

Letters to the Editor



Dear Editor

Jet Skis in Dover Harbour

On four recent visits to the Dover Harbour beach, I observe, with concern, the increasing presence of jet skis. Until this holiday season, I think I am correct in saying that these dangerous craft were banned from being used anywhere in the harbour.

According to one owner, the Dover Harbour Board now allows them to launch from the hard outside the Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club, and proceed across the harbour at a maximum speed of eight knots; and then, presumably to terrorise St Margaret's Bay, Shakespeare and Folkestone Beaches.

These demonic water-motor-bikes are noisy, dangerous and pollute the otherwise clean sea-water, especially when being launched or landed. They are a serious menace to swimmers, yachtsmen and larger ships entering or leaving the harbour and to the jet skiers themselves. They already have a poor accident record, including fatalities, mercifully not yet in the harbour. The cost of a jet ski is declining, which means that there will be of them. Unless the ban is reimposed, this is an accident waiting to happen.

I suggest they should be restricted to designated beaches or lakes, away from sailors and swimmers, just as noisy stock-car banger racing is restricted to tracks like the Lydden circuit. Finally, what an appalling waste of our ever diminishing fossil fuel!

Yours sincerely
G. N. Harby

Dear Editor

Bullet Trains

Having recently returned from Edinburgh (by train) I was astonished to see the description, in the Dover Express, of the Bullet Trains that will be running between Dover and London from 2009. The King's Cross - Edinburgh trains operate to a faster schedule though I would not describe them as Bullet Trains so where is this latest spin originating from? Was it in the DDC press release?

I was moved to write to both local papers and was wondering if you had spotted the mistake in the Express where I was quoted as stating that the London - Dover journey time in the 60's was little more than an hour! This was untrue. An extract from my e-mail to the Express is as follows: "So I can state categorically that, with 3 stops to Charing Cross, the journey time over 40 years ago was little more than a few minutes greater than 1½ hours. So 70 minutes in 2009 is no big deal." In fact the train I used to catch over a 5 year period from '63 to '68 left Charing Cross at 7pm arriving at Priory at 8.34pm. Later the schedule was speeded up from 94 to 92 minutes.

I am very pleased that Dover is to get the faster trains that will go to St Pancras. That will be of particular benefit for onward services north from King's Cross with a similar benefit travelling north from Euston. However, a 35% ticket premium is rumoured for a return journey to London and the time saving is much reduced when travelling by underground to the city or the west end. These are better served by Cannon Street and Charing Cross.

So my verdict is that the new services will fit very well into a faster integrated national rail network, something that Lorraine and I are using increasingly frequently as journeys by road become both less predictable and practical. This situation can only get worse in the future.

DDC would like to believe that the proposed services will appeal to the commuter thus justifying their decision to endorse the building of thousands of new homes in the district. We both have yet to be convinced?

Best regards
Alan Sencicle