

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

## **Thanet & East Kent Insider**

**17<sup>th</sup> July 2009**

### **1. Jeremy Clarkson In East Kent**

Renown for his blunt speaking, Jeremy Clarkson entertains television viewers on Top Gear and writes a column in The Sun. At this time last year, he visited British hotels and made some pointed comments on this most important aspect of UK tourism; an industry that a recent Deloitte study defined as contributing £114.4bn to the national exchequer in 2007, the equivalent of 8.2% of UK Gross Domestic Product. Jeremy Clarkson did reserve some kind words for this part of the world. As holiday makers are aware, there is a long-standing tradition of exceptional hospitality at hotels in East Kent. Those establishments that survived the downturn in the 1960s following the advent of cheap continental holidays have done so by outperforming their continental counterparts. New arrivals have had to follow high standards to compete and compete they do, Express By Holiday Inn at Ramsgate-Minster being a prime example of a successful new kid on the block. The result is that a friendly welcome on arrival can be the start of a life-long relationship, as many local hoteliers will testify. Jeremy Clarkson was impressed by a Chamber member in Sandwich, declaring that “all British hotel managers should be sent to the Bell Hotel in Sandwich”. Manager, Matt Collins, would like to share that experience with readers of the Thanet & East Kent Insider and has produced his “Entertain a Friend For Free” offer for Thursday and Friday lunches and Thursday dinner. For details, telephone 01304 613388. You can be sure of a friendly reception. Express By Holiday Inn at Ramsgate-Minster is also renown for its best value deals and is continuing the popular offer of £25.00 per person per night for two sharing Monday to Thursday. You can book direct by telephone to 01843 820250. Other price/quality specials can be found at Kent International Hotel in Ramsgate tel: 01843 588276; Keston Court Hotel Broadstairs tel: 01843 862401; Ramada Hotel Dover tel: 01304 872841; Royal Harbour Hotel Ramsgate tel: 01843 591514, Thorley Taverns with many outlets in Thanet tel: 01843 602010 and Walpole Bay Hotel & Living Museum Cliftonville tel: 01843 221703.

### **2. Free Advice**

Chamber member Harrington Associates notes the need to be fully prepared to take full advantage of opportunities that will develop as recessionary forces weaken. Director, John Harrington, has prepared a free guide on how to conduct meetings to achieve the maximum efficiency and how to fight burnout. Also included are some useful tips on reducing absenteeism, a hidden cost in many companies. For your free copy, email John at [johnharrington@iib.ws](mailto:johnharrington@iib.ws) with the subject line “TEKC Request July Newsletter”

### **3. Protect Your Company**

There are a few places left for the business breakfast presentation on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2009 on “Top Ten Tips To Keep You Out of an Employment Tribunal”. At only £12 per person, this event represents excellent value and will help you to stay competitive. To reserve your place, email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line “Employment Tribunal? No Thank You” and we will send you details.

### **4. Feel Good About Spending**

Our partners at the Channel Chamber have drawn our attention to a new financial service offered by Port Lympne and Howletts Wild Animal Parks. Members of the Chamber are invited to apply for a free Aspinall Maestro® Prepaid card for business or personal use. It can be used like a debit card and functions in a similar way to a mobile phone card. You top it up with the amount you wish to spend. As no credit line exists, the card can be used to manage your business expenses securely. It can also serve as a pre-loaded card to give to employees as a reward for high performance. Users can feel good about their spending as all the profits are given to The Aspinall Foundation. No credit check is required and the card can be used at over 28.5 million Maestro® or MasterCard® outlets. Full details are available on line or you can telephone 0871 641 9981. John Aspinall's wild animal parks make a unique contribution to the life of East Kent. By using the prepaid card, you will be supporting the Aspinall Foundation worldwide.

## **5. The Problem With Business Today Is ...**

Do you find that your insights into the problems facing business today are lost on your colleagues and family? The Chamber is always here to listen. Furthermore, with our partners at the Channel Chamber of Commerce, we are contributing to a Manifesto For Business to highlight any obstacles to trade and to influence the UK economy towards a more responsive and dynamic future for business. Later today, Chamber members will receive an email with three questions and a comments section. If you can spare a few minutes to respond, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that your views will have an impact on the Manifesto For Business which will be a significant document backed by the British Chambers of Commerce and likely to be featured in the national news.

## **6. Bicycle, Bicycle**

Steve Darling, of Kent Highway Services has contacted the Chamber with details of a new cycle route scheme between Margate seafront and Drapers Mill, Margate. If you would like to comment on any aspect of the route or suggest how it could be improved, have a look at the website at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/publications/transport-and-streets/margate-seafront-to-drapers-mill.htm> and complete the feedback form. The first modern bicycle is generally reckoned to be the Starley's Rover of 1885. The invention of the inflatable tyre by Dunlop three years later gave us the basis of what we have today. Why has it taken us so long in the UK to get used to the idea of planning our cities and towns around them? We seem to be good at winning cycling gold medals at the Olympic Games and stages of the Tour De France, well done Mark Cavendish, but our UK roads are mostly unfriendly to cyclists. We warmly welcome the initiative of Kent Highway Services and Thanet District Council. Perhaps Steve Darlings's plan will ring a bell in higher places and we can finally get our act into gear. If we do not, we may be saddled with traffic problems for years to come.

## **7. SEEDA Is Changing**

The Chief Executive of the South East England Development Agency, SEEDA, has written to the Chamber with news of changes at this government agency charged with managing the economy of the South East outside London. Pam Alexander informs us that a new SEEDA structure is planned to be operational by April 2010 which will put a focus on inward investment in the following sectors: advanced engineering, ICT, life sciences and health, financial services, environmental technologies, aerospace and defence. Four programmes for regeneration will remain a priority in Ashford, Hastings and Bexhill, Dover and Margate.

## **8. Sport & Religion**

These columns have often commented on the success of some football managers and have compared management styles and their possible application to business. Although the Venerable Elvis, Thanet's own hermit, occasionally offers moral guidance on issues of the day, it is rare to find sport and religion combining with a message to enlighten our working lives. Cricket enthusiasts enthralled by the drama of the 2009 Ashes series, currently in its second test match at Lords, may welcome this contribution from one senior Chamber member who prefers to remain anonymous, perhaps fearing he may have to open the batting in a later life. He relates the following tale. "Freddie Trueman was probably the most hostile bowler England has ever produced. He played the game in a fair but ultra competitive spirit, showing raw aggression to the Aussies and occasionally to his team mates. I remember one incident on a tour of Australia in the 1962/63 Ashes when that distinguished English cricketer and later Bishop of Liverpool, the Reverend David Shepherd, dropped a succession of catches from the bowling of Fred Trueman. After one particularly bad miss, Fred turned round at the end of the over with a sour grin on his face. Walking past the clergyman, he said, 'Kid yourself it's Sunday, Rev, and keep your hands together.'" Some gifted people have a way with words and are able to utter the right phrase at the right time. All contributions welcome.

## **9. 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.

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