

Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

Thanet & East Kent Insider

11th June 2009

1. Blowing In The Wind

We are now taking bookings for our business breakfast of 23rd June 2009 entitled "Thanet Off-shore Wind Farm: Investing Now, Investing in Thanet". If you would like to see if your company or organization can benefit from this inward investment project, then please come and listen to the Project Director, Ole Bigum Nielsen, who will outline where Vattenfall wants to spend its money. Exceptionally, this week's edition of the Thanet & East Kent Insider includes the attachment of a flyer/booking form so that any readers who have not yet booked their place may do so promptly. There is £800m blowing in the wind from Sweden and we would like as much of it as possible to be spent in East Kent.

2. Signs of Recovery

We are grateful to Chamber member Adecco, a sponsor of the Thanet & East Kent Insider, for bringing to our attention a report from the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) which claims that the economy grew by 0.1% in May 2009 and by 0.2% in April, after contracting by 0.5% in March. Such optimistic news has stimulated the interest of HR companies and recruitment consultants in East Kent. Other data from the Office for National Statistics showed industrial production rose by 0.4% in March and April giving optimists the hope that the economy may have reached its nadir. The Recruitment & Employment Confederation publishes its own report in liaison with KPMG. In its summary of performance for May 2009, it noted that some sectors of the economy may have bottomed out but concluded that "it remains difficult to build real optimism of an incipient recovery because most of the world remains mired in the depths of recession." Readers of this weekly bulletin will have their own experience of how green are their shoots of recovery but some good news is welcome and we look forward to the day when unemployment figures start reflecting an upturn. If you are among the lucky few looking to increase your workforce or employ a temporary member of staff, please contact one of the following Chamber members who will ensure that you have a selection of appropriate candidates for the post: Adecco tel: 01843 609292; Big Fish Recruitment tel: 08450 602999; Curzon Place Recruitment tel: 01843 233425; HRGO Kent tel: 01843 591798; Morgan Jones Recruitment Specialists tel: 01843 604890.

3. Free Chocolate

Entering our Business-To-Business scheme with enthusiasm this week is Eurostat Office Supplies which is promising a box of chocolates to all Chamber members who contact the company to enquire about office supplies. David Burgess has a range of special seasonal offers to whet your appetite during June, including some "two for the price of one" specials. For details, contact David direct at Eurostat by telephone to 01843 580960 or by email to david@eurostat.co.uk. Thanet Business World can also supply products for your office. Stephen Matsubara can be reached by telephone to 01843 851600 or by email to sales@thanetbizz.co.uk.

4. Four More Years

Further to item 2 above, NIESR is also well-known for its detailed research on other aspects of our economy. A recent paper entitled Macroeconomic Implications of Pension Reform includes the opaque statement that $d\ln C_t = \lambda(\ln C_{t-1} - b_0 - \ln P_{t-1}) + b_1 d\ln RPD_{t-1} + b_2 d\ln NW_{t-1} + b_3 d\ln HW_{t-1}$. If this equation has not appeared on your screen in a legible form, count your blessings because a Nobel Prize in mathematics would not guarantee an understanding. Such highly technical reports are attractive to most of us only when we get to the executive summary or the conclusion. It takes three authors to produce text like that. Ray Barrell, Ian Hurst and Simon Kirby finally come into our sphere of comprehension after 10 pages when they declare that we are all living longer and the official retirement age will have to rise by four years if the nation is to support its aging population. If you are now under 45 years old and working in the private sector, you may find that you will be expected to work until you are 69 years old. Sales of cardigans and slippers may fall and purchases of briefcases and suits could increase. Over the next decade, any company servicing the needs of the active, elderly working population may be well-placed to benefit from the so-called demographic time-bomb resulting from our increasingly long lives.

5. News from Other Chambers

Dover District Chamber of Commerce informs us with great pride that a Big Screen is being erected this week in the Market Square, Dover. Local ratepayers are comforted in the knowledge that the screen is a gift from the organizers of the 2012 London Olympics. A key element in Dover District Council's regeneration strategy, the screen will also be used to showcase locally produced short films, Dover events and live opera and ballet from Covent Garden. It will be up and running in time for the Blériot festival on 25th and 26th July which will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Louis Blériot's cross-channel flight. The Channel Chamber reports that local businesses overwhelmingly support the expansion of Lydd Airport. In a recent Chamber survey of local companies, over 90% of respondents considered that airport expansion would be good for business. Airport Managing Director, Cliff Spink, is quoted as saying, "If we are allowed to develop operations I really believe that Lydd can act as a catalyst for economic regeneration in the region, creating jobs and bringing hope to local communities blighted by soaring unemployment." Well said, Sir.

6. Do You Know Where You Are Going?

The University of Kent held a Leadership for Growth and Performance workshop for SMEs yesterday which summarized the research conducted by Dr Mark Gilman and his team at the Kent Business School. One of the key facts presented from a survey of over 500 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Kent and Medway is that only 42% have a business plan and of these only a quarter develop their plan during the course of a year. The old army adage that if you fail to plan, you plan to fail applies to around 9 out of 10 SMEs. Such are the pressures these days that smaller companies are increasingly relying on 'gut feeling' rather than benchmarking or detailed research. Know Your Destination is of course as important as Know Your Customer and Know Your Competitor. Dr Gilman has accepted an invitation to speak at a business breakfast before the end of the year so that Chamber members can benefit from his thoroughly researched insights into SMEs in the county. If your company is one of the 90% of SMEs without an active business plan, email admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "One Page Business Plan" and we will send you a simple template that can be completed in less than 30 minutes. After all, if you have some idea of where you want to go, you are more likely to get there.

7. Attention Building Companies

Our friends at the Arab Chamber of Commerce tell us that the government of Oman is keen to find a British company to build 10 classrooms at a Boys School at Souqrah, Wilyat-Jazer in the Wusta region of Oman. If you would like to find out more about this export opportunity, contact the Oman Tender Board before 3 July 2009 by post to PO Box 787/133, Al Khuwair, Muscat, Oman or email tenderom@omantel.net.om. An English speaker is available for telephone calls on 00 968 2460 2612.

8. Waste Not, Want Not

"Where there's muck, there's money" is a phrase that has lost popularity in recent years as our manufacturing industries have declined and the service sector has grown. However, the United Arab Emirates is particularly keen to promote green energy and to convert its own waste into electricity. Ajman, the smallest of the seven emirates that constitute the UAE, is looking for a UK company to build an Energy From Waste facility which can generate 10 – 12 MW from an Independent Power Plant. Ajman produces around 500 tons of waste per day and the successful bidder will have to liaise with the municipal bodies that serve the population of around 600,000. The British Government's UKTI can supply more details and any interested parties are invited to apply by email to Adil Khan, Trade & Investment Adviser, British Embassy Dubai, tel: 00 971 4 309 4202, email: adil.khan@fco.gov.uk.

9. Doctor, Doctor

A story reached us this week from one Chamber member who reports that his father went to see his doctor last December complaining about a sore left elbow. After waiting for 90 minutes in a cold surgery, he received a cursory examination and was dismissed after a few minutes with the comment: "There's not much we can do for you, I'm afraid, it's just old age". When the 84-year old former soldier in the Royal Tank Regiment (motto 'Fear Naught') asked for a more detailed examination, the young doctor replied "Look, I've told you, it's old age and there's nothing more I can do for you." Our veteran stood up tall and said pointedly to the doctor; "Just a moment young man, the right elbow is exactly the same age and there's nothing much wrong with that". We are pleased to report that the doctor relented, gave the left elbow the attention it deserved with the result that the former soldier is now able to drink pints of beer with either arm with equal facility. This is good news for all pub owners in East Kent who might like to remind some of their regulars of this story in case they are ever blighted with the dreaded "drinkers elbow"; a condition like tennis elbow but with much more serious consequences.

10. Sponsors

We are grateful to Adecco Recruitment, tel: 01843 609292; Girlings Solicitors, tel: 01843 220274 and Express By Holiday Inn tel: 01843 820250 for sponsoring this edition of the Thanet & East Kent Insider.



Working effectively for you

Tel: 01843 609292

Tel: 01843 220274



Tel: 01843 820250

<<END>>

David Foley
Chief Executive, Thanet & East Kent Chamber Limited
Director, Channel Chamber of Commerce
Fellow, Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures & Commerce
Tel: +44 (0) 1843 609289
Fax: +44 (0) 1843 609291
Email: davidfoley@tekc.co.uk
Mobile: +44 (0) 7967 284850

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

For details of membership, email admin@tekc.co.uk

Thanet & East Kent Chamber Limited

Thanet & East Kent Chamber Limited (TEKC) is a company registered in England and Wales with company number 4518138. Thanet & East Kent Chamber Limited, Kent Innovation Centre, Thanet Reach Business Park, Millennium Way, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 2QQ. Tel: 01843 609289 Fax: 01843 609291 TEKC is not VAT Registered. Important: This e-mail may contain confidential information. If you are not the intended recipient it may be unlawful for you to read, copy, distribute, disclose or otherwise use the information used in this e-mail. If you are not the intended recipient of this e-mail, please telephone, fax or e-mail us immediately. Errors and omissions may occur in the contents of this e-mail arising out of or in connection with data transmission, network malfunction or failure, machine or software error or malfunction, or operator error. TEKC accepts no responsibility for any such errors or omissions and you are advised to confirm the accuracy of the contents of this e-mail before relying on it for any purpose.