

PRAISE & SHAME

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by Jack Woolford

PROMPTED BY OTHER Kent Federation Amenity Societies in East (notably Ramsgate and Margate) and West Kent (Bexley) and after very much cogitation and consultation the Planning Committee have decided to go public on the state of Dover. The following letter has been sent both to the 'Dover Express' and 'Dover Mercury'.

'Dover, like nearly every town in the country, suffers from architectural eyesores inflicted on us by architects and developers who appear blind to their surroundings. In Dover these are well known - Burlington House, Woolworths, the Premier Lodge Hotel, as seen by the thousands who pass along Townwall Street to the Docks, and the B&Q Store, etc, etc. These cannot in the short term be changed and unfortunately at present we have to live with them.

However, there are areas of the town, seen by visitors and residents alike which could and should be smartened up if we are to make Dover more attractive to we who live here and wish to attract others to visit the town. De Bradelei's and the surrounding area have been considerably smartened up and show what can be done with a little investment. The underpass to the town, although at times suffering from pools of water and litter, is kept reasonably clean. But coming up into King Street visitors are faced with an unkempt area which surely needs smartening up. Visitors must ponder about the attitude of people who allow one of the gateways to the town to be so neglected. Both corners of Townwall Street with Bench

Street have buildings which are eyesores, as is the site of the former Crypt public house. For visitors driving along Townwall Street or walking from the seafront this main entrance should be attractive. But with a shabby amusement arcade on one side and a derelict area on the other, this entrance is shaming. Boarded up shops in Bench Street and King Street (the property next to the Inland Revenue, once an indoor market, and the site of Walter's shoe shop, in particular) do nothing to enhance the entry to the Market Square. Nor does the *buddleia* growing from the building used by Topo



Sight of the old Crypt, Bench Street

- 6 Gigio. On St Mary's Passage, two back areas of properties fronting Cannon Street have accumulations of rubbish and rats have been seen in the vicinity.

Walking through the town the pedestrianised area presents an acceptable image and is kept clean although it is a pity that the paving around the Eight Bells pub is badly broken. It is heart warming to see the good efforts of the new cafe with its seating area under outdoor heaters surrounded by nice railings, which is well patronised even in winter. Looking up Pencester Road the isolated building next to Pencester Park, used, (dare we say?) by

Town Centre Management, could be smartened up and the rubbish behind the shops on the north side of Biggin Street must attract rats. The 'Dover Express' offices themselves need a facelift.

All the above areas could do with a little investment in time and cash. **This matter will be ongoing. Please tell us what you think! Have we been unfair? What have we missed? Please write, phone or e-mail me at:- 1066 Green Lane, Temple Ewell, Dover CT16 3AR. Tel: 01304 330381**

Editor's Note: Some of the views expressed in Jack Woolford's letter may not be the views of the Editor or of all the members of the Society.



Two views of the old army recruitment centre, under Henry VIII's Motte Bulwark at East Cliff. The site has now been partially cleared and is 'to let'





Derelict site of the corner of Bench Street and Townwall Street



Dover's infamous eyesore - Burlington House seen over the BP garage and adjacent derelict site

Photographs by Merrill Lilley