

Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

Thanet & East Kent Insider

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1. Luxury Brands And Thanet

In the first week of October, the Thanet & East Kent Chamber will be welcoming a representative of the UK's most successful shopping outlet. Our visitor will be interested in looking at the retail infrastructure of the East Kent coastal business community with a view to examining the opportunities available in a resurgent economy conveniently located next to the largest market on the world, the 26 countries of the European Union. Not to be ignored also is the presence of an expanding airport at Manston served by the UK's biggest domestic airline and a port at Dover which welcomes nearly 14 million passengers a year and where the cruise terminal can host at any one time 10,000 consumers, all with considerable spending power. We can certainly learn from a shopping centre that currently hosts 130 luxury designer brands including Aquascutum, Armani, Calvin Klein, Dior, D&G, Jaeger, Jimmy Choo, Valentino, Vivienne Westwood and Yves Saint Laurent? Margate, take note. There is more to life than Primark.

2. Annual Increase Of 88%

The UK's most successful shopping outlet enjoyed an increase of 88% in tax-refunded sales; these relate to the purchases made by overseas visitors keen to reclaim VAT on their return home. Value Retail's company Chairman, Scott Malkin, states that his outlet is: "more well-known today in China than Selfridges or Harrods". He has a good point when you consider that the average spend per overseas visitor is around £1,000. One Chamber member has told us that that when he meets a Chinese VIP at London Heathrow, one of the first requests is often to visit this shopping outlet at Bicester Village. Thanet & East Kent Chamber will be working with our associates at the Dover District Chamber of Commerce to ensure that our Chamber members are at the head of the queue for any commercial opportunities that arise. Supermodel, Jade Parfitt is currently featured on the Bicester Village website. A favourite of the designers Karl Lagerfeld, Jasper Conran and Jean-Paul Gaultier, she knows about fashion. When she says: "It's all about craftsmanship and having that longevity" she confirms the old maxim that 'quality pays'. If you can get a discount of 60% on a top brand, that must help too.

3. Thanet Surcharge

The power of the media was demonstrated again last week when the Thanet Gazette again referred to our campaign about the Thanet Surcharge on petrol, see <http://www.thisiskent.co.uk/news/Drivers-pay-surcharge-petrol/article-2652282-detail/article.html>. As reported in the Thanet & East Kent Insider of 11th September 2010, Tesco Broadstairs was charging 5p a litre more for unleaded fuel than Asda, Lakeside or Morrisons in Canterbury. We wrote at the time that "Motorists in Thanet deserve better". We are pleased to report that the Thanet Surcharge has now been reduced to 4p a litre. Thank you Thanet Gazette, we are stronger together. What is perhaps surprising in all this is that Tesco is one of the UK's most successful companies with an enviable record of efficiency and growth based on its promise to consumers of offering value for money. Yet, the Tesco petrol outlets in Dover and Broadstairs still charge 4p a litre more for unleaded petrol than their competitors at Morrisons and Asda in Canterbury. Interestingly enough, the Tesco website at www.tesco.com provides a price comparison facility and declares: "We are in the process of improving this webpage and an exciting new page will be up shortly. In the meantime, our Price Check price comparison tool is still available for you to use, which provides you with Tesco and Asda prices on thousands of comparable products." When the Thanet & East Kent Insider entered the word "Petrol" we received the following reply: "Sorry, there were no products matching this description." How exciting is that?

4. The World's Biggest

The Thanet & East Kent Chamber has been invited to the official opening of the world's largest offshore windfarm. It is only fitting that that Thanet's largest business support body should be on the list, but we are nonetheless grateful for the opportunity to meet Vattenfall's President and CEO, Øystein Løseth, who will perform the official opening ceremony on 23 September 2010 in the company of the UK Secretary of State, Chris Huhne. A report will follow in the next edition of the Thanet & East Kent Insider.

5. Business Booming

Chamber member Oyster Press of Whitstable, tel: 01227 772605, reports record orders for printing. In an exclusive interview yesterday with the Thanet & East Kent Insider, Director Clive Tucker said: "We will be working all weekend to meet demand." One corporate client has ordered 55,000 business cards. Despite being so busy, Clive is one of many successful business leaders who will be attending next Tuesday's Business Networking Breakfast, "Get a Share of £700,000". Almost every sector of East Kent business will be represented at the Fayreness Hotel to hear Thanet College's enterprising new Principal describe how he will look to spend more of his budget on local companies. Oyster Press will be joined by Lanes Printers, tel: 01843 861314 and Sharps Printing Services, tel: 01843 600123, all of which have acquired an excellent reputation for the quality and speed of their service.

6. Marlowe Innovation Centre

The Marlowe Innovation Centre is the trading arm of Friends of Folkestone and Marlowe Academy and forms part of a regeneration project for Thanet. The centre offers start up businesses high quality, low cost offices and light industrial units. Unlike some local business centres, there is 24-hour access for tenants. Two offices will be available shortly at competitive rents. For details, contact the centre on 01843 598 600 or email info@marloweinnovationcentre.co.uk for more information.

7. News From Dover

Dover Town Council and Dover District Council offer excellent support to their largest business support body, the Dover District Chamber of Commerce. It is therefore not surprising that the town centre economy is doing so well. Providing the planning applications go ahead as expected, seventeen new jobs should accompany the opening of two new stores in Dover town centre, Greggs and Bighthouse. Greggs has plans to add another 600 stores to its UK chain. For more details, see <http://www.thisiskent.co.uk/news/job-hopes-look-bright-town/article-2646392-detail/article.html> Plans for the National War Memorial on Dover's Western Heights received a further boost in a BBC Breakfast News broadcast last Tuesday which featured John Pegg of Craft:Pegg Architects. The target date for completion is 4 August 2014, the centenary of the beginning of the First World War. A recording of the broadcast will be available until Tuesday 21st September 2010 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p009vyfg> fast forward to 1:39:50. The boost to East Kent business from 500,000 visitors a year would be significant.

8. Office Space Wanted in Ramsgate

A Chamber member is looking to relocate to a large office space in Ramsgate close to the central area. Anyone who can assist is requested to email admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Ramsgate Office".

9. Healthy Mind, Healthy Body, Free Lunch

Porchlight supports people in Ashford, Canterbury, Dover and Ramsgate with mental health difficulties. Kay Eastoe, the Porchlight Service Manager for Thanet, has contacted the Thanet & East Kent Chamber with details of a "Get Fit For World Mental Health Day" on Monday 11th October 2010 starting at 10:30 in the morning to be held at Ramsgate Sports Centre, High Street, Ramsgate, Kent, CT11 9TT. Kay writes: "A free lunch will be provided. We have hired out the facilities for our exclusive use and we will be running Badminton, Table Tennis, Spinning Classes and Fully Equipped Gym. We have fully qualified instructors with us throughout the event. The event is free for anyone living in Thanet, who has mental health needs and is over 18 years old. Carers and support workers are also

invited to attend with their clients.” For more details, contact Kay direct by telephone to 01843 863015 or by email to kayeastoe@porchlight.org.uk.

10. Chamber Upgrade

The staff members of Chambers of Commerce spend a large part of their working day discussing business issues with members. Our supporters and sponsors know that they can rely on our absolute discretion in not revealing confidential information to third parties. They are also aware that they can discuss subjects which for a variety of reasons would not be appropriate with their workforce or families. In being so free to give advice, Chambers must also accept guidance from members when they have our best interests at heart. The Thanet & East Kent Chamber welcomes constructive advice from any source. As a result of comments received, we are upgrading our website and improving our telephone links so that members receive a more personal service. Additions to our staff and board of directors also allow us to expand the range of services available. We expect to be making further additions to our staff before the end of the year.

11. Golf Day

A record number of entries for the Chamber Golf Day at the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club in Deal on 8th October 2010 includes a team from France who will play alongside Chamber members in the traditional Thanet v Dover competition. Prizes on offer include a new car and a host of quality products, helping to make this tournament East Kent’s premier corporate golf event. New for 2010 will be a putting competition to allow early finishers and late starters to have the option to enjoy a full day of competitive activities, if the charms of the luxurious clubhouse should wane. The Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club has hosted two Open Championships and has been roundly praised by some of the world’s top golfers. Bobby Locke, winner of four Open Championships and author of the phrase “You drive for show, but putt for dough” loved the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club so much he took his wife to Deal on his honeymoon in 1958 and taught her to play golf there.

12. No Shorts Please, We’re British

Walter Hagen was the world’s first professional golfer. Arnold Palmer, who is widely credited with popularising the modern game, once said at a dinner to honour Walter Hagen: “If not for you, Walter, this dinner tonight would be downstairs in the Pro Shop, not in the ballroom.” A flamboyant, larger than life character, he believed in living life to the full, as his much quoted aphorism relates; “You’re only here for a short visit. Don’t hurry. Don’t worry. And be sure to smell the flowers along the way.” Great though he was, his American ‘can do’ outlook did not always appeal to the British establishment. In the aftermath of the First World War, a brash American proclaiming that he was “unbeatable” did not sit easily with the gentlemanly spirit that had hitherto characterised the sport of golf. Born in December 1892, he was 27 years old when he joined the well-dressed and impeccably-mannered amateurs at the Open Championship of 1920 at the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club, Deal. As a professional, he was denied entry to the clubhouse and instructed to change in the Pro Shop. He ignored that advice and changed at his hotel, putting on his golf shoes in his chauffeur-driven Austro Daimler parked pointedly opposite the front door of the clubhouse under the flagpole. The results for the 1920 tournament reveal that Walter Hagen was 55th, decidedly beaten, if unbowed. To be fair to this garrulous American, he went on to win the Open Championship four times during the decade. Despite claiming that he “never wanted to be a millionaire, just to live like one”, Walter Hagen became the first golfing millionaire and died a wealthy man in 1969. The Thanet & East Kent Chamber is pleased to confirm that at its tournament on 8th October at the same Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club that spurned Walter Hagen, members will be allowed in the clubhouse, assuming of course that they are not wearing jeans, trainers or shorts; after all, we are British and we do have certain standards to maintain.

13. Our Sponsors

Girlings Solicitors has been 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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