

# Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

## Thanet & East Kent Insider

12<sup>th</sup> June 2010 Issue No.: 111

### 1. Thanet Business Exhibition

The Thanet Business Exhibition took place yesterday at G Casino, Westwood Cross, Broadstairs. The event brought together some of the area's most successful companies who are eager to continue their growth curve by accessing new markets and making contact with more buyers.

### 2. Supporting Local Business

This is the last call for delegates to attend the "Supporting Local Business" networking breakfast scheduled for Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2010 at Pegwell Bay Hotel, near Ramsgate. The main speaker will be the newly elected MP for South Thanet and Sandwich, Laura Sandys. Booking is essential for this popular event. A full cooked breakfast will be provided with a vegetarian option. Cost: £12 for Chamber members, £15 for non-members. To reserve your place, email [manager@tekc.co.uk](mailto:manager@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "Supporting Local Business Breakfast".

### 3. Health Matters

The king of merchandising at Thanet Business Exhibition was undoubtedly the Spencer Wing which offered visitors to its stand a wide variety of give-aways from boxed thermal mugs to the more traditional pens and rulers. The Spencer Wing takes its excellent reputation for preventative health screening very seriously. As at the previous day's Business Exhibition organised by our sister Chamber in Dover, the Spencer Wing staff provided a free blood pressure check which attracted many clients eager to see whether too many corporate lunches and too few trips to the gym posed any immediate risk to their corporate selves. Respected by health professionals throughout Kent for its zero percentage MRSA record, the Spencer Wing offers employers a comprehensive range of health packages available on site or as a mobile service including pre-employment screening and tests for "busy executives". The Spencer Wing is well aware of the need to look for "the silent killers such as heart disease, diabetes, hypertension and cancers." As their useful pocket guide states, "Early detection and prevention is key to good health in our later years". For more details on Thanet's private hospital, telephone 01843 234555.

### 4. Legal Eagles Flying High

Legal services were very much to the fore throughout the Thanet Business Exhibition. Chamber sponsor Girlings Solicitors offered a jargon-free zone fully justifying their claim to be "approachable, friendly and easy to deal with". From six offices across East Kent, Girlings provides an all-encompassing service with specialists available in almost every aspect of business transactions, private arrangements, charity dealings and legal issues with Europe. Wherever you are in East Kent, the chances are that there is a Girlings office near you. The company welcomes telephone enquiries to any of the following welcome desks; Margate 01843 220274; Ashford Bank Street, 01233 664711; Ashford Station Road 01233 664711; Canterbury 01227 768374; Folkestone 01303 850100 and Herne Bay 01227 367355. Added power from the legal profession was supplied by Boys & Maughan Solicitors and Notary Public. Established in Thanet for more than 200 years, Boys & Maughan promises, "From private individuals to businesses large and small: you will be treated with the same attention, expertise and respect". Offices in Margate, Birchington, Broadstairs and Ramsgate ensure a strong local presence. Boys & Maughan keeps clients up to date with initiatives. Yesterday's posting on the company's website will strike a chord with anyone who has sent out an invoice and not received prompt payment. "As anyone who has ever tried to collect a debt knows, there is a big difference between obtaining judgment and obtaining payment." Too true. The Margate HQ will be pleased to take your call, tel: 01843 234000.

## 5. A Very Broadstairs Coup

The Sarah Thorne Theatre Club was a most welcome exhibitor. Readers of the Thanet & East Kent Insider of 1<sup>st</sup> May this year may recall the item headed “Superstar Patronage” which stated that “Sarah Thorne Theatre Club in Broadstairs has announced its first patron. The gasp from the arts establishment can probably be heard in John O’Groats.” The superstar in question was Judi Dench, or to be more correct, Dame Judith Olivia Dench, CH, DBE, FRSA. We speculated at the time whether she had a mantelpiece big enough to display her awards which include ten BAFTAs, seven Laurence Olivier Awards, two Golden Globes, a Tony Award, two Screen Actors Guild Awards and an Oscar. Not a bad friend to have for an out-of-town theatre near Broadstairs. The problem is that after such an outstanding coup, how do you follow that? Sarah Thorne Theatre Club Director, Michael Wheatley-Ward, continues to surprise the arts establishment with news of an additional actor patron which he revealed from his stand at the Thanet Business Exhibition. The actor in question went to school in Birchington. He is the brother of a television news presenter on Five News. He won the Best Actor accolade at the 2008 International Emmy Awards in New York for his portrayal of Robert Maxwell in a 2007 BBC drama. He was previously much celebrated for his role as Edward Teller in the 1980 BBC-US TV serial about the H-Bomb called Oppenheimer. To paraphrase Rolf Harris, “Can you tell who it is yet?” His most famous role is as Agatha Christie’s detective, Hercule Poirot. The new patron is, of course, David Suchet, currently appearing in Arthur Miller’s All My Sons at the Apollo Theatre, London. David Suchet will be joined by Orlando Bloom next month in Canterbury Cathedral to receive an honorary degree from the University of Kent. Michael Wheatley-Ward will not be drawn on an appearance at his theatre by Judi Dench and David Suchet, but Kent theatre-goers can undoubtedly expect more surprises from this mercurial director who continues to fill his commercially operated theatre week after week at a time when heavily subsidized competitors struggle to attract an audience. In an age of public funding cuts, there must be a lesson to be learned from this.

## 6. Premier Frameworks

Last week’s edition of the Thanet & East Kent Insider highlighted the valuable contribution to our economy by people who make things. Manufacturing in Thanet employs less than 10% of the workforce [Nomis 2008] and yet this country has a genius for invention and a practical approach to engineering. Framework Displays is probably the only significant UK manufacturer of exhibition displays. From its base at Lakeside International Business Park at Hersden, the company supplies large displays for blue-chip clients such as Kimberley-Clark as well as offering local one-man bands products such as the Premier Mini Wing banners for desktop use. Portability is one of the key advantages of Premier Framework displays. It is amazing how even the large structures made for international exhibitions abroad can be dismantled, folded and rolled to fit in the back of a small hatchback. For a demonstration, give this ‘exhibitor for exhibitors’ a call, tel: 01227 710104.

## 7. Training

Gary Player’s much quoted aphorism, “The more I practise, the luckier I get’ has a lesson for all local companies who wish to enhance the skills of their workforce in order to increase production and retain their best staff. Profile Development and Training takes this to heart with a focus on flexible, demand-led courses that are designed to meet the particular needs of companies. As an example, the iTQ levels 1 – 3 qualification aims to increase IT skills through an “individual, flexible, work-based training programme” that leads to full OCR IT User NVQ. If these abbreviations are unfamiliar to you, let Profile Development and Training explain what they mean. If you want to sound knowledgeable, ask how many UVs (unit values) it takes for a level 1 qualification. All will be revealed by telephoning 01843 609300. Maximus Employment & Training also provide help with upskilling your workforce. Based in Ramsgate, Maximus is part of an active network in the UK, Australia, USA, Canada and Israel which describes itself as a “welfare to work provider”. The success of its operations derives from working closely with candidates before they are presented to employers and ensuring that both the candidate and the interviewer are fully briefed on what is required. Increasing use of 4-week work experience trials also reduces the risk for employers and increases the success rate of candidates. Maximus offers a “100% free of charge service” which helps to explain the rapid expansion of the company in Surrey, Sussex and Kent. Even your call to enquire about the service is free. For details, telephone 0800 028 3037.

## 8. Other Exhibitors

News of Thanet Business Exhibition stands by Auditel, Carol Peters Travel, Claridge Upholstery, ID Matters, Levicks, Thanet Business Network, Thanet College and Quex Park follow in a later edition.

## 9. Luftwaffe, Thanet & Pickles

At the despatch box in the House of Commons on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2010, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Rt Hon Eric Pickles, said that under the previous government “more damage was done to the housing industry than the Luftwaffe did”. Property professionals in the East Kent coastal business community know that commercial premises have suffered more than housing as a result of the Rating (Empty Properties) Act 2007. The Thanet & East Kent Chamber has campaigned relentlessly against this pernicious legislation which was conceived at a time when the economy was in a far healthier state. The Act is a piece of London-centric legislation that took no account of the needs and interests of investors in the East Kent commercial property infrastructure. Thanet District Council was the first district council in the UK to pass a motion calling for the Act to be removed from the statute book. The economic case for a full repeal was very much in the minds of the then Thanet MPs in 2008, Roger Gale and Stephen Ladyman, who both wholeheartedly supported this Chamber’s campaign. The winning candidate for South Thanet in last month’s general election, Laura Sandys, had already given her solid backing to local business in a two-page article in Property Week on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2008; a synopsis is available at <http://www.bdonline.co.uk/empty-rates-hit-kent/3126444.article> Tom Stokes is the Managing Director of the UK’s largest provider of new premises for Small and Medium Enterprises, Evans EasySpace. In an exclusive interview with the Thanet & East Kent Insider on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2008, he said, “I urge the government to conduct a proper review that will throw up how much damage has been done to the property sector and the unintended consequences of the Act”. In a press release that followed the Pre-Budget Report of that month, this Chamber wrote, “the Act promises to achieve what the mighty Luftwaffe did not manage throughout WWII”. It is curious that Eric Pickles should use the same imagery. We can only assume that he is an avid reader of the Thanet & East Kent Insider. A copy of this week’s edition is on its way to him. Let’s hope that the Empty Rates legislation is also on its way; the sooner, the better.

## 10. The Longest Match

In last week’s edition, we took account of World Cup fever but asked readers to “spare a thought for the true supporters of local clubs in Sittingbourne, Maidstone, Folkestone, Whitstable, Herne Bay, Canterbury, Margate, Ramsgate and Deal.” These columns have occasionally featured issues surrounding Doncaster Rovers which at first sight have little relevance to the economy of East Kent but might be of interest to die-hard football fanatics or to those who struggle for an answer to that difficult question at the end of a pub quiz. If you have ever found your patience severely tested or if you were obliged to watch yesterday’s tedious draw between France and Uruguay, which did not even feature a contentious hand-ball or a chest head butting, then spare a thought again for the Doncaster Rovers supporters at a Division Three North cup game against Stockport County in 1946. It remains the longest professional football match ever played. After 30 minutes of extra time, the teams were drawing at two goals each. The referee decided that the match should continue until one team scored. After three hours and twenty-three minutes of play, the gathering gloom plus steam from locomotives returning to the nearby engine sheds forced the referee to end the match with the scores still tied. Stories abounded at the time of spectators going home for tea and returning to watch the end. One contemporary report quotes a miner who claimed to have completed a shift and produced two tons of coal during the added time. Penalty shoot-outs have mercifully put paid to such prolonged games. Long suffering supporters have noticed that good judgement and Doncaster Rovers have not always been close friends. This is the team that rejected Kevin Keegan as being not good enough. He later became European footballer of the year not once, but twice. The club sacked Lawrie McMenemy as manager. Almost inevitably, McMenemy went on to win the FA Cup as manager of Southampton. You could almost make the case that being rejected by Doncaster Rovers is a guarantee of success. In an incident on 12 September 2006, the club mascot, Donny Dog, was refused entry to the stadium and told by the police ‘not to reappear’ within 50 metres of the stadium’. Perhaps there is a message for East Kent business in all this. Do not despair, if your early efforts are rejected; it can even work to your advantage. After all, it will be no surprise to the long-suffering fans of Doncaster Rovers if the next list of Nobel Prize winners features a certain Donny Dog.

## 11. Our Sponsors

Girlings Solicitors has been managing the managing the legal affairs of commercial and private clients for over a century. Twenty-six partners and one hundred and twenty members of staff ensure a comprehensive range of services from the local offices in Ashford, Canterbury, Folkestone, Herne Bay and Margate. Offices in France and Spain complement specialist departments for charities, individuals and companies. For details, telephone 01843 220274. Express By Holiday Inn took on the daunting task of restoring the former Prospect Inn at Minster. The result is a spectacular hotel that combines the best of Oliver Hill's 1930s design with ultra modern facilities and technological support. Conveniently located for business guests and holiday makers in East Kent, the meeting rooms and 105 bedrooms are available at competitive prices throughout the year. For details, telephone 01843 820250. Adecco is the world's largest HR solutions company offering a comprehensive service of temporary and contract staffing, permanent recruitment, outsourcing, outplacement, career services, training and consulting. Officially designated as a 2009 British Superbrand, Adecco is represented in Thanet and Dover by its Broadstairs office, tel: 01843 609292. CARISS design, install and support education and business computing systems as East Kent's leading specialist company in Open Source Software. To lower your carbon footprint, reduce your power consumption and adopt a thin client system, call CARISS, tel: 01843 823724. Mach Associates are the high-fliers in providing Internet technologies and specialist software solutions with a particular expertise in servicing the travel industry. A Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and with ISO9001 accreditation, Mach Associates also offers reduces telecom operating cost through VOIP/PBX phone systems. tel: 0870 321 9986. Sota Connect offers a comprehensive IT service covering best-value voice, data and Internet services for companies of all sizes as well as public sector organisations. The company operates two state-of-the-art data centres of over 10,000sq ft. Sota Connect owns and operates a unique 200km fibre network from London to Ramsgate with high bandwidth Internet access giving superfast Internet connections, tel: 0800 072 2420.



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**It's happening now, it's happening in Thanet & East Kent.**  
**For details of membership, email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk)**

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