

# Society Meetings

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## THE NOVEMBER MEETING

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*The two speakers at the meeting on 19th November were John Moir, Chief Executive for Dover District Council and Dr. J. Coleman, who gave an 'Update on the Civil War'.*

### JOHN MOIR

*By Jack Woolford*

DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL'S Chief Executive began by saying that he was now used to being the 'warm-up act' at our meetings, having addressed us 'two or three' times. We now know that it was, in fact, his "swan-song", because of the impending reorganisation of local government, after 18 years. Consequently (I conjecture) his address was, like Gaul, divided into three parts: retrospect, the current situation and the prospects.

John Moir briefly instanced the East Kent Investment framework, which justified the use of public money, but detailed the July 2001 Benchmark Investigation which had shown that four of Dover's wards, including Buckland and St. Radigunds, were far below both national and regional standards in educational deprivation, health and child poverty, skill base and aspirations. Nevertheless, in the background was the Discovery Centre (ex White Cliffs' Experience), Kent's first showcase for Further and Higher Education. The mixed development in the Town Investment Zone (St. James/York Street) envisaged a major store in the town centre and an hotel on the York St corner. He congratulated Jonathan Sloggett, retiring Manager of the Harbour Board, on the prospective establishment of Westport. The White Cliffs Business Park was successful and

the acquisition of Buckland Paper Mill by SEEDA for mixed housing and industrial development. A Lottery application for the refurbishment of Kearsney Abbey's tea room was being made.

Mr Moir answered questions on the future of Maison Dieu House and on Dover's prospects in the South East Region and on the possible disappearance of Kent County Council. He detailed possible transfers of power from the District to Parish Councils (including Dover Town Council), which were very much welcomed by Vice-Chairman Derek Leach - also Chairman of River Parish Council - in his speech of thanks.

I take the liberty of adding the Dover Society's thanks to John Moir for his part at the centre of so many positive Dover developments since 1984, with a special emphasis on conservation. I am also pleased to be able to add that the Moirs do not propose to leave East Kent.

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### THE EMERGENCY OF 1628

*Reported by Derek Leach*

FOLLOWING THE WARM-UP by John Moir (his words not mine), Reg Colman, the retired Head of Dover Boys' Grammar School and a student of history, treated his audience to an excellent example of how to make history interesting and why it is important to have an understanding of