

# Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

## Thanet & East Kent Insider

13<sup>th</sup> March 2010

### 1. Caught In A Sandwich

There's no doubt about our lead article this week. It is the Sandwich story. Since 1170, Canterbury has long benefited from the footfall generated following the martyrdom of Archbishop Thomas Becket in its cathedral. Cheddar still attracts cheese lovers from far and wide. Pontefract has its liquorice fans. Bordeaux and the Champagne region have obvious attractions and even Patna draws in the tourists who like rice. Battenberg for cakes and Cornwall for pasties. The astute reader will notice that we have made no mention of Bakewell. Sandwich has largely missed out on trading on its name. This all changed on Wednesday of last week when Gary Lineker, Jason Button, Frank Lampard, Marco Pierre White, Pamela Anderson and the boy band JLS took a full part in the life of the town as part of a Walkers Crisps advertising campaign. Chamber member Matt Collins of the Bell Hotel tells us that JLS sang Happy Birthday to one of his housekeepers. If any readers have not seen the advertisement recorded on the day, it is available on line at [www.walkerscrisps.co.uk](http://www.walkerscrisps.co.uk) Rumours of Beyoncé coming to Birchington have not been confirmed, but there is no doubt that with the advent of the High Speed rail link, the publicity surrounding the Turner Contemporary and all the news about windfarms, this part of East Kent is getting an increasingly high profile on the national agenda. As it states at the end of the Thanet & East Kent Insider, "It's happening now, it's happening in Thanet & East Kent".

### 2. But What is Happening With Windfarms?

Thanet Off-shore Windfarm is on schedule to meet its target completion date of October this year when it will become the world's largest windfarm. The London Array promises to be even bigger. On Wednesday of this week, the London Array Project Director, Richard Rigg, gave a detailed presentation to the Thanet & East Kent Chamber and a selection of invited guests in the magnificent surroundings of Chamber member Court Stairs in Pegwell Bay Road, Ramsgate. With the assistance of Commercial and Operations Manager, Matt Britton, Richard gave a full account of the current stage of development and outlined the opportunities for local companies. The London Array is a consortium consisting of three shareholders. Dong Energy of Denmark has 50%. E.ON of Germany owns 30%. The Masdar Initiative of Abu Dhabi is the proud possessor of the remaining 20%.

### 3. Where is the London Array?

The simple answer is that it is not in London. The windfarm is planned for an area of 245km<sup>2</sup> located 20km from the Kent and Essex coasts in the outer Thames estuary. It will be connected by undersea cables to a substation at Cleve Hill, near Faversham. Phase One will see the placing of 175 turbines capable of producing 630MW. The next phase will depend on the satisfactory outcome of bird studies, but promises to produce a further 370MW, bringing total capacity to 1,000 MW. Regular readers will recall from the Thanet & East Kent Insider profile of the Thanet Offshore Windfarm, see Edition 65 of 25<sup>th</sup> June 2009, that TOW should produce 300MW from 100 turbines, sufficient for 240,000 homes. The London Array seeks to supply 750,000 average households. The construction, operations and maintenance base will be in Ramsgate.

### 4. How Much Will It Cost?

The consortium partners have given the green light to an investment for Phase One of 2.2bn Euros, the equivalent of around £2bn. That is serious money that takes full account of Britain being the windiest country in Europe.

### 5. What About The Technical Details?

Phase One will see the installation of 175 Siemens 3.6MW wind turbine generators fitted with the new 120m Siemens rotor. There will be two offshore substations, 220 km of subsea 150 kV export cables and 209km of 150kV inter array cables.

### 6. When Will It Begin?

It already has begun with the start of the onshore construction in July last year. This year will bring the start of the pre-construction surveys, the mobilisation of the offshore construction base and the assembly of the offshore construction team. In 2011, the foundations will be installed with the turbine installation beginning in October. Phase One is expected to be

completed by December 2012. Richard Rigg anticipates that visitors flying into the London Olympics over the Thanet and Thames coastline will have a fascinating view of the latest developments in green energy.

## **7. What Will Happen in Ramsgate Then?**

There will be a Construction and Management Base of 2,500m<sup>2</sup> consisting of a 650m<sup>2</sup> temporary office of two storeys. As well as a dedicated car park and welfare facilities, there will be provision for a health and safety department, marine coordination and installation management with 40 – 45 people based in the port. The much larger Operations and Maintenance Base will cover 8,000m<sup>2</sup> in a purpose built two-storey facility offering secure storage, offices, workshop, warehousing and welfare facilities. Alongside will be a mooring for six 12-person vessels. A new pontoon is envisaged and the existing fuel pumping arrangements will be upgraded. As many as 90 people will work from this base. Full-scale control and operations of the windfarm should begin from here in October 2011.

## **8. What About Jobs?**

Around 70 posts will be created in June of this year. The Chamber has been in close consultation with the London Array for more than two years to maximize the benefits of the project for East Kent. The construction, operations and maintenance services are expected to make full use of taxi transfers, hotel accommodation, long term rents, office equipment, cleaning services, waste/recycling operations, safety equipment, catering, crew boat maintenance, fuel supplies, spare parts, crane hire, small tool hire and purchase, building site maintenance, welding and fabricators. All Chamber members not in default of their membership fees on 30 March 2010 will be automatically included on the supply list for the London Array.

## **9. What About Skills?**

The Thanet & East Kent Chamber has attended a series of meetings in the last year to assist the London Array in sourcing local staff with the appropriate skills. We have been working with Kent County Council, Marine South East, Thanet College, Job Centre Plus and private training providers. We are in contact with the key decision-makers and will be seeking every advantage for Chamber members.

## **10. Who Has Got The Contracts So Far?**

The fact is that the major Tier 1 contractors are mostly from overseas. We expect that the Marine Energy Industry in the UK and indeed, in East Kent will grow from the opportunities presented, as confirmed at the Marine Energy Summit last November, see Edition 84 of the Thanet & East Kent Insider dated 13<sup>th</sup> November 2009. For the record, our understanding of the major contractors engaged to date is as follows: *Marine Crew and Vessels*: MPI, a wholly owned subsidiary with a UK base in North Yorkshire, and A2SEA, 100% owned by Dong Energy of Denmark. *Turbines*: Siemens Wind Power of Germany. *Foundations*: Per Aarsleff A/S of Denmark and Bilfinger Berger Ingenieurbeu GmbH of Germany, UK base in Warrington. *Two Offshore Substations*: Fabricom, part of the GDF SUEZ Group, listed on the Brussels, Luxembourg and Paris stock exchanges with a UK base in Immingham, Lemants and Geosea of Belgium. *150kV subsea Export Cables*: Nexans Norway AS which unsurprisingly is based in Norway. *33kV Array Cables*: JDR Cable Systems of Hartlepool and Littleport, Cambridgeshire (loud cheers everyone). *Export and Array Cable Installation*; Visser & Smit Marine Contracting of the Netherlands and Global Marine Systems Limited of Chelmsford (getting close).

## **11. What Happens Next?**

A supplier event in late April, see the Thanet & East Kent Insider for details. The London Array acknowledges a responsibility towards the East Kent business community. Over the next few years, the company promises to “maximise the benefits for the local economy” and expects to “make contributions to the local economy through the use of local services and facilities”. The Thanet & East Kent Chamber will be working closely with its members to bring products and services before the key buyers.

## **12. Visit Kent More**

These columns often highlight the advantages of the tourist industry and the key role it plays in the economy of East Kent. Our friends at Visit Kent are offering readers an opportunity to hear industry experts on how to boost your income from the UK's fifth largest sector. On 30<sup>th</sup> March at Godinton House and Gardens Ashford, Visit Kent, Tourism South East and Business Link are offering a free advice clinic and workshop. For three hours from 1030am, owners, managers and senior staff in tourism related businesses are invited to hear how an action plan can attract more customers and increase turnover.

Lunch and refreshments are included. For more details, contact Daniel Humphreys by email to [dhumphreys@tourismse.com](mailto:dhumphreys@tourismse.com) or by telephone to 023 8062 5499.

### **13. Ten Years On**

Boys & Maughan, the Thanet based law firm, has been awarded a certificate by Investors in People in recognition of 10 years of continuous attainment of the IiP standard. In receiving the award certificate Andrew Baker, Quality Partner at Boys & Maughan, remarked: "as an organisation that delivers knowledge on behalf of its clients, we have always invested heavily in our staff to enable them to convey their understanding in a people-friendly way".

### **14. Dreamland Breakfast**

This is a reminder of the Dreamland Wakes Up business breakfast scheduled for Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2010, as highlighted in the last two editions of the Thanet & East Kent Insider. The new Dreamland Project Director will be outlining the progress of the world's first Heritage Amusement Park and all delegates will hear how their company might benefit from the increased footfall and selling opportunities. There will be no admittance without booking. For details, email [manager@tekc.co.uk](mailto:manager@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "Dreamland Breakfast". We know from an article in the Times of 3 February 2003 that at its height of its popularity "One-fifth of all visitors to Thanet come for Dreamland". Traders in Thanet will be looking to the Turner Contemporary, Kent International Airport at Manson, the London Array and the High Speed rail link to take the word 'regeneration' out of the land of dreams and into reality. As the largest business support organisation in the area, the Thanet & East Kent Chamber will be part of this transformation. There has never been a better time to participate in our events.

### **15. Opportunity in Europe**

The Chamber has been approached by a French organisation looking for a partner for an INTERREG IVA cross-border project focusing on enhancing business development between the UK and France in the field of biomaterials. The project seeks European funds to establish a Euroregional cluster. Any medical, pharmaceutical or biosciences company is invited to contact the Thanet & East Kent Chamber with an expression of interest. Email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "Biomaterials INTERREG IVA".

### **16. Going Down To The Beach**

Do you know Spike Milligan's well-known parody of a John Masefield poem, "I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky; I left my shoes and socks there - I wonder if they're dry"? Are you thinking, "What on earth is a respectable Chamber of Commerce doing wittering on about poetry when I have a VAT return to complete before this evening's post?" A fair point, but you might just know somebody who is looking for a job on the beach or near it. Thanet District Council has a vacancy for a young person aged 18 – 24, or older if a resident of Margate Central, Cliftonville West, Ramsgate Eastcliff, Central Harbour, Newington or Dane Valley wards, for a job as a Thanet Coast Project Support Assistant. Reporting to the Thanet Coast Project Manager, the fortunate occupier of this position will spend some time in the Council's offices in Margate but also a pleasant few hours on the local beaches where the main duties will be "to support the Thanet Coastal Project Staff working on public, volunteer and community activities with occasional help at environmental and coastal-related events". There is no mention of whether the successful candidates should supply their own bucket and spade, but the job looks like a good opportunity to start a career in the growing sector of environmental care. More details available from the Thanet Coast Project, email [thanet.coast@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:thanet.coast@thanet.gov.uk) or telephone 01843 577672 or 01843 577409.

### **17. A Party To Remember**

In the last few weeks, we have featured the new daily £24.99 Flybe flights to Edinburgh from Kent International Airport at Manston. The reaction from Chamber members has been uniformly positive and we expect a brisk trade when the service begins on 27<sup>th</sup> May this year. Fans of single malt whisky and those who know how to enjoy themselves at the company's expense might be interested to learn of the experiences of our new friends at the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce. After receiving its Royal Charter in 1786, one of its first tasks was to appoint a lighthouse man on May Island. The annual salary offered was £7 per year, a reasonable sum for a year's work at the end of the eighteenth century. The committee of the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce that had to make the decision on which candidate appoint took their duties very seriously; so seriously in fact, that the drinks bill that accompanied their deliberations amounted to £12. From this, it can be deduced that the Edinburgh Chamber has always known how to enjoy itself and how to generate income. We celebrate our new link with this organisation and look forward to promoting trade with the members of the Thanet & East Kent Chamber. By the way, if you are thinking of getting a Royal Charter for yourself, the Privy Council Office tells us that you should have

“at least 5,000 members” and “the corporate members of the institution should be qualified to at least first degree level in a relevant discipline”.

## 18. 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 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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