

## March's Tourism Matters - Useful Information and Updates

Dear Colleague

Welcome to March's Tourism Matters

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

We wanted to provide you with some advice and reassurance in relation to the steps that Thanet District Council is taking as an organisation following the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19). We also want to provide you with links to national updates being provided by Visit Britain (National Tourism Agency), the Tourism Industry Emergency response group (TIER) and Visit Kent.

Whilst cases of the virus have been confirmed in Kent, Thanet District Council is currently operating business as usual. We are, however, taking sensible steps to prepare if the situation changes

### **NHS advice**

The priority at this stage has been to signpost our staff and the wider public to the guidance being issued by our health providers. This is regularly updated on the [NHS website](#) and is the recommended source of information for the public. We encourage you all to familiarise yourself with this advice.

We will continue to share NHS guidance on the [council's website](#), via social media and through our community networks too.

### **Business continuity**

Business Continuity plans are in place which set out how council services will operate in the event there is any disruption to normal business. We are currently operating business as usual and will keep you and our customers updated if this changes. The council is also involved with continual monitoring across Kent through the Kent Resilience Forum involving all of the relevant agencies.

### **Visit Kent**

They are receiving daily updates regarding the Coronavirus from the Tourism Industry Emergency Response group (TIER), including advice, useful links and information for tourism businesses. [See their dedicated page.](#)

### **Visit Britain**

We wanted to make you aware that their [website](#) is being continually updated on the current situation in relation to COVID-19. The information includes the latest advice from government, travel information and advice for businesses.

The Tourism Industry Emergency Response (TIER) group is meeting on a regular basis to enable the Tourism Minister to receive updates.

Please continue to check the council's website as this will be updated regularly with information that you might find useful.

### **Visitor Survey Research Workshops**

Thank you to those who attended our recent Visitor Survey Workshops in Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate and to those who took the time to give us some feedback.

A total of 30 businesses were represented at the workshops and comments received include.

*"They delivered an informative workshop and created a relaxed environment whereby people felt they could contribute throughout the presentation rather than wait until each section was completed. I think this helped allow people to share trials and triumphs more readily."*

*"It gave a good outline of the recently undertaken survey which was used as a basis for discussion. Thinking about our target audience was interesting and doing the group work with the different characters was interesting."*

We know some of you are already putting your newly-gained knowledge into practice and tweaking your marketing and promotional activities, we hope this results in more business for you.

For those of you unable to attend, the presentations from the workshops can be [found here](#)

The full Visitors Survey and 'How to connect with visitors to Margate/Broadstairs/Ramsgate' information sheets can be found [here](#)

### **New Destination Management Framework**

We are delighted to share the new Destination Management Framework (DMF) with you. Thank you to all those who fed into the process of developing the framework with Blue Sail through the creative Think Tank session held last year, meetings and one to one discussions.

The Destination Framework is for all partners in the destination and sets out shared priorities for the next 5 years to grow and strengthen the visitor economy. The headline priorities for the next 5 years are

- *Vibrant Towns* - making Thanet's town centres more attractive for visitors and providing more of the right kind of accommodation.
- *Coastline Focus* - focusing on providing year round experiences, activities and facilities at key sites along the coast.
- *The Isle of Thanet Promise* - using the strong themes from Thanet's shared story to develop brilliant experiences and a brilliant welcome.

Thanet District Council's senior team have fed into the process and the next stage is for the Framework to go to the Council's Cabinet on the 23rd April for adoption. We will be

arranging a meeting for those that want to get more involved in making the framework happen, and will update you soon.

### **Dickens House Museum - call out for Assistance**

Following the news that Lee Ault, Honorary Curator of Dickens House Museum is retiring and will not be continuing in her role, we would like to recruit a new position of Visitor Manager for the Museum.

With 2020 being a key year for Dickens commemorations (150 years since his death) Thanet District Council and Broadstairs and St Peters Town Council want to ensure that the house is open for local people, community/school groups and visitors to enjoy.

Please see the attached advert detailing the role and responsibilities of the position

For more information on the museum including opening times please visit [www.dickensmuseumbroadstairs.co.uk](http://www.dickensmuseumbroadstairs.co.uk)

To help us make the most of these opportunities, we are looking for volunteers to help support the Manager opening and welcoming visitors to the museum throughout the season.

If this is something you are interested in, please ring Paula Harbidge, Tourism Manager for an informal chat on 01843 577644 (Monday - Wednesday). Alternatively, if you know somebody who would be interested, please forward this information on to them. Thank you.

### **Visitor Information Service Update** **Ambassador Training**

Want to help your visitors even more? Why not register to join one of our Visitor Ambassadors sessions. They're FREE and provide you with the tools to help answer visitor queries more confidently, know more about the area and what's on offer and encourage visitors to explore more and stay longer! The sessions are 2 hours long and informal, fun and informative. You will also get monthly updates on the latest news and developments. For more information or to book onto a course please contact Jan Wheatley [jan.wheatley@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:jan.wheatley@thanet.gov.uk)

### **Seasonal Opening**

**Broadstairs Information Kiosk** is looking forward to opening for the 2020 season on Thursday 2nd April at 10am. The kiosk will be open 7 days a week 10am-4pm through to mid September, when it will be Friday - Monday (18-21 and 25-28) and then weekends in October plus Friday 2nd (Food Festival) and half-term week. Due to its location it may close at short notice in poor weather. For information on the kiosk and opening times visit [www.broadstairsinfokiosk.co.uk](http://www.broadstairsinfokiosk.co.uk)

**Ramsgate Visitor Information** at The Custom House will be open daily 10am – 4pm from the 1st April to the 30th September for the Spring and Summer season

### **Visitors' Map 2020**

We will be taking delivery of our Visitors' Map 2020 at the end of March, with the aim of having copies in as many local outlets as possible before the Easter holidays.

The map is aimed at visitors already in the area to show them, as much as possible, what there is to see and do here in the hope that they will stay longer, explore more of the area and return for a repeat visit - generating income into the local economy and your business.

With this in mind we would really appreciate you working with us to ensure you have supplies of the map, that they are visible and that you keep them topped up. We can provide holders for them if you wish.

If you would like to pick-up a supply of the new maps, please ring the Visitor Information Centre team on 01843 577577 or email [visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk) to make arrangements so that we can ensure we have a supply ready for you.

### **Enter the Visit Kent Tourism Awards**

Entries are open until **Sunday 17th May** for the 2020 Visit Kent Tourism Awards

There are 14 categories representing the wide range of tourism businesses found in Kent covering accommodation, attractions, pubs and food businesses. You can enter more than one if eligible.

Entering not only rewards employees for creating compelling visitor experiences and adopting best practice, but shortlisted businesses will also benefit from a mystery shopping visit. Eligible winners will automatically feed up to the VisitEngland national Awards for Excellence scheme.

It's completely FREE to enter, so to read more about the awards, the criteria and [enter click here](#)

### **Opportunity with Southeastern Railway**

Southeastern Railways are putting the Isle of Thanet in the spotlight and would like you to be involved!

They are looking for local top attractions, restaurants, bars, hidden gems, upcoming events and hotels to offer exclusive discounts as part of their weekender ticket promotion.

If you would like to be included in their next Spotlight email (sent to more than 25,000 customers week commencing 30th March), please email [George Finch](#) by Friday 20th March.

### **Your News**

Congratulations to **NorthDown Brewery**, who were announced winners of the Kent Beer of the Year in the Taste of Kent Awards 2020. Congratulations to Ramsgate Brewery and Buoy and Oyster who were shortlisted in the top 3 of their category

### **Events (12th March - 9th April)**

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

- Until 15th March: [POW! Thanet](#)
- Until 23rd March: [Thanet Photographers Exhibition](#)
- Sunday 29th March: [Cliftonville Farmers Market](#)
- 3rd - 5th April: [Wind in the Willows](#), Sarah Thorne Theatre

- 9th April: [Great Eggcase and Scavenger Hunt](#), Ramsgate Main Sands
- 11th - 13th April: [Broadstairs Spring Food Festival](#)

For more events happening in the area go to [www.visitthanet.co.uk/whats-on/find-events](http://www.visitthanet.co.uk/whats-on/find-events)