

THE DOVER SOCIETY

Inaugural Meeting

Menzies Hall, Folkestone Road, Dover at 7.30 p.m.

APOLOGIES: Cllr Alan Dale, Jean Bowers, Cllr Philip King, Richard and Victoria Fidler, Joan Liggett, Bessie Newton, Peter and Mary Sherrard, Ray Warner: British Legion Women, Dover and Deal Conservative Association, Royal Naval Association.

PRESENT: Chairman- Secretary- and Treasurer-elect, members of the Steering Committee and approx 150 people.

1. Welcoming participants, Mr Woolford said that Eurotunnel had already offered membership of its Consultative Committee which he had accepted.

2. Proposing the motion that the Dover Society be inaugurated with a Civic Trust constitution, Peter Johnson JP thanked Mr Jack Ind, Headmaster of Dover College, for the accommodation, emphasising the appropriateness to a civic society of inauguration in a college some of whose buildings dated from the eleventh century and in a hall which had housed a pulpit used by John Wesley. Mr Johnson said that the Society arose from growing concern in 1987 of threats to Dover including the District Council's proposed sale of public open spaces. It would not, however, be a mere protest and banner-waving group but would be non-party and constructive, offering inside knowledge. He enumerated some of Dover's unique touristic assets and thought that some, like the Zeebrugge Bell and St James's Cemetery, might be more emphasised. The Channel Tunnel need not be a disaster for Dover which, with better shopping, might rival Canterbury, Bath and York. To general applause he addressed the Chief Reporter of the "Dover Express" saying that he, too, was "backing Dover". The motion was seconded by Ken Wraight and carried unanimously and with acclamation.

3. Mr Woolford then outlined the Civic Trust constitution, emphasising its open democratic membership and control with annual election of officers. There would be only one rate of subscription, namely £2.50 per annum, with a reduction to £10 for five-year membership.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS: the following recommendations from the Steering Committee were accepted:

Chairman: A.J. Woolford MA; Vice-Chairman: John Gerrard

Secretary: Barry Smith; Treasurer: Norman Willis

4. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE: the following recommendations from the Steering Committee were accepted:

Ken Berry; Linda Clackett (Social Secretary); Jeremy Cope; Michael Foad (Advisory) Peter Johnson; Philomena Kennedy; Mike McFarnell (Advisory); Sybil Standing; Ken Wraight.

The following were coopted on proposal and seconding from the floor:

Joan Liggett (Royal Naval Association); Phyllis Dobbins (Fair Play - Dover Action Committee); David Elms (River Dour Association); Jim Truelove (Sports Council and Carnival Committee); ? Page (Social Programme). Mr Steve Turner (Fair Play: Action Committee) agreed to attend the first Committee meeting to press the priority of preserving public open spaces. The Committee will meet on Thursday May 12th at 7.30 p.m. at 53 Park Avenue (by kind invitation of Jeremy Cope).

5. PRESIDENT:

The following names for consideration by the Committee were suggested:

The Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports (Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother); the Duke of Kent; the Earl (Countess?) of Guilford;

6. VICE-PRESIDENTS:

The following names for consideration by the Committee were suggested:

Budge Adams; Ivan Green, Jack Ind, Peter Johnson, Lilian Kaye, Jonathan Sloggett.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- a. Peter Johnson thanked Philomena Kennedy for initiating the concept and for devising and distributing the publicity.
- b. Cllr Kit Smith of Dover District Council offered the hand of friendship and a direct line to the Council.
- c. David Elms briefly addressed the meeting on the River Dour Association.
- d. At the conclusion of business 73 members joined.

8. Mr Woolford listed and illustrated some of Dover's "Assets and Liabilities" with slides loaned by Ray Warner and specially taken by Philomena Kennedy. The following additional suggestions were made from the floor. A second public meeting would follow as soon as there was something to report.

- a. A site on the Western Heights rather than Connaught Park for a caravan park.
- b. The Barton Path riverside car dump.
- c. The desirability of listing Brook House.
- d. Consultation with Dover Harbour Board on the closure of Admiralty Pier.
- e. The rehabilitation of Dover Marine Station as an entry to the town in contrast with mainland counterparts.
- f. The tourist potential of the Admiralty Pier battery, the subterranean tunnels, the Officers Mess.
- g. The standard of shop facades compared with upper storeys.
- h. Responsibility for cleaning of shop frontages.
- j. Provision of skips.