

# Anti-social Behaviour Issues in Dover

## Visit to Chief Inspector Steve Barlow

Jenny Olpin

On 10th December, 2013 Joan Liggett and Jenny Olpin had the pleasure of meeting with Chief Inspector Steve Barlow at Dover Police Station to discuss anti-social behaviour issues in Dover. We were very pleased that the meeting was at our local Police Station in Ladywell and were surprised to find a modern and refurbished reception area with staff available and specifically there to help. The station was busy with staff and the Chief Inspector directed us to his modern and functional office where he updated us on Kent Police and Anti-Social Behaviour in our town.

Chief Inspector Barlow was very clear and understanding as to those citizens who can cause the problems and commented that there are 'no magic solutions'. However, that said, the aim of Kent Police is to make it 'uncomfortable for the unpleasant' in Dover. Methods being applied to make this possible include having an alcohol free zone where an officer in uniform can confiscate the drink and direct the offender not to access the area for up to 24 hours, or be subject to arrest. The current dispersal target areas are Pencester Gardens and the Market Square.

Of course, we are all aware of the reduction in Police staffing over the past few years and this made us doubtful as to whether this initiative could actually be implemented.

However Chief Inspector Barlow quickly gained our confidence when he informed us that he had recruited, for this initiative, a Dover Town Centre team of eight officers, plus a sergeant, working shifts in two groups of four covering seven days per week.

This Team will be based at Ladywell and it is hoped that the target areas will be 'cleaned up' by the summer of 2014. It is expected that those citizens 'moved on' will either stay at home or may appear on the fringes of the town where the Team will collaborate with the Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) and Community Wardens as required. Engagement with other Agencies such as Social Care and Mental Health is also envisaged to provide support in the longer term. Key to supporting these initiatives is the Dover community. The Society is keen to help Kent Police in their efforts to 'clean up' our town to ensure a 'two way' effort and have arranged to meet with the Chief Inspector quarterly during 2014 to update and to share information.

Therefore, should any of you have anything you may wish us to raise at these meetings please email us either on; [jenny.olpin@uwclub.net](mailto:jenny.olpin@uwclub.net) or; [liggettjoan@hotmail.com](mailto:liggettjoan@hotmail.com)

Dates of the meetings are 11th March, 10th June, 9th September and 10th December 2014.