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Banksy mural in Dover

MP takes Banksy mural campaign to Westminster

by Sam Lennon
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MP Charlie Elphicke has urged the arts minister to help protect Dover's Banksy mural.

The Dover and Deal MP met John Glen in the House of Commons to ask him to intervene.

He has also written to Historic England and asked for the Brexit-themed artwork to be listed as well as sending the proposals to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport for consideration.

Mr Elphicke said: "I told the minister how much it is loved in the town and why we must protect it.

"The Banksy may be worth millions – but to the people of Dover it is priceless.

"He said he will examine our case carefully when it is sent to the Department."

Dovorians were surprised when they first found the giant artwork on the flank wall of the former Castle Amusements building on



MP Charlie Elphicke launches his Save our Banksy Campaign at York Street

Sunday, May 7.

The building is at the corner of Townwall Street and York Street.

Soon afterwards the Folkestone-based Godden family confirmed it was theirs and that they planned to demolish the building and sell the art for charity.

Last month Mr Elphicke launched a Save Our Banksy campaign to keep it in the town.

Dover District Council's plan for a new waterfront development counts on the demolition of the building and Mr Elphicke

has asked both the Goddens and the council for a meeting.

He said: "The new waterfront development should have this Banksy at its heart – as a central attraction. It will draw so many people to visit the town and help make the development a success.

"Renewal is about more than just new buildings. This is about protecting a piece of our culture and history."

The Godden family did not respond to requests for a comment.

Learning from international links

A new partnership has been set up between churches in Walmer with their counterparts in Madagascar.

Walmer Parish Churches have made an agreement with St Patrick's Cathedral in Toliara, as part of the Diocese of Canterbury's Link programme.

An agreement was signed in St Saviour's church, Walmer.

The Rev Patsy McGregor signed on behalf of St Patrick's Cathedral where she is the priest, and Canon Seth Cooper, vicar of Walmer, and Mavis Stevenson and Jerry Swallow, churchwardens, signed on behalf of Walmer Parish Churches.

The Rt Rev Todd McGregor, bishop of Toliara, said: "These links are an essential part of developing global co-operation



Mavis Stevenson, the Rev Patsy McGregor, the Rt Rev Todd McGregor, Canon Seth Cooper and Jerry Swallow

between churches. We run a number of economic development programmes in Toliara and, with God's blessing, churches can learn from each other about how to improve the projects."

The churches have committed

to keeping each other informed about their work, to pray for one another, and to help and encourage each other in mission and ministry. An informal link has existed for more than a decade and Walmer Parish Churches have previously raised funds for mosquito nets and to build a barn for coffee storage.

Mr and Mrs McGregor are visiting the UK for a pilgrimage and have been regular visitors to Walmer leading worship and speaking at the Downs' Church of England school.

Mr Cooper said: "This agreement is a sign of our commitment to one another as Christians across the world. We hope to build on this agreement with visits, school's links, and mutual support."