

Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

Thanet & East Kent Insider

4th December 2009

1. Take Me To Your Leader

It is not only Martians landing on earth who ask to be introduced to their leader, but companies and residents throughout Kent. There is an opportunity for readers of the Thanet & East Kent Insider to do just that on 17th December 2009 when the Leader of Kent County Council has agreed to speak at the Pegwell Bay Hotel, Ramsgate. Thanet & East Chamber in association with TEKBA, SEEDA and Chichester College invites you to a business breakfast scheduled to begin at 0730 hrs. Paul became Leader of Kent County Council in October 2005. He is also now Chairman of South East England Councils which represents 74 councils throughout the region. He is a businessman himself and has a particular interest in property and construction. Despite his elevated position, Paul is down-to-earth and fully committed to the regeneration of East Kent. Fans of British sports cars, will find a kindred spirit as he has an abiding passion for car racing, rallying and trailing. To book your place, email admin@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Paul Carter breakfast". Cost: £12.00 including full English breakfast with tea or coffee. Booking is essential.

2. Don't Dilly Dally

Lavender Blue Media is one of those few companies which offer almost every type of client a route to improvement. Executive Producers Neal and Claire Ashford have perfected the technique of making short promotional videos to increase traffic to your website. As Neal said at a recent Chamber breakfast meeting, 'A video on your website of around two and half minutes should dramatically increase visitors and sales'. He gave the example of himself looking to buy indoor fireworks. Of the ten websites he viewed, only one had a video and you can guess where he placed his order. Lavender Blue Media also hosts Business News South East where you can find David Fenton, Head of Microeconomics at the Royal Bank of Scotland, declaring that the recession is over, but 'We expect the recovery to be pretty sluggish.' In a hi-tech industry where creativity and professional production techniques are at a premium, Lavender Blue Media's experience of making films for Channel 4, Discovery, Sky 1 and the BBC gives the company an advantage from which all their clients can benefit. To boost traffic to your website, give Neal or Claire a call at 01795 424252 or email via the website at www.lavenderbluemedia.com/contact-us.

3. What About The Airport?

Kent International Airport at Manston is owned by Infratil Airports Europe Ltd (IAEL). In contrast to a previous owner, IAEL is backed by a parent company, Infratil Ltd, which is based in New Zealand and controls or influences assets worth £1.7 billion. This gives IAEL a stability and established strength which have enabled the company to invest over £30 million in the past four years. IAEL states that it is committed to 'seeking out further airport investment opportunities in the UK and throughout Europe'. In an email to the Thanet & East Kent Chamber, Chief Executive Officer, Matt Clarke, looks forward to working with the Chamber 'over the coming months and years'. We will continue to bring to his attention the many excellent products and services available from members of the Thanet & East Kent Chamber and will be keeping our members informed of the growing opportunities available.

The final Master Plan envisages 2.2 million passengers in 2018 rising to 4.7 million in 2018. In the accompanying press release, Matt notes that the recession has delayed plans for an expansion of passenger services this year, but he is confident that the recent economic woes will not impact unduly in the longer term. As he puts it, 'We do not expect medium or long-term growth to be affected by the current economic climate'.

4. Write On, Baby

Last Friday, the Chamber Chief Executive visited new Chamber member, Antique Desks at their premises at Lakeside International Business Park, Hersden. Although founded over 40 years ago, the new owners of this enterprising company have been in East Kent for less than a year and have already acquired an impressive client list. With no fancy London offices to challenge their budget, Antique Desks has attracted buyers from the USA and Europe who have been particularly keen to take advantage of the competitive prices. The desks on view are all authentic antiques. Owners, David and Lynda Lawrence are keen to maintain their brand values and set great store on after sales service. Not everyone can put a 19th century walnut pedestal desk in the back of their car. David and Lynda are pleased to organise delivery and ensure that their customers are completely happy with their purchases. On-line sales account for the majority of their turnover, but anyone in East Kent looking for a statement of quality in their office or home is welcome to call in to view. For details, email info@antiquedesks.net or telephone 0754 564 1953.

5. What Is A Chamber Mentor?

The Thanet & East Kent Chamber is blessed with some excellent advisors who have accumulated expert knowledge and are willing to offer free advice and guidance to young companies eager to get established on a firm footing. Last Friday, two new Chamber members benefited from a visit by a Chamber mentor and they expressed themselves thoroughly enlightened afterwards. On hearing of a recommendation for a new product line, one of the recipients of the advice said afterwards, 'It seems so obvious now; I cannot think why we didn't think of it before'. This service is not meant to replace the expert consultants available. Indeed, mentors very often recommend a consultant to sustain the required improvements resulting in increased turnover or sharp cost reduction. These pages often feature the full range of specialist advice available in Business Planning, Catering, Credit Control, Design, Fire Prevention, Fraud Prevention, General Management, Grants & Subsidies, Green Issues, IT, Property, Law, Lean Production, Pensions, Sales & Marketing, Tenancy References, Training, Utilities Costs, Waste Reduction and almost every other sector of the local economy.

6. Identity Theft

Chamber member, HSBC, informs us that the credit referencing agency Experian has reported a 12% increase in cases of identity theft since the start of 2009. According to Experian, there have been large increases in fraudulent applications for credit cards, loans, automotive finances and mortgages, with 11.91 instances per 10,000 applications in Q1, 12.72 cases in Q2, and 13.37 cases in Q3. For advice on fraud prevention, contact Chamber member, Darren Jones of Fraud Consultant UK Ltd of Broadstairs, tel: 01843 600960. He knows about that sort of thing.

7. A Frosty Report for Public Finances

The Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce, David Frost, has forecast that the economy will grow by 1% next year rising to 2.3% in 2011. Quoted earlier today, he also predicted that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for 2009 will show a fall of 4.6%. The state of public finances is described as 'perilous' and his prescription to restore the balance is 'freezing public sector pay and reforming pensions'. As the NHS is promised protection from budget cuts by all the main political parties, David Frost advocates that there should be 'no sacred cows' in the public sector. With a pre-Budget report expected next Wednesday, the milk of human kindness may not be much in evidence for public sector workers in the next few years as budgets tighten and the government of the day seeks to restore the nation's finances.

8. A Christmas Story From Spain

This story comes to us from a fanatical fan of Barcelona who is still revelling in the glory of having beaten his time-honoured rivals at Real Madrid in the recent 'El Clásico' football match. Apparently on the way to the ground, there was a serious car crash between a Madrid fan and a Barcelona fan. Miraculously, no-one was hurt. Both drivers escaped from their wrecked cars with nothing worse than bruises and a few rents in their respective club scarves. Contemplating the damage, Josep from Barcelona said, 'Well, I think this must be a message from above. Here we are traditional, deadly rivals, our cars are written off and yet we have escaped serious injury. With Christmas approaching, we should take note and make peace.' Manual from Madrid conceded, 'I suspect you are right. We have been so lucky'. They duly shook hands as a mark of mutual respect and friendship. Contemplating his concertinaed SEAT, Josep noticed that a bottle of best bandy had survived intact. In a gesture of friendship, he handed it to Manual and said, 'Please, be my guest and drink up'. Anxious to recover his composure and delighted with the gesture, Manual accepted the offer and with a quick toast to Barcelona FC, drank deeply before passing it back to Josep. After a few moments of silence, Manual said, 'Aren't you going to have a drink and toast my team, Real Madrid.' 'If you don't mind,' said Josep, 'I'll just wait here until the police arrive'. Perhaps this is a timely reminder to us all.

9. 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 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 220274. 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

Thanet & East Kent Chamber Limited

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