

March's Tourism Matters – Free Training Courses

Dear Colleague

Welcome to March's Tourism Matters

The clocks will soon be going forward, the weather is gradually improving and it will soon be the Easter holidays, marking the start of what will hopefully be another busy season for us all. In preparation, we have lots of news for you.

FREE Tourism Training Opportunities

First on the list is the opportunity to participate in training workshops. We have run these over the past few years and they have proved to be very successful. The workshops are all aimed at those who work in Thanet's tourism industry and they are provided free by Thanet District Council's Tourism Service

This year there are five training courses, focussing on:

- Digital Development
- How to use short Video to Promote Your Business – follow-on
- Marketing on a Shoestring
- Storytelling and Instagram
- Delivering Service Excellence

Please see here for [full course details](#)

If you wish to book a place on one of more of these courses, please email tourism@thanet.gov.uk or phone Emma Dadds on 01843 577637. **Please provide your name, telephone number, email address, position and name of the organisation you are from.** You will receive an email confirming your place.

Please note that as before, if you are unable to attend, there is the opportunity to send a replacement. However, if you are unable to attend and don't send a replacement, and if you don't notify us in good time, ideally 48 hours before the workshop so we can offer the place to another person, there will be a cancellation fee of £20.

Press and PR

The sun is out (today anyway) and press visit season is getting underway with three press visits in the pipeline for April and two for May.

This week we are hosting Gillian Thornton, who is visiting Margate and Thanet to gather information for a variety of features she is writing on Turner, Margate and WWII for The People's Friend, My Weekly and Silver Travel Adviser. Gillian is a long-standing travel writer and sits on the board of the British Guild of Travel Writers. This is her first time visiting Thanet and if the enthusiasm she felt for Margate on her first day transfers to her features, we should soon see some lovely, positive coverage.

Thank you to everyone who is helping to host Gillian's visit and thanks in advance to those who agree to assist with the forthcoming visits. You all play your part in helping us raise awareness of the area and encouraging visitors by supporting these visits.

Visitor Information Service Opening Hours

Talking of sunshine, we know the busy season will soon be upon us as the visitor information teams extend their opening hours, or indeed, open for the season.

As of Saturday 1st April, the **Visitor Information Centre** at Droit House will be on high season opening hours of 7 days a week 10am – 5pm.

Broadstairs Information Kiosk opens for the season from Saturday 1st April, 10am – 4pm. They will be open 7 days a week from 29th April until mid-September. Full details of the kiosk opening hours can be [viewed here](#)

Ramsgate Visitor Information at Customs House continues to be open 7 days a week 10am – 4pm

New Visitors' Map 2017/18

In readiness for the new season, we will be taking delivery of our new Visitor Maps week commencing 27 March, in good time for distribution prior to the Easter holidays.

The VIC team will be working hard to deliver these to you, but if you are able to collect your supply from us and be one of the first to have them, then please contact the team on 577577 to arrange collection. Thank you.

New art focussed tourism film

We plan to produce a new 2 minute film, with a shorter 30 second version, which encapsulates the opportunities available in Thanet for visitors to engage with art. We know how diverse this offering is, so we would like your assistance please with suggestions for inclusion and why you think they should be included. This could be anything from the exhibitions and family workshops at Turner Contemporary, creative workshops such as pottery making, music events and festivals, street art, etc. Key is that it is something a visitor to the area can engage with.

The films will be used as part of our planned digital marketing activity.

Please send suggestions to tourism@thanet.gov.uk with 'New Film' in the subject line, thank you.

News for Accommodation Providers

The VisitEngland accommodation assessment schemes have been successfully run under licence since 2012. The existing licence ends in March 2017 and this has given the opportunity to review how it operates and grow the schemes.

Following a rigorous tender and evaluation process, VisitEngland has appointed the AA as licence-holder to run all their National Quality Assessment Schemes, subject to contract.

The AA has been inspecting and rating hotels and guest accommodation in the UK for over 100 years and follows the same common standards used by VisitEngland and the national tourist boards for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The strength of the AA bid lay in not only their commitment to maintaining standards and meeting the expectations of Quality Assessment Schemes' participants, but also in matching VisitEngland's ambitions to develop the schemes further and bring additional value to participants and consumers.

Quality in Tourism continues to operate the schemes until the new licence comes into effect which is anticipated will be on 1 April 2017.

As the contract is developed, VisitEngland's priority is to work with the AA to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. More details, including the time frame for renewals and assessments, will be available this spring.

If you would like to find out more please email industry.relations@visitbritain.org

Kent Choices Local 2017

Sponsored by Kent County Council and in partnership with EBP Kent, the **Kent Choices Local** events provide employers with an opportunity to showcase their industry through an interactive skills event. They bring vocational learning to life and show young people the wide range of apprenticeship and career opportunities available to them.

Stand space is free and you can choose to attend all events or one event in your local area. Details of the events are as follows:

31st March at Mote Hall, Maidstone 9:45am - 3pm. For more information on this event contact Toni Clarke on mebp@btinternet.com

16th March at Dreamland, Margate 10am - 2.30pm and 23rd March at Ashford International Hotel, Ashford 10am - 3pm. For more information on these two events contact Anne McNulty on anne.mculty@ebpkent.co.uk

If you are unable to attend any of these events but have information on apprenticeship or training opportunities you would like to share with the students, please get in touch with [Louisa Mungall](#)

Literature Exchange

Ashford & Tenterden Tourism Association are hosting a Literature Exchange and Networking event on Tuesday 28 March between 12noon – 4pm at The Big Cat Sanctuary, Smarden near Ashford. For information on the event please see the [event invitation](#) and to reserve a space please complete the [booking form](#). Further information can be obtained from [Tracey Mckeen](#)

Your News

Congratulations to Louise and Liam of **The Reading Rooms**, Margate, which has been named in Dorset Cereals Bed and Breakfast Awards 2016, as Best Overall B&B. For more information on the awards and to watch a short film of The Reading Rooms please see the [Dorset Cereals website](#)

Dreamland is holding a Recruitment Fair on Friday 17 March between 1pm-4pm. They are looking for enthusiastic and engaging team members to join Dreamland in the exciting new step of the journey. They are recruiting seasonal staff across the whole business - customer service and catering to ride operators, events and entertainments staff. To register your attendance email recruitment@dreamland.co.uk or for more information visit the [website](#)

The Dreamland Trust is looking for volunteers to help with the new summer programme to promote the history and heritage of Dreamland. They are looking for people to help meet, greet and explain the role of the Dreamland Trust, the content of the exhibitions, roles relating to the Dreamland archive, its organisation and display, as well as developing free talks and tours for the general public and schools. Find out more at the recruitment day on Friday 17 March. Drop in to the Ballroom between 1pm - 4pm, email Arcade@dreamlandmargate.co.uk for an application form or telephone 07795 275641 for further information

Events

Here are just a few of the events taking place across the area in the next few weeks

- 8th – 11th March: [POW! Thanet](#)
- 11th & 12th March: [Be an Explorer](#) at Powell-Cotton Museum

- 21st March – 2nd April: [Paper 1st Anniversary](#) at Kent New Art Gallery
- 24th – 26th March: [1st Ramsgate International Film Festival](#)
- 26th March: [Cliftonville Farmer Market](#)
- [Mother's Day Event](#)
- 4th April: [Scavenger & Great Eggcase Hunt](#) at Margate Main Sands

For more events happening in the area go to www.visitthanet.co.uk/whats-on