



## **Your Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber**

### **Thanet & East Kent Insider**

**7<sup>th</sup> October 2012 Issue No.: 195**

#### **1. East Kent Opportunity**

As reported in the previous edition of the Thanet & East Kent Insider, this Chamber will be hosting a Renewable Profits, Renewable Energy seminar on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012 which will bring amazing opportunities for companies in the East Kent coastal business community to engage with companies from Northern France. Activities will be conducted in English. Local companies in almost every sector of the East Kent economy will have an interest in meeting senior staff from the following firms which have confirmed their attendance: Actemium, CMI Services, DEF, Dieppe Meca Energies, Dieppe Navals, Foure Lagadec, France Telecom Marine, G-Tec , Heos Marine Brittany, In Vivo Brittany, Le Havre Développement, OG2S, Sames, SOM Industrie, Thomas Services Maritimes, Vialog. This initiative has taken over six months to bring to fruition. Anyone attending will have unprecedented access to key decision-makers. We are also pleased to confirm the presence of three officials representing over 600 French companies with established links to the UK. All the overseas companies have an interest in maritime industries and renewable energy. Their collective buying power for almost every type of product and service is enormous. France Telecom alone has over 200 million customers and around 180,000 employees. If you are serious about increasing your sales, register for this event in Sandwich starting at 1040 hrs Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012, see below: "3. Count Me In".

#### **2. Why Should I Be Interested In Meeting French Companies?**

East Kent has an obvious appeal for companies in Northern France. Not only is this part of the UK the closest to continental Europe, but recent fiscal and tax changes proposed by the French President have increased interest in France in establishing stronger ties with the UK. We have yet to see the details of president François Gérard Georges Nicolas Hollande's proposed 75% income tax rate for those with salaries above £800,000 a year, but, there is no doubt that the relative ease with which a company can be established in the UK and the availability of suitable premises in East Kent have whetted the appetite of some executives from across the water. The presence off our East Kent coast of the world's two largest offshore wind farms gives our area a pre-eminence which provokes commercial curiosity and

provides opportunities which are denied other parts of the UK. When one adds the Enterprise Zone status accorded to the Discovery Park, the high speed rail links to London, the improved road structure, the potential of a community owned Port of Dover and a reinvigorated Manston, it is not difficult to justify inviting such a prestigious group of French companies and to realize why they have all accepted.

### **3. Count Me In**

To book your place at the Renewable Profits, Renewable Energies seminar in Sandwich on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012, email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "Renewable Profits 19 October 2012". The fee of £20 for Chamber members includes lunch and refreshments. The programme begins at 1040 hrs with informal networking followed by presentations by Vattenfall, The London Array and McCabe Ford Williams. We are expecting the afternoon to begin with a short speech from Laura Sandys MP who is Co-Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Green Deal Group and Parliamentary Private Secretary to Greg Barker MP, Minister of State at the Department of Energy & Climate Change. Also attending will be representatives from the government's Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) which has a declared mission to: "to create the conditions for the private sector to grow and remove unnecessary barriers that can stifle growth." The London Array will make a presentation in the afternoon. We are hopeful of taking all delegates to the Discovery Park next door for a short visit before the sessions end at 1515 hrs. Please note that this event has been organised without recourse to public funds and is separate and different from an export event recently advertised for earlier in the day in Margate.

### **4. Manston Needs You**

It has been an open secret for more than a year that KLM, supported by Air France, has been looking closely at Manston Airport. The overwhelming enthusiasm of local companies and consistent messages of support from this Chamber that Kent Loves Manston have doubtlessly contributed to these national carriers opening a dialogue directly with residents of the county. Under the inspiring leadership of Manston Airport's Managing Director Charles Buchanan, we now have the genuine prospect of a twice daily service to Amsterdam from next spring. Such a route to a major Northern European Hub could act as a strong catalyst for growth in East Kent from which all private and public companies could benefit. Charles Buchanan quite rightly states in an email to the Chamber that: "This service would be a significant advance both for the airport and the local economy." Of course, this will only happen if there is sufficient support from residents and workers in Kent. We understand that over 7,000 people have responded to the on-line survey at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/LOYJTJT](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LOYJTJT). If you have not done so yet, you have until 12<sup>th</sup> October 2012 to register your interest. It is not necessary to be an international air traveller to respond, but it is necessary to add your voice to those in support if you agree with the vast majority of our Chamber members that the development of Manston Airport is the best opportunity for job creation in Thanet in the medium term. Given the high rates of Air Passenger Duty levied on international flights from the UK, it is not fanciful to suggest that flying long haul from Manston with a quick change at Amsterdam could sharply reduce costs for exporters traveling to the growing BRIC markets of Brazil, Russia, India and China. Any aeroplanes flying out of Manston will be expected to return just as often, which creates spaces for incoming tourists keen to experience the attractions of East Kent with its rich heritage offer and extensive coastline attractions. Isn't that what we are supposed to call a "win-win situation?"

### **5. Fresh Thinking From Shepway**

Are other companies kicking sand in your face? Are your competitors on a wave while you are in a trough? Is your firm sinking while neighbouring establishments are sailing serenely into the sunset? Are you suffering from your customers rocking the boat? Are you fed up with business news bulletins that seek to persevere with a maritime theme with ever increasing desperation? If your answer to any of these questions is 'yes' or if you just wish to make more money, you might like to contact new Chamber member Pebble Shores. This dynamic agency specializes in branding, design and marketing. Based in Folkestone, Pebble Shores offers practical solutions to your particular needs with an unpretentious and friendly approach that should make you feel comfortable as well as somewhat richer. In an email to the Chamber, Director Daniel Kennedy summed up his approach as "some fresh thinking, innovative ideas balanced with a good dollop of common sense and commercial acumen". Too good to be true? Give Daniel and his team a call and discover for yourself. Pebble Shores can be reached by telephone to 01303 245673.

## 6. Siemens & HP Sauce

If you agree with Ewan Davies of the BBC that it is sad that the number of UK employees in manufacturing has fallen from 1 in 4 at the end of the 1970s to fewer than 1 in 10 now, then you will find a sympathetic analysis in a recent article in The Guardian by star reporter, Terry Macalister. Lamenting the lack of goods made in Britain supplied to our wind farms, Terry notes that even the HP sauce on the buffet table in the Siemens building in Ramsgate Harbour is produced in the Netherlands. The lack of local skills and appropriate factories is one reason advanced for the reduced benefit to the East Kent economy. But this alone ignores the considerable advantages that we have received from the presence of the London Array and Vattenfall in our backyard. As Joanne Haddon, London Array's media manager, declares: "We have nearly 100 people working from the London Array construction office at Ramsgate port – 86% are British, with 46% from the local area," She adds that another 90 staff will be required to keep the London Array operating when it starts producing electricity at the end of the year. Terry graciously quotes some optimistic words from this Chamber on the advantages of our wind farms in boosting confidence in the area. The full article is available on line at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/oct/02/uk-windfarm-little-british-involvement>

## 7. Dramatic Announcement About Dover

On the BBC 2 Newsnight programme on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2012, the MP for Dover and Deal, Charlie Elphicke, made a dramatic announcement about the port of Dover. With Waterloo Bridge in the background, he suggested that the demise of the Dover Harbour Board might be drawing nearer. If not quite yet 'the nearest run thing you ever saw'. The President of the Dover District Chamber of Commerce said: "If we look at what is happening in Dover with the People's Port project to take over the Port of Dover, we are expecting a decision in the next month." He then listed some of the government's recent other initiatives to devolve power away from "centralised departments or localised authorities". Back in the studio, a subsequent interview provoked the comment from Phillip Blond, the Director of ResPublica and arch champion of Big Society initiatives, that: "If Dover gets its People's Port – brilliant." Charlie Elphicke's words mark the first public statement from Westminster that the extensive consultation over the future of the Port of Dover may be reaching a conclusion. Bidding to buy the port is Dover People's Port Trust Ltd (DPPTL) which has the fulsome support of the union Unite and the Labour peer Lord Glasman. In March last year, 97.5% of the Dover population who cast their vote in a parish poll opted for a community owned port rather than see Dover Harbour sold to remote interests, most likely overseas. DPPTL has set itself the target of ensuring that more of the passengers passing through Dover should become customers of East Kent companies and aims to reverse the decline in traffic which, with the exception of road haulage vehicles, has fallen steadily since 1997 as the following data shows.

Year	Passengers	Tourist Cars	Coaches	Lorries
1997	21,463,570	3,558,355	165,002	1,602,863
2011	12,764,699	2,653,127	84,938	2,069,945
Change	-41%	-25%	-49%	+29%

Source: Annual Traffic Statistics, Port of Dover 2012.

## 8. Centre For Environmental Technologies

On Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2012, the planning committee of Thanet District Council will be considering the application by East Kent College (EKC) to build a Centre for Environmental Technologies on its campus in Ramsgate Road, Broadstairs. Should the application be refused, there is no guarantee that the funding of more than £6 million will be available in Thanet at a later date. Regular readers will be aware that Thanet has the highest rate of youth unemployment in the South East. One of the objectives of the proposed centre is to prepare students for the growing opportunities in the renewable energy sector and allied sunrise industries. You might consider that the issue is a classic 'no-brainer'; but, the risk remains that without public support, Thanet could lose the centre to another district where enterprise and training have a higher priority. If Edmund Burke did indeed state that: "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing", the same might also apply to the triumph of rising unemployment, with the addition that women have a responsibility too. If you support the building of a Centre for Environmental

Technologies in Broadstairs, do not just say so to your pals in the pub or around the dinner table at home, please write to the planning committee as soon as possible and state your views. Letters should be addressed to the Planning Applications Team, Development Services, Thanet District Council, PO Box 9, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent CT9 1XZ quoting the reference Planning Application No F/Th/12/0500. If your budget does not extend to a stamp and headed notepaper, you can also send an email using the same reference to [planning.services@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:planning.services@thanet.gov.uk). As in the Manston Airport consultation above, the quantity of replies does matter and any members of your family are welcome to submit their views under separate cover or in an email from a different email address. Any letter posted after Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October may arrive too late to be considered.

## **9. Golf Day**

Is our local economy recovering? These days there is a marked and understandable reluctance for anyone in public office to mention the words “green shoots of recovery”, but if the response to the Chamber’s Golf Day is any indication, the good times may not be long in returning. The Chamber has received a record number of applications for our tournament at Prince’s Golf Club scheduled for Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2012. With 92 keen players registered in teams of 4 and a lengthening reserve list, there is likely to be some stiff competition for the £30,000 of prizes on offer at what has become the largest corporate golf tournament in the East Kent coastal business community. We are grateful to our sponsors. In particular, we would like to thank DP Lead & Sons for providing a new Renault car to the first player to make a hole-in-one on the second hole of the Dunes course and to DFDS Seaways for providing return ferry crossings to France for many of the winners. Handsome prizes are also provided by Vattenfall, GoKart Electric Golf, Golf Stream, the BayPoint Club, OFP Timber Framed Homes, the Walpole Bay Hotel and Antony Tarchetti of the Pro Shop at Prince’s. If you are not due to play on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2012, please do look outside your office window on the day and spare a thought for the players who will, like good Chamber members, prepare for the worst climate and hope for the best, which is perhaps not a bad recipe for businesses everywhere.

## **10. Management Styles**

The Thanet & East Kent Insider has often reported on different management styles, from the active listening approach advocated by Epictetus nearly 2,000 years ago: “We have two ears and one mouth” to the more recent direct methods employed by the football manager, Brian Clough: “We talk about it for twenty minutes, and then we decide that I was right.” We are grateful to Admiral The Lord Boyce GCB, OBE, DL, our own Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, for reminding us all that Brian Clough was by no means the first 20<sup>th</sup> century manager to be successful in imposing his will on an acquiescent workforce. In a speech to the Rt Hon Sir Winston Spencer Churchill Society of British Columbia, he informed his audience that when his illustrious predecessor as Lord Warden was First Sea Lord in WWI, he exhibited that characteristic determination that was to reassure the country in the darkest days of WWII. As Lord Boyce put it: “But Churchill was very adamant in his belief in his overall philosophy and underlined it by saying “all I want is compliance of my wishes after reasonable discussion”. Management styles may have changed over the years. National leaders tend no longer to be pictured smoking cigars or pipes, but knowing your own mind and communicating that to others ‘after reasonable discussion’ is surely a characteristic of most successful business people.

## **11. Visit Kent Celebration**

The Chamber was represented at the birthday celebrations of Visit Kent which took place at Brogdale, Faversham on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2012. This year’s garden party provided an opportunity to review the ten years of operations since the organisation was first formed by Eurotunnel and others as Kent Tourism Alliance. With the firm backing of Kent County Council, Visit Kent has presided over strong growth in annual visitor numbers, which have now reached 57 million, and a rise in the value of tourism to the county to its current £3.2 million a year. Visit Kent tells us that the tourism industry now supports 63,000 jobs in the county, an increase of 15% since 2003. Chief Executive Sandra Matthews-Marsh paid tribute to Visit Kent’s founder, Fran Warrington, who is retiring. Chairman Amanda Cottrell presented awards to worthy recipients from around Kent including Chamber members John George and David Holder of Prince’s Golf Club, Trevor Bond of Dover Marina Hotel & Spa and Delphine Houlton, of Maxim PR, based in Tunbridge Wells.

## 12. Media Watch

In the year to June 2012, the Leveson Enquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the UK press cost £3,903,000, which could buy you more than a few copies of The Sun newspaper if you were so inclined. There is little doubt that the enquiry will not resolve the journalistic errors that so many of our Chamber members take delight in noticing. A particularly delicious typographical error was spotted on 29<sup>th</sup> September when the BBC reported that: "The Vatican was arrested in May, accused of passing papal correspondence to journalist Gianluigi Nuzzi". How does one go about arresting The Vatican? It would require a large pair of handcuffs. At a critical point in Europe's remarkable triumph over the United States in the Ryder Cup competition, following a near hopeless position at the start of the final day, the BBC's Ken Brown was moved to state: "And if you are playing chess, our bishop has just taken their King". Depending on your point of view, this shows either a remarkable ignorance of the rules of chess or just indicates how even experienced commentators can be overcome with the excitement of the occasion. But for our final offering, we turn to the British Embassy in Madrid, which states on its website that "Journalists working in Spain should contact our Madrid Press Office by emailing: [madridpressoffice@fco.gov.uk](mailto:madridpressoffice@fco.gov.uk)". Our Chamber member wonders: "What are Journalists? Does the British Embassy in Madrid employ any British people who can spell?" He has a point, but keen readers will note that whatever Journalists may be, they are probably happy now because the embassy tells us that they are working and precious few are doing that in Spain today.

## 13. Mother-In-Law

For our final item in this edition, we are grateful to one of our regular readers who has recently retired from a senior position in local government. Whether his wife's family has the same admiration of his many civic achievements may be open to question, but we leave this to our readers to judge for themselves. As he puts it: "My mother-in-law was always complaining that I bought her naff Christmas presents. They were always the wrong size, an unfashionable colour or something that she already had stored in a cupboard somewhere in her house. Then the year before last, I had a brainwave and bought her a plot at the cemetery nearby. It was a good size and shaded in the summer. She seemed happy enough with that. However, at the Boxing Day confrontation last December which we fondly call a family party, she started complaining again. "You bought me that plot last year, but this Christmas you gave me nothing, not a single thing." "That's right", I replied, "But then you still haven't used what I got you last year."

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