

The work of the

PLANNING

Sub-Committee

Reported by JEREMY COPE, Chairman

CYCLE ROUTES

In April I reported on our ideas to promote cycle routes and about our contacts with Dover District Council.

Since then we have plotted a possible cycle route from River to the sea, a spine to which offshoots can be added to provide a network for the Town. Tim Ingleton came a second time and discussed our ideas and made it clear that DDC welcomed the interest and pressure for cycling. However this is not a route for town travel. We will now develop our ideas for submission to DDC but have you, our members, any contributions you will like added? We are always reminded in this matter how difficult it is to reconcile the conflicting demands of the car and the cycle on our congested roads. The problem is further compounded by a lack of money to implement any changes. Kim told us there is no Kent Transport Strategy. Without a strategy DDC can only react to existing problems; it does not have the authority to plan for changes, however desirable.

With each passing day there is news of the increasingly urgent need for a new approach to transport if we are to avoid seizing up our roads with traffic jamb and are to hand on to our children a world that is not irreparably damaged with car fumes, a major element of global warming. Our interest is therefore very opportune and with the new government appearing keen to find alternatives with better public transport and a more extensive use of cycles we have lobbied our new MP, Gwyn Prosser, on the need for a Kent Transport Strategy. His response is awaited.

BENCH STREET

The Society is very concerned about the derelict and neglected state of that part of Bench Street adjacent to Townwall Street. It is an area that, because of its location, advertises Dover to a visitor in a not very creditable way. Retail business must find it a difficult area within which to operate successfully. Jack Woolford represented us at a recent meeting attended, amongst others, by DDC, Town Centre Management, property owners and shopkeepers. It is difficult to feel other than pessimistic about a resolution. DDC appears to have neither the funds nor the legal powers to either bring about a co-operative redevelopment, or, as a final resort, to take over properties to enforce a solution. The Town deserves better and your Society will lobby for change,

GENERAL PLANNING MATTERS

Kent County Council asked for our comments on the substantial extension proposed to the Police Station in Ladywell. Alterations include a change of the neighbouring SEEBOARD site to an enlarged police parking area. We could find nothing to criticise and indeed, welcome the development in Dover. The only point made was the need for a proper regard for the residents with possible 24-hour car use.

The old Castlemount School site is proposed for housing development and, with one exception, welcomed by the committee SUBJECT ONLY TO THE LOOK OF THE SITE From the Town. The site is heavily wooded at present and proper regard must be paid to those trees to be retained and those taken down.

Members may be familiar with the old St. James Hotel. Failure to rebuild after the fire some years back has left a semi-derelict and rather sad site. Concern was expressed to DDC that a risk now existed, particularly to children, with the lack of proper boarding-up.

FINALLY

Have members seen, in recent issues of the *Dover Express* and *KM Extra* the reminder of ideas of a cable car from the St.

James Street area to the Castle/ It seems good sense to try a guide people into the Castle via the Town and in the process galvanise tourism. English Heritage are right to be sensitive about the impact on the Castle and the cliffs but provided their integrity is maintained, is it right to pickle in aspic? The events laid on at the Castle are artificial re-creations but no-one thinks they are out of place. A time for a rethink on a direct link from Town to Castle? Have you any ideas, please?

PROJECTS : Update

JOHN OWEN, Chairman, Projects sub-Committee

"OPERATION CONSERVATION 97" at ARCHCLIFFE FORT

The eighth annual Dover Cadets Voluntary Community Project took place on Sunday 9th March when the cadets turned out to lend a hand at the fort where ST. MARTIN EMMAUS TRUST have been restoring the living accommodation and the storage buildings.

A christian organisation, EMMAUS provides accommodation and work for its 'companions' who have fallen on hard times and need help to get back on their feet. They re-cycle household goods for sale at the fort and in their High Street shop.

ARCHCLIFFE FORT is an important local ancient monument on the A20 overlooking the sea. As yet little or no restoration of the basic Henry VIII fabric has been attempted and the site until now has remained closed to the public

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The working party – and supporters – at the entrance to the Fort