

WHITE CLIFFS COUNTRY TOURISM ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF AN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2008 AT DOVER TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

Present: 16 members as recorded in Attendance Book – Annette McPherson in the Chair.

1. Apologies for absence received from Keith Southey (Port of Dover), Debbie Dainton (VIC), Bill Hamblin (Victoria GH), Dawn Kellers (Pines Gardens), Councillor Scales (DDC) and Hardicot Guest House.

2. **MINUTES OF AGM 2007**

It was proposed by Terry Sutton, seconded by Jon Iveson and passed unanimously that the minutes of an Annual General Meeting held on 23rd January 2007 at Dover Discovery Centre, having been circulated to all members, be approved and adopted as a true record. There were no matters arising.

3. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR PAST YEAR**

Full report attached to these minutes.

4. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Copies of an Income & Expenditure Account for year ended 31st December 2007 were circulated to members. Balances at the bank as at 31.12.07: Current Account £2,519.25; Reserve Account: £3,050.02. The Chairman said that the accounts show the Association funds to be in a healthy state but it must be borne in mind that the DDC invoice for Horace Holyer's 2007 employment (£1,287.41) was not presented in time to be included in the 2007 accounts, although the donations from Dover Town Council towards his employment are included. The Chairman added that she hopes to approach Dover Town Council committees in the near future in the hope that they will again agree to sponsor Horace's employment this year. Also outstanding is the considerable amount to be paid this year for the filming project being sponsored by the Association as mentioned in the Chairman's Report.

The Income & Expenditure Account for year ended 31st December 2007 was unanimously approved and adopted by those present.

5. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Nine nominations for the Executive have been received, all proposed and seconded as required by the Association's rules. There being nine only nominations no ballot is required. The following members will therefore serve on the Executive during the current year: Officers: Annette McPherson – Chairman; Treasurer: Keith McPherson; 7 members: Tracey Ward (Sandwich Town Council), Terry Sutton (Independent and Dover Society), Patrick Williams (SeaFrance), Ruth Shepherdson or Simon Ovenden (National Trust), Dawn Champion or Jaqui Roebuck (English Heritage), Keith Southey or Rachel Goring (Port of Dover), Marlene Burnham (Deal Town Council).

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Roger Walkden said that there is a proposal afoot to introduce historic town walks in Dover. Several experienced people have expressed an interest in leading such walks, including Chris Precious and Horace Holyer. The walks would be self-funding. Roger said he would like to think that both WCCTA and DDC would give their support to this proposal. All those present felt that this would be an excellent addition to town attractions particularly as such walks have already proved successful in Sandwich, Deal and Broadstairs. The Chairman told Roger that WCCTA would indeed support the introduction of historic walks to Dover and suggested that liaison with The Dover Society may be of benefit when planning the walks.

Cruise Ships: Terry Sutton said that there will be an increase in the number of port calls this year and some of the ships will be considerably larger thus carrying more passengers. A discussion ensued as to how cruise passengers can be persuaded to spend more time in Dover and White Cliffs Country in general. Jane Langstaff (Deal & Walmer C of C) asked if the DVD sponsored by WCCTA could be shown on board prior to passengers disembarking – Jon Iveson (DDC) said that this would be ideal but so far it has proved impossible to get co-operation from the cruise companies - however the situation continues to be addressed by the Cruise Partnership. Unfortunately it is in the interests of the travel companies to get their passengers to take expensive tours when ashore and these are booked well in advance of arrival. Ray Haines (Dover District C of C) said that his organisation has tried very hard to persuade cruise passengers to spend time in Dover but it appears that London, Leeds Castle and Canterbury are the preferred places for cruise passengers to visit. Denise Ryeland (Tours of the Realm) said that some cruise passengers are complaining that on-shore excursions are becoming too expensive but unfortunately apart from the Castle there is little capacity in Dover or the surrounding area to cater for large coach loads of tourists – there are many small attractions and catering outlets of various kinds inadequate for coach parties therefore it is only the independent cruise passengers likely to stay in and around Dover.

Jon Iveson explained more fully the idea behind the production of the film footage sponsored by WCCTA. He said the film is capable of being broken up into sections that can sit on various web sites. The complete version will sit on the KTA web site. A DVD will also be produced for other advertising purposes. The film will be officially launched alongside the 2008 White Cliffs Country brochure on 17th March at Walmer Castle.

Deal: Marlene Burnham (Deal Town Council) told the meeting of various events taking place in Deal this year. The town's new web site is now up and running and will be continually updated. New signage is being introduced to Deal both for the benefit of tourists and residents. It is hoped that volunteers can be found to man the Timeball Tower at weekends during the season. The Tower will be open for Easter but due to lack of volunteers cannot fully open until after April. There will be a number of French and Italian markets during the year (Union Road car park).

The annual Braderie will take place on 29th September – there will also be a “posh” boot fair on Walmer Green on 20th April. 27th April will see a re-enactment of the first bus service introduced 100 years ago and running between Deal, Walmer and Kingsdown. Jane Langstaff said that Deal's first business exhibition will take place on 4th April and will specifically be a showcase for the “back street” businesses to promote themselves. There will be a disability awareness section in order that businesses can find out how to make their premises more accessible. The exhibition will also provide an opportunity for job sourcing in the local community.

Goodnestone Park Gardens: Lady Fitzwalter said that the Gardens will open from 19th March. There will be an active programme during the year including two plays (Charley's Aunt and Peter Pan), a 2-day Jazz Festival and a Promenade concert – details of all forthcoming events can be obtained from the web site www.goodnestoneparkgardens.co.uk

There being no further business the Chairman thanked those present for their attendance and participation. She also expressed her gratitude to Dover Town Council for its generosity in providing today's meeting room.