



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

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

**13<sup>th</sup> April 2013 Issue No.: 201**

#### **1. Change to Win Breakfast 26 April 2013**

Change To Win will be the theme for the Chamber Business Networking Breakfast scheduled for Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2013. Delegates will hear how three organisations have embraced change with huge benefits to their customers, to their staff and to their profitability. This next Chamber event will be at the Walpole Bay Hotel which will celebrate its centenary next year. Despite its on-site museum, 1927 Otis trellis gated lift and old world charm, this hotel has not been afraid to use modern media to promote its restaurant and accommodation. Popular with directors of modelling shoots, the hotel has also featured in the BBC One's Cash in the Attic, Channel 5's Hotel Inspector and Sky Sports broadcasts with Paula Ratcliffe, Steve Cram and Tim Hutchins. The speakers will each tell their story of how they have kept ahead of the competition and successfully implemented change with outstanding results. There will be ample time for networking. The event will begin at 0730 hrs and will finish just before 0900 hrs. Booking is essential. Full details will follow with confirmation. The price of £12 for Chamber members includes a full English breakfast with a vegetarian option. To reserve your place, email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "Change to Win Breakfast 26 April 2013". There is a limited number of places for non-members.

#### **2. South East Air Show Breakfast 17 May 2013**

A huge boost to East Kent business is expected from the South East Air Show at Manston. Companies in all sectors stand to benefit from the massive influx of visitors to Manston on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2013. Our South East Air Show Chamber Business Networking Breakfast will take place at a venue near Manston on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2013. The main speaker will be the organiser of the Air Show, Angie Sutton of Chamber member AS Enterprises. A former senior officer in the RAF, Angie has battle experience as the director of airfield operations at Kandahar, Afghanistan. Praised unreservedly for her coolness under fire by her senior officer, Group Captain M F Baker, "*during a very long a dangerous summer in a hostile theatre of war*", Angie is ideally qualified to make a success of the air show. She will speak about the opportunities for companies to promote their products and services at the event and explain how Chamber members can open the

wallets of the thousands of visitors expected and meet the VIP decision-makers from leading companies in the South East. We have been waiting 20 years for the air show to return to Manston. If you want to boost the turnover of your company, meet commercial buyers and interface with thousands of potential customers, you should attend this Chamber business breakfast from 0730 hrs to 0900 hrs. Booking is essential. Full details will follow with confirmation. There will be plenty of time for networking. The price of £12 for Chamber members includes a full English breakfast with a vegetarian option. To reserve your place, email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "South East Air Show Breakfast 17 May 2013". There is a limited number of places for non-members.

### 3. KLM Launch

The Chamber's long-standing campaign to support Chamber member Manston Airport in attracting a national carrier to the home of Kent's longest runway was fully vindicated earlier this month on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2013 when KLM Air France launched its daily flights to and from Schiphol Amsterdam. National broadcasters and wide press coverage ensured that the news was brought to potential passengers from across the catchment area of the South East. David Johns of ITV Meridian gave a full account in his broadcast that evening, see <http://www.itv.com/news/meridian/update/2013-04-03/new-era-for-air-travel-in-south-east/> A distinguished group of Kent VIPs in attendance for the launch included Chamber Co-President Sir Roger Gale MP, Kent County Council Leader Paul Carter, Thanet District Council Leader Clive Hart, Dover District Council Leader Paul Watkins and Henri Hourcade, the KLM Air France General Manager for UK & Ireland. With a smile broad enough to illuminate the departure lounge, Manston Airport Managing Director Charles Buchanan was justifiably proud of the new facilities available and the success of his staff in meeting a demanding schedule of works prior to the big day. Passengers from Manston can now connect at Schiphol to 190 cities worldwide. Manston is less than an hour from direct connections to the world; a huge boost for exporters, tourism managers and anyone with overseas contacts. It also means more jobs for locals, more customers for our shops and more business for our companies.

### 4. How Are We Doing?

As predicted in the Thanet & East Kent Insider, the latest unemployment figures have at last showed a year-on-year net increase in jobs across every district of Kent. For the first time in over four years, right across the county there are now more people employed than twelve months previously. Our joy does not remain unconfined. Youth unemployment remains a serious concern in the East Kent coastal business community. The Office for National Statistics reports that 13.4% of 18 to 24 year olds in Thanet are looking for work which again contrasts sharply with just 3.3% in Canterbury, the lowest rate in Kent. The picture in the Dover district is not much brighter at 9.4% nor is the climate sunnier in Shepway at 8.0%. The band of 18 to 24 year olds accounts for over a quarter of all the unemployed in Kent. Nonetheless, the overall trend for men and women in Kent aged 16 to 64 years old is decidedly positive and reveals a marked change from the outlook for the local economy in February 2009 when the Thanet & East Kent Insider edition no. 53 noted an annual growth in unemployment in Kent of over 90%.

### 5. Give Us The Facts

Unemployment

	February 2013		Change since Feb 2012	
	Unemployed	% of workforce	Number	%
Thanet District	5,052	6.3%	-17	-0.3%
Ashford	2,043	2.8%	-104	-4.8%
Canterbury District	2,421	2.5%	-234	-8.8%
Dover District	2,755	4.0%	-35	-1.3%
Maidstone	2,627	2.7%	-77	-2.8%
Shepway	2,833	4.3%	-59	-2.0%
Swale	3,540	4.1%	-352	-9.0%
Kent	36,881	3.4%	-2,293	-5.9%
South East	141,531	2.6%	-10,551	-6.9%
Great Britain	1,547,585	3.9%	-75,626	-4.7%

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## 6. Discovery Park

Chamber members attending our recent business breakfast at the Discovery Park were treated to a detailed account of the magnificent facilities available to prospective tenants at this former Pfizer site at Sandwich. Located in an officially designated Enterprise Zone, the Discovery Park sits within the district of Dover. Managing Director Paul Barber outlined the business support packages available and referred to the success enjoyed by the tenants of its sister business park in Billingham. Discovery Park's parent company can rely on the experience gained from managing over £1 billion of assets in Europe and Asia. There is over 1.5 million square feet of high class accommodation available in Sandwich with excellent road, rail and ferry links to London and the continent. Due to the EZ status, incoming tenants can enjoy a subsidy on business rates of up to £275,000 on their first five years on site. Development Director Paul Weavers emphasized the flexibility of the accommodation available. With over 1,000 people now employed there, the Discovery Park is well on the way to achieving its long-term objective of attracting 6,000 employees. Chamber Co-President and Member of Parliament for the area, Laura Sandys, said that first-time visitors to the site are almost always amazed by the truly world-class laboratories and the range of hi-tech equipment available to Research & Development companies. She added that her government is fully supportive of the Discovery Park and would be making every effort to ensure that inward investors have the best possible chances of success.

## 7. Skanska UK

Chamber members attending our recent Skanska Lunch were treated to an invitation to work with the world's 9th largest construction company on projects in Kent. Over 150 companies were represented at the meeting to hear Skanska's senior staff explain in detail how firms based in East Kent can sell their products and services to Skanska subject to the high standards of quality and sustainability that the company promotes for itself and for all its suppliers. Over £23 million was spent by the company in Kent last year. With a bid in the pipeline to take over the facilities management of a substantial estate of publicly owned buildings in the county, turnover is expected to rise considerably. Registered Chamber members will be at the front of the queue to benefit. Any Chamber members who were not available to attend the event can find details of the scheme by emailing [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "Skanska Opportunity". Photographs from this and a selection of other recent Chamber events can be found on our image website at [www.photoboxgallery.com/ddcc](http://www.photoboxgallery.com/ddcc)

## 8. East Kent Business Advice Clinic

The East Kent Business Advice Clinic is operated and administered by the Thanet & East Kent and the Dover District Chambers of Commerce. Conceived as a direct response to the withdrawal of the regional Business Link service, EKBAC has now welcomed over 140 established companies and would-be entrepreneurs to the monthly sessions. Around 60% of East Kent businesses fail within five years of their establishment [ONS, IDBR Mar 2012]. The EKBAC panel of bank managers, senior lawyers, Chief Executives, UK Business of the Year winner, chartered accountants, local entrepreneurs and other enlightened private sector professionals are able to predict and prevent a wide range of problems that start-ups and company owners face and advise on how changes to a business model or strategic direction might lead to increased profits and a healthier future for workers and shareholders alike. EKBAC operates without any public funding of any description. For more details on this free service, email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "EKBAC".

## 9. Business, Innovation & Skills in East Kent

The EKBAC session of 14<sup>th</sup> March 2013 was observed by the Regional Head of the government's Department for Business, Innovation & Skills together with his assistant director. The Chamber also arranged a helicopter tour of East Kent, by courtesy of Chamber member Summit Aviation, which allowed our visitors a literal overview of Thanet Offshore Wind Farm, the London Array, Quex Park, Thanet Earth, Manston Airport, Margate, Ramsgate Harbour, the Discovery Park, the Port of Dover, Western Heights, Farthingloe and Lakeview International Business Park. As well as a detailed briefing on the local economy from the Chamber, the Secretary of State for BIS, Rt Hon Vince Cable, can expect to receive a digest of the views of a selection of Chamber members who gathered in Sandwich during the afternoon for a frank exchange of views on how their businesses could benefit from changes in national policies. The Rating (Empty Properties) Act 2007 received some withering criticism for its devastating effect on commercial property investment in East Kent. Equally baffling for Chamber members was the continued imposition on UK regional airports of Airport Passenger Duty which is the highest in Europe. A recent PwC study commissioned by Virgin Atlantic, easyJet,

Ryanair and British Airways, reported that the UK economy would be £16 billion to the good if APD were scrapped by 2015. The Chamber has learned that the World Economic Forum now ranks the UK 134th out of a list of 138 countries as regards competitive aviation taxes and airport charges. It may be of some comfort to know that we outperform Chad, Mali, Senegal and Ivory Coast.

## **10. KLM Air France Chamber Breakfast**

On 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013, over 150 companies were represented at a Chamber business breakfast in Sandwich prior to the launch of KLM Air France flights to Schiphol Amsterdam, see item 3 above, to hear direct from KLM's UK General Manager Henri Hourcade and his super efficient colleague Victoria Williams on how local companies could benefit from the new investment in East Kent. The airline already has an established record of success in developing routes from 16 other UK regional airports and confidently expects Manston to enjoy similar growth to Norwich, Southampton, Leeds, Bristol and the rest. As Field Sales Manager for London and UK South, Victoria is unsurprisingly a superb communicator and briefed delegates on the time and cost savings they can expect from using the new Manston service. As an example, Victoria said that anyone living in East Kent wishing to travel to New York could board a KLM flight at Manston and be on their way to New York from Amsterdam in less time than it takes to drive to London Heathrow. If you have ever struggled with delays on the M25, high parking charges at Gatwick, Heathrow and Stansted or three-hour check-in times at capital city airports, you will appreciate just how easy it can be to start your journey from a congestion-free regional airport. Laura Sandys MP added her congratulations which she had summarized in a previous publicly released statement as: "This makes Thanet even better connected with the rest of the world and makes our area a more attractive place to invest. I am very much looking forward to supporting KLM to ensure that this route is a success".

## **11. Port of Dover**

As regular readers will be aware, Dover People's Port Trust is bidding to take over the ownership and management of the Port of Dover. In an exclusive interview with the Chamber, DPPT Chairman Neil Wiggins said: "Three years ago, with the port of Dover on the brink of being sold off privately, the founders of DPPT came forward with an idea and concept for the future of the port which marked a radical departure from all that had gone before in the UK ports industry; that the port should be owned by and run for the benefit of its local community. Today we are still committed to achieving this aim and, having won the argument over privatisation, believe that success is within reach." Membership of DPPT is open to any adult living or working in the district of Dover. For details of how you might be able to buy a share in DPPT for £10, email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "Dover People's Port Application Form". Background information on DPPT can be found on the website at <http://www.peoplesport.org.uk> .

## **12. Farthingloe & Western Heights**

Planning application DOV/12/00440 promises to develop housing, a hotel and a care home on the outskirts of Dover. It is now to be considered at a Dover District Council planning committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2013. This £200 million project is expected to provide a significant stimulus to the East Kent economy. Not only will the extensive building works provide a huge boost in the short and medium term to suppliers and job seekers, but the quality accommodation envisaged will serve to attract skilled workers and senior managers to the area who will in turn bring a long-term benefit to our retailers and service providers. In addition, the visitor centre at the Drop Redoubt will undoubtedly add to the tourism offer and provide a welcome neighbour to the proposed National War Memorial on Western Heights which itself should attract around 250,000 visitors a year.

## **13. Spires Academy**

The £13.4 million Spires Academy in Sturry was opened last November by Sir Mervyn King who said at the time: "The moment will come when Spires Academy produces its first Governor of the Bank of England and that is a realistic aspiration for this school to aim for". Quick feet and considerable creativity may well be valuable assets for any banker wishing to manage the UK financial sector. They are also skills which will be manifest at the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April 2013 when the Spires Academy will be joined by other local schools to showcase young dancing talent in East Kent. If you would like to spot a budding Billy Elliot or a possible future member of Diversity street dance troupe or would just like to support youth talent from across the county, then you will get full value for your ticket costing just £3 plus any booking or postal charges. For more information, telephone 01227 787787 or see the website at <http://www.marlowetheatre.com/page/3040/Spires-Academy-Dance-Showcase/440> .

#### **14. Masala Gate Gets 5 Stars**

Chamber member Masala Gate is best known for the dishes on offer at its restaurant and take-away in Duke Street, Margate. Anyone with concerns about food hygiene can rest assured that Masala Gate has achieved a clean bill of health with a 5 star rating from Thanet District Council Environmental Health Department. Owner and manager Mahbub Hossain looks forward to welcoming individuals and groups from local companies and promises that no customers of his will leave disappointed. Menu items start at 60p for a popadom and peak at £10.95 for Tandoori King Prawn Shaslik which, as all Asian cuisine gourmets may recognise, consists of giant prawns from the Bay of Bengal marinated in spices, mixed with yoghurt, threaded onto skewers with onions and capsicums and finally cooked in a clay oven. Feeling peckish? Have a look at Mahbub's website at <http://masala-gate.co.uk/margate> or give him a call: 01843 228877.

#### **15. Turner Lecture & Dinner**

The Turner Lecture and Dinner on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2013 at the Turner Contemporary in Margate will feature a lecture from the art critic, historian, broadcaster and curator Richard Cork. The evening begins with a drinks reception at 1800 hrs. Richard Cork will entertain guests from 1845 hrs and dinner will be served at 2000 hrs. Tickets priced at £100 each or £700 for a table of eight are available on the website at [turnercontemporary.org/whatson](http://turnercontemporary.org/whatson) or by telephone to 01843 233000.

#### **16. Bank Fined**

Have you ever been fined for parking your car in the wrong place or exceeding a 30 mph limit in a built-up area? If so, you will probably have felt aggrieved that your overall contribution to society has not been taken into mitigation resulting in a reduced fine; £25 or less being more bearable. By contrast, the Royal Bank of Scotland has freely admitted its sin of fiddling the London Interbank Offered Rate, known as LIBOR, and has agreed to pay penalties of £87.5 million to the UK's Financial Services Authority, \$325 million to the United States Commodity Futures Trading Commission and \$150 million to the United States Department of Justice. Does that make you feel better?

#### **17. Advice On HS2**

The HSI fast rail link from London St Pancras to East Kent operated by Southeastern Railway has been a success for most local companies located near a station on the line, but has had a detrimental effect on the pre-existing 'classic' routes where journey times have lengthened. Anyone from Margate or Herne Bay needing to commute to the City of London has been particularly disfavoured. Chamber Co-President Sir Roger Gale has been a stern critic of the service available to passengers using the classic routes and directs our attention to the "Longer journey times, fewer and crowded trains, an unreliable service and much, much higher fares." There are still some inexplicable anomalies which Southeastern Railway has yet to address successfully. Why does the HSI train stop at two stations within one mile of each other at Folkestone West and Folkestone Central? This has a needlessly deleterious effect on stops further down the line. The sensible option of closing one of these stations seems to be beyond the management mechanisms currently in place. There is a heightened land value premium attached to any property near a station within the magic sixty minutes of London St Pancras. Freehold owners in Ashford and Canterbury have basked in self-contentment. With a few minor adjustments and a more considered timetable in Folkestone, residents and businesses in Dover could enjoy a warm glow of comfort from being within the golden hour of travel to the centre of power and influence in the UK. One of the lessons to be learned from the design and construction phase of HSI is that more attention should be given to simultaneous planning. We are now considering a parkway station at Manston airport. If this had been incorporated into the original HSI scheme, it would have made our travel plans so much simpler. Similarly, it is not very clever for Southeastern Railway to open a station on the high speed line and then later to decide that it would be a good idea to have a car park nearby, which is what seems to have happened in the case of Dover Priory station. The designers of HS2 should take note.

#### **18. Kerry Dixon At BayPoint Club**

On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013, the BayPoint Club in Sandwich is hosting an evening with Kerry Dixon, the gifted English footballer renowned for his goal-scoring prowess in the 1980s and early 1990s. He netted 193 times for Chelsea and scored 4 goals in his 8 appearances for the national team. Less well-known is that early in his career when playing for Reading, he scored 4 goals in a Third Division encounter against Doncaster Rovers on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1982, but ended

on the losing side of a 7 – 5 result. This must have impressed him considerably because after his top level spells with Chelsea, Southampton, Luton, Millwall and Watford, he accepted an offer from Doncaster Chairman Ken Richardson to be a player/manager at the club and stayed for one year before leaving at the end of the 1996/97 season. Dixon is held in great affection by Doncaster supporters for his efforts during his brief stint with the South Yorkshire side. It will be interesting to hear his views on his then Chairman. Readers of this business bulletin will know that Doncaster Rovers has not always been blessed with the best management. Ken Richardson was described by detectives as “the type that would trample a two-year-old child to pick up a 2p bit”. He later appeared before Judge Peter Baker QC to receive a sentence of four years in jail for conspiracy to commit arson. It was revealed that Richardson had offered £10,000 to a former soldier to start a fire at the club’s Belle Vue ground. His partner in crime, Alan Kristiansen, did the deed but left his mobile telephone behind allowing the police to trace and arrest him swiftly. Kristiansen was subsequently invited to spend 12 months at Her Majesty’s pleasure. These pages have often commented on the waywardness of modern footballers. It will be interesting to hear of Dixon’s views on George Best, Kevin Keegan, Stan Bowles and other notable players of a bygone era before the Premier League inflated the salaries of players to the levels of merchant bankers. Whereas now a stable of Ferraris, Bentleys and Range Rovers has become the norm for professionals playing at the highest levels, in previous eras, players sought simpler pleasures. Seventies showman Stan Bowles was a genius of a footballer who was adored by his Queens Park Rangers fans but did not always invest his money wisely. One of his managers, Ernie Tagg, once remarked: “If Stan could pass a bookies as well as he passes a football, he’d be a very rich man.” Tickets for the Meet Kerry Dixon evening on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013 can be obtained at £25 for members and £29.50 for non-members by telephone to 01304 613022 or by email to [bistro@baypointclub.co.uk](mailto:bistro@baypointclub.co.uk) The price includes a buffet meal and the opportunity to ask Dixon questions such as which club he found to be the more glamorous. Will it be Chelsea or Doncaster? For your information, Chelsea are the current champions of Europe as holders of the UEFA Champions League title. The team has won the First Division/Premier League five times, the FA Cup on seven occasions, the League Cup and FA Community Shield four times, the UEFA Cup twice and the European Super Cup once. Celebrity Chelsea fans include Raquel Welch, Sienna Miller, Michael Crawford, Bryan Adams, Jimmy Page, Danni Minogue, Lord Coe, Sir Stephen Redgrave, Joe Calzaghe, Sir John Major and Bill Clinton. Among the club’s sponsors are Adidas, Samsung, Audi, Thomas Cook and Dolce & Gabbana. On the other hand, Doncaster Rovers has won the Johnson’s Paint Trophy and is supported among others by its local Yorkshire Pie House, “Country pub pies. All served with home-made mash or fat cut chips”. To find out if Mr Kerry Dixon prefers Sienna Miller to fat cut chips you have to be there on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013.

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It’s happening now, it’s happening in East Kent.  
For details of membership, email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk)

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