

**Minutes of the 36th Annual General Meeting
of The Dover Society
7.30pm Monday 15th April 2024
At St Mary's Parish Centre**

- 1. Apologies:-** Jean Gavin, Mary Margery, Penny Matthews, Graham and Vanessa Fletcher.
- 2. Minutes** of the 2023 Annual General Meeting. Carried unanimously.
- 3. Matters arising.** There were none.
- 4. Chairman's report – Jenny Olpin**

Those present stood and observed a minute's silence in memory of those members who had died in the past year. Names reported in the Newsletter over the year. Bill Browning, Gloria Morgan, Phil Headon, Helen Miller, Jennifer Simmonds, Meryl Lilley, Nina Woolhouse and Terry Sutton

The Dover Society is continuing to engage with a range of issues and agencies to meet our objectives. (Do please revisit these objectives which are listed on page 2, next to the Editorial, in our Newsletter. Our Vice-Chair, Graham Margery, President, Derek Leach and I have frequent meetings with Dover District Council (DDC) officers which enable us to keep informed as to local developments and to discuss current initiatives. In addition to this engagement, we have been busy promoting the Society at the Dover Regatta and Urban Fete and have this year purchased a gazebo to protect us in both the rain and sunshine!

The Society has over many years been working to conserve and protect the environment at Cowgate Cemetery. However, this is now proving a challenge as our volunteers are depleting. We are pleased that support is now being given by White Cliffs Countryside Project with the grass cutting and general maintenance. If you have an interest in helping with our much-reduced team at Cowgate Cemetery, then please do contact us. Fresh air and good company are assured.

We have been pleased to install two Blue Plaques during this year. In Temple Ewell we erected a plaque to commemorate the life of Laura Bomford, an artist (Paris Salon), the first female Kent County Councillor, Justice of the Peace, and a leader of the Dover Suffragette movement. Secondly, we installed a plaque on the St Paul's Church Vicarage, commemorating The Lord Lewin, Admiral of the Fleet, who was born in Dover in 1920. Our Executive Team will be discussing our next allocation of a Blue Plaque over the coming year ready for installation in 2025.

The Environment Team now have a hybrid approach to meetings including a WhatsApp group. They are busy mapping 'trees of interest' and particularly focussing on the extremely neglected lampposts at the eastern end of the sea front. I am extremely grateful to our member Micheal Dukes for his continuing hard work in gaining some resolution with these much-neglected lights. This team has, amongst many other things, persisted in challenging the provision and quality of toilets in our town. We have been pleased with upgrading of those at Stembrook but continue in seeking increase in availability.

The Society Planning Team meet monthly at The Beacon and have been engaged with the plans for the return Fast Track bus route. Earlier in the year they were involved the issue of Air Raid Shelters which highlighted the lack of recording of such locations. The Local Plan remains a

current focus for the Team, and members continue to represent us with planning for the Beacon Development at Bench Street. Our Planning Team has developed a strong relationship with the DDC Planning department and has regular meetings and email contact that results in constructive dialogue that is welcomed by all participants. The Dover Society also has a strong relationship with the Dover Town Council Planning Group.

To commemorate the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Society is commissioning a Queen Elizabeth Maple in Pencester Gardens. This is in progress, and we are hoping for its completion this year. The Society also continues to take every opportunity possible to raise the problems with lorries being held at Aycliffe during Port delays. It is not only the noise and inconvenience that is very apparent, but the potential health issues.

We have been pleased to support our member Peter Sherred in seeking possible City Status for Dover. The opportunity to apply for this requires a national occasion and currently this is not available. However, Peter's hard work is in place for when that opportunity arises and is now held with the Society.

Our regular meetings continue with Kent Police who are now well embedded back in the Ladywell station. Our discussion covers a range of issues. Just a reminder that if there is anything you wish us to raise with the Chief Inspector then do let us know, but do remember that parking is the responsibility of Dover District Council.

Socially, we had a very successful summer trip to Windsor and the Thames. Our Quiz and winter monthly meetings attract both new and old members, as well as non-members. We offer a range of interesting speakers that have included The Duke of York's Military School, R.N.L.I. and Dover's Sky at Night. Over 80 members enjoyed our Christmas lunch once again held at the Marina Hotel.

The future of The Dover Society is assured as we recruit not only new members but also new members for our Planning and Environment teams. We are committed to promoting and protecting the wellbeing, development, heritage, safety and natural environment in partnership with our local authorities and charities. We have been saddened by the loss of Terry Sutton. We will very much miss his contribution to our Executive meetings where he would regularly share his experience and knowledge, correcting us when necessary and allowing no room for 'small talk'!

Finally, my sincere thanks to my fellow officers and to all those who help with the social events, trips, campaigning, projects, recruitment, Newsletter, website and representing us at the many meetings throughout the town. The Dover Society has a respected 'voice' in Dover so do come and join us as we collectively work towards making our home a 'very nice place to live'!

5. Treasurer's Report – Jane Jones

A comprehensive Financial Statement was circulated at the meeting. Chair thanked Jane for her diligent efforts in supplying these figures.

6. Election of Officers

6a. Chairman - Jenny Olpin,

(proposed Alan Lee seconded Carol Duffield) Carried unanimously.

6b. Treasurer - Jane Jones,

(proposed Alan Lee seconded Carol Duffield) Carried unanimously.

6c. Vice Chairman (Acting) - Graham Margery,
(proposed Jenny Olpin seconded Alan Lee) Carried unanimously.

6d. Hon. Secretary - Carol Duffield
(proposed Jenny Olpin seconded Alan Lee) Carried unanimously.

6e. Election of the Executive Committee

Existing members willing to stand, Ann Burke, Deborah Gasking, Derek Leach, Alan Lee, Jean Marsh, Alan Sencicle, Patrick Sherratt, Lyn Smith, Martyn Webster, Mike Weston.

(All proposed by Jenny Olpin, seconded Graham Margery) Carried unanimously.

6f. Nominations from any other society members

Paul Wells, (proposed Jenny Olpin seconded Alan Lee) Carried unanimously.

The Executive will confirm appointment of elected committee members to fill the following roles at the earliest opportunity. Until that time existing holder, if elected, will remain in post.

Membership Secretary, Editor, Advertising Secretary, Environment, Planning & Local Government, Web Master, Winter Social Secretary, Ecological Projects, Plaques, Dover Heritage Open Days, Minutes Secretary.

Non-Executive Roles (ex-officio) are not subject to election and will be appointed by the Executive Committee when required.

7. Appointment of Audit Committee

John Widgery, John Morgan. Carried unanimously.

8. Any Other Business.

MCW 50th anniversary of DDC clearance of St James graveyard to be commemorated. Executive Committee to investigate.

Then the meeting broke for refreshments followed by the drawing of the raffle.

After the interval the speaker was Josianne Murrel from “The Alkham Valley Community Project.”

AGM

A reminder to all members

The Annual General Meeting this year will be held in St Mary's Parish Centre, Dover at 7.30pm on Monday 21st April 2025.

All resolutions for discussion and nominations for officers and committee members must be received by Thursday 10th April 2025. They should be supported by a proposer and seconder and nominations must include the written consent of the potential candidate, then submitted in writing to,

Hon. Secretary: Carol Duffield, 46 Friars Way, Dover. CT16 2DW

Tel: 07855 045650. Email: cddoversociety@gmail.com

As this is the last of the winter meetings until October and the most important meeting of the year all members are urged to attend.