

# DISCUSSION GROUPS

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After the interval the members and guests divided into groups to discuss the following topics:

## 1. TRANSPORT

Points arising from Gwyn Prosser's talk

## 2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Government proposes to create an English Regional Government in parallel with Welsh And Scottish devolution. The South East region, already a quango, comprises Oxfordshire, Beds., Berks., Surrey, Sussex and Kent, but excludes London. Does this make sense? It involves the removal of county councils and the creation of much larger unitary authorities. Can we afford it? Do we want it?

## 3. THE ZEEBRUGGE BELL

Should it be moved?

## 4. VISION OF THE TOWN CENTRE IN THE FUTURE

Opinions.

## 5. IDEAS FOR FUTURE OUTINGS AND SPEAKERS

### RESPONSES

1. The unanimous opinion was that the services should be improved, that we need rail services we can rely on,

better rolling stock, tunnels and fire doors. The A2 road link should be improved. Better railway stations and bus stations needed.

2. Three groups out of four did not want the new system. One group thought that London should be included in the S.E. region as all transport centres on London.

3. General agreement that the Bell should stay where it is, with a suitable information plaque at eye level.

4. Ideas and suggestions.

Open up the Market Square by demolishing some existing buildings.. Consider similar plans opposite the Town Hall. Demolish Burlington House. Introduce legislation to deal with dilapidated properties. Demolish telephone exchange. Develop Pencester gardens which are under-used. Improve after millennium bandstand built. Install a cafe. Make French market a regular feature. New uses for the White Cliffs Experience - Maritime Museum, English School, Theatre.

5. Ideas for outings.

Globe Theatre, Marlowe Theatre, Ypres, Lille, House of Commons, Hever Castle, Ightham Moat, Knole Park, Tenterden, wine tasting.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

SUMMER 1999

The Society has recently been criticised for failure to attract young members. Certainly at our functions grey panthers rather than 'yoof' are represented. Your committee agonises about this situation. After all, who is to succeed us? Yet two specific efforts have largely failed. We are obliged reluctantly to accept that most people below retirement age have neither time nor energy for active commitment to societies such as ours.

All new members of any age are very welcome. By chance, these newcomers include some under 50s, Mr & Mrs M Lee, Mr E Connell & Miss C Black, Mr & Mrs L Vaughan, Mr T Brown, Mr & Mrs P Simmons, Mr & Mrs C Collings, Mr W Mills, Mr & Mrs T Manton.

*SHEILA R. COPE, Membership Secretary*