



Your Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

Thanet & East Kent Insider

26th May 2012 Issue No.: 186

1. Business Networking Breakfast Star Speaker

We are delighted to welcome a true star of Kent as our guest speaker at our Business Networking Breakfast on Friday 8th June 2012 at the Bell Hotel, Sandwich. Amanda Cottrell OBE is the Chairman of VisitKent, patron of Produced In Kent and a trustee of Kent Wildlife Trust. An acknowledged expert on all matters related to tourism, she works closely with the Department for Culture, Media & Sport as a board member of VisitEngland. All companies trading in East Kent will benefit from hearing the latest news on the opportunities to benefit from the £97 billion contribution tourism makes to England. 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, 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. Save On Motoring Costs

A Class Insurance of Hersden, tel: 084544 9855, specialises in car insurance for drivers and the motor trade. Any driver aged 23 years or more is invited to contact Dee Harrild and her team for specialist advice on how to save money on motor insurance at renewal time. A free courtesy vehicle and legal cover of £100,000 are featured in the policies as well as flexible payment options and reductions for multi-car policies. Motor trade professionals will be pleased to know about the deals to cover mechanics, tyre fitters, exhaust fitters and car dealers. HGV firms will appreciate the advantageous terms of offer for own goods and haulage use which provide generous discounts for operators in business for two years or more. For more information give A Class Insurance a call, tel: 084544 9855, or email sales@aclassinsurance.com.

3. Jobs Minister at Margate Jobs Fair

At the request of our Chamber Co-Presidents, Laura Sandys MP and Sir Roger Gale MP, we are pleased to draw your attention to the Thanet Jobs and Apprenticeships Fair to be held at The Winter Gardens, Margate on Tuesday 26th June 2012 from 1000 hrs to 1500 hrs. The Jobs Fair will be opened by the Minister of State for Employment, The Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP. Pfizer is sponsoring the day with the support of Thanet Leisureforce. The Thanet & East Kent Chamber looks forward to working with our good friends at the Dover District Chamber of Commerce, FSB, BNI,

Canterbury City Partnership, Kent Invicta Chamber and Job CentrePlus in promoting the event to companies throughout East Kent. A free stall is available to showcase your company to prospective employees and apprentices. As Laura puts it: "The Fair is an excellent opportunity for you to tap into a rich local talent pool and meet prospective employees in an informal environment. Even if you do not currently have a vacancy, there are many very exciting employment incentives which may be of interest and make hiring a new employee more beneficial than you may have previously thought." Participating companies will also find the latest information on government support available through wage incentives, apprenticeship schemes and the Regional Growth Fund. To book your stall email jobsfair@telllaura.org.uk

4. Outrage At Hartsdown

Hartsdown Technology College in Margate is widely regarded as one of Kent's outstanding successes in secondary education. Listed in the top most improved schools in the UK, the curriculum and improving exam results have produced widespread praise from every level of government. There was a justifiable expectation last week that Hartsdown would be included in the list of schools earmarked to receive a share of this government's £2 billion Priority School Building Programme which replaced the previous government's Building Schools for the Future scheme. There were 587 applications for funding in total, resulting in 261 awards of which 14 were in Kent. In an email from Hartsdown to the Thanet & East Kent Chamber, we learned of the acute disappointment felt by the staff and students at the school that Hartsdown had been ignored. "Utter madness" was one comment from a senior member of staff. Head Andy Somers is not one to give up easily and has already enlisted the support of his local MPs and the Kent County Council cabinet member for education in pressing the case for a review. As Andy puts it: "A whole generation of Margate children have gone through their education with the promise of a new school. They are incredibly resilient and they passionately believe that their town is important. As Margate continues to grow and improve a need for new school on our site becomes greater and greater. This is why we will continue to explore every option available to achieve our goal." Six inspectors descended on Hartsdown Technology School in July 2011, not the easiest month for any formal inspection. The subsequent Ofsted report stated: "Care, guidance and support, as well as engagement with the community, are outstanding. Under the inspirational leadership of the Principal and senior staff, as well as the increasingly competent and confident middle managers, the college has continued to secure improvements in external examinations." The Chamber has often commented that as a nation our public funds should reward success and not subsidize failure. Hartsdown is one of the undoubted successes of Margate. Any school that receives an independent assessment that states: "The promotion of community cohesion is outstanding" fully deserves for that support to be returned by the surrounding community. We will be working with Andy and his team to ensure that his case receives the strongest possible backing.

5. Latest On Turner Contemporary

Tracy Emin's first solo show in Margate may not be the perfect complement to the Olympic Torch procession on 19th July 2012, but it will put another spotlight on the Turner Contemporary following the huge numbers that were attracted by the Turner and the Elements exhibition which closed on 13th May 2012. Entitled "She Lay Down Deep Beneath the Sea", the new show opens today and is billed as "themes of love, sex and eroticism are the main focus of this exhibition, which includes embroidery, drawing, mono-prints, painting, neon, tapestry and sculpture.". Rodin's The Kiss will remain on display until 2nd September 2012.

6. Waste Consultation

We are grateful to Lillian Harrison, Minerals and Waste Planning Policy Manager at Kent County Council, for asking for the Chamber's views on preferred sites for Waste Disposal as part of KCC's preparations for a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The final framework will be in three parts: a Minerals and Waste Plan, a Mineral Sites Plan and a Waste Sites Plan. Following the previous round of consultations, there are now 25 preferred option sites for mineral supply and 21 preferred option sites for waste management. More details are available on the website at mwdf@kent.gov.uk. The Chamber welcomes views from all members and especially those replying to the consultation directly. Please email admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "KCC Waste Management". The consultation closes at 1700 hrs on 23rd July 2012.

7. Comments On Unemployment

A slight improvement in the monthly unemployment figures for the UK brings scant comfort to companies trading in East Kent. Uncertainty over the future of the Port of Dover may be one of the factors behind the sharp increase in year-on-year joblessness in the Dover district where employment has declined by 25% since April 2011, the sharpest annual fall of any Kent district. Cliftonville West remains the most deprived ward in Kent with 20.3% of the workforce registered as unemployed which translates to 1,028 adult men and women claiming benefit payments, an increase of 35.8% since last year. Youth unemployment in Thanet remains at an unacceptably high 13.6% which contrasts sharply

with Canterbury where just 3.2% of 18 – 24 year olds are classified as registered unemployed. We are again grateful to the ever-excellent research & Evaluation Department at Kent County Council for forwarding the latest figures from NOMIS, the source of official labour market data from the Office for National Statistics. A summary appears below

8. Give Us The Facts

Registered unemployment in East Kent

	April 2012		Change since April 2011	
	Unemployed	% of workforce	Number	%
Thanet	4,902	6.2%	+520	+11.9%
Ashford	2,059	2.9%	147	+7.7%
Canterbury	2,524	2.5%	+219	+9.5%
Dover	2,783	4.3%	+556	+25.0%
Maidstone	2,549	2.7%	+282	+12.4%
Shepway	2,777	4.5%	+313	+12.7%
Swale	3,600	4.3%	+468	+14.9%
Kent	37,602	3.5%	+3,799	+11.2%
South East	143,383	2.6%	+6,356	+4.6%
Great Britain	1,554,548	4.0%	+92,904	+6.4%

9. Youth Unemployment In East Kent

Registered unemployed aged 18 – 24 years.

Thanet	13.6%
Ashford	7.2%
Canterbury	3.2%
Dover	10.5%
Maidstone	6.7%
Shepway	10.1%
Swale	10.7%
KCC Area	7.4%
Great Britain	7.8%

10. Now, About That Meeting

Following his well-received Time Management article in the previous edition of the Thanet & East Kent Insider, chamber member Philip Tilston of Polylink Solutions, tel: 07875 924191, has submitted the second in his series of management advice texts on the subject of Effective Meetings. Fans of Star Trek and Peter Drucker will have plenty to ponder. “Capt James T. Kirk of the USS Enterprise summed up the experience of many when he said: ‘A meeting is an event where minutes are taken and hours wasted’. We all know that lots of time is wasted in meetings. If you want real incentive to make meetings more effective, then add up the cost of one hour of everyone attending the meeting. The amount can be frightening. A few simple steps can have a huge impact on the effectiveness of your meetings. Ensure you know what the purpose of the meeting is. This will determine the people you need to be there and provide an idea on how long the meeting needs to run. Set an agenda ensuring that when this is distributed attendees are aware of any pre-meeting preparation required. Stick to timings on agenda items. Ensure all comments are relevant to the topic and there is no drift into social or tangential chit-chat. Be aware of the character of the attendees. Some will want to dominate the conversation and some may not want to say anything. Ensure that attendees can be heard when they have something important to contribute and ensure that the quiet ones have the opportunity to contribute. One person should have the responsibility for taking minutes and making a list of action points with deadlines. Minutes should be written up and distributed as close as possible to the end of the meeting. For the person writing the minutes, everything is clearer. It is quicker to write them while the details are fresh rather than waiting and trawling through hastily written details. Also, some attendees will not start work on their action points until they have the minutes and action points. Some will use this delay to justify missing agreed deadlines. Set a culture where people know that they have to be at meetings on time. That includes you. People will look to you for what behaviours are important in the organisation. Most importantly, if you can avoid having a meeting then don’t. As the late business guru Peter Ferdinand Drucker put it: ‘Meetings are a symptom of bad organisation. The fewer meetings the better’”.

11. More On Manston

Thanet District Council has now produced its official response to the night flights proposals put forward by the owner of the Airport last October, see http://www.thanet.gov.uk/news/latest_press_releases/night-time_flying.aspx. The Chamber is consulting with its members and board of directors to frame a response of its own to the conclusions of the council. We note that one of the reasons put forward by Thanet District Council to oppose two night flights at Manston Airport in the period 2300 hrs to 0700 hrs invokes The Human Rights Act. This legislation was introduced by the British Government in a wave of idealism in 1998. It has its origins in the European Convention on Human Rights which was drafted by Sir David Maxwell Fyfe in 1952 in the aftermath of the Second World War. Maxwell Fyfe had been a prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials. When drafting the convention, it seems unlikely that this distinguished lawyer, Solicitor-General, Home Secretary and Lord Chancellor had in mind a measure to block the creation of jobs at an airport that has been in operation since 1915. In the cold war Manston proudly welcomed round the clock flights of USAF Thunder Jets.

12. Job Vacancy

We have been approached by Age UK with details of a post available for a Chief Officer at the Margate office. The successful candidate will benefit from a permanent contract, an annual salary of between £36,000 and £38,000 and a working week of 37.5 hours. The main task of the Chief Officer will be to coordinate the activities of the Thanet office to meet the needs of older people and their carers. Strong leadership qualities will be required and Age UK will no doubt be grateful for any fund-raising capabilities. Interested parties should make contact before the closing date of 31st May 2012. Full details are available from Eleanor Hazlewood in the London office, tel: 020 303 31622 or email eleanor.hazlewood@ageuk.org.uk.

13. A Tale From Romney Marsh

As regular readers will be aware, we like to end the Thanet & East Kent Insider with a homily or story that illustrates a particular aspect of commercial life in East Kent. Our Chamber members are keen to supply examples. Of course, we all seek knowledge of best practice wherever it exists in the world. However, the following account is for interest only and we cannot under any circumstances recommend any imitative behaviour. We have our doubts about the story but we leave it to the good sense of our readers to judge for themselves. As our Chamber member put it: "I saw the news about New Romney being a possible dump for Nuclear Waste and I wondered if Chamber members knew about my great uncle Jack. He lived to a ripe old age in the wilds of Romney Marsh on a small-holding. He had the one son, a clever lad, who helped him with the donkey work until he found himself in some trouble with the police. To put it bluntly, he was too clever by half and got himself put away at Her Majesty's pleasure for twelve months. It was something to do with smuggling but I don't know the details. Anyway, old Jack was finding it very hard going on his own and he wrote to his son at Wormwood Scrubs and lamented that he was finding it increasingly difficult to manage the large vegetable patch and wondered what he was going to do for the following year's crop. 'If only, you were here, son, life would be so much easier. I just don't have the strength to turn over the soil anymore.' Within the week, he received a letter back from his incarcerated off-spring along the lines of: 'Dear Dad, whatever you do, do not dig up the large vegetable patch as that is where the bodies are buried'. This mystified Jack and he worried about it all day. Early the following morning, he received a visit from six burly policemen in all-weather gear who bid him a cheerful 'Good morning, Pop' and proceeded to set about digging up the entire plot with spades and rakes. After ten hours of solid work and finding nothing remotely of interest, they departed with a meek apology for having disturbed great uncle Jack and a promise not to bother him again. Two days later, old Jack received a second letter which stated simply: "Dear Dad, You can plant all the vegetables now. Sorry I couldn't be with you but that's the best I could do in the circumstances. Your loving son, Al." It makes you think, doesn't it?

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

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