



Your Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

Thanet & East Kent Insider

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1. Royal Harbour History Festival 8th March 2018

David Gower, Henry Blofeld and other celebrities will be among the many well-known faces attracted to Ramsgate next June. Chairman of RHHF 2018, Victoria Nielson, will be joined by the owner of the Royal Harbour Hotel, James Thomas, to outline the benefits of heritage tourism to East Kent in a sector that adds over £20 billion a year to the UK economy. They will focus on the plans for the Royal Harbour History Festival but Chamber members from across the region will find much of interest to help them promote their products and services in the next few years. The price of £15 for Chamber members includes a hot drink on arrival and a full English breakfast with a vegetarian option. Booking is essential. To reserve your place, email admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line: "RHHF 8 March 2018" Full details of the venue near Ramsgate will follow with confirmation.

2. Healthy Workers, Healthy Profits 22nd March 2018

The Chamber is delighted to welcome Andy Scott-Clark as a speaker at our Chamber Business Networking Breakfast on Thursday, 22nd March 2018. As Director of Public Health at Kent County Council, Andy has a strategic and community leadership role in promoting good health. His job description includes the need for him to "understand the link between economic success and good health". He does. Chamber members will find the evidence he presents to be of significant value in their commercial and personal lives. Although ultimately accountable to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, Andy is mercifully free of any active political role and is widely respected as a trustworthy and independent professional dedicated to improving the lives of all workers and residents in Kent. The price of £15 for Chamber members includes a hot drink on arrival and a full English breakfast with a vegetarian option. Booking is essential. To reserve your place, email admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line: "Healthy Workers Healthy Profits 22 March 2018" Full details of the venue near Sandwich will follow with confirmation. There will be plenty of time available to promote your products and services to other delegates.

3. How Are We Doing?

As any Doncaster Rivers supporter will know, one of the great joys of being near the bottom of the league is that any win is greeted with delight. The marked year-on-year increase in registered unemployed in East Kent must foreshadow an improvement in the twelve months to December 2018. The lamentable figure of +37.5% for the Dover District is likely to reduce significantly before the end of the year. The opening of a large Lidl store in Whitfield should more than offset any redundancies by Tesco and of course the significant number of new jobs at the St James development will feed into the figures before 2019. Discovery Park, formerly occupied exclusively by Pfizer, now supports over 3,000 jobs in Sandwich and is set to attract more skilled employees as the dynamic new owners implement their plans to make these premises, "a global leader for science and enterprise". Similarly, following an announcement last week, it is now official that the East Kent College Group will be the main and official provider of Further Education in Dover, Thanet, Shepway, Swale and Thanet. Building on East Kent

College's outstanding success in responding to the needs of companies across the area, we can now expect a coordinated approach to skills training that will serve to boost employment as the college leavers become better prepared for a more successful transition to the workplace. Medway outperformed Kent last year with the jobless total falling by 80, whereas every district of Kent increased its registered jobless over the year; Maidstone suffering the least with just a 0.8% gain. Whether last month's announcement by Shepway District Council that from April this year it will be rebranded as "Folkstone & Hythe District Council" [BBC News, 19 Jan 2018] will make any significant contribution to employment rates is open to speculation, but it will certainly help to attract inward investors. There is little doubt that Shepway is sometimes confused with Sheppey and the change will allow the local authority to sit neatly alongside other councils named after their principal population centres, as is the case with Dover, Canterbury, Maidstone and Ashford. Two areas remain a mystery to many from outside Kent. There are some who need to be convinced that Swale has nothing to do with a 1976 film featuring Clint Eastwood and that Thanet is not spelt with an initial "F".

4. Give Us The Facts

Unemployment

	Dec 2017		Change since Dec 2016 % of workforce
	Unemployed	% of workforce	
Ashford	1,290	1.7%	+14.2%
Canterbury	1,345	1.3%	+1.9%
Dover District	1,935	2.8%	+37.5%
Maidstone	1,205	1.2%	+0.8%
Shepway	1,450	2.2%	+7.4%
Swale	1,960	2.2%	+2.1%
Thanet District	3,290	4.0%	+19.9%
Kent	16,485	1.8%	+11.3%
Great Britain	769,785	1.9%	+6.9%

Based on the claimant count of jobseekers aged 16 – 64 years. Office for National Statistics (ONS) Jan 2017. See www.nomisweb.co.uk

5. High Speed May Be Medium Speed, But It's Ours

We are informed by Chamber members in East Kent that the High Speed railway line to London St Pancras has been a great asset, not only for fast rail travel to and from London, but as a unique selling point. Any company with a base near a High Speed station can justly claim to be accessible by train "via the UK's only high speed train service". With the delays to the construction of HS2 that advantage may persist for longer than was previously anticipated. Critics may complain that HSI did not become operational until 2009 and is High Speed in name only: the Shinkansen service was introduced to Japan in 1964 and the latest test version of JR Central's Superconducting Maglev train has clocked 375 miles per hour while pulling seven carriages. If the SCMaglev were to replace the current Class 395 Javelin trains, such a service from the East Kent coast to London would barely leave time for passengers to read the headlines of a newspaper. As the position stands now, Chamber members tell us that they are most interested in the fastest HSI times to bring them to London between 0800 hrs and 0900 hrs on weekdays. As always, the Chamber is happy to oblige, see below.

6. Fastest HSI Weekday Journey Times To London Arriving 0800 hrs - 0900 hrs

From	Mins	From	Mins
Ashford International	36	Faversham	150
Birchington-on-Sea	126	Folkestone West	51
Broadstairs	80	Margate	86
Canterbury West	54	Ramsgate	74
Deal	82	Sandwich	88
Dover Priory	64	Whitstable	142

High Speed Timetable 31 Dec 2017 to 19 May 2018

7. Media Watch

The Chamber welcomes opportunities to bring the views and interests of Chamber members to a wider public. We are often asked by printed and broadcast media for statements and interviews that have a bearing on the business climate of East Kent. Our good friends at the BBC South East and ITV Meridian are not alone in seeking to find out what is happening in the offices, warehouses and factories of our area. Although steadfastly apolitical in every aspect of our operations, the Chamber is inevitably asked to comment on matters such as Brexit, transport infrastructure and national policies. We do our best to support the local economy as a way of serving the best interests of our members. Comments on Tesco, Manston Airport, cross-channel bridge

plans and corporate funding for charities can be found on the KMTV website at <http://www.kentonline.co.uk/kmtv/video/chris-co-wednesday-24th-january-2018-11364/> With such a large trade imbalance with Germany, it is not surprising that the German national broadcaster should wish to access the thoughts of companies closest to the EU border. Das Ertse's broadcast is available to view at http://www.daserste.de/information/politik-weltgeschehen/morgenmagazin/videos/brexit_2610nI_8000-100.html Chamber members can make up their own mind if the interviewer's questions on BBC Radio Kent were answered fairly on matters related to Dover retailers by listening to the attached broadcast of 27 January 2018.

8. Water and Business Stream

Many Chamber members will recall the presentation by Business Stream at our Chamber Business Networking Breakfast in February last year giving all those present notice of the imminent changes in the supply of water to commercial users in East Kent. Although the commercial water market in England was not fully opened to competition until April 2017, Business Stream has been operating in the deregulated water industry in Scotland since 2008 and can therefore claim more specialist knowledge and capability than any other UK water provider. The Chamber has been happy to introduce large users to key decision-makers at Business Stream who are able to offer competitive rates as well as advise on the significant savings that can be made by monitoring usage in greater detail. Sometimes the mere presence of Automated Meter Reading (AMR) meters can lead to lower bills as well making leakages much quicker to spot and stop. Companies of all sizes can find more information on the website at <https://www.business-stream.co.uk> or contact the chamber by email to admin@tekc.co.uk for contact details of the appropriate Business Stream contact for your location.

9. Water and Southern Water

The Chamber enjoys excellent relations with Southern Water and has been more than happy to represent the views of local companies at Southern Water Stakeholder workshops during the past year. Although its headquarters are firmly rooted in Worthing, Southern Water has made extensive efforts to forge closer links with East Kent firms and has reacted positively and quickly to matters raised by this Chamber. Extensive investment in new equipment at the Palm Bay Pumping Station has sharply reduced the risk of a repeat of the sewage dumping on the beaches that drew so much ire in the past from coastal hoteliers and retailers. As well as a concentrated focus on developing short and long-term plans for our area with a projected £6 million earmarked for investment in the main Thanet pumping station, Southern Water has also introduced many business-friendly initiatives designed to make it easier for developers and builders to work with them. A prime example is the fixed cost schedule just introduced for charges to connect new homes to the existing network. For your copy of the new charges that come into effect later this year, email info@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Southern Water New Connection Charges". For a copy of Southern Water's latest plans to the year 2050, email info@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "SW Water Futures". We will respond promptly.

10. Thanet Earth

We have often celebrated the successes of Thanet Earth and its contribution to domestic food production. At a time when companies throughout UK are calling for more workers with STEM skills, i.e. skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, we have in East Kent an outstanding example of excellence in Thanet Earth. Another greenhouse at this country's largest hydroponic facility is expected to harvest its first crop of cucumbers this month, doubling the production on the Birchington site and significantly reducing our dependency on cucumber imports. At the sharp end of technological innovation in food production, A&A Growers at Thanet Earth have equipped the 6.1ha greenhouse with sodium lights and diffuse glass, a UK first in large scale salad production. As well as A&A, Thanet Earth is home to Kaaj Greenhouses, Rainbow Growers and the Fresca Group. Thanet Earth can teach a few companies about productivity too. Tomato production has now reached 15% of the UK planted tomato area but, such is the efficiency of its growing system, that the percentage of UK tomatoes grown is just under 25%. These technologically advanced companies on site have each made significant investments in East Kent and provide a beacon of enlightenment for every school leaver with an interest in STEM subjects who resists the temptation to believe that a lottery ticket or an appearance on a Simon Cowell talent show are the best routes to success.

11. General Data Protection Regulation

The provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) scheduled to enter law in the UK on 25th May 2018 stipulate some frightening fines, up to 20 million Euros in some cases, for companies that fail to abide by the new legislation. Chamber members who attended the 'Love Your Data' Chamber Business Networking Breakfast just before Christmas were treated to a bravura presentation by Colin Smith of Brachers LLP. In the best BBC traditions that would have delighted John Reith himself, Colin proceeded to inform, educate and entertain chamber members on a difficult subject that should be of vital interest to public and private sector bodies alike. The Information Commissioner's Office has yet to provide detailed guidance which complicates the matter further. The ICO currently states that: "In the future, standard contract clauses may be provided by the European Commission or the ICO, and may form part of certification schemes. However at the moment no standard clauses have been drafted". [<https://ico.org.uk>] With this in mind, Chamber members will be keen to seek professional guidance before 25th May 2018 this year. Colin can be

reached by telephone at Brachers LLP, tel: 01622 776451. Other law firms able to provide expert legal advice are Mowll & Mowll in Dover tel: 01304 873344; Cripps LLP in Sandwich tel: 01732 224006; Boys & Maughan in Margate tel: 01843 234000; Barnes Marsland in Broadstairs tel: 01843 861595; Anderson Law LLP in Shilligford tel: 07970 627439 and Chatalkoy Arbitration Litigation Mediation in Deal tel: 07778 067749.

12. East Kent Business Directory

The East Kent Business Directory and Chamber Diary 2018 features a detailed list of leading companies trading in East Kent together with a classified section making it easy to find a supplier in nearly every sector of our local economy. Published by the Thanet & East Kent and Dover District Chambers of Commerce, all registered Chamber members are entitled to a free copy. If you did not attend any of our events at the end of last year or for some reason have not received a copy, please email info@tekco.uk and we will respond promptly. Handsomely bound with brass corners and a commentary on the previous year's trading conditions, the 2018 publication has a wealth of useful information to make it an attractive and useful resource on your office desk.

13. More On Manston

No matter on which side of the great Manston debate your views lie, aviation or mixed development, you will surely find a wry smile to greet the following account for which we must thank Alan Saunders. Of all the pilots who have escaped from the elements and landed their aeroplane safely at Manston in the last 100 years, there is one who has more reason than most to regret his decision. Uffz Heinz Ehrhardt was cruising home happily enough on his flight back to Germany when he ran into dense fog over the Thames estuary. The date was 20 May 1943. The aeroplane was a Focke Wulf 190. With fuel running low, he mistook the north Kent coast for the Pas-de-Calais coast line. Landing at what he thought was the Luftwaffe aerodrome at St Omer, he was somewhat startled when he came to a halt in front of a Hillman staff car and was then summarily escorted to the dispersal hut of RAF 609 squadron. A photograph of a distinctly sheepish Ehrhardt flanked by his RAF Typhoon pilot captors appears on page 147 of Alan Saunders excellent book "Arrival of Eagles: Luftwaffe Landings in Britain 1939-1945".

14. Boys & Maughan

After more than two centuries of serving the population of East Kent, you could think that an accumulation of dusty documents could restrict the space available at Boys & Maughan. After winning five accolades at the ESTAS Conveyancing Awards, new display cabinets might be required at their offices in Margate, Birchington, Broadstairs, Canterbury or Ramsgate. Winners of the prestigious titles of Best Solicitors in Kent 2017 and best firm with two to five offices in the country, Boys & Maughan benefited from a survey of over 500 of their customers which revealed that 99% would be happy to recommend the conveyancing team to any family or friends moving home. We have not heard if Phil Spencer, the Channel 4 Property celebrity presenting the awards, advised on the location, location, location where the awards should be displayed, but we can be sure that Robert Mouldsdale, Andrew Baker and the other 100 or so staff at Boys & Maughan will be up for the challenge to beat the record haul of 2017. What is the reason for such a successful year? Conveyancing Partner Richard Durrant puts it down to: "... the incredible hard work that everyone puts in day after day".

15. All Drivers Take Note

Many chamber members are engaged in the Transport Industry. We are always grateful to the Road Haulage Association for its regular updates. A recent notice will be of interest to anyone with a driving licence. "From March, drivers who ignore smart motorway lane closures face a £100 fine and three penalty points on their licence.". Our good friends at the RHA have some pointed comments on the Foreign Secretary's plan to build a bridge over the English Channel and note: "A similar proposal was rejected by the Government in 1981, and we think that we're better off spending smaller amounts of money on improving our crumbling roads as well as opening more lorry parks. The Channel Tunnel and the ferry routes are working well within capacity, so it makes no sense to commit huge amounts of taxpayers' money in an uncertain economic climate to a costly bridge project that we don't need." And so say all of us.

16. A Maritime Story

As established Chamber members will be aware, we end our business bulletins with a narrative which we are not always able to verify to the standards you have every right to expect from the leading business support body in the East Kent coastal business community. Although we are not able to confirm the following account from one of our distinguished Chamber members, you may well be curious about what we heard at our last Chamber business breakfast. "It was my great grandfather who was the musician. He took up the violin as a teenager and from the age of about 16, he was able to earn a few pennies playing popular tunes outside the North Western Hotel in Liverpool. He must have been about 18 when a gentleman emerged from the nearby Lime Street Station and paused to listen. That man was Frederic Cowen, the conductor of the Liverpool Philharmonic, who was so impressed he subsequently sponsored my great grandfather to study music seriously and he thus became a double bass player in the junior section of the orchestra. That must have been around 1910. Anyway, the White Star Line was based in Liverpool and one of its directors had a passion for the double bass and arranged for my great grandfather to join the orchestra of the

RMS Olympic which was due to arrive in Liverpool on 31 May 2011. I don't really know what happened immediately after that except that my great grandfather was on excellent terms with the captain of the Olympic who took him to Southampton in April 2012. It was there that he joined the musicians of the Titanic for its fateful maiden voyage. Of course, we all know what happened next. As to whether my great grandfather was a great player, all I know is that my great grandmother always said he was very popular and went down well with the other members of the orchestra."

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It's happening now, it's happening in East Kent.
For details of membership, email admin@tekc.co.uk
Offices in Broadstairs, Sandwich and Dover.

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