

# Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

## Thanet & East Kent Insider

30<sup>th</sup> January 2010

### 1. New Radio Station

Although we are still waiting for final confirmation from Ofcom, Academy FM is preparing for a launch on 25 February 2010. Thanet's newest media outlet will not only serve the local population but will make a serious contribution to raising skill levels for employers. Operations Director, David Atkey, and Marlowe Academy Principal, Ian Johnson, are determined that this community radio station will add value to the curriculum of all secondary schools in Thanet. Students will be fully involved in the programming and management of the station, giving them first class preparation for the creative industries. This Chamber fully supports Academy FM and will be taking an active part in representing the business community of Thanet and East Kent on the airwaves.

### 2. Did We Get It Right?

The Thanet & East Kent Chamber appears regularly on local, regional and national television and radio and we are constantly asked about trading conditions in East Kent. Last Wednesday, the Chamber Chief Executive was interviewed on the BBC Radio News about the announcement of a 0.1% growth in the UK economy in the final quarter of 2009. His interview followed that of Alastair Darling and George Osborne and preceded a spokesman for the Confederation of British Industries. Our CEO said that that one quarter's figures do not constitute a trend. The year-on-year decline of 4.6% in GDP is a matter of grave concern, as is the reported 6% decline in output. He continued that Thanet and East Kent has much to offer tourists and listed the successes of Thanet and the many attractions for inward investors. He called on the Chancellor to implement measures to boost tourism to East Kent, amend the pernicious tax regime for pubs and end the demolition of perfectly sound commercial property caused by the empty rates legislation. But did we get it right? All Chamber members are invited to give us their frank views so that we can continue to speak to the decision-makers and ensure that we represent your concerns to the people who make decisions on your businesses. Please send your comments to [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk). By the way, we promise to remain suitably humble and not be too embarrassed if you tell us that we did get it right. It is important to know that too.

### 3. How Are We Doing?

We are grateful to the ever excellent Research & Intelligence team at Kent County Council for sending us the unemployment figures for 2009. The data shows that unemployment in Kent increased in the last year by 42.6%. Thanet records a more modest 36%. Now you could argue that is because Thanet has always had high levels of joblessness. After all, if you are already unemployed, you can only be counted once. Perhaps that is true, but even in the most deprived ward, Cliftonville West, the decline is only 23%. The decline in the South East of over 46% suggests that Kent is doing marginally better than most neighbouring counties. The figures also reveal that Dover, Canterbury and Thanet are the East Kent districts that have declined the least in the past year.

	December 2009		Change since Dec 2008	
	Unemployed	% of workforce	Number	%
Dover	2,435	4.0%	587	31.8%
Canterbury	2,374	2.6%	602	34.0%
Thanet	4,304	5.9%	1,139	36.0%
Shepway	2,619	4.6%	704	36.8%
Swale	3,285	4.1%	904	38.0%
Kent	35,364	3.5%	10,567	42.6%
South East	152,629	3.0%	48,325	46.3%
Maidstone	2,444	2.8%	893	57.6%

### 4. Trains Again

Our members have asked us to present an updated list of the train times to St Pancras London.

#### Average Peak Journey Times to London on High Speed Train

From	Mins	From	Mins	From	Mins
Ashford International	37	Dover Priory	69	Ramsgate	81
Birchington-on-Sea	86	Faversham	64	Sittingbourne	56
Broadstairs	93	Herne Bay	77	Whitstable	71
Canterbury West	60	Margate	91		

Southeastern Trains, Jan 2010

## 5. CRM Explained

In last week's edition of the Thanet & East Kent Insider, we promised to give our readers details of a fully featured Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) that has no license fees. It enables you to keep track in real time of your contacts, sales made, sales prospects and business dealings. It is a web-based service that requires no special installation but allows you to monitor activity at any time of the day or night from any terminal in your office or while sitting in your most comfortable chair at home. You can email anyone or everyone on your database in the sure knowledge that your data is secure and your correspondence is confidential. This is a clever way of using modern technology to promote your business and improve the performance of your sales and marketing team. For details, contact Chris Maflin or Emily Milne at Cariss, tel: 01843 835 791 or email Chris direct to [chris.maflin@cariss.co.uk](mailto:chris.maflin@cariss.co.uk). It's simpler than you think.

## 6. Sales Leads

This item is of interest to any Chamber member manufacturing or supplying electrical equipment, generators, turbines, valves, uniforms, workwear, kitchen utensils, power tools or DIY products who wishes to export to the Middle East. These are live sales leads from buyers eager to purchase from the UK. [[Details dispatched to Thanet & East Kent Chamber members only](#)]

## 7. Welcome Paul

Insider sponsor Express By Holiday Inn welcomes a new manager, Paul Etheridge, to the hotel at Minster, see item 12 below. A native of Framlingham in Suffolk, nobody can deny that Paul began his career in the hotel business with clean hands. As a student, he paid his way through university by washing dishes and waiting at tables. After graduation he joined the De Vere Hotels group as a management trainee at The Bellhouse Hotel in Beaconsfield. After just 4 years, he was elevated to Front of House Manager. Successive promotions led to posts with the Crowne Plaza Marlow and the White Lion Hotel in Aldenburgh where he was Deputy General Manager. Paul moved to Kent to help open the Village Hotel. He joined the Holiday Inn Express group as a General Manager 18 months ago. At the grand old age of 30, he is now happily settled with fiancé, [Louisa](#), and one-year old son, Jack, who has yet to declare whether he will follow his father into the hotel business. As the new General Manager of the splendid 105-bedroom hotel at Minster, Paul is looking to develop warm links with the East Kent coastal business community and welcomes enquiries by telephone to 01843 824250 or by email to [gm@express-kia.co.uk](mailto:gm@express-kia.co.uk). Chamber members have an open invitation from Paul to call in for a coffee. Google map addicts, SatNav users and first-time visitors to Thanet will have no difficulty in finding Paul's place of work by inputting CT12 4AU and finding the hotel conveniently located on the main route into Thanet on the outskirts of Kent International Airport at Manston by the roundabout on the A299. Locals will just think "Prospect Inn".

## 8. Silk Screen Printer Wanted

One Chamber member has contacted us with a vacancy for a silk screen printer. If you know someone who fits the bill, please email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "Silk Screen Printer" and we will pass on the details to the interested party.

## 9. HSBC

We are grateful to Chamber member, HSBC, for informing us that figures released by the Office for National Statistics have revealed that 2.4% of the UK population has no wealth, or negative wealth, even after counting the value of all household possessions, clothes and other assets such as cars. The data shows that around 10% of tenants in social housing are facing retirement with assets worth less than £3,000. Those in the middle have assets worth £42,000 and the top 10% has £177,000 or more. The top 1% has a minimum of £665,000.

## 10. Planning for Recovery

Business Link has published a handy guide for companies looking to recover their markets and boost sales. Under the four headings of Retaining and Motivating Your People, Keeping Costs Under Control, Planning for Growth and Marketing, the guide offers some commonsensical advice. You can find Planning for Recovery on-line at <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?site=210&type=ONEOFFPAGE&itemId=5001463507> or email [info@businesslinksoutheast.co.uk](mailto:info@businesslinksoutheast.co.uk) for further details.

## 11. Fanatical Support

Liverpool football club is renowned for its fanatical supporters. Legendary manager, Bill Shankly, oversaw the club's rise to world-wide prominence. He is also credited with alienating half of the local population with his oft-quoted remark that "There are two great teams on Merseyside, Liverpool and Liverpool Reserves." However, even the late Bill Shankley might have been surprised at the story reaching this Chamber about one Liverpool supporter who was allegedly sitting on the edge of his seat at Anfield Stadium eagerly awaiting the start of the derby match against Everton when a nearby fellow season-ticket holder said, "I can't believe it. A home match against Everton and you've got an empty seat next to you". "Oh", said our supporter, "That's for my wife. She sadly died last week." "I'm sorry to hear that", said the neighbour. Sensing that a devotion to Ian Rush, Kenny Dalglish and Steven Gerrard might be subject to genetic transfer, he continued, "But er-r-r couldn't you have given the ticket to a family member or a friend?". "I thought of that", said our supporter, "But they've all gone to the funeral".

## 12. 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](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk)**

Thanet & East Kent Chamber Limited  
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