

*The work of the*

# PLANNING

*Sub-Committee*

Reported by JEREMY COPE, Chairman

## CYCLE ROUTES AND TRANSPORT POLICY

Following up on the last report, Gwyn Prosser has been very helpful obtaining responses from the KCC and DDC to our request for information about the problems of getting a cycle network off the ground. It's all very clear. Both councils claim that whatever their aims they do not have money to make changes and that if anything is to be done then it is up to central government to provide funds.

Hence when John Prescott announced he wanted views on an integrated transport policy, and this includes cycling, we felt bound to respond. Our response will be not just about cycling but the future of transport generally, a matter of considerable importance to Dover. We shall shortly be finalising our views, to be set out in a letter prepared by Jack Woolford. The critical measure of the government's intentions will be the cash it is prepared to put into any transport system.

## YOUR LISTED BUILDING VANDALISING SOCIETY

The Society likes to think that it looks forward, supporting new ideas and that it is not just stuck in the past. However, when suggesting or backing change, listed buildings should be the subject of particular care as representing the best of the past. Dover has lost a wealth of buildings through the war and the subsequent attempts at modernisation. It is against this background that I have to report two cases of your committee standing on its collective head.

We did not oppose the proposal to demolish the old listed railway walkway on the Admiralty Pier. A group of members made an inspection and the universal opinion was that it was ugly and its removal to return to the outlook pre-1916 was far preferable. However, we wanted the entrance, which is a handsome building in its own right, to be retained. The ugly security fencing needs to be changed and the necessity for a public toilet was emphasised. the verdict on this application is awaited with some interest.

The castle is our most famous historic site. Last time I asked if any one had any ideas on a link between the town and the Castle, following an article in the *Dover Express*. there was a sense that English Heritage was against change. I was delighted to hear from Barry Smith (at one time our Secretary) and from Barry Sheppard. At the Members' Meeting in October they both joined discussion groups and explained their ideas. Barry Sheppard favoured a glass lift going up the face of the cliff which would provide spectacular views. Barry Smith reminded us that there is a tunnel from Moat Bulwark up into the Castle which could provide access, maybe even house an inclined escalator. It seems to me that both ideas have great merit and should be publicised. Such ideas, if properly thought through, need not damage the integrity of what is our castle, whilst providing a more dynamic link to the town.

## GENERAL PLANNING MATTERS

The August report noted our support of an application to develop the old Castlemount School site with good quality

6 housing. It seemed an excellent way to deal with, in a very constructive way, what has become something of a derelict site. There was provision to retain the extensive tree cover, safeguarding the view from the town. However, a new planning application had been made to build an additional 18 flats in three blocks. John Gerrard prepared a photo-montage which demonstrated how intrusive this additional development would be. The flats appeared a poor fit within the adjacent area and did not harmonise with the neighbouring Vic-

toria Park. the photo-montage was sent as supporting material for the objection.

The Society opposed the planning application for a business park development at Farthingloe on the site of "Stalag Maxton", more properly known as the Channel Tunnel workers village. We should not forget that it is within an area officially designated as an area of outstanding beauty. Other business parks make this an unnecessary development and the committee are firmly of the view that it should revert to countryside.

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## DOVER SOCIETY AND DOVER TOWN COUNCIL

— JACK WOOLFORD —

THERE WAS A WELCOME NOVELTY at our Members' Meeting on October 20. Inspired by Dover Town Council's example at the Mayor-Making, we invited all the Secondary Schools in Dover to send their Head Boys and Girls and their Deputies. Only St. Edmund's Roman Catholic School responded but the contributions of Thomas Connolly and Jonathan Verrill to the Discussion Groups, notably (but not exclusively) on the adequacy of youth facilities in Dover, were splendid. They were informed, articulate, and a credit to their school. We look forward to a larger response from other schools next year.

A second surprise was the Chairman's production of the mayor's application for membership of the Society. This was received with appropriate applause.

The Dover Society campaigned for a Parish (Town) Council in the recent reorganisation of local government and has established friendly relations by attendance at Council committee meetings on common concerns. Permission to speak and to make suggestions on matters such as twinning with Calais, signposting, and the promotion of tourism is very much appreciated. The invitation to "them" to speak to "us" naturally followed.

### THE ROLE OF THE DOVER TOWN COUNCIL

ROBERT BAILEY, TOWN CLERK

Robert Bailey, Man of Kent and former Senior Civil Servant, now Town Clerk, emphasised his non-political role in advising on policies but his responsibility to implement them. For this, good relations with mayor, councillors, townspeople and local societies were essential.

Dover as a community had suffered for 20 years from the absence of effective local representation after the abolition of the Borough Council in 1974, and it was this gap that the (single) Parish (Town) Council, separate and autonomous, now fulfilled.