



Your Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

Thanet & East Kent Insider

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1. Business Networking Breakfast

The Thanet & East Kent Chamber again joins forces again with our sister body the Dover District Chamber of Commerce (est. 1850) in announcing our June Business Networking Breakfast on the theme of Tourism. Of interest to anyone interested in improving relations with their customers and clients, the session will include speakers with a profound knowledge of the East Kent coastal business community and a desire to help all delegates to improve their bottom line. There will be excellent networking opportunities along with a full cooked breakfast with a vegetarian option. Scheduled for Friday, 8th June 2012 from 0730 hrs to 0900 hrs at a venue in Sandwich, the event is expected to attract a wide range of companies and interested parties. Tickets cost £12 for Chamber members and £16.00 for non-members subject to availability. Booking is essential. To reserve your place, email admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Business Networking Breakfast 8 June 2012".

2. Manston Airport Update & BBC

Following the publication last Wednesday of Thanet District Council's draft response to Manston Airport's night flying proposals of 27th October 2012, BBC Radio Kent featured a spirited debate yesterday morning between the leader of Thanet District Council, Cllr Clive Hart, and the Chief Executive of Thanet's leading business support organisation, the Thanet & East Kent Chamber. Cllr Hart made the point that the Council was against night-time flights as this was the majority view expressed in a recent survey it had conducted. He also emphasized that cross-party groups had been fully involved in the processes leading to this conclusion. Cllr Hart added that the economic benefits of airport expansion have been over-estimated and the environmental anxieties were paramount in the council's rejection of two night flights in the period 2300 hrs to 0700 hrs. David Foley countered with a quotation from the council's own consultants which largely validated the promised boost to the local economy. He reminded the audience of the high unemployment in Kent and said that Thanet could learn from the business-friendly approach of Southend Council. He also promised a warm welcome to investors keen to imitate local successes such as TV One, Carol Peters Travel, Hornby, Flying Fish (hovercraft), Westwood Cross and Thanet College. The discussion can be heard for the next six days at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/console/p00rfbym> fast forward to 1:07:30.

3. What's All This About Southend?

When looking for best practice in Council support for its local airport, Southend Borough Council stands out from the crowd. Demonstrating a warm welcome to inward investors, the local Council has shown unswerving backing for Southend Airport since its purchase by the Stobart Group on 2nd December 2008. The massive employment opportunities presented by a successful airport have been recognised by both the elected members and some business-minded officers, notably Scott Dolling, Group Manager for Enterprise & Tourism at the Council, and Emma Cooney, Inward Investment & Enterprise Manager. Southend Borough Council managed to avoid the planning delays and red tape that bedevilled Heathrow Terminal 5 which took 20 years to come to fruition from its genesis in 1982 to the beginning of its construction in 2002. Scott and Emma's seminal Southend-on-Sea Hotel Investment Fact File published in March 2010 foresaw Southend Airport increasing passenger numbers

to 2 million with a view to creating 4,900 related jobs and another 1,000 at a nearby business park; targets that are now well within sight. Southend Airport Railway Station opened on 18th July 2011 and a new passenger terminal received its official blessing from the Secretary for State for Transport on 5th March 2012. Nine days later, at the Local Government Chronicle Awards, Southend Borough Council was voted Council of the Year 2012. Not surprisingly, two days ago Cllr Nigel Holdcroft was re-elected as Leader of Southend Borough Council. The new extended runway at Southend Airport is 5,902 ft. long. The runway at Manston Airport measures 9,029 ft. Thanet has the highest youth unemployment in the South East. Southend doesn't.

4. Three Job Vacancies

An international mobile telephone consortium has contacted the Chamber with a request for a Research Analyst to work in Nairobi for three months starting in June 2012. The same company also has a temporary post for a research position in London for two months starting in July 2012. This latter post would be suitable for an undergraduate. If you know of any suitable candidates, Chamber members are invited to email admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Research Post Vacancy Kenya" or "Research Post Vacancy London". Nearer to home, one of our Chamber members has a vacancy for a part-time post of around two hours a day for five days a week. No special skills are required. There is a possibility of working off-site. This position might suit a disabled person. For more details, email admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Part-time Packing Post".

4. Energy Procurement

During the last month, public bodies in Kent have received a reminder about how important it is to keep a sharp eye on procurement procedures when buying energy. Fortunately, companies in East Kent are able to call on the services of tried and tested specialists who are able to negotiate the best discounts with suppliers and keep your accountants and auditors happy. For more information on how you can reduce your energy costs, the following experts will be pleased to help you. Martyn Young of Atlantic Business resources tel: 0781 353 7456, David Batten of Auditel (UK) Ltd tel: 01843 581322 and Jeremy Bailey of Auditel tel: 01843 588776.

5. Commercial Energy Costs

Japan faces energy supply problems in the wake of the tsunami disaster of March 2011. Following the closure for inspection of its last operational nuclear power plant on 5th May 2012, Japan is now facing the prospect of power shortages in the Summer months. Until the Great East Japan Earthquake, as it is known in the Far East, 30% of Japan's power generation was from nuclear sources. Happily, we are currently facing a brighter prospect in the UK. We are grateful to E.ON for the May 2012 market report which shows welcome falls in commercial energy prices of between 2% and 16% in the last twelve months with at least a 5% decrease in commercial energy prices across the board in April 2012. Although domestic gas prices are expected to rise again before the Winter months, at last our energy advisors have some better news for companies about to review their energy contracts.

Supply	Year	Month
	April 2011 – April 2012	April 2012
Average front month power contract price	13% lower	5% lower
Average front month gas contract price	2% lower	5% lower
Average front month oil contract price	2% lower	5% lower
Average Oct'12 Annualised power price	16% lower	April'12 5% lower
Average Oct'12 Annualised gas price	6% lower	April'12 7% lower

6. Big Companies, Big News in Thanet

The Thanet & East Kent Chamber hosted a meeting of the Thanet Business Forum last Thursday at its Broadstairs offices at the Kent Innovation Centre. A small grouping of larger companies, the Thanet Business Forum focuses on some of the issues faced by bigger enterprises. Although some of the discussions must inevitably remain confidential, members will want to know that the development of Primark at Westwood Cross shopping centre is progressing on schedule. The former Antolin warehouse of some 70,000 sq. ft. is expected to host around 250 staff when it opens later in the year. The development of the new Sainsbury's on the other hand is reported not to be going ahead for the moment pending a review. The premises formally occupied by Peacocks will be taken by Poundworld, a competitor to Poundland, an established retailer already in residence across the road from Westwood Cross.

7. Charles Dickens

In contrast to the depressed pub sector as a whole where doom and gloom are still the order of the day, the Charles Dickens pub in Victoria Parade Broadstairs has been flourishing since its recent complete refurbishment. The upstairs rooms are now open for business and it is clear that the business has benefited from the magic touch of new owners, Thorley Taverns.

8. Turner Update

The Turner Contemporary on Margate's seafront can claim over 500,000 visitors since its launch in April 2011. An independent assessment of its economic impact on Margate and the surrounding area estimates that £6.2 million has been spent locally as a result of the new gallery. Last week alone saw 13,000 visitors pass through the doors. The successful Turner and the Elements exhibition finishes tomorrow. The next blockbuster show entitled "She lay down deep beneath the sea" opens on 26th May 2012

and features the works of Tracey Emin. The gallery advises: "This exhibition contains work of an adult nature. Please use your discretion when visiting with children."

9. Late Bookings Expected

Manston Airport reports an increase in freight traffic of 18% and is looking for a boost in aircraft movements as we approach the opening of the London 2012 Olympics on 27th July 2012. Advance bookings at the airport and at local hotels for the London 2012 Olympics have been below expectations suggesting that we can anticipate a rush of last minute reservations as overseas and domestic customers make late decisions on their travel and accommodation plans.

10. Locate in Kent & HSI

The ever-excellent Locate in Kent is as busy as ever encouraging inward investors into East Kent at a series of exhibitions overseas and in the UK. LiK is liaising closely with Kent County Council and London Metropolitan on securing the future of the Discovery Park at Sandwich. We now know that the first phase of upgrading of the fast rail link from Ashford to Canterbury should reduce journey times by 3 or 4 minutes. The second phase to take place in the years 2014 to 2017 is awaiting approval but is expected to focus on improvements between Canterbury and Ramsgate with a reduction of a further 10 minutes. By the end of the second phase, it should be possible to claim a Ramsgate to London Stratford journey time of 59 minutes. We currently have no more information about the proposed Manston Parkway Station.

11. New Car Sales And Arsenal FC

Paul Everitt, the Head of The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders since 2008, has strong family connections with East Kent. He was happy indeed this past week with news of a 3.3% rise in new car registrations. Following a fall in private sales last year of 14%, Paul is widely quoted in the national press as saying: "We are seeing a steady increase in consumer confidence with growth in private demand, boosted by the arrival of a raft of new products. SMMT has increased its full year forecast to 1.95 million units, putting the market marginally ahead of 2011, indicating a period of relative stability". This will be good news for motoring suppliers in East Kent and a welcome sign of recovery in a key market for all commercial media organisations, printers, ferry companies and a myriad of small firms involved in the motor trade. Paul Everitt joined SMTT in January 2008 with the industry in crisis after a 60% fall in production. At the time, he said how much he admired Arsène Wenger, the manager of Arsenal Football Club. "He is somebody who has set out a strategy and worked that out over a long period of time. He has remained committed to some clear principles". Since then, Paul seems to have done rather better than the Arsenal team which has won nothing in the last four years despite finishing in the top four places in the Premier League. Still, he can at least be pleased with himself that he did not model his management strategy on Doncaster Rovers FC, the subject of past comment in these columns. The South Yorkshire Club that has at least two supporters in East Kent was indeed first in one respect this season. It was the first club in all the professional leagues to be relegated. Doncaster Rovers fans can look forward next season to travelling to the exotic climes of Crawley, Walsall and Hartlepool.

12. Top Selling Cars

Can you guess the ten most popular cars sold in April 2012? The Ford Fiesta tops the list with 8,780 cars sold. Petrolheads and car fanatics may find a few surprises in the list that follows: Vauxhall Corsa 6,184 sales, Ford Focus 5,491, Vauxhall Astra 4,684, BMW 3 Series 3,737, Volkswagen Golf 3,600, Volkswagen Polo 3,579, Nissan Qashqai 2,990, Vauxhall Insignia 2,751 and Fiat 500 2,600. Readers are invited to discuss their own motoring needs with A Class Insurance Solutions of Canterbury tel: 0844 544 9855. BSB GB (Ltd) of Broadstairs for car paints tel: 01843 604995; D P Lead & Sons of River tel: 01304 824155; Kent Car Craft of Broadstairs tel: 01843 587376; Millards Insurance of Deal tel: 01304 613072 and Walmer Adamson Motors of Deal tel: 01304 381300.

13. Thanet Jobs Fair

Following a meeting yesterday with the Thanet & East Kent Chamber's Co-Presidents Sir Roger Gale MP and Laura Sandys MP, the Chamber will be working with Job Centre Plus, Thanet College, government bodies, Thanet District Council, Thorley Taverns and others in organising a Jobs Fair in Thanet on 26th June 2012. Of interest to recruiters and job-seekers alike, the event will focus on boosting the job market in Thanet, Dover and beyond and on bringing companies of all sizes up to date on the incentives available for apprenticeships and training. The Thanet & East Kent Chamber looks forward to working with our members and associates in promoting the event to the business community and ensuring that local companies can benefit to the maximum from the opportunities presented.

14. Thanet District Council

Following a series of meetings with Thanet District Council, we are pleased to report that TDC has revised its procurement policies. We are grateful to Cllr Clive Hart for his prompt responses to our entreaties on behalf of Chamber members and welcome the changes to the "Thanet District Council Contract Standing Orders" and the "Thanet District Council Purchasing Guide, Supplementary guidance to the application of Contract Standing Orders" which now state that for works, supplies and services of a value between £10,000 and £74,999 "Consideration to be given to suitably qualified Thanet Supplier/s, if available.". We see that as an important step towards redirecting locally generated public funds towards local companies. Regular readers will be aware of this Chamber's long-standing campaign to end the ridiculous position whereby Thanet District Council is contractually obliged to buy its printing from companies in Northampton and elsewhere. We look forward to working with Thanet District Council on implementing further business-friendly policies which will not only benefit our Chamber members but will help to

address the severe unemployment in Thanet. The latest figures show that in the Cliftonville West ward, one in five adults of working age are now claiming unemployment benefit. [NOMIS March 2012]

15. Beware Of Imitations

We have been advised that some Chamber members have been harassed by unsolicited telephone calls and emails purporting to be from a Chamber of Commerce claiming to represent Thanet and the surrounding area and making wild claims about membership status. If you are worried about any such communications, please make this known to the Thanet & East Kent Chamber and we will take the appropriate action. We should make it clear that our good friends at the Federation of Small Businesses, the BNi, the Institute of Directors and the Kent Invicta Chamber in Ashford have not been the subject of any complaints and we look forward to working happily with them in the future as we have in the past.

16. Can We Expect a David Cameroon & An Ed Millibank?

The BBC, world-class broadcaster, paragon of media virtue and upholder of the highest standards in international journalism does occasionally make mistakes. If you have ever missed out an apostrophe, misspelt a word in an email to a customer or, perish the thought, written to an elected member of parliament and got the name wrong, you can take a large measure of comfort from knowing that you are not alone. It appears that the BBC is after all staffed by humans. A report yesterday on the BBC News website stated: "In April, transport minister Theresa Villagers suggested Manston could be used to increase airport capacity in the south east of England." It is not known whether this young and good-looking Minister of State for Transport is happy with the beeb's rechristening from Theresa Villiers to Theresa Villagers, but as a former barrister and lecturer at King's College London, she will know what to do if she isn't. See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-18031552>

17. Forewarned Is Forearmed: London 2012 Olympics

Thanet & East Kent Chamber member Stonelees Golf Club will be the setting for a meeting on the evening of Thursday 24th May 2012 when our good friend Cllr Sue Chandler of Dover District Council will be joined by Martyn Cassell of Thanet District Council and Ian Parkes, 2012 Business Lead for South East England for a full briefing on how to minimise disruption to your business during the period of the London 2012 Olympics. Organised in conjunction with our good buddies at the Federation of Small Businesses, the session incurs a small charge of £6 to cover the cost of the buffet and refreshments. The evening begins at 6.00 pm and is expected to finish at 9.00 pm. To book your place, contact Sue Waldock by telephone to 01622 688134.

18. Making Time To Succeed

Chamber member Philip Tilston of Polylink Solutions, tel: 07875 924191, has submitted one of what we expect to be a series of short articles on different aspects of management written exclusively for the Thanet & East Kent Insider. We know that readers will find much of interest in the words from this experienced Finance Director. We start with two paragraphs on Time Management. Phil writes: "In the words of William Penn: 'Time is what we want most, but what we use worst'. We can use our time better by utilising some simple techniques detailed below. They may not be rocket science, but time management is one of those areas where we all get into bad habits and a quick refocusing on a few techniques can yield great benefits. Perform a time audit. I know, you don't have time to log your activities for a day, let alone a week. However, just logging how you spend your time for one day is a real eye-opener. Once you see the amount of unproductive time spent then it helps give focus to improvement. Set Priorities each day. Rank items on a daily 'to do' list in order of importance by using A, B or C rankings. Make sure to clear all the A items each day. Determine what is your most effective time. Some people are really effective first thing in the morning while for others it is later in the day. Tackle your A items when you are at your most effective. Set aside blocks of time when you will not be disturbed. Use this time for A tasks. If you have an office, then shut the door and put up a 'Do not disturb' sign. If you work in an open plan office you can still use a 'Do not disturb' sign on your desk when you want to focus on a key task. Yes, people will make comments at first but once they get used to it then they will treat it as normal. Remember that an Open Door policy is not the same as allowing anyone to walk into your office and talk to you whenever they want to."

19. Delegation

Phil concludes his master class on time management with a few comments on delegation. "Delegate Effectively. You don't have time to do everything yourself. Also, don't do the work of subordinates that you have just delegated to them. It is now their responsibility. Don't let them put it back onto your shoulders. Voicemail is your friend. Let it take messages while you are in your 'Do not disturb' time. Make all the return calls at a more appropriate time for you. Procrastination can be caused by not wanting to do certain tasks or by not knowing where to start on large tasks. There is little option but to grit your teeth and start on those irritating jobs. If there are a lot of small ones, it is often best to set aside one hour and deal with them all in one go. For larger tasks it often helps to break them into smaller pieces. Once a start has been made, it often creates a momentum that makes it easier to keep going. In the words of Jean de la Bruyère, an astute lawyer and acute observer of life across the Channel in 17th century France: "Those who make the worse use of their time are the first to complain of its shortness"". Thanks Phil. We look forward to more sage advice in the next edition, assuming you have time to write it.

20. Dame Carol Black Speaks

Lynn Marchant of Kent Mindful Employer has sent the Chamber details of the Kent Wellbeing Symposium scheduled for 3rd October 2012 at Detling, near Maidstone. Headline speaker for the day is Dame Carol Black, the UK National Director for Health and Work. Billed as "a unique mix of expert speakers, idea forums, sounding platforms and networking opportunities", the event is open to private and public bodies. Tickets are available at £149 each. For more details, click on www.kentwellbeingsymposium.co.uk or telephone 01622 684407.

21. DWP Advises

We are grateful to Tony March of the Department of Work and Pensions at Palting House, Folkestone for drawing our attention to the new government packages designed to encourage young people into joining the workforce. A range of wage incentives are available. There is a neat summary of the national scheme on two pages of text, see <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/youth-contract-employer-factsheet.pdf>. Also available is a toolkit for employers to acknowledge the issues around the removal of the Default Retirement Age. 'Working Longer - A Guide for Employers' is an online resource which offers guidance and support, including links to case studies that illustrate how other businesses are managing without a fixed retirement age. The DWP informs us that: "The default retirement age (DRA) has been abolished. This means you can no longer retire staff unless retirement notifications were appropriately sent out before 6 April 2011. You can only retire workers if you can objectively justify it in your specific circumstances." So now you know. For more information, see <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1097353348&type=CAMPAIGN&furlname=workinglonger&furlparam=workinglonger&ref=&domain=www.businesslink.gov.uk>

22. Hartsdown Helps Alzheimer Sufferers

We are grateful to Peter Barnett of Hartsdown Technology College for informing the Chamber of the £500 raised for Alzheimer charities by three walkers from Margate who made the long journey on foot from home base to the new Olympic Stadium at Stratford. We offer our congratulations to Grant Roswell aged 16, head of college Kerry Boyd aged 18 and college governor Richard Boyd, father of Kerry and a former student himself. We do not know how old Richard is but he is clearly fit enough to walk for the best part of two days. Joined for the last six miles from the Cutty Sark by teachers Ryan Gardner and Alan Cadby, Kerry said afterwards: "It was a really tough challenge and I felt like quitting when the tiredness and pain got too much. But I struggled through because it was for a really worthwhile cause." Public understanding of dementia in its common forms of Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia has progressed considerably in the past thirty years. Early diagnosis is critical for effective treatment. The Alzheimer's Society informs us that a recent survey revealed that nearly 60% of sufferers remain undiagnosed, causing considerable distress to their families and friends.

23. Will, Will, Won't

Mick Rendell of Acorn Investments reminds us of the importance of making a will. As he puts it: "We should all know how important it is to have a valid will, yet millions of us put off writing a will and, in doing so, run the risk of the state determining how our assets should be distributed on our death. If someone dies without making a will, they are said to have died 'intestate'. If this happens, the State sets out who should deal with the deceased's affairs and who should inherit their estate i.e. property, personal possessions and money." Mick outlines the current legal position as: "If you are married or civil partners, there are surviving children, grandchildren or great grandchildren of the person who died and the estate is valued at more than £250,000, the partner will inherit all the personal property and belongings of the person who has died, the first £250,000 of the estate plus a life interest in half of the remaining estate. This means that if you are entitled to the life interest, you cannot get rid of or spend that part of the estate. You can, however, have the benefit of it during your lifetime." We share Mick's view that the writing of a will is something that can never be done too soon, no matter how young you are. Specialists offer the best advice and we recommend contacting one of the following Chamber members: Barnes Marsland tel: 01843 221466; Boys & Maughan tel: 01843 234000; Girlings tel: 01843 220274; Macalister White 01843 572789; Venado tel: 01843 591791.

24. A Car Story

This edition of the Thanet & East Kent Insider has mentioned an upturn in the motoring trade. It has not stopped one Chamber member from reminding us of his experiences as the proud owner of a Lada. We have our doubts about this story, but we leave it to readers to judge for themselves. "It was in the early nineties and I suppose I must have been around 24 years old at the time. I was as proud as punch of my Lada Riva and it was something of a mystery to me why no-one else shared this enthusiasm. Of course, the car was basically a 1966 Fiat 124, made in Russia without the benefits of modern machinery or design. It was heavy on fuel, slow and had a marked tendency to break down often. My particular model blew smoke out of the exhaust like a steam train and various parts of the exterior kept falling off. But, in other ways it was an ideal vehicle. I mean I often forgot to lock it at night and it was never stolen. I expect that the main dealership was in Russia or St Petersburg or somewhere which made spare parts something of a problem. Anyway, one day I found that I needed a new rear light bulb. Thinking that this might be a common part, I went to my local garage in Ramsgate. On arrival at reception, I said: "Excuse me, have you got a new rear light bulb for my Lada?" The owner of the garage disappeared for a few moments and then returned with the bulb. Grabbing my ignition keys, he said: "A new light bulb for your Lada. Mmmm. I suppose it's a fair swap, but only if there is some petrol in the tank".

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It's happening now, it's happening in Thanet & East Kent.
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