

New group gets line to the top

DOVER'S new amenity group, The Dover Society, was launched at a meeting attended by nearly 200 people on Monday and was immediately promised a "direct line" to the decision makers on the district council.

Many have already joined the society, which was formed as a reaction to Dover District Council proposals to sell off council-owned open spaces.

Elected chairman of the new group was Mr Jack Woolford, of Green Lane, Temple Ewell, who is also chairman of the Kent Association of Amenity Societies and was the last chairman of the now-defunct New Dover Group.

Other officers elected were: John Gerrard (vice-chairman),

By Terry Sutton

secretary Barrie Smith, of Glenfield Road, Dover (Dover 214049), and Norman Willis (treasurer).

Committee: Linda Clackett, Jeremy Cope, Mike Foad, John Jerrard, Peter Johnson, Philomena Kennedy, Mike McFarrell, Sybil Standing, Ken Wraight, Joan Ligget, Phyllis Dobbins, Jim Truelove and Ken Barry.

The Lord Warden, the Queen Mother, is to be invited to become Patron.

Councillor Kit Smith, from Northbourne, told The Dover Society that its formation was

welcomed by Dover District Council. He suggested a partnership between the two to help enhance the town.

"You have a direct line to the leader of the council," he promised.

It was Mr Peter Johnson, of Castle Avenue, Dover, who formally proposed the formation of The Dover Society. He explained the background to the formation of the group was the conflict that built-up in 1987 between Dover citizens and the district council over the proposed sale of open spaces.

Many, he said, felt their views about the future of Dover were being ignored while decisions were being made by councillors who lived elsewhere.

But, said Mr Johnson, the new society was not a protest organisation and was not party political. In his view too much time and money was wasted over politics in local government.

Nor were members of The Dover Society cranks, he said. They aimed to harness the experience and skills of Dover people for the benefit of the town.

They would offer constructive criticism and aimed to be influential. They wanted to work with the district council.

"We are backing Dover," said Mr Johnson. The town had so much to offer and he did not believe that the Channel Tunnel was going to hit Dover disastrously.