

Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

Thanet & East Kent Insider

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1. Eurocell Open Day

We cherish inward investors. We should embrace them warmly, give them every encouragement and make them feel so welcome that they tell all their friends and contacts from outside East Kent to come and set up shop in our neighbourhood. Eurocell is the UK's market-leading manufacturer and distributor of quality UPVC profiles for UPVC windows, UPVC doors, UPVC conservatories, UPVC fascias, UPVC soffits, UPVC guttering and rain water systems. By now you will have gathered that Eurocell knows a thing or two about UPVC building materials. This successful company is now in Thanet and trading at Eurokent Business Park. The Deputy Chairman of Thanet District Council, Cllr Michael J Roberts, and the Chief Executive of Thanet & East Kent Chamber shared the honour of cutting the ribbon to mark the official opening of Eurocell in Thanet. As retail and trade customers streamed into premises, Area Manager Tony Smith and local manager Dave Ashley looked on with great satisfaction, confident that their offers cannot be beaten for price, quality and service. Initial results are very positive. Some of the most popular items on sale are the low-maintenance PVC soffit boards. Guaranteed against discolouration, warping and cracking, these can be ordered on line and delivered free of charge within 48 hours. Give Dave a call to discuss your needs, tel: 01843 589686 or email dave.ashley@eurocell.co.uk for more details. The Thanet & East Kent Chamber will be working closely with our associates at the Dover District Chamber of Commerce to assist the company to open another outlet in East Kent.

2. Golf At Its Best

The 2010 Thanet v Dover Golf Tournament took place at the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club. East Kent's largest corporate golf day featured a team from Nord De Calais as well as over £20,000 of prizes available to the teams competing. In a closely fought contest the main team prize was won by Thanet with team captain Alastair Narraway of OFP Ltd collecting the trophy on behalf of the Thanet & East Kent Chamber members. The winner of the Ray Haines Memorial Trophy with the lowest individual score was Justin Bishop following a round of 74, an excellent return on this demanding course which has hosted two Open Championships. Other winners included Alex Pentecost of Avia, Dave Mulcare of Amdell and Darren Lamb of Country Carpets. Joe Futter was nearest the pin on the 8th hole but just not quite near enough to win the new Skoda car on offer for a hole-in-one. One of the happiest winners of the day was the Dover Counselling Centre (DCC), a charity founded in the wake of the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster which is now £276 better off thanks to the generosity of Chamber golfers. DCC continues to minister to some of the bereaved of the 193 victims of that dreadful night of 6th March 1987. The National Memorial was the beneficiary of the putting competition. Full details will be available shortly on a Roll of Honour. The Chamber thanks Ken Hannah and his team at the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club for its delightfully friendly service, Graham Rayner for his unrivalled marketing skills and Justin Bishop of the Walpole Bay Hotel who used all his experience as an ex-professional golfer to make the sure the tournament progressed without a hitch.

3. Boost Your Turnover

The Thanet & East Kent Chamber has designed a logo specifically for the use of Chamber members. We urge all members to use the logo on their publicity, websites, letterheads, sales brochures and email correspondence. Members will be aware of the advantages of Chamber membership when applying to access the Thanet College discretionary spending budget of £3.5 million and a free place at the Business-to-Business exhibition on 24th November 2010, see 4 below. The increasingly high profile of the Chamber on television and radio will also produce a credibility advantage to members who advertise that they are officially linked to the largest business support agency in the area. Attached to the members only edition of this Thanet & East Kent Insider is a copy of the Conditions of Use together with a high resolution jpeg file of the logo. In contrast to some membership organisations, there is no charge for its usage.

4. Free Exhibition Space

Chamber member Evans Easyspace is the UK's leading provider of small business units specifically catering for the small and medium sized enterprise (SME) market. Following warm relations with the company's Managing Director established during the joint campaign against the iniquitous Rating (Empty Properties) Act 2007, Thanet & East Kent

Chamber members are offered a free place at a business exhibition at the Lakeside Business Park premises at Hersden, near Canterbury. Scheduled for 24th November 2010, the exhibition will allow members to display their products and services to visitors and tenants in what promises to be a cost-effective promotion with valuable networking opportunities. There are a limited number of stands available. Chamber members are invited to apply promptly by email in the first instance. Please state clearly that you are a current member of the Thanet & East Kent Chamber, ideally including the member logo as listed at 3 above, and email sarahcooney@evanseasyspace.com with the subject line "B2B 24 Nov 2010 Thanet Chamber Member". Please also copy the email to admin@tekc.co.uk.

5. News From Dover

The People's Port of Dover Trust is now a legal entity and will be bidding to take over the ownership of the Port of Dover with the stated objective of operating the port for the benefit of the local community. Plans for the National War Memorial on Dover's Western Heights received a boost last week with news of the support of Ian Hislop. Although a renowned humourist as editor of the satirical magazine Private Eye and a panelist on every episode to date of the BBC's Have I Got News For You, Ian Hislop takes a serious interest in military history. He presented the six episodes of Channel 4's Not Forgotten which detailed the experiences of soldiers in the First World War. Ian Hislop's support increases the chances of the National War Memorial being built before the 4th August 2014, the centenary of the outbreak of the twentieth century's most lethal conflict which resulted in over one million deaths among the British Imperial Forces.

6. A Little Bird Told Us

Thanet's poorest residents are being offered financial support by the charity Cheerful Sparrows. Tracing its origins to a Mr Sparrow, a casualty of the Boer War, this wonderful Thanet-based organisation offers help to Thanet residents whose specific needs cannot be addressed through official channels. Referrals must originate in the first instance from a reputable body or professional association; GPs and school welfare officers are in a particularly good position to make recommendations. Long-term residents of Thanet will recall the former President of Cheerful Sparrows, the late Peter Finlay, who passed away in May this year after a lifetime of service to the district. Those who attended his funeral may remember the Reverend Stanley Evans's comments from the pulpit when he said that Peter Finlay served only one term as a Councillor as "he found the council's bureaucracy frustrating". For those not blessed with the best numeracy and literacy skills, accessing help from social services can also prove impossibly frustrating and Cheerful Sparrows may provide the solution.

7. Trustees Week

We are grateful to Cllr Clive Hart who has drawn our attention to the valuable work of trustees who play a vital role, volunteering their time for the benefit of others less fortunate than themselves. The week beginning 25th October 2010 has been designated Trustees Week and has been designed to celebrate the efforts of trustees everywhere in the country, encouraging more people to take an active interest in the charities operating in their local area. Full details are available at <http://www.trusteesweek.org.uk>

8. China's Growing Domestic Market

We learned last week that China's foreign exchange reserves increased in the last reported quarter by USD 194 billion, the equivalent of around £121 billion at current exchange rates. The Financial Times tells us that total foreign currency reserves now stand at around £1,160 billion. That is a lot of money to have jingling in your pocket available to spend. We have received a succession of reports over the last six months from seasoned travellers to China that a significant change has taken place. There is a growing market for imports. It might be time to stop thinking of China as a base for low-cost manufacturing and to start considering exporting to the country to meet the growing demand from increasingly wealthy and urban domestic consumers. We have received a request for a Kent-based clothing manufacturer who can supply China with ready-made garments for 18 – 25 year olds. Another Chamber member has begun exporting mini-keyboards for mobile phones. Consumer demand in China is undoubtedly growing strongly and UK companies with interesting products are well advised to get in quick. The BBC and the CIA agree on an estimated population for China of 1.34 billion. Even if just 5% of the inhabitants are potential customers, that is still more than the population of the UK. Makes you think, doesn't it?

9. High Earners

Jon Cleverdon of J Cleverdon Chartered Accountants invited the Thanet & East Kent Chamber to a confidential meeting last week at which he outlined a series of strategies relating to bespoke planning to save high earners considerable sums of money which could then be used to invest in the local economy or reward key employees, our preferences, or alternatively to indulge every whim living on a beach in a warm country. In our limited experience,

you soon tire of exotic locations where there is no marmite, HP sauce or news of Doncaster Rovers's latest defeat. You pay your money, and you take your choice. The beauty of Jon's system is that you pay a lot less money. He categorizes the tax solutions in seven areas as follows: Employee Benefit Trust, IR 35 Contractor Solutions Peak Performance Contracts, Stamp Duty, Income Tax Strategy, Inheritance Tax Planning, Capital Gains Tax and Employer Funded Retirement Schemes. To find out more, give Jon and his colleagues a call at their main office in Broadstairs, telephone 01843 866599.

10. Community & The Arts

This Chamber has always believed that a successful enterprise requires a strong arts community. That is why the Chamber organised arts festivals in 2009 and 2010 from which many members benefited. A consistent supporter of business engagement has been Michael Wheatley-Ward of Chamber member, the Sarah Thorne Theatre Club. Despite the forebodings of disaster from some quarters, Michael has made a brilliant success of the venture, combining artistic success with a commercial acumen from which heavily subsidised public theatres could all learn. Regular readers of the Thanet & East Kent Insider, see editions of 1st May 2010 and 12th June 2010, will be familiar with the names of the patrons Michael has ensnared, Dame Judi Dench and David Suchet. What is perhaps less well-known is the astonishing audience figures he has secured for his programmes, most recently for Rodney Bewes in a production of Jerome K Jerome's Three Men in a Boat. One Likely Lad does not make a summer, but with enticing evenings to come which include The Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band Changed My Life Forever and Kissing Sid James, about which the advance publicity tells us intriguingly "Crystal's a croupier with a bit of a thing for Sean Connery", we can expect continuing success for the rest of the year. In the last twelve months, over twenty community and business groups have shared in the success of the Sarah Thorne Theatre Club, proving yet again that reciprocity is a key ingredient in promoting sales. Recently, we have featured the exemplary business engagement policy of Thanet College. Michael Wheatley-Ward can be added to the list of enlightened East Kent entrepreneurs who believe in their community. In efforts to boost turnover and reduce costs, you do not need to be Richard Branson or Damien Hirst, Britain's wealthiest artist, to appreciate that in our local economy there is a simple reciprocal benefit in the doctrine, "You buy from me, I buy from you".

11. Princes

Following the success of the event at the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club, the Thanet & East Kent Chamber has received many requests to organize a Spring Golf Day. We will shortly be discussing options with Chamber member Princes Golf Club and welcome suggestions from members. We would particularly like to hear of any ideas that can help us to work together with our other fellow members at Stoneless Golf Club and Manston Golf Centre. All suggestions welcome. Please email us with your ideas to admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Spring 2010 Golf".

12. Insurance Claim

News has reached the Chamber of some rather unusual insurance claims. Anyone who has been the victim or the perpetrator of a road accident will know the foreboding that greets you when faced with a claim form to complete. Chamber member Millards Insurance of Deal, tel: 01304 613072, can offer practical help and years of experience to Chamber members required to provide a true and accurate account of an incident. We have heard of some curious replies to common questions but none more so than the example forwarded by one Chamber member who insists that it is the gospel truth. We have no doubt about its veracity, but readers must judge for themselves. In answer to the question "Could either driver have done anything to avoid the accident?", this enterprising claimant wrote simply: "Travelled by bus." Now you can't argue with that, can you?

13. 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

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It's happening now, it's happening in Thanet & East Kent.
For details of membership, email admin@tekc.co.uk

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