

# Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

## Thanet & East Kent Insider

*Example of the weekly business bulletin sent to Chamber members by email promptly on publication.*

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### **1. £3.5 Million Pounds To Local Economy**

Thanet & East Kent Chamber, the largest business support body in Thanet, has partnered with Thanet College, the largest training provider, in a pioneering initiative that promises to give a huge boost to the local economy. At a Chamber business networking breakfast last Tuesday at the Fayreness Hotel, Broadstairs, new College Principal, Graham Razey, announced to a packed room that £3.5 million of the College's budget that is currently being spent on suppliers from outside the area will be switched to local companies "wherever possible". Almost every sector of the East Kent economy stands to benefit from this new policy. Chamber Chief Executive said afterwards: "This is a wonderful example of business engagement at its very best. Thanet College is leading the way in working with the private sector." Graham Razey declared: "The Thanet & East Kent Chamber is at the heart of the business community. We will go local wherever possible and look forward to working with East Kent companies of all sizes". All current valid Thanet & East Kent Chamber members are on a classified supplier list in the possession of Thanet College. Chamber members wishing to register individually should email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) for details of priority status.

### **2. Thanet Offshore Windfarm Opening**

Readers of the Thanet & East Kent Insider have received regular updates on the progress of Vattenfall's £780 million windfarm project off the Thanet coast. The official opening last Thursday saw dignitaries, press and guests board the chartered P&O Pride of Burgundy at Ramsgate port. After a short trip, the vessel moored on the edge of the array of 100 wind turbines. It was quite appropriate that as the ceremony began a gentle breeze accompanied the first speaker, Cllr Bob Bayford. As Leader of Thanet District Council, he congratulated Vattenfall on completing the project on time. Vattenfall's Swedish President, Øystein Løseth, was next to speak. In flawless English, he managed to thank everyone on the top deck and reserved some special words of praise for Thanet College which had provided the entertainment and prepared the excellent food. Last on the podium was Chris Huhne, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, who resisted the temptation to reply in Swedish. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to wind energy. He lamented that the UK has "One of the worst records in Europe on renewable energy. We are 25<sup>th</sup> out of 27 member states". He continued: "We are playing in the Conference League and we want to play in the Premier League." Perhaps with the prospect of a local Marine Energy Research & Development Park in mind, he added: "We are in a unique position to become a world leader in this industry."

### **3. Up Close and Personal With Øystein Løseth**

In an exclusive interview with the Thanet & East Kent Insider, Vattenfall's President confided that it was not a simple matter to expand the current windfarm by just adding extra wind turbines. Any expansion would require infrastructure changes that would need to be part of new facilities both on land and offshore. He pointed out the technical challenges presented by the marine location. Seawater and adverse weather conditions posed particular problems for offshore generation. When asked if he thought the recent troubles

experienced by BP in the Gulf of Mexico strengthened the case for windpower, he said that the oil spill had caused him to reflect on the importance of safety issues, especially with regard to nuclear power.

#### **4. News From Dover**

Our associates at Dover District Chamber of Commerce allowed the Thanet & East Kent Chamber to take centre stage in an interview on BBC Radio Kent which can be heard until 28 September 2010 by clicking on [http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p00b1k8h/Breakfast\\_with\\_John\\_Warnett\\_and\\_Clare\\_McDonnell\\_22\\_09\\_2010](http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p00b1k8h/Breakfast_with_John_Warnett_and_Clare_McDonnell_22_09_2010) and fast forward to 0:42:00. The broadcast examines the cruise ship business in Dover and the wealthy passengers who “are not short of a bob or two”. The visitor from Bicester Village, “130 well-known brand names Dior, Armani, D&G” will be visiting the Chamber in Thanet on 5<sup>th</sup> October. Included in the programme is a meeting at Manston Airport and Quex Park. Bicester Village claims the highest density retail sales in the world and we look forward to learning from this best practice operator.

#### **5. Save Your Balance Sheet From £93,880 Of Stress**

We are grateful to Lynn Marchant, who manages the Kent Mindful Employer Service, for drawing our attention to a useful document, “Work-related stress, What the law says” which has just been published following consultation with four national bodies; the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS), the Health and Safety Executive, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and Health, Work and Well-being. Stress is defined as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them”. The booklet relates the case of ‘Young v The Post Office [2002] EWCA Civ’. Maurice Young was a workshop manager at a Port Office depot in Scarborough who suffered a breakdown as the result of ‘overwork and lack of training on new systems’. When he returned to work four months later, he was given the same workload as before and in consequence went sick again after seven weeks. The subsequent court case resulted in an award of £93,880 in damages to Mr Young plus costs. Whatever your view of psychiatric illnesses, employers who fail to take into account the mental health of their workforce are liable to face considerable stress if asked to pay damages on this scale. For a free copy of the booklet, email [manager@tekc.co.uk](mailto:manager@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line “Work Related Stress Guide”.

#### **6. New Legislation for Temporary Workers**

The Agency Workers Regulations (AWR) are expected to be introduced on 1 October 2011 producing radical changes in the way agency workers can be treated. Temporary workers employed for fewer than 12 weeks on a contract will soon be entitled to access what is called ‘collective facilities’; childcare services, canteen facilities, company transport services and notification of vacancies. After 12 weeks on an assignment, agency workers’ relevant terms and conditions of employment must be no less favourable than they would have been if hired direct to do the same job. Adecco is providing free booklets and arranging seminars to update employers on the new arrangements. Among the guest speakers booked is Neil Carberry, Head of Employment and Pensions at the Confederation of British Industry. For details, email [Mary.CAMPBELL@adecco.co.uk](mailto:Mary.CAMPBELL@adecco.co.uk) with the subject line “AWR Info”.

#### **7. G Casino**

Sherrill Hawker, the popular Sales & Events Manager at G Casino, is now back at work after an absence of five weeks. She assures the Chamber that a networking session at G Casino will go ahead in October and she is planning a Be Gorgeous event for November. Interested parties can contact Sherrill on her direct line, tel: 01843 579361, or via the G Casino switchboard, tel: 01843 579999.

## **8. Congratulations to Robin Evans**

The Boys & Maughan Marketing Manager, Robin Evans, has just returned from cycling from London to Paris to raise funds for the Everyman Campaign which raises awareness about testicular cancer. Robin's ride started with a 90-mile pedal through the Kent countryside, followed by three stages of 70 miles a day before arriving in Paris at the Eiffel Tower. On the website at <http://www.justgiving.com/RobinEvans-London2Paris2010-Everyman> Rob shares a few sobering thoughts with the words: "In the past 18 months, 3 good friends of mine have been diagnosed with cancer, only one of them is still with us. With the great work that Everyman does we can hope to increase the survival rate in the future." After reading about the Everyman Campaign, all male readers will have very reason to keep their eye on the ball.

## **9. Solar Panels On Your Roof**

David Batten of the well-respected cost management consultancy, Auditel (UK) Ltd, has contacted the Chamber with details of the government's 'feed-in' scheme. As he puts it: "An average 3 bed house with a south facing roof tiled with photo-cells could expect to receive about £900 p.a. from energy directed to the grid at preferential rates and a further £100 off its electricity bills. It's not all honey though and these systems cost about £12,000 to install. Payback is after about twelve years. Over the guaranteed 25 year scheme, home-owners can expect to make about £20k. The real payback is with commercial properties. Schemes are available to fund the installation and get revenue during the normal 10 to 20 year lease period. This makes it attractive from both a commercial and environmental point of view." For more details on this and how to cut costs in your business, contact David Batten direct by email to [batten353@aol.com](mailto:batten353@aol.com).

## **10. Boost Your Business With Film**

One of the stars of Vattenfall's celebrations last Thursday was Thanet & East Kent Chamber member, Lavender Blue Media. Commissioned by the Swedish Energy giant to make a film about the project, Lavender Blue Media used their local knowledge and technical expertise to show a brilliant set of sequences that gave a breath-taking overview of the 35 square kilometres of the world's largest offshore windfarm; much of it from the air. Producer Claire Ashford drew on her experience at one of the South East's leading digital content creation agencies to produce an accompanying press pack of high definition video scenes of a similar stunning quality. East Kent companies wishing to join the rush for online video content on their websites should know that Clare has recently acquired an animation studio which has proved to be an effective and economical means to explain complicated processes. A list of satisfied customers that includes Skanska, NHS, Fireco and Kent County Council suggests that Lavender Blue Media is enjoying the sweet smell of success. To enhance the attraction of your company's products and services, contact Claire direct by email to [info@lavenderbluemedia.com](mailto:info@lavenderbluemedia.com) or by telephone to 01795 424252.

## **11. Visit Kent, Please**

The Thanet & East Kent Insider has often commented on tourism issues. We now know that "seaside tourism in England and Wales is by any standards a large industry. In terms of employment it is comparable to the telecommunications sector and larger than the motor industry, aerospace, pharmaceuticals or steel." We have learned also that "a substantial British seaside tourist industry remains alive and well and seems even to have been growing over the last decade. For the future, the industry has a potentially important contribution to make not only to seaside towns but also to the British economy as a whole." For this information, we must be grateful to the report of June this year called "The Seaside Tourism Industry in England Wales" written by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University. The East Kent coastal business community has an especial interest in seaside tourism. With a fast-growing airport at Manston and a port at Dover that last year welcomed 13,350,000 passengers, many local companies are sensitive to changes in the number of tourists who stay in the area. Fortunately, we can rely on Visit Kent to keep us informed with up-to-date statistics. Since the excellent Visit Kent Business

Barometer moved from quarterly publication to the current monthly schedule, it has become an essential guide to many hotel operators and managers of attractions. No-one can accuse the Visit Kent Chief Executive of letting the grass grow under her feet. The day after the Thanet Offshore Windfarm opened, Sandra Matthews Marsh posted a photograph and text on the website at [www.mykent.co.uk](http://www.mykent.co.uk) extolling the potential for tourism. She even managed to quote accurately Bob Bayford's opening address: "Kent is known as the Garden of England and this is now the Garden's biggest water feature" which is more than some of the national newspapers managed. The lady will go far.

## **12. Statistics**

Modern probability theory tells us that if there are 23 people in a room, there is a 50% chance that two of them will have the same birthday. With 57 people, the probability rises to 99%. If you find that difficult to accept, then we suspect that most people would feel the same. Statisticians live in a different world, as the account sent to us by one Chamber member illustrates. We have our doubts about this story, but we leave readers to judge for themselves. "John and Bernard were statisticians. Uneasy in many social situations, they tended to spend a lot of their free time together. Last summer, they decided to hire some guns to go shooting in the woods. After a fruitless tramp all afternoon, they were just about to return to base when they spied a pigeon perched contentedly half-way up a tree. By silent and mutual agreement, John and Bernard raised their guns together and fired simultaneously. John missed by two feet to the right. Bernard erred on the left by the same amount. The pigeon, not unduly perturbed, took flight and disappeared happily into the distance. John said: "Great shooting Bernard. On average, I think we got it."

## **13. Our Sponsors**

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David Foley  
Chief Executive, Thanet & East Kent Chamber Limited  
Industrial Professor, Thanet College  
Fellow, Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures & Commerce  
Tel: +44 (0) 1843 609289  
Fax: +44 (0) 1843 609291  
Email: davidfoley@tekc.co.uk  
Mobile: +44 (0) 7967 284850

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