

*The work of the*

# PLANNING

*Sub-Committee*

Reported by JACK WOOLFORD, Chairman

**W**e are deluged by Dover District and Kent County Council with paper plans requesting our views on many planning subjects and, of course, we always respond responsibly, critically and at length, and we always send copies to Dover Town Council.

Recently we have commented on DDC's comments to the Inspector of the Draft Local Plan on his comments on Dover's former comments on his Report which started going back and forth in 1996 and is still unadopted. We have backed DDC on those matters we raised at earlier stages in the process.

Simultaneously we have commented on the Town Centre Strategy involving St. James and York Street and have rejected Option A (which included a rival factory outlet to De Bradelei's). We rejected Option B (which proposed a Tesco-size superstore in St James) in favour of Option C, a mixed development of high quality housing, restaurants, pubs and shops and entertainment facilities. This would presumably only be achieved piecemeal (as usual) but would be acceptable provided that long-sighted objectives are maintained. We have provided a coloured map to illustrate our plan. We emphasise the necessity for Dover to be reconnected with its sea front, apart from the underpass and a dangerous pedestrian crossing, by bridges at York and Woolcomber Street. We are not unamused that the Consultants' plan requires amendment to the Local Plan, which is still unadopted. Although we

think that a funicular railway from the back of the Health Centre through underpasses for Maison Dieu Road, via Godwyne Road to a tunnel under the moat into the grounds of the Castle is technically feasible, our preferred solution for improved access

is a glazed lift from the Sports Centre up the White Cliffs. What a Tourist Attraction! English Heritage please note.

As to "Kent Vision", "Kent Local Transport", as to both Dover District and Kent County Council's "Best Value Performances", "Local Agenda 21" and "Housing in Kent", it is one thing to proclaim virtually utopian solutions but another to have available resources to make them work. There are many feasible possibilities for reducing congestion, creating cycle paths and controlling parking etc, but unless enforced they are useless.

Meanwhile, we have reluctantly decided that Dover Town Council's offer of £500 to publicise our "Buckland Village" Project might do no more than arouse unfulfillable expectations. We have in mind the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme for Conservation Areas in London Road has so far attracted only one taker (Pharos Insurance Brokers).

We are doing what we can to move the prospective Water Sports Centre westwards towards the now hovercraft-less Prince of Wales Pier but expect again to be told by Dover Harbour Board that only the proposed site involving the slipway opposite the Yacht Club will be acceptable to the Royal Yacht Club with its indispensable financial resources.

We regret that our objection to the Biggin Street Amusement Centre was unsuccessful. We are not amused by the prospect of yet another on the premises now occupied by George Lock.