

The work of the

PLANNING

Sub-Committee

Reported by JACK WOOLFORD, Chairman

The response to our appeal to members for contributions towards our share of the costs for Town Centre Trees was very generous. So is the £1500 from Dover Town Council. Unfortunately, however, the essential £800 from the Regeneration Unit is delayed by new CCTV conditions and uncertainty about the rival merits of ground planting and containers.

Dover Town Council has persistently opposed applications for conversions of houses into flats in Folkestone Road, formerly controversial for housing asylum seekers and now associated with fears of crime. Dover District Council is now fighting an appeal against the refusal of permission to convert a hotel into flats. Yet this is what the market, following on long-term and widespread population trends, prefers. In the last six months there have been literally scores of similar applications. As a Dover Express correspondent asked: what alternative option is feasible?

Meanwhile Dover is showered with good intentions. These include the South East Plan, the Kent and Medway Structure Plan, the Local Development Framework, the Dover Town Council Five Year Plan, not to mention Dover Pride, DTIZ, WCBP Phase II, etc., etc. All agree on strengthening and diversifying the

economy, the need for employment, the expansion of the port, the dualling of A2/M2, the reconstruction of a rail link to the Western Docks, new water supplies and a hospital, a further education centre, etc, etc. All agree that infrastructure should come first: but none can say what or when the Treasury will contribute to kick-start the process.

Meanwhile (again) on the positive side, Dover Harbour Board has not only refurbished the finials on the Prince of Wales Pier lamp posts but has also undertaken to finance a dock exit road to reduce congestion at the Eastern Docks roundabout. Would that they might also support our suggestion that the slip road in front of the Britannia Inn, the Light of India, the County Hotel and Burlington House be prolonged to Russell Street and fenced off from Townwall Street to provide an alternative route to the town centre from the York Street Roundabout. Prompted by the Society, the Kent Highway Agency will finance reconstruction of the Crabble Hill traffic lights to overcome the problem of right turns. Apparently the Town Council has now appointed a new Town Clerk. Relations between the Environment Agency and the River Dour Steering Group may (!) have improved. Every little helps...

