more flats. At that stage it is expected the accommodation for about twenty-five Companions will have been provided.

The shop at Archcliffe Fort is open and trading well – but could do with more shoppers. Companions go out into the wider Dover community, collect unwanted items, take them back to the

workshops at the fort, repair and then sell them. Average weekly takings are about £500 but this is expected to increase as more people realise that the shop is open and that bargains can be found there.

Archcliffe Fort is open to visitors from 10am to 4pm except on Sundays and co-ordinator Kendal Beasley (01304 204550) and the Companions will be pleased to see you. Give Kendal a ring if you have anything you do not want that the Companions could sell.

Directors (commonly known as Trustees) of St. Martin's Emmaus are: chartered accountant Francis Watts (chairman), Dover housing director Chris Barnett (vice-chairman), Veronica Mitchison (hon. secretary), David Ryeland, chairman of George Hammond plc, Robert Scruton, chartered accountant and Local Government Commissioner and Terry Sutton, journalist.

Emmaus communities are growing throughout the UK – Dover's was the fourth. Emmaus communities – providing work and accommodation for the homeless unemployed – are now open at Cambridge, Coventry, Greenwich, Dover and Belfast with groups advancing plans for communities in Brighton, Gloucester, Greater Manchester, Oxford, Scarborough and Preston.

STOP PRESS

The **IMPACT** team says 'Farewell!'

On Friday, 14 March at seven in the evening the IMPACT team held an informal reception to say 'thank you' to everyone in the town who contributed to their programme and made them welcome during their stay here.

They moved to new headquarters at 5 West Terrace, Folkestone on 17 March.