

Temple Ewell Doomsday 1990

William the Conqueror's Doomsday in 1086 was to assess the taxability of the newly conquered kingdom: ours in 1989 was to measure not only what the village was in terms of numbers and properties etc but what the village thought of itself and what it wanted. It was an interesting and informative exercise and involved a lot of people, amateurs all, doing a lot of work. As with membership of an amenity - or any other - society, it brought together a group of people, strangers to each other for the most part, and turned them into working partners and friends.

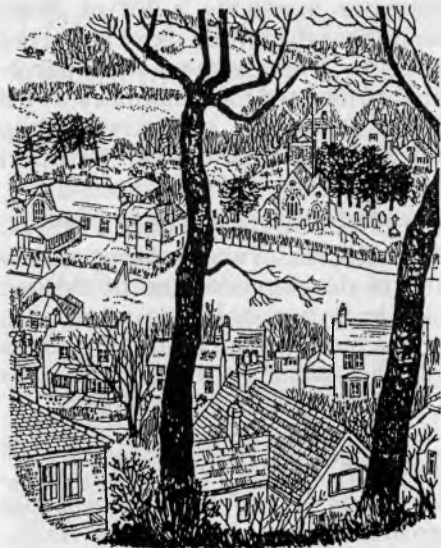
The sponsoring body was, of course, the Parish Council, assisted materially by the District Council and advised by Miss Helen Bovey of the Kent Rural Community Council. We read the booklet, looked at several other local appraisals and, skilfully guided by Councillor Joan Parkin whose only principle was to proceed by consensus only, formed ourselves into subject groups, drew up the questionnaire, distributed and collected it, analysed, summarised and published it, with an

exhibition in the village community centre to crown it. It took just less than two years and was worthwhile both as a record and as a programme for future action. It also yielded a surprisingly salutary vote of confidence in itself at a time when discontent and disruption are not uncommon. Here are some extracts from the booklet.

... "The number of households, less than fifty in 1086, which had only doubled by 1600, has multiplied almost sevenfold (to 658) and the population (now 1436) almost fifteenfold. Agriculture with its associated crafts and trades, so long the virtual monopolist of employment, is now the occupation of only a tiny minority (2.3%) whereas professional and clerical employment together have risen to 40%. Of these, despite the revolutionary increase in personal mobility, no less than three-quarters still work in or around Dover.

Hasted's "meanly built flint cottages" have all become desirable residences, detached, semi-detached or terraced. Two thirds of their residents have been attached to them for more than 10 years, a third for more than 20 and a fifth for more than 50!

The reasons for these improvements, in housing, employment and health etc, of



Temple Ewell. A drawing by Roy Chambers

course, lie well outside and beyond Temple Ewell and in some ways the comparisons are ludicrous. But what is unquestionable and shouts loud and clear from the survey questionnaires is the sense and valuation of community and community itself is entirely dependent upon generations of kinship and continuity. People live and stay, even if they were born here, because they have chosen to do so. They cherish their environment, will work to improve it and will fight to defend it against improper development. They are attached to their church, their school and their pub and they admire and approve of their Parish Council. Let us hope that Temple Ewell's next Doomsday survey, whenever that may be, will, whatever the inevitable changes, bear further witness to that tradition of local attachment that dates back to Anglo-Saxon if not to Roman, Neolithic and Palæolithic times...

HOUSEHOLDS: ... They own 221 dogs and 264 cats, 585 cars and (at least) 46 bikes, and 389 houses with 185 garages. Apart from the 19 who were born here, they live in Temple Ewell by choice, many managing to combine family connections, housing and jobs with their delight in the environment and they like it because it is a friendly rural village community with good access to Dover, Canterbury and the sea...



The Community Centre in 1990. Formerly the 'George & Dragon'. photo: Victor Nelson

The 'George & Dragon' c1890

from collection of Budge Adams



PARISH COUNCIL CONTENTMENT:

... The Parish Council is entitled to be very gratified by the 60% vote in its favour and there is much additional praise, including the absence of party politics, in other comments. There are, of course, criticisms too. It is suggested that members should be younger, more pushful and more powerful. ... Only one voice says it should be abolished as unnecessary and expensive. ... There is only one complaint of too much policing! Over half think there is too little ...

AMENITIES: ... As to village amenities, there are inevitably a lot of small minorities who would like a variety of services ... There is much more agreement on the need for a pharmacy, a Post Office, newsagent, and general shop and for improved public transport facilities...

HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT:

NOT MUCH!: ... Two thirds oppose any kind of development and of the one third in favour, only two want a lot, some a moderate amount but most as little as possible. Such development as is favoured is mainly for housing ...

ENVIRONMENT and

CONSERVATION: YES PLEASE!:

... Comments on problems suggest that parishioners are deafened by traffic, sleepless from barking dogs, howling

cats, screaming parrots, army manoeuvres and heli-copters; stepping from rubbish dump to rubbish dump past eyesores along broken or non-existent pavements in ill-lit streets; and surrounded by piles of litter as they slip and slither in stacks of dogmess. Such is not the case. It is because they live in so pleasant a village that they complain and it is good to know that so many people really care about their environment and will do something about it ...

TOO LITTLE TRANSPORT: TOO MUCH TRAFFIC: ... There are many complaints both of inadequate car parking facilities and of consequential dangerous parking and inadequate access for emergency services. Many suggestions are made for sleeping policemen, more traffic signs, chicanes, access only limitations, speed traps and mirrors. Heavy goods vehicles should be banned and the police more determined. Complaints are heavily repeated

about bad roads and bad pavements or no pavements ...

CONCLUSION: ... In 1989, the Year of Revolutions in Eastern Europe and beyond, and despite all the criticisms, the emergent picture of Temple Ewell is of a substantially socially homogeneous, stable and contented, predominantly middle class community, deeply aware of its virtues and advantages and understandably very anxious to preserve itself. It is well-housed, almost fully employed close to homes, and prosperous.

JACK WOOLFORD

Copies of the full appraisal (with maps, illustrations, histories of church and school, reminiscences and suggestions for the future) from: Jack Woolford, 1066 Green Lane, Temple Ewell, Dover CT16 3AR: £2.30 including postage.

The Objectives of the Dover Society: *founded in 1988.*

- to promote high standards of planning and architecture.
- to interest and inform the public in the geography, history, archaeology, natural history and architecture of the area
- to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest.
- And commitment to the belief that a good environment is a good investment.

The area we cover comprises the parishes or wards of Barton, Buckland, Castle, Lydden, Temple Ewell, Maxton, Pineham, Priory, River, St. Margarets-at-Cliffe, St. Radigund's, Town and Pier and Tower Hamlets.

Members receive three *Newsletters* a year and in each year the Committee organises about ten interesting events – talks, tours, visits, a Members' Meeting, a Christmas Feast, etc.

The Society gives Awards for improvements to the area, monitors planning proposals and supports, joins in or initiates civic projects and arts events.