

The Dover Society

Minutes of the Executive Committee, held on Thursday 11 October 2012 at St Paul's Parish room, Dover

Present: Derek Leach (Chair), Jeremy Cope, Sheila Cope, Glyn Hale, Patricia Hooper-Sherratt, Alan Lee, Susan Jones, Mike McFarnell, Jean Marsh, William Naylor, Pat Sherratt, Terry Sutton, Mike Weston

Member Sylvie Parsons gave a short talk about the Brighter Dover project, which is the planting of plants and shrubs in tubs and planters in the town centre. It has been very successful and she was seeking advice from the committee on how to take it forward. The Executive suggested that the Society could support the project by acting as its banker and by the project being under the umbrella of the Society. The Brighter Dover group would be free to spend any funding the project raised. It was agreed that the Chairman should set out the offer in a note for the group to consider.

1. Apologies and resignation

Apologies from Alan Sencicle.

A letter of resignation had been received from Di French. Due to family and business commitments she feels unable to devote the time to be an active member of the committee. Derek Leach to respond suggesting she reconsiders – giving what little time she feels able.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Correction to September minutes, item 7, should read Glyn Thomas and not Ian Tomlinson. Item 9, S215 should be under planning. The minutes were then agreed.

3. Matters Arising

Terry Sutton has started on the archives project and has three volunteers.

On the Town Hall Heritage open day seventy people attended.

The 25th Anniversary text has been drafted and is being proof read. London Fancy Box has been approached informally and received a favourable response; Jeremy Cope will contact them by letter in the next few days.

The Chairman has written about the 25th Anniversary for the Dover Life magazine.

Dover Castle is open in October, and not closed as previously stated at last meeting. For details of the winter opening times, refer to English Heritage website.

4. Chairman's Report

Remembrance Sunday this year is on the 11th November. Terry Sutton will represent the Dover Society at the Dover Town Centre parade. The Chairman will represent the Society at the Western Docks service on 8 November.

Banners for the Society. Two suggested wordings had been sent out to members of the committee for comment. Susan Jones had made some suggestions and agreed to consider design. Dover Arts Development may have ideas on design and could be approached for advice.

5. Secretary's Report

There was nothing to report.

6. Treasurer's Report

Subscriptions received during September £16.00.

As agreed at the last meeting, a donation of £125.00 has been paid towards the cost of winter plants for the town centre.

The quarterly interest from our CAF account amounted to £12.95.

This morning our internal auditors, Barry Late, John Widgery and John Morgan went through our 2011/2012 accounts and signed them off. Jeremy Cope was thanked for the assistance he gave in going through the records and in preparing the report, based on the requirements of the Charity Commission. A copy of the report is available for anyone who wishes to see it.

Jeremy also relayed the praises of the auditors on the way the Treasurer's records had been kept and presented.

7. Membership Secretary's Report

There are no new members this month. Moya Large has died. The last number allocated is 1132 and we have 444 members. An old poster was shown to attract new members. Sue Jones offered to take it to redesign it.

8. Projects

- **Cowgate.** The wet weather has made the mowing very difficult. A more powerful mowing device is needed and there is funding to finance this.
- **River Dour.** The steering group meets next Wednesday and Sue Jones was asked to be chair, which she would be prepared to accept. The involvement of the Town Council is important because the worst part of the river is in Dover. There is a conflict between the flood risk and the bio-diversity of plants and small islands placed in the river. Requested to bring this up at the meeting.
- **Walk paths.** No.1 walk not yet been done. There is a need to get a group together. There has been a complaint about access in Barton Path.
- The drains are blocked at the bottom of Connaught road. The routine maintenance is not being carried out. Details of any other locations of blocked drains to be sent to Nigel Collor.

9. Refurbishment

Rainwater collection. It has been raised with DDC about harvesting rainwater on new builds, in particular in the DTIZ. There is an issue of collection, soak away and drainage.

United Reform Church. This church on the High Street, opposite the Town Hall entrance was damaged by fire in 2007 while it was being converted into apartments. No work has been done since and it now requires action. It is not a listed building and the opinion is it is not listable. However, an individual can apply to have it listed. Referred to Pat Sherrett, re S215.

- **Conversation Areas.** The possibility of guided Dover walks to cover the history of Dover. There are several publications on this subject but need to be brought up to date. Sue Jones offered to do this. It has been noted that satellite dishes are being put on properties in Conservation Areas. Also the area behind Barclays Bank is a mess and needs cleaning up. To be raised with council. It was suggested that Sylvie Parsons, who raised these items, should contact Pat Sherratt to keep him informed.
- **Snargate Street.** Pictures of the now demolished Hover port hotel, shows the missing Hippodrome plaque. Does anyone know where this is?
- **Clean up.** The clean up organised by DTC on 15TH September was a success. Future annual clean ups rely on volunteer groups and there is a need to give three to four months notice.
- **Zero Tolerance.** The DDC policy is to be introduced this winter.
- **Bomb sites.** It has been suggested that a plaque be put on former bombsites but this may not be practical and not sure where the funding would come from.
- **Rail Fares.** There is a concern that it is more costly to get to Dover than other towns on the South East coast. These concerns have been passed on.
- **Norwegian Garden.** These gardens need attention.
- **Big Screen.** The meeting was keen to see this eyesore and white elephant removed now that the Olympics but apparently the very high cost of removal would have to be found locally. Sue Jones would like to see it removed and will give her full support. Issue to be raised with Mike Dawson.

10. Town Hall Refurbishment/Guided Tours

The guided tours from 1 November are from 10.00 to 14.00 hrs on Wednesdays. We have now grossed over £1200.00 from 750 tour visitors. There is to be a guides meeting next Thursday 18 October. The Executive Group responsible for progressing the long term usage of the building and its restoration funding had not met since February due to DDC staff's

involvement with the Olympic Torch arrangements but at long last a meeting will be held shortly.

11. Social Secretary's Report

- **Christmas Feast.** 71 bookings so far. If any more wish to come they would have to be seated in the terrace area.
- **Trips.** Three trips are planned for next year and details will appear in the newsletter.

12. Planning

- **DTIZ.** No evidence of any activity on site.
- **Buckland Hospital.** Due to start March 2013 and planning application is now going in.
- **DHB.** Privatisation submission now awaiting new Transport Minister's decision.
- **Seafrost.** The shingle plants planted by volunteers are a success.
- **DDC.** Consultation on Land Allocation. This should have been in April but is now due in the autumn. Need to know objectives and criteria.
- **ABC Cinema, Castle Street.** Not included in the S215 as it was within the DTIZ. Weatherspoons had proposed plans for the building that have not materialised so the property will now be put on S215 list.
- **Western Heights.** Now at Executive Committee level. English Heritage and DDC have revised plans.
- **River Dour Cycle route.** There is a concern over the safety of this route. A member of the Castle Forum with Risk Assessment expertise is preparing a paper for DDC/KCC.
- **Section 215 Stage One.** The properties that have not started work or given a start date to DDC have been sent a second warning letter. It is possible that 215 Notices will be served on two or three properties. From the experience of Hastings, this makes others take note and take action.
- **Section 215 Stage Two.** In Folkestone Road, 65 properties have been identified and the first warning letter has been sent out. There is a need for photographic evidence. The Air Wardens Post – need to get in touch with KCC.
- **Maison Dieu Lodge.** Appeal dismissed. There was much emphasis on the quality of life for residents, mainly elderly, and the statement from DDC that indicated a risk of anti social behaviour.
- **Policing.** No further news from Dover Police. Pat Sherratt has a contact who attends the Divisional Commanders' meetings, and will raise in particular the lack of a custody suite at Dover Police station.

13. Press Secretary's Report.

There was nothing to report.

14. Editor's Report.

Waiting for proof reading to be returned then taken to the printers. The newsletter should be out by end of October, early November. Some stuffing will be needed.

15. Publications

There was nothing to report.

16. Any other business

Mike McFarnell has given Terry Sutton copy of Dover film made in 1962 for narration. Pat Sherratt said we still have three vacancies on the Dover Society planning committee. They are representatives of Whitfield, Dover and Temple Ewell. If we cannot get the numbers, we may consider merging the areas. As chair of this committee he would welcome a debate on this.

The raffle prizes for the Christmas Feast. Denise Lee is taking this on and Chairman will mention at the October meeting that the prizes should be mainly food and drink.

Date of next meeting

Thursday 9th November 2012, at 7.30 pm at St Paul's Parish Rooms, Dover.