

Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

Thanet & East Kent Insider

5th June 2010 Issue No.: 110

1. Business In Thanet

Thanet Business Exhibition is the unmissable event for all businesses trading in Thanet. It will take place at G Casino, Westwood Cross, Broadstairs CT10 2BF from 1000 hrs on Friday 11th June 2010. For more details, contact the Chamber Marketing and Membership Officer, Graham Rayner, tel: 07899 873535 or email manager@tekc.co.uk with the subject line, "Thanet Business Exhibition".

2. Supporting Local Business

This is a reminder of the business networking breakfast scheduled for Friday 18th June 2010 in Ramsgate from 0730 hrs to 0900 hrs. The main speaker will be the newly elected Member of Parliament for South Thanet & Sandwich, Laura Sandys, who will address the theme "Supporting Local Business". Booking is essential. Tickets cost £12.00 for members and £15 for non-members. A cooked full English breakfast is included. For details and to book your place, email manager@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Supporting Local Business Breakfast".

3. The World Cup & You

We are grateful to Chamber member J Cleverdon Chartered Accountants for drawing our attention to the official advice of Acas, the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service, which refers to employees being "less productive, hung over or sick following over enthusiastic celebrations." Now that Rio Ferdinand, 'the Rolls-Royce of the team', has been obliged to return home injured, it may be that celebrations might not be as enthusiastic as Acas has envisaged. Nevertheless, employers might like to consider some of the worker-friendly advice offered which urges companies to be; 'Flexible, where possible – for example, by altering start and finish times during the working day; Clear about what you expect from employees – in terms of attendance and performance during the World Cup; Communicative – start talking to each other now about the World Cup and how you hope to manage leave and working hours; Honest – if you cannot accommodate any changes to your work practices then say so and Fair – you need to be seen to be fair about the way you respond to requests for time off and avoid favouritism'. Presumably, companies that do not follow this advice will be considered inflexible, unclear, uncommunicative, dishonest and unfair to their employees. Surely, these are not qualities associated with members of the Thanet & East Kent Chamber. The next three England matches are timetabled for Saturday 12th June at 1930 hrs against USA, Friday 18th June at 1930 hrs against Algeria and Wednesday 23 June at 1500 hrs against Slovenia. The last of the three is the first game to be played within standard office hours. Jon Cleverdon and his colleagues can also advise on changes in state pension age, national insurance contributions, changes to the advisory fuel rates from 1 June 2010, directors' benefits and expenses claims for the year ending 5 April 2010 and news of a scam relating to a fake HMRC tax rebate. For details, give Jon a call in his Broadstairs office at 7, The Broadway, telephone 01843 866599.

4. Silent And Successful

Chamber member Silent Gliss is renowned for its forward-looking policies and world-beating expertise in lean manufacturing. It will come as no surprise to suppliers and customers alike that this well-respected company at Pyramid Business Park, Broadstairs has won another award. The Manufacturing Advisory Service is the government body tasked with promoting best practice among British manufacturers. At a ceremony at the RBS Williams Formula One Conference Centre in Oxfordshire, Silent Gliss received the Best Practice Award for Kent from MAS South East. These prestigious accolades reflect the added value that can be derived from companies working together to improve every aspect of their operations. As Lord Digby Jones said at a recent series of interviews with Thanet & East Kent Chamber members, "We live in a world where India wants your lunch and China wants your dinner". The MAS South East Network and the Chamber forums bring together like-minded managers and company owners keen to match British goods and services against the world's best. Silent Gliss is the leading global supplier of curtain tracks and blinds. Its products can be found in major stores throughout the UK and in 70 countries overseas. For more details of why East Kent is proud to host this company, see <http://www.silentgliss.com>. We congratulate Hugh Gage, Simon Waller, Kevin Stocker, Bob Brown and all the team at Silent Gliss and look forward to celebrating future success with them.

5. Manufacturing in the UK

The recent recession has caused many companies, investors and employees to look again at manufacturing. The beauty of producing saleable goods from raw materials is that the manufacturer is in contact with nearly every aspect of the process. Unlike commission on money transfers or stock-broking, the products a manufacturer makes are generally visible, touchable and enjoyable to the workers involved. It is far harder to draw comfort from a 5% commission on a £1,000 currency exchange than by feeling the curve of a well-turned hard-wood leg on a chesterfield sofa. East Kent manufacturers who have sourced their raw materials in the UK and exported overseas have fared reasonably well in the the past two years. Steve Claridge of Claridge Upholstery Company, tel: 01843 290855, has a flourishing export market for his furniture which is all manufactured in his factory in Harold Road, Margate. The Manufacturing Institute in Manchester has just produced an enlightening report entitled, "Manufacturing: the Truth Behind the Myths". It seeks to address directly the misguided belief that manufacturing is

predominantly dirty, low-paid and uncompetitive. Using data from the Office For National Statistics and other reputable sources, it makes the following conclusions; The manufacturing and engineering sectors contribute £799 billion to the UK economy; The UK is the world's sixth largest manufacturer by output; Chartered engineers can earn as much as lawyers; Manufacturing accounts for 55% of all UK exports; Engineering and technology graduates are more likely than average to be in full time employment six months after graduation; more than 1.2 million people will be in green jobs by 2020; 3.1 million people are employed in UK manufacturing; UK manufacturing contributes one seventh of national wealth; The UK pharmaceuticals industry accounts for 9% of global R&D expenditure and Productivity per workforce job in UK manufacturing is nearly £8,000 higher than the service sector. To obtain your copy of the report, chamber members are invited to email manager@tekco.uk with the subject line, "Manufacturing: the Truth Behind the Myths".

6. Communities Knit Together

At this Chamber, we often highlight mental health issues as being a significant factor in harmonious relations between management and the workforce. Companies which address the social and psychological needs of their workers obviously have fewer problems during periods of difficult economic conditions. We should also perhaps not forget the vital role played by community knitting clubs where the click-click of knit one, pearl one has punctuated the social intercourse of generations at communal gatherings and provided a welcome backdrop for comfortable thinking. Chamber member King Ethelbert School in Birchington has taken this a stage further with its Crazy Craft Club which meets in term time on Thursday evenings between 1800 hrs and 2000 hrs and costs just £3 per week. If golf is too strenuous for you, if you have decided that Britain has not got talent or that the attractions of the World Cup are beyond your comprehension, you might like to try joining the light-hearted activities organised by Jayne Lawson, Director of Community Learning King Ethelbert School. On the menu for next Thursday is how to make your cushions plumper and your zips straighter, as demonstrated by the celebrated soft furnishings designer, Karen Hewitt. The sessions finish long before the pubs close leaving you plenty of time to insult your line manager and complain about your neighbours. For more details, contact Jayne by email to jaynelawson@kingethelbert.kent.sch.uk or by telephone to 01843 830206.

7. News From Dover

On Sunday 6th June 2010, Dover and East Kent celebrates the centenary of the first first ever return cross-channel flight of 2nd June 1910 by the Hon Charles Rolls, better known to the world as one half of Rolls-Royce. Sadly, forty days after his historic flight, Charles became the first British aviator to be killed in an air accident when his Wright Flyer crashed in Bournemouth. Festivities to commemorate the historic flight centre around the statue of Charles Rolls on Dover esplanade and include a display of 100 Rolls-Royce cars as well as Charles Rolls's 1899 Panhard et Levassor 8hp. One of the lesser known facts about the early days of Rolls-Royce is that Henry Royce and his engineers were based in St. Margaret's Bay between 1913 and 1917. This is where they developed the first Rolls-Royce aero engines which proved to be of such inestimable value in the First and Second World Wars. Claude Goodman Johnson was the first Managing Director of Rolls Royce. Known within the company as 'the hyphen in Rolls Royce', he had a weekend house in Kingsdown, near Deal. The early and rapid success of the Rolls-Royce Company owed much to the contacts of Charles Rolls within the aristocracy, but it owed more to the superb quality of its British manufacturing and engineering. After fewer than three years of trading, Rolls-Royce was dubbed by the Autocar magazine in 1907 as "the best car in the world", a title it has worn comfortably ever since.

8. True Supporters

Any football fans besotted with the World Cup take obvious pleasure from seeing the nation's best players pit their skills against the finest from other countries. However, glory seekers should spare a thought for the true supporters of local clubs in Sittingbourne, Maidstone, Folkestone, Whitstable, Herne Bay, Canterbury, Margate, Ramsgate and Deal who watch their teams play each week with no realistic prospect of being drawn against Real Madrid or seeing Lionel Messi or Ronaldo ever grace their home turf. Regular readers of these columns may recall the trials and tribulations of supporting Doncaster Rovers in their darkest days in 1997-98 when the team suffered the largest number of losses in a season experienced by any English professional club. The Thanet & East Kent Insider edition of 25th June 2009 relates the story of "the manager leaving the Belle Vue stadium to visit a tobacconist around the corner to borrow 20p to telephone a supporter. Clearly taking pity on the benighted coach, the shopkeeper replied, "Here's 40p, telephone them all." Another account surfacing from that time tells of the then manager, Mark Weaver. He was keen on strict codes of behaviour for both players and supporters. Half-way through one game, he allegedly saw two fans climbing over the stadium wall. He grabbed them both by the collar and said, "What do you think you are doing? You just go back there, sit down and wait until the match has finished." The manager had a point. It is not much fun suffering alone.

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It's happening now, it's happening in Thanet & East Kent.
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Thanet & East Kent Chamber Limited

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