

Reports on SOCIETY EVENTS

The November Meeting

Report by Tessa George

BUILDINGS UNDER THREAT

On November 20, 2000, Clive Alexander, Conservation Officer of DDC, and Sarah Dee, Assistant Conservation Officer, came to talk to the Society about buildings under threat. Mr. Alexander began by saying that in his 13-year tenure, he thought his major achievement after setting up the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme in Dover was not having had a nervous breakdown. In dealing with their chosen subject the two speakers covered a wide range of topics.

They explained that Listed buildings are those of historic or architectural interest not identified by DDC but by the Department of Media, Culture and Support based in London who identify buildings throughout the entire country.

LISTED BUILDINGS

Grade I listings are of national and historic importance, Grade II* tend to be country houses. Locally Goodnestone Park Grade II* listed, was built in 1704. It had originally two storeys - the upper floor was added in 1780 and much altered in various stages. Goodnestone Park is famous for its association with Jane Austen. Oxney Court in St. Margaret's Bay was originally built in the 16th century. The owner who gothicized the building dramatically altered it in 1820. It was used by the military in the First World War and



Salutation, Grade I listed 1912, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens



Goodnestone Park, Grade II* listed 1704 but much altered at various stages. Famous for its association with Jane Austen

rebuilt in 1987. It has now been restored by its new owners to a very high standard.

Grade II listings consist of buildings, bridges, even telephone kiosks and gravestones. 92% of listed buildings fall under Grade II. If your building is listed,

you cannot make internal or external alterations without submitting an application to Dover Council, accompanied by detailed drawings.

CONSERVATION AREAS

There are fifty six conservation areas within the Dover District. These areas

do not necessarily need to have listed buildings, but this designation preserves the character and nature of an area as a whole rather than individual buildings. There is greater control over unlisted buildings in these areas, which includes repairs to roofs, putting cladding or satellite dishes. There is also greater control of new buildings within the areas. Trees are also protected and they cannot be 'chopped about'.



New Bridge House, Grade II listed 1865. Also Telephone Kiosk Grade II listed.

GRANTS

For repairs The District Council of Dover allocates 25% of the cost for structural repairs up to £2,000. This varies from 66% towards the cost of repairs for commercial buildings and 50% for residential. The Heritage Economic and Regeneration Scheme has been formed between Dover District Council, Dover Town Council, Kent County Council and English Heritage with the aim of stimulating the economic regeneration. This is reflected by the designation of the Dover College and London Road Conservation areas and the large number of listed buildings. The buildings are essentially late Georgian and early Victorian in design and retain much of their original character with their perfectly proportioned sash windows, ornate doors and iron railings. The scheme has an annual budget of £130,000 to improve the economic viability of the area.

Castle Street has had the pavements widened with York stones and bollards installed to prevent traffic running up onto the pavements and ruining the good work. The Castle Street Society, an organisation chaired by David Hannent, is watchdog for the conservation and regeneration of Castle Street, ably assisted by Mike Webb of Town Centre Management.

Dover Paper Mill. An application by The Dover Society was made to have this building listed.

PLANNING PFIZER'S GROWTH - EXTERNAL ASPECTS

After the interval our second speaker was John Elliott, Transport and Planning Manager for Pfizer Limited who came to talk to the Dover Society about plans for traffic control and the "greening" of Pfizer.

John was previously with Westminster City Council; the Greater London Council, and, more recently, Sterling Granada and the London

Borough of Barnet. Much of his career has been involved with traffic limitation strategies.

Keith Hill, Parliamentary under Secretary of State, Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, wrote to Pfizer recently complimenting the company, saying, "It is very encouraging to see a key player, such as your company, actively supporting the aims of the Government's integrated Transport White Paper."

John Elliott is incorporating "green" policies for transporting Pfizer's nearly 4,800 employees into their Sandwich complex. 41% of their employees live in the Dover area, 37% reside in Thanet and 20% in the Canterbury district, which seemed to be a first choice for most, stymied only by cost. By the year 2005, it is expected that there will be an additional 1,200 staff requiring some 1,250 new homes.

To alleviate the onslaught of traffic, through, to and from Sandwich, John Elliott is introducing policies such as free bus services to the complex; a car-share scheme and a rebate of £2 a day for those leaving their cars behind. Cycling, of course, is the greenest of the schemes which can work for those living in Sandwich, the terrain being quite flat. Expansion is always underway for the increase in the free bus services, and car sharing has been put online for match-ups. Surely the rebates will somehow have to be calculated between the "sharers". Public transport is much encouraged with buses collecting from Sandwich station to the complex. All these schemes certainly also cut down on company-owned cars.

Last year 9,000 hotel nights were booked in the surroundings of Sandwich. John made the point that for every five people employed by Pfizer another five jobs were created in various industries.

We wish John Elliott and Pfizer great luck with their schemes.