

Refurbishment Committee

Jenny Olpin

Refurbishment continues to focus on the quality and appearance of our Town. As we hopefully move out of lockdown, we are beginning to get out and about but still staying local. We are enjoying the lovely Kearsney Abbey and Russell Gardens that take us further into the wilds of Bushey Ruff and, for some, onto the Kearsney Loop. The beautiful sea front now provides us with lots of outside refreshment, where, as the weather improves, it will be lovely to linger with tea or coffee or even a Pimms!

Our meetings continue to be online, and the Zoom habit is now a natural experience but one that we should soon break. That said we are still busy. Since our last report we have, as have many of you, focussed on the new parklets. We continue to urge that KCC and DDC involve Dover's community representatives in the way forward for our town, particularly in the face of the very significant changes that town centres in general are facing, with the decline of High Street shopping.

At our recent meetings we have had the opportunity to update on those who find themselves homeless or are from our itinerant population. The Government Covid-19 scheme is still operational in providing accommodation and now Dover District Council, in partnership with Folkestone and Hythe, have obtained funding for a 12 unit accommodation provision for short term stay. We were also advised (and this is useful for all of us to know) that "If we have concerns about a homeless person, the Porchlight organisation provide an Outreach worker who will help". Their contact details are on their website. They are open 24/7:

<https://www.porchlight.org.uk/information-support> or call their free helpline on 0800 567 7699.

It was reported that the Dover Foodbank is still in great demand and they are very grateful for their team of volunteers, as the Foodbank is still doing deliveries only. The Food Pantry in the Charlton Centre is proving successful for those on low income, so do not hesitate to signpost anyone you know having difficulty. The Sunrise Café opened at the beginning of July and is for those who are hungry. It is run by the Dover Outreach team and Noel Beamish, one of their leads, will be coming to speak at our first 'face to face' post-Covid Dover Society Meeting at St Mary's Hall in October.

Our interest has also been the closure of the Co-innovation Centre. This highly successful initiative has supported the 'graduation' of eight fledgling businesses into various shops throughout the town. We can only hope that its success is not ignored and that an opportunity is quickly found for the Centre to re-locate and to continue being a refreshing, interesting, eclectic venue for the many people of our town who have supported it since its inception and who benefit from its friendly and inclusive approach.

We are due to meet with Kent Police again in October, so do let me know if there is anything in your area that is resulting in anti-social behaviour. I will endeavour to speak to the Detective Inspector about it on your behalf. Those of you who came to the AGM, or viewed the meeting on our website, will have a good idea as to what Refurbishment's remit is, so do consider joining us, or emailing if you think we may be able to help.