

IMPACT

ACTION IN LOCAL IMPROVEMENT

UPDATE by LINDA WADE

JULIAN OWEN, our Project Manager will be speaking to the Dover Society at the AGM on 22 April, so I do not want to steal his thunder in this report by anticipating too much of what he will have to say then. However, he has let it slip that he hopes to provoke the usual lively debate. He will be reflecting not just on whether IMPACT has made an impact, but also as I mentioned in the last *Newsletter*, that the scheme in Dover and Deal formally comes to an end on 31 March 1996. The District Council has finally agreed that the KCC team can stay on a little while longer at the 69 Castle Street office so that the IMPACT team will still be very much involved with on-going work locally as well as beginning to turn their sights to the next projects – principally in Folkestone.

TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT

Impact is now very much closer to forming the Dover Town Centre Management Partnership into a Limited Company and to appointing a town centre manager to continue the commitment to town centre issues. The continuing management of the town centre has always been a key development of the IMPACT programme. It has created key partnerships with all those concerned and had been crucial in generating confidence in the centre's future. The stop-watch scheme is an example of how town centre management has effectively helped retailers in the town centre to set up a radio link security system linked to CCTV. This brings them into closer contact with each other; they are able to exchange information about potential "n'er do wells", and the system helps combat everyday petty crime before it happens.

The other good news is that Dover now has a community policeman on the beat in the town centre. The town centre management partnership has always experienced a close working relationship with the local police and is delighted that a friendly and recognisable police presence will give a greater perception of care and comfort which, in turn, will continue to promote Dover as a safer place to shop and do business.

Also the town centre management partnership is now becoming quite skilled at putting together town centre promotional packages aimed, in the national retailers' jargon, at increasing footfall, or, to you and me, just making it a good place to be.

Easter will provide the next occasion to welcome extra customers into the town. The Town Centre Management Promotions Working Group will be co-ordinating its usual package of special shop window displays, a children's Egg and Spoon Race and an Easter Bonnet Parade. Anyone interested in joining in these activities should contact me on 01304 214141. Last year's Easter bonnets were a sight to behold, and the children had a lot of fun.

THE NEW IMPROVED SEAFRONT

IMPACT is very proud of its work in partnership with Dover Harbour Board which has brought about such a delightful improvement to Dover's seafront promenade. On 23 January Kent County Council Chairman, Derrick Molock, unveiled a plaque to mark the completion of the work. The ceremony also opened to the public an integral feature of the project – Ray Smith's "On the Crest of a Wave" – the sculpture inspired by Dover's history of Channelswimming. Alison Streeter, M.B.E.,

Channel Swim World Record Holder, was also one of the invited guests.

At the opening, Gill Hedley, the Director of the Contemporary Arts Society, said how Ray Smith "has a vast amount of experience at listening to what people want, and reading all the values of the place – consulting the genius of the place, as a landscape artist might say. What he has come up with is something, if you will forgive the pun, distilled so that the spirit of the place is revealed".

It was good to hear that Dover Harbour Board plan to continue with the rest of the promenade.

YORK STREET CORNER

By the time this *Newsletter* is published work should be complete on the prominent York Street corner, very important in terms of first impressions for visitors and passers-by. The scheme was complex in its creation, involving a series of partnerships with various landowners, changes to leases and the agreement to shift sideways the footpath alongside the Nu-Age nightclub. The retaining walls have been re-faced in flint and brick and the car park will be screened by shrubs and hedging. All the planting will be taken into the District Council's programme of care.



IMPROVEMENTS AT THE YORK STREET CORNER WILL GREATLY ENHANCE THE APPEARANCE AND VISIBILITY OF THE UNITARIAN CHURCH

NEW BRIDGE

Adding on to the improvements already carried out on the seafront, works on the second phase of New Bridge are now taking shape. The two refurbished sections respond to the fine building façades and will delight all who use it as a route to and from the sea. It includes lawns, high quality natural paving, and specially designed lights, and the scheme is expected to be finished in May.

VICTORIA CRESCENT

As I write *IMPACT* is awaiting competitive quotes for work in front of Victoria Crescent, including re-instatement of the railings and repair of the walls and hope to be on site during April.

CASTLE HILL

Also due on site during March is KCC's highway safety scheme at Castle Hill, which involves a number of lit traffic islands. In such a sensitive location, we have been

concerned to avoid as much as possible the 'creeping urbanisation syndrome', and so IMPACT'S contribution will help fund better paving, granite kerbs and more traditional lights.

WORK IN DEAL

Remembering IMPACT'S remit includes not only Dover but also Deal, a series of improvements and enhancements have been carried out, all aimed at strengthening the town's existing character and its points of arrival such as Middle Street Car Park. The latest idea to be tackled is the Pier entrance area. IMPACT has designed a scheme which re-models the flower beds and reduces the height of the front walls to allow the new planting to be more easily viewed from the street level.

Dover District Council is also looking after the selection of a suitable art feature for the centre of the entrance area. This has arisen as a result of a bequest left to the town of Deal. The donor, Mr Kennett, requested that part of the proceeds of his estate be given for or towards the cost of improvement of the entrance and forecourt of the pier.

The bequest was made in appreciation of the many pleasant years Mr Kennett had spent in the town and of his kindly associations with the residents. It is hoped that the newly improved entrance area will receive a work of art which will be both stimulating and worthy of its setting, and of the spirit of Deal, which Mr Kennett had clearly experienced during his time there.

WHAT NEXT?

One of the things IMPACT said it would do is to leave behind a 'shopping list' of future project ideas including some wacky ideas of our own! For the KCC team, working in Dover has been a challenge, but also (mostly) a real pleasure and certainly the County Council has been pleased enough with the results to decide to continue with the IMPACT programme, despite budget cuts. There was fierce competition for the next location, which in the end came down to Folkestone, where we will again be tackling the problems of the coastal towns, as partners in a very wide-ranging "Believing in Folkestone" initiative.

Membership News – Spring 1992

Numbers continue to rise steadily. Subscriptions now due are payable at the new rates of £6 single and £10 joint. The committee believes the subscription represents good value. Our financial situation is sound and we hope to hold subscriptions at the new level for some time.

Once again, I commend Standing Order as a method of payment: why not ask me for a form? Complete it and send it to me – I will add your membership number if you have mislaid it – or, if you wish to send it direct to your Bank or Building Society, please let me know if you have done so.

Since November 1995 we have welcomed: Mrs M. E. Dixon, Mrs J. Groves,

Dr J. C. G. Binfield, Mr D. H. Popman, Mr & Mrs J. Steed, Dr & Mrs J. Hinton, Mr R. & Mrs D. Hearn, Mr R. J. Meares and Mr P. & Mrs J. Cook.

Obituary: In addition to two of our Vice-Presidents, Sir Clifford Jarrett and Lord David Ennals and Mrs May Elvey Bradley already mentioned in August 1995, sadly we have also lost Mr D. G. Eagles, Mr G. Brown, the Rev. G. Johns and Mr Harry Fagg.

SHEILA R. COPE

STOP PRESS A Standing Order form is enclosed with all *Newsletters* delivered by hand. Some of those sent by post will also include a form.