**Coronavirus and Tourism update 22nd May**

We hope this week’s e-newsletter finds you feeling as uplifted by the lovely sunshine as we are as we write it.

This week we have news on the new Ministerial Task Forces, English Tourism Week and Visit Kent’s new consumer-facing messaging - Respect, Protect, Enjoy, which we will be using in our visitor messaging.

If you know somebody who would like to read our e-news, please forward it on, or let them know they can register to receive it themselves on [www.visitthanet.co.uk/tourismmatters](https://www.visitthanet.co.uk/tourismmatters/)

**Thanet District Council**

**Discretionary Fund**

The process and criteria for this is in the process of being worked through, with the aim of being able to support as many relevant businesses as possible. We are hopeful that this information will be available from 1 June.

**Toilet provision at beaches and bays**

Toilets will be open at four sites from Saturday, 23 May.

* Joss Bay, Broadstairs
* Margate Main Sands (Buenos Ayres/TS Eliot)
* Viking Bay, Broadstairs (Harbour Street)
* Ramsgate Main Sands (near Wetherspoons)

The toilets will be open to the public from 10am to 5pm daily, including disabled facilities which will be accessible with a RADAR key.

A statement from Councillor Steve Albon, Cabinet Member for Operational Services can be found [here](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/4-beach-toilets-to-open-from-saturday-23-may/)

**Lifeguard provision**

The RNLI are hoping they can provide lifeguard cover for 30% of the country’s beaches this summer. Their emergency lifeboat service will run as normal. There will be RNLI lifeguard cover for Viking Bay from 30 May and for Margate Main Sands from 20 June. This will be 7 days a week from 10am to 6pm at both beaches. We will be using our social media accounts, including @visitthanet to put out safety messages linking to the [RNLI website](https://rnli.org/pages/beach2020?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=beachsafety_2020&utm_content=organic_council_launch) ‘Protect your family at the beach’ pages.

Other facilities unavailable on the beaches at the moment are general first aid and lost children’s services.

**Government Information**

**Ministerial Task Forces**

Five new ministerial-led task forces have been set up to develop plans for how and when closed sectors can reopen safely. Each task force will lead on developing new Covid-19 secure guidelines for the reopening of public places and businesses, where and when it is safe to do so.

The task forces will look at the following sectors:

* Pubs and restaurants (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy)
* Non-essential retail, including salons (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy)
* Recreation and Leisure, including tourism, culture and heritage, libraries, entertainment and sport (Department for Culture, Media and Sport)
* Places of worship, including faith, community and public buildings (Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government)
* International aviation, reflecting the unique challenges that sector is facing (Department of Transport)

Further information can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-roadmap-taskforces?utm_source=sendinblue&utm_campaign=covid19guidance&utm_medium=email)

**Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS)**

The maximum loan size for this has been increased from £50 million to £200 million and expanded loans will be available from 26 May. Further information can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/larger-businesses-to-benefit-from-loans-of-up-to-200-million).

**Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme opens**

Small and medium-sized employers will be able to [recover Statutory Sick Pay](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-statutory-sick-pay-rebate-scheme-set-to-launch?utm_source=0128333f-ceb9-45ee-a773-0051e0111053&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate) (SSP) payments they have made to their employees through an online portal from 26 May. Employers with fewer than 250 employees will be able to apply to HMRC to recover the costs of paying Covid-19 related SSP.

Repayments will be at the relevant rate of SSP paid to current or former employees for eligible periods of sickness starting on or after 13 March, 2020. Tax agents will also be able to make claims on behalf of employers. Guidance on making a claim is available [here](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-back-statutory-sick-pay-paid-to-employees-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19).

**Business Events Growth Programme 2020/21 is open for applications**

Applications are welcome from various types of organisations, including but not limited to, event organisers, convention bureaus/destination management organisations, universities or associations.

Further information, including types of event support, current criteria and how to apply for financial support is available [here](https://www.visitbritain.org/event-support-programme-overview#utm_source=vbve_special_bulletin_19_05_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=covid19-bulletin_19_05_2020).

**Other Government updates**

* A new page has been published pointing businesses to the main links for making a claim to the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](http://maxemail.visitbritain.com/rsps/m/91gnVWBx20Qx0QRPS-CZqbihcqqZuOpJ7-gO-BB0RN0).
* Guidance outlining how [holiday entitlement and pay](http://maxemail.visitbritain.com/rsps/m/91gnVWBx20Qx0QRPS-CZqZpaB5-kIMWCo6rqv3HUerE) operate during the coronavirus pandemic, where it differs from the standard holiday entitlement and pay guidance, is available.
* Guidance for the owners and operators of [urban centres and green spaces](http://maxemail.visitbritain.com/rsps/m/91gnVWBx20Qx0QRPS-CZqd9wgG-H0k31N2DCk_K7Kxg) has been published to help social distancing.

**VisitBritain/VisitEngland**

**English Tourism Week - 25 to 31 May**

VisitEngland’s annual campaign to raise awareness of the value and contribution of the English tourism sector will take place ‘virtually’ this year.

MPs and industry are being asked to tweet their support on social media with the hashtag #EnglishTourismWeek20. You can join in the campaign and download their specially designed ‘I Support English Tourism’ [here](https://www.visitbritain.org/english-tourism-week#utm_source=vbve_special_bulletin_19_05_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=covid19-bulletin_19_05_2020). VisitEngland will be sharing posts across their social media channels.

**Visit Kent**

**Respect, Protect, Enjoy - new consumer-facing messaging**

Following the new and updated guidance from the Government allowing the public wider access to outdoor spaces, and supporting Natural England’s guidance, Visit Kent has launched their new consumer facing messaging.

They are encouraging all Kent tourism businesses to adopt similar communications and to assist with this have produced a resource pack.

Further information on Respect, Protect, Enjoy and the resource pack can be found [here](https://www.visitkentbusiness.co.uk/insights-and-resources/information-for-tourism-businesses-on-covid-19/visit-kents-consumer-messaging-toolkit/?utm_source=sendinblue&utm_campaign=covid19guidance&utm_medium=email).

We will be using this in our visitor messaging and have already included it on our [website](https://www.visitthanet.co.uk/)

**Business Resilience Webinars**

Please see below the remaining free Business Resilience webinars. Just click on the links to register.

* Thursday, 28 May - 1pm to 3pm

[Creating Virtual Content](https://event.webinarjam.com/register/25/ml2x1u77) - delivered by Sleeping Giant Media

* Tuesday, 26 May - 2pm to 4pm (<https://event.webinarjam.com/register/25/ml2x1u77>)

[Communicating in a Crisis](https://event.webinarjam.com/register/25/ml2x1u77) - delivered by Pillory Barn

* Monday, 1 June - 2pm to 4pm (<https://event.webinarjam.com/register/29/7vwk7s7y>)
* [Maximising Opportunities Across Google Solutions](https://event.webinarjam.com/register/27/xyq2ocmw) - delivered by Sleeping Giant Media <https://event.webinarjam.com/register/27/xyq2ocmw>)

**Your News**

**The Ambrette**

The Ambrette in Margate is now offering Indian inspired afternoon teas for home delivery across the Isle. You can find out more [here.](https://www.ambretterestaurant.co.uk/home-delivery-menu-2-copy)

**The Little Ships**

If you fancy a ‘Little Ships Alfresco Feast’ delivered to your door, with chef’s special grown-up doughnuts, check-out their [website](https://littleshipsramsgate.co.uk/)

**Buoy and Oyster - County Chef recipe boxes**

The Buoy and Oyster in Margate have just launched their new venture, County Chef, a home recipe box scheme. Find out more [here](https://www.county-chef.co.uk/)