

***** Welcome to the Thanet & East Kent Insider *****

Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

Thanet & East Kent Insider

5th November 2008

1. In the News

The Thanet & East Kent Chamber's campaign against the new business rates on empty commercial property received a boost over the weekend. The Mail On Sunday quoted extensively from the words of one Chamber member, Mick German of MPG Properties, who is faced with a potential rates bill of £400,000 from properties that previously would have incurred no charges from government. Kent On Sunday also returned to the theme and for good measure added some words about our second campaign issue, pub closures. Our thanks to reporters, Neil Craven, Jeena Pudelek and Steve Wright. Our gratitude also extends to the industry bible, Property Week, which pays us the compliment of quoting extensively from our 25-page campaign pack and lists in detail, this Chamber's four reasons for repealing the Rating (Empty Properties) Act 2007. With widespread cross-party support, we are hopeful that the government will heed the words of our growing list of supporters which includes Roger Gale MP, Dr Stephen Ladyman MP, Cllr Sandy Ezekiel, Leader of Thanet District Council, Laura Sandys and a host of senior business figures from across England and Wales. See Hardeep Sandher's two-page article in Property week at

<http://www.propertyweek.com/story.asp?sectioncode=39&storycode=3126444&c=5&featurecode=12355>

2. Thanet College Breakfast and £82m

In the original tendering documents for the project to relocate Thanet College, there was an obligation for the successful contractors to use locally sourced labour and materials wherever possible. Thanet College is keen to work closely with the business community to ensure that the benefits of this £82m investment are enjoyed by local companies both in its construction and in the 21st century learning experience it will provide. With this firmly in mind, Thanet & East Kent Chamber has teamed with Thanet College to offer a business breakfast entitled "Thanet College: New Campus, New Opportunities". On 4th December 2008, the Director of the relocation project, Rob Thrower, will outline the design of the new premises and advise on the products and services required in its construction. Representatives of the College's "preferred second stage bidder" will also be in attendance. Before the presentation, all delegates will be invited to enjoy a breakfast from the famous college restaurant. Too good to miss. For details of this event, email admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Thanet College Business Breakfast".

3. Predict, Prevent & Prosper

At a business breakfast on 26th November 2008, Thanet & East Kent Chamber will bring together two powerhouses of business advice; Dr Mark Gilman of Kent Business School and Chris Argent, Partnership Director of Girlings Solicitors and one of the most senior serving Territorial Army officers.. Mark is an expert on efficiency and productivity in Kent and Medway companies. His guidance can assist you to be successful and to avoid the mistakes made by others. Chris will offer advice on how to fight the recession, protect your business and help you prosper where your competitors might fail. This networking business breakfast at the Oak Hotel on Ramsgate sea front provides a unique opportunity to hear two speakers at the top of their profession advise you on how to make your business work for you. For details of this event, email admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Gilman Argent Business Breakfast".

4. Thanet Works

At the Winter Gardens Margate this morning, we were treated to a visit from Paul Carter, Leader of Kent County Council, and committed supporter of the Thanet Works scheme. In brief, the Department for Work and Pensions in liaison with the Department for Communities and Local Government has awarded Thanet £4.057m to be spent between 2008 and 2011 on initiatives to promote employment among NEETs and deprived groups in Thanet. For a fuller discussion of NEETs, see the special edition of the Thanet & East Kent Insider of 16th October 2008. Chairman of Thanet Works is Cllr Jo Gideon who is keen to use the funds in innovative ways that will provide a sustainable solution to inherited social problems. Jo was joined on the platform by fellow Thanet Works Director, Colin Maclean, who brings with him considerable expertise and experience in the successful delivery of regeneration programmes. Philip Sturt of Job Centreplus also spoke in support of the scheme. This Chamber is represented on the main decision-making board and will promote the perspective of local companies to ensure that the business view is considered at every stage of development. If Thanet Works can reduce the number of people in Thanet on benefits by 7%, it will have more than paid for itself. This is a practical scheme being managed by practical people. Proof of this is that from 0930 hrs to 1400 hrs throughout all the deliberations involving numerous publicly-funded organisations not one person mentioned the word "vision". This is surely a first for Kent.

5. Climate Change in Coastal Communities

Interested? Channel Arc Manche will be holding its annual conference on 3rd December in Folkestone. For details, contact Heather du Plessis, tel: 01243 777697.

6. Folkestone Breakfast

Our partners at the Channel Chamber of Commerce offer a networking breakfast for companies wishing to establish contacts in Shepway. The event takes place at The Grand, The Leas, Folkestone on 12th November 2008. For details, telephone 01303 270022.

7. Ramsgate News

Ramsgate Town Partnership held a meeting at The Oak yesterday morning. Among the speakers was Terence Painter of Terence Painter Properties. He gave an update on the Royal Sands development of 107 luxury apartments, a hotel and retail outlets on Ramsgate beach. Despite being delayed by a crack in the cliff face, this project is back on track. The developers have already invested £2m in the infrastructure. Terry has received expressions of interest for 70% of the commercial units and 30% of the apartments. This is a local project that is committed to using local contractors for its construction. For more details, contact Terence Painter Properties in Broadstairs, tel: 01843 866866.

8. The Venerable Elvis Speaks

Previous editions of the Thanet & East Kent Insider have featured the thoughtful utterances of Thanet's own hermit, the Venerable Elvis. Living a simple life in the hinterland between Sandwich's defunct power station and the disused quarry in Manston, the Venerable Elvis spends his time in spiritual contemplation of the human condition. Comparisons with the great philosophers of the past such as Descartes, Leibnitz and Nietzsche fail to do justice to this sage of our time. With the next US President now elected and soon to be confirmed as the most powerful figure in the Western world, we wondered what advice the Venerable Elvis might have for Barack Obama. During an exclusive interview with the Thanet & East Kent Insider, we outlined the deep recession in manufacturing, the deep problems in the stock market and the deep vein thrombosis in our financial arteries. The Venerable Elvis stroked his beard in silent contemplation before whispering these words of guidance, "When checking the depth of a swimming pool, do not use both feet". We trust that Barack Obama will take heed of these wise words from Thanet and act accordingly.

9. Sponsors

We are grateful to Adecco Recruitment, tel: 01843 609292; Girlings Solicitors, tel: 01843 220274 and Evans EasySpace, tel: 0800 039 3900 & 07753 799 333 for sponsoring this edition of the Thanet & East Kent Insider.



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Thanet & East Kent Chamber Limited

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

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