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**Subject:** Thanet & East Kent Chamber weekly bulletin "The Insider"

\*\*\* Welcome to the Thanet & East Kent Insider \*\*\*

Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

Thanet & East Kent Insider  
20 May 2008

### **1. Kent Volunteer Awards**

"Never volunteer" was a catch phrase often heard in the days of National Service. But without volunteers, many of Kent's vital social services would cease to function. Do you know of an individual or a group who deserves particular recognition? If so, Kent Volunteers would like to hear from you. Details of the awards scheme are available on request. Just send an email to enquiries@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Kent Volunteer Awards".

### **2. Petrol Prices & the BPI**

There are many indicators of inflation ranging from the Retail Prices Index (RPI) to the less formal Mars Bar Index, as first advocated in the Financial Times by the late Nico Colchester. A new star has entered the firmament with the BPI or Broadstairs Petrol Index. On 6 May 2008, the Thanet & East Kent Insider reported the price of unleaded petrol at Tesco Broadstairs as 110.9p a litre, "Every little helps, but whom does it help?" Two weeks later the price has now risen to 113.9p a litre; an increase of 2.7%. The government's target for the annual rate of inflation is 2%. I am not clever enough to calculate the effect of compound interest at the same rate on a litre of petrol over a year from 6 May 2008, but I can manage the simple sums required to find the final price if a litre continues to rise at the rate of 3p per fortnight. The answer is that on 6 May 2009 a litre of unleaded would cost 189.11p, a rise of 70.5% on the year. That would be £8.59 a gallon; a frightening thought. Thus, the Thanet & East Kent Chamber BPI Tracker from 6 May and the projected Annual BPI are as follows: BPI Tracker: 2.7 BPI Annual: 70.5. This should make interesting reading in the next few weeks.

### **3. Government's £505 million Fuel Tax Windfall**

Our professional association, the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), informs us that due to the rising price of oil, the Government has received an additional £505 million in tax over the past six weeks. With the prospect of this figure rapidly approaching the £2 billion mark in the next few months, is it unreasonable to ask the Chancellor to scrap the next 2p per litre step on the fuel duty escalator planned for October? This chamber says a resounding "No, Sir". With our partners at the Channel Chamber, we will be lending our support to the BCC Director General, David Frost, for his next meeting in Downing Street.

### **4. Chamber Campaigns**

This Chamber is not politically driven. We have no political affiliations of any description and remain committed to working with the democratically elected representatives of any party. Indeed, despite the evidence from animated exchanges in the House of Commons and the fearsome debates in Councils closer to home, we have found a large measure of agreement on many issues relating to Thanet and a genuine harmony and commitment to promoting the best interests of East Kent. Through the good offices of the leader of Thanet District Council, Cllr Sandy Ezekiel, we are expecting shortly to attend a joint meeting with Stephen Ladyman, Labour MP for South Thanet, and Roger Gale, Conservative MP for North Thanet. Politics will be off the agenda as we discuss the Rating (Empty Properties) Act 2007, the scope of commercial development in Thanet and various initiatives to promote Thanet to the UK and overseas. If any Chamber member has a particular point they would like to raise, please email the Chamber at admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Agenda for MPs" and we will do our best to meet the request.

### **5. Westwood Cross**

This is a reminder of the business networking breakfast scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> May 2008 at G Casino, Westwood Cross. Entitled "What's happening at Westwood Cross?", this event provides an opportunity to promote your products and services as well as to influence the future development of Westwood Cross. For booking details, email the Chamber on admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Business Breakfast Westwood Cross".

## 6. Thinking of You

The Chamber now has a range of benefits worth many thousands of pounds. If you do not have the passwords and reference numbers to hand, we are here to help. Any company in valid Chamber membership is invited to contact the Chamber for details on how to reduce costs and access free services. Please email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line listed below:

Free Legal Help Line 24/7 covering £670,000 of fees & awards:	“Free Legal Help Line”
Credit Card Processing Charges from 1.2%:	“Credit Card Processing Offer”
AA Fleet Membership Discounts:	“AA Membership”
Free Chamber Business Health Check with Written Report:	“Free Business Health Check.”
Free Chamber Computer, IT, Internet & Email Check:	“Computer & IT Check”
Free Chamber Accountancy Advice:	“Accountancy Advice”

## 7. China Gateway Deadline

All Chamber members with no fees outstanding on 30 May 2008 will be on a classified list supplied to the developers of the China Gateway at Manston. This classified list will show contact details with the main contact person, a three word description of products or services and an entry of one word in Category 1 and one word in Category 2. The list will be supplied initially in alphabetical order of Category 1. If you would like to revise your current record, contact the Chamber by email to [enquiries@tekc.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line “China Gateway Entry” and state in the body of the message your revised text.

## 8. Bye, Bye Robin

After 20 years of dedicated service, Robin Browne of Girlings Solicitors is stepping down from the board of the Chamber. He takes with him the best wishes of every director and Chamber member with whom he has been in contact over the last two decades. The board of directors of the Chamber will be showing their heart-felt appreciation in a suitable fashion at the next board meeting in early June. The good news is that Robin has agreed to remain as an advisor and consultant to the Chamber where his wisdom and first class advice will continue to be appreciated and admired for many years to come. Girlings Solicitors will also continue as a valued Chamber member and can be contacted for legal advice at their Margate office, tel: 01843 220274.

## 9. That moving feeling

Have you ever been moved by a fine piece of classical music? Or transported to a better world through contemplation of a masterpiece of fine art? You have? Then you will like the service offered by Chamber members, Andrews of Kent and Fox's Removals & Storage who can move you and your belongings from Margate to Birchington in their fleet of dedicated vehicles. Anyone contemplating moving house or offices within the UK or abroad is advised to contact Andrews of Kent tel: 01843 299500 or Fox's Removals & Transport tel: 01843 294422. Both companies are members of the British Association of Removers and offer a full range of products including storage, packing and an international administration service. Their websites at <http://www.andrewsofkent.co.uk> and <http://www.foxs-removals.com> will give you more details. Think global, act local with Andrews or Fox's. That's better. I couldn't let the bulletin finish without at least one slogan.

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Thanet & East Kent Chamber Limited

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