

# Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

## Thanet & East Kent Insider

31<sup>st</sup> July 2009

### 1. Fam Trips in Thanet, Shepway and Isle of Sheppey

Vanessa Wolfman of the Visit Kent Project informs the Chamber of a series of familiarisation tours, known in the trade as “fam trips”, which are available to Chamber members and their associates who wish to put themselves in the shoes of a visiting tourist or simply explore some local attractions. Targeted at tourism industry employees, the fam trips consist of a one-day tour and include lunch and refreshments for a price per person of just £10.00. The promotion is sponsored by the European Regional Development Fund, Kent County Council, Thanet District Council, Discover Folkestone, Swale Borough Council and VisitKent. The Thanet fam trip will take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2009 and will include a visit to chamber member the Powell Cotton Museum, Quex House & Gardens followed by lunch at Harvey’s Crab & Oyster House in Ramsgate and a tour of the UK’s first pinball museum. The timetable then shows a beach walk to Kingsgate Bay. The day will continue by coach from the Captain Digby public house to the Theatre Royal, Margate. Before returning to Quex House, there is a final stop at Chamber member the Walpole Bay Hotel & Museum. The Shepway fam trip follows on 9<sup>th</sup> September and the Isle of Sheppey on 11<sup>th</sup> September. For further details and to book, contact Vanessa direct by telephone to 01622 696936 or email [celebratingkent@kent.gov.uk](mailto:celebratingkent@kent.gov.uk).

### 2. Why Talk Tourism?

The local press and media have been abuzz this week with news of the £384,500 awarded to the Dreamland Trust by the Heritage Lottery Fund as a contribution to the restoration of the theme park. Tourism is a huge industry in the UK and especially important to the East Kent coastal business community. A recent study by Deloitte estimated that the sector was worth £114.4bn in 2007, which accounted for 8.2% of the UK Gross Domestic Product. Deloitte also found that 1.4m people are employed directly in the tourism industry with another 1.3m dependent on the tourist trade for their wage packets. It is interesting to note that in 2008, of the top five nationalities visiting the UK, France was in first place followed by Ireland, USA, Germany and Spain. In terms of spending per person, the USA topped the list; Germany was second with France, Ireland and Spain to follow. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Japanese are the best customers to have visiting your shop. They buy quality goods and rarely complain. No-one doubts that it is overnight stays that produce the best returns for the area. Visit Britain tells us that in 2008, the average hotel room occupancy rate was 60% across the UK, down 2% from 2007. Bed occupancy is always lower and was 44% last year, down 4%. English Heritage manages Deal, Walmer and Dover Castles. At a meeting three weeks ago with one of the EH board members, it emerged that EH’s strategy for East Kent is to focus on improving the visitor experience in order to promote overnight stays. This Chamber looks forward to working with EH and other public bodies to do precisely that. Dover Castle is the second most visited attraction in the EH portfolio; its 300,000 visitors putting it ahead of all other EH properties except Stonehenge.

### 3. Hospitality and Tourism

The Chamber is grateful to Peter Green of Business Link for bringing our attention to a new Guide entitled Hospitality and Tourism which contains some solid advice and enterprising tips for anyone involved in tourism, catering or accommodation. There are case studies portrayed throughout. The easy-to-read guide has four chapters called, Managing Costs, Smarter Marketing and Selling, Beating the Competition and Useful Contacts. For a copy to read at your leisure, email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line, “Hospitality and Tourism Guide”.

### 4. Kent International Airport Update

Although the summer period is traditionally the off-season for import freight, Kent International Airport at Manston reports the busiest summer freight season on record. At a meeting last week at the airport, KIA Managing Director, Matt Clarke, revealed exclusively to the Thanet & East Kent Insider that volumes for the first quarter of the financial year are up 29% with positive indications of future growth. Matt relates that “Several new airlines to KIA have commenced regular weekly services with the airport capturing a larger share of the imported perishable market”. With the vast majority of Thanet residents supportive of the airport, KIA is well-placed to take full advantage of any upward trend in the economy.

### 5. The Grand Life in Folkestone

Our partners at the Channel Chamber will be celebrating their 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September with a special Business Breakfast & Exhibition at the Grand Hotel, Folkestone from 7.30am until 11.30am. Exhibition opportunities are available exclusively to Chamber members for the remarkable price of £50 +VAT which includes a full English breakfast. Too good to be true? Find out for yourself by emailing Sezen at [sezen.zeki@shepwaybc.co.uk](mailto:sezen.zeki@shepwaybc.co.uk) for details.

## **6. Fairtrade, Chocolate and Feeling Good**

Tammy Stewart-Jones has contacted the Chamber with the news that the nation's favourite chocolate bar, Cadbury's Dairy Milk, has been endorsed by the Fairtrade Foundation. The independent Fairtrade Mark appears prominently on the new packaging bringing the logo into millions more homes in the UK for the first time. In an email to the Chamber from Cadbury earlier today, Trevor Bond, Cadbury MD for Britain and Ireland is quoted as saying, "I've seen the new bars and I feel enormous pride that we are the first mainstream confectionery product in the UK to display the FAIRTRADE Mark". Readers of these columns will recall the Fairtrade Let's Go Bananas promotion in March and the Christmas Event at Quex House last December sponsored by Chamber member Cariss and Thanet District Council. What might have been labelled a few years ago as an eccentric approach by some well-meaning enthusiasts is now becoming increasingly mainstream as successful companies develop their corporate social responsibility agenda. This Chamber is pleased to advise on how your business might benefit from a greener approach to your operations. It used to be common to declare, "Where there's muck there's money". With the increasingly high profile of ethical trading and a rising awareness of green issues, the proverbial saying may change soon to "Where there's no muck, there's profits". By the way, if you do have too much waste and do not know what to do with it, have a word with TW Services, tel: 01 304 626364 or MPL Waste Management, tel: 01843 232584. They are the professionals. They will make you feel good about recycling and you could probably buy more than one Cadbury's Dairy Milk with the proceeds.

## **7. Your Logo Here**

The Consilium Group is well-known for its range of corporate clothing and branded workwear. Managing Director, Justin Baker, informs the Chamber that as from tomorrow, 1<sup>st</sup> August 2009, Consilium of Margate will be trading as Logo ID. An extensive product range allows companies to match their requirements against the available budget. T-shirts for under £3 are offered alongside work clothing featuring elaborately embroidered designs; all are available with your own logo and wording. For details, look at the website at [www.cg-uk.com](http://www.cg-uk.com) or make a telephone call to one of Justin's team, tel: 0845 180 1008. We wish this growing company every success as it increases its range of products and moves into new markets.

## **8. Beyond The Moon**

Chamber Member Ramada Hotel Dover will be holding a dinner and auction in aid of Beyond The Moon, a charity that grants holiday wishes to children between the ages of 3 and 18 who are stricken with life threatening illnesses. Michelle Shepherd of the Ramada welcomes enquiries as well as offers of raffle prizes. Tickets for the evening are £35 each with discounts for tables of 10. For details, contact Michelle on her direct line, tel: 01304 872841, or email [events@ramadadover.co.uk](mailto:events@ramadadover.co.uk).

## **9. Helpful Hints**

Cllr Clive Hart has kindly contacted the Chamber with news of some government initiatives designed to promote best practice. The Prompt Payment Code addresses the perennial problem of late payments which causes so many difficulties to small and medium enterprises. This initiative follows the advice of the British Chambers of Commerce among others and receives the full support of SEEDA. Signatories to the code include big names such as Shell, Sony, BBC and Primark Stores. To see what all the fuss is about, look at the website at [www.promptpaymentcode.org.uk](http://www.promptpaymentcode.org.uk).

## **10. HMRC Loves You**

HM Revenue & Customs is looking to project a friendlier image with a greater understanding of the company owners from whom it extracts huge sums of money. A series of short films of around five minutes each shows ordinary business people coping with the everyday problems of the credit crunch with good humour and never a word against the wonderful, good-looking, kind-hearted and generous HMRC tax officials who work so diligently on our behalf. Of especial interest to start up companies, the films may also intrigue the more experienced company practitioner as an example of an approach designed to make your clients love you even if you have your hand in their pocket. See for yourself at the website at <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&itemId=1081994865>

## **11. Business Rates**

The Non-Domestic Rating (Deferred Payments) (England) Regulations 2009 come into force today, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2009. Businesses are able to delay business rates payments. To qualify for automatic eligibility, companies must apply to their local authority on or before 30 March 2010. For more information, email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "Business Rates Deferral" and we will reply promptly with some details.

## **12. A Silly Point**

Cricket is very much in the news this week. The third game of the Ashes series began yesterday with England one game to the good following a draw in Cardiff and a win at Lords. Rather like golf, cricket breeds fanatical enthusiasts whose waking thoughts are dominated by the big games and obscure vocabulary. News has reached the Chamber of one such fan whose wife was expecting a baby during the first test match. Although abroad on business, true to his paternal instincts he telephoned the

hospital for news. Clearly, his mind was on other matters as he inadvertently rang the Cardiff cricket ground rather than the hospital. Oblivious to the fact that the sister on his wife's private ward didn't answer the call, he nevertheless asked, "How is it going?". You can just imagine his surprise when the answer came back, "We've got two out already, and hope to have the other eight out before tea-time. The last one was a duck." It could have been worse. Had he been a golf rather than a cricket fan, he might have found himself contemplating his existence as the father of an eagle, an albatross and a bogie. Count your blessings.

### 13. A Word on our Sponsors

The Thanet & East Kent Insider is grateful for the support and sponsorship provided by Girlings, Express By Holiday Inn and Adecco. Girlings Solicitors has been managing the managing the legal affairs of commercial and private clients for over a century. Twenty-six partners and one hundred and twenty members of staff ensure a comprehensive range of services from the local offices in Ashford, Canterbury, Folkestone, Herne Bay and Margate. Offices in France and Spain complement specialist departments for charities, individuals and companies. For details, telephone 01843 297828. Express By Holiday took on the daunting task of restoring the former Prospect Inn at Minster. The result is a spectacular hotel that combines the best of Oliver Hill's 1930s design with ultra modern facilities and technological support. Conveniently located for business guests and holiday makers in East Kent, the meeting rooms and 105 bedrooms are available at competitive prices throughout the year. For details, telephone 01843 820250. Adecco is the world's largest HR solutions company offering a comprehensive service of temporary and contract staffing, permanent recruitment, outsourcing, outplacement, career services, training and consulting. Officially designated as a 2009 British Superbrand, Adecco is represented in Thanet and Dover by its Broadstairs office, tel: 01843 609292.



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

Thanet & East Kent Chamber Limited  
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