

constructive liaison between the local Agency team and our volunteers to both clarify what may safely be done and to co-ordinate each other's work.

It has been suggested that our volunteers may carry out some improvement work at B&Q lake. However Paul Marshall, the local Agency team leader, is unhappy about this because of silt pockets in the river. Whilst watching the weed clearance I saw an EA worker start to sink and understood the river's hidden dangers.

The Agency is not responsible for litter. I guess this is where the volunteers' primary role will lie.

Bit 4. At least I think it is an advance. I am helping Mike Webb to use the Riverwatch grant to further the work on the Dour, but the £8,500 must be committed by 31st December, not an easy task in the circumstances.

Bit 5. We agreed to press DDC to help provide a map of riparian owners. I understand from a press report DDC have agreed to do so.

I hope my report demonstrates that

things are moving forward, albeit slowly. I am afraid that when we started local people did not understand the way things work in riverworld. We thought that the first report, financially supported by the Society and other local bodies, would set out a detailed plan of action. However, all it did was to summarise the known facts and outline a strategy. Then there was a topographical survey, now completed by the Agency, to determine the river's reaction to any work undertaken. And now I understand that a further report is being prepared by Agency consultants to prepare a detailed programme of works. This, I guess, will draw on but supersede Paul Solas's report.

What becomes clearer to me is the Environment Agency's dominant role. We, as locals, can lobby and influence and through our volunteers help on the margins (literally). We, particularly DDC, will have a crucial role ensuring sympathetic development of the banks through the planning process. But so long as the river is saved for Dover then I, for one, will be more than content.

COWGATE

Report by Jeremy Cope

The year rolls on and nature having given us the summer growth tells us it is time to mow. We are now cutting the grass which we will pile into stacks, a winter home for the living inhabitants of Cowgate Cemetery. Our thanks to Peter who provided the highlight of last Thursday's meeting with almond macaroons and home grown grapes - delicious!

We would very much welcome members joining our working parties. We meet one Thursday morning and one Saturday morning each month so that you can choose the day to best suit your circumstances. Interested? We do

get stuck into the job but also take time to laugh and enjoy each others' company. Please phone Jeremy Cope on 211348.

