

THE RIVER DOUR

Report by Jeremy Cope

TO THE CASUAL OBSERVER little has changed. The dry winter has meant that water levels have dropped quite markedly and rivers without water are just not rivers. The District Council may be making good progress on tidying the litter from the river but all of that good work is set at nought if only one major private riparian owner (such as the owners of the B&Q lake) neglect to keep their bit of the river litter free. It leads everyone to think that the river is still a rubbish tip.

However the District Council is working hard at removal of litter. Claire Pitts, the officer responsible has tackled Netto and has received a verbal assurance that they will start work on improvements to the B&Q lake in March and this will include removal of the litter. Claire is very committed to the river and to getting it clear of rubbish. The District Council have now set up a call centre and if you see litter, rubbish or an environmental problem phone and report the abuse on 01304 872428. Claire will deal with the litter and pass on environmental problems to the Environment Agency. The District Council want dog fouling reported; Barton Path is something of a problem at the moment and I would urge members to use the call centre number. Well done Dover District Council.

The Peoples Places money has now been secured, subject to submission of evidence of expenditure, with £8,500 committed on volunteers' tools and training, signs for the riverside walk, explanatory leaflets, and information boards. Without input from White Cliffs Countryside Project and backroom support from the Environment Agency the bid would have failed. The riverside walk has been one of the Society's long term aims.

The White Cliffs Countryside Project is now active in the leadership of the volunteers, busy organising training in risk assessment and first aid, vital for work on a river. It will be important to get training completed by the end of March/early April

when the trout breeding season comes to an end and work can restart on the river. The Project's Julie Thomsett is also looking to recruit as River Dour Wardens those who walk the river. The wardens will be asked to "keep an eye on the river" and report abuses to the District Council help line. Those interested in becoming a volunteer or warden please contact Julie on 01304 241806.

The Environment Agency intends to hold a seminar on the river's environment and this should prove popular with so many in Dover interested in the Dour.

In my last report I wrote of progress proceeding "bit by bit" and I am pleased that this continues. Of course we would all like to see the Dour upgraded in an instant but that is not going to happen. It is up to Dorvians to determine that we will work and campaign for a better river over the years ahead.



Local Books

Most titles are available from local Dover bookshops but also from:

Triangle Publications

Derek Leach Tel: 01304 823926

Dover: Collected Memories of a Century

A.F. Adams and Merril Lilley
price £10 - out of stock

Dover and the Monarchy

Ivan Green price £8

***The White Cliffs of Dover:
Images of Cliff and Shore***

Peter and Julie Burville
price £8.75 - now in its second print

***Dover Tribute in Photographs
to Budge Adams***

Bob Hollingsbee and Derek Leach
price £10 - now in its second print