**July’s Tourism Matters: Latest Roadmap Updates and New Beach Check App**

Dear Tourism Industry Colleague,

In this issue we bring you the latest news from the Government in the relaxation of restrictions, grant opportunity through Revi-VE and details of the new Beach Check UK App which features Thanet beaches.

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://2uz0w.r.a.d.sendibm1.com/mk/cl/f/DekBBfZP3LAIZ-s6vUtRdj2N3K0y9mOgkDSXrPdjnBptAw5_g3qnkpbc3nY0Ti7O4OJDZheJXea8dAs-1I8cMWmZwuNL1uBECjUAjae1COLO5BSBu9Amwl-_FnLMN4y4Ur9vuZWt93hNbyCaQXcpvu1RN_aPF4EFqDhJHOu37zzAckDlc36sUzskHOsqmg)

**Government Updates**

**Step 4 of the England Roadmap Announcement**

[**The Prime Minister held a press conference on Monday**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-sets-out-plan-to-ease-restrictions-at-step-4)**(5th July)** outlining more details about step 4, the final stage of the England roadmap, which is expected to start on Monday 19th July. At step 4, the Government will remove outstanding legal restrictions on social contact, life events, and open the remaining closed settings. Guidance will be provided to the public and to businesses on how they can help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

There are 5 principles for managing COVID-19 as England learns to live with the virus:

* Reinforce the country’s vaccine wall of defence through booster jabs and driving take up.
* Enable the public to make informed decisions through guidance, rather than laws.
* Retain proportionate test, trace and isolate plans in line with international comparators.
* Manage risks at the border and support a global response to reduce the risk of variants emerging globally and entering the UK.
* Retain contingency measures to respond to unexpected events, while accepting that further cases, hospitalisations and deaths will occur as the country learns to live with COVID-19.

More details can be found in the[**COVID-19 Response: Summer 2021**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-summer-2021-roadmap)

The Prime Minister announced that the Government will work with the travel industry on removing the need for full-vaccinated people to isolate when entering the country from amber countries. The Transport Secretary is due to set out more details this week.

A decision will be made on Monday 12th July if this move can be made on Monday 19th July.

**View** [**the speech**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-sets-out-plan-to-ease-restrictions-at-step-4) **and the** [**slides**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slides-to-accompany-coronavirus-press-conference-5-july-2021)

The Government intends to exempt people who have been fully vaccinated from the requirement to self-isolate if they are a contact of a positive case, with a similar exemption for under 18s. Anyone who tests positive will still need to self-isolate regardless of their vaccination status.

Travel restrictions will continue as part of the UK Government’s plan to prevent the continued emergence of Variants of Concern.

**Other Government Updates**

The [**social distancing review and COVID-Status Certification review reports**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021-reviews-terms-of-reference)have been published. These reviews, alongside other Roadmap reviews into events, have informed the approach to step 4.

**New guidance to check if you need to change your Self Assessment return for SEISS**

New guidance has been published to help individuals find out if and when they may need to make a change to their Self Assessment tax return for SEISS payments, and how to do it.

[**See the full guidance here**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-need-to-change-your-self-assessment-return-for-seiss)

**Thanet District Council**

**New National Beach Check UK App for Thanet**

Thanet is the only district in Kent to be part of a new national Beach Check UK App to help manage overcrowding on beaches. Six destinations are part of this first phase, which hopefully will see other destinations participate later. Users of the app will be able to check real time updates at five of Thanet’s busiest beaches

In 2020, Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council launched a Beach Check app to help manage overcrowding on its beaches. The app was funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government department (MHCLG).

The app works on a traffic light system using sophisticated technology and on-the-ground authorised users who assign a colour to beaches according to the number of visitors. Visitors can check the status of a beach before leaving home and avoid the hotspots, thereby encouraging safe, social-distancing. In its first phase, the app had 37,000 downloads.

Following its success, MHCLG has awarded further funding to roll the app out nationally to any UK coastal location, to allow visitors and residents to avoid congested beaches. Thanet District Council has signed-up to have Thanet beaches on the app, the only authority in Kent to do so. Five of Thanet’s busiest beaches will be updated in real time (Margate Main Sands, Botany Bay, Joss Bay, Viking Bay and Ramsgate Main Sands), but all beaches will be included. Other information shown will be whether beaches have lifeguard provision and toilets.

The app is simple to use and free to download from Google Play and the Apple App Store ([iOS](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/beach-check-uk/id1517773231) or [Android](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.xpertie.beachcheck)) and it allows users to check individual beaches or see a map showing red (crowded), amber (less congested) and green (uncongested) beaches.

[How to use video link](https://vimeo.com/569379195)

The app is embedded on visitthanet.co.uk (www.visitthanet.co.uk/beaches-bays) and information also on TDC websites. We are linking-in to a national PR and digital campaign, plus working on our own local communications plan, to promote it. We would appreciate your help too - by working together, we can ensure the app is seen by as many people as possible. Here’s how you can help:

* Add a banner to your Twitter Bio
* Post on Instagram
* Use the hashtag #BeachCheckUK

There are examples of how these look and guidelines for use to support you in the [Beach Check UK brand resources](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xpMUj5QmYuP_4gFZoDbNXdLmnQHz0ouj)

A4 and A3 posters are available for businesses to display to encourage visitors, prior to their beach visits, to download. Please email [visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk) if you are interested in displaying a poster.

**Seaweed - new process round-up**

We will be taking a different approach to seaweed clearance this year, using a contractor to clear from our beaches and transport seaweed to a nearby farm.

There are a number of different things that need to align in order to clear seaweed from our beaches, with strict laws in place to protect our unique chalk reef. There will be regular updates on Thanet District Council’s social media channels detailing which bays will be cleared, so do keep an eye out for real-time information throughout the season.

[Please see our FAQs on seaweed in Thanet on our website](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/info-pages/seaweed/)

**ARG Grant Update**

The council has distributed £4.4million in Additional Restrictions Grants (ARGs) so far as part of a package of support to local businesses from Central Government.

The last round of payments were made by the council in May, with most businesses receiving £700 (larger businesses received up to £1,575).

Thanet District Council will now be making further payments of £1,000 to approximately 400 local businesses. Larger businesses will receive £1,500 or £2,250. These payments are not related to a specific time period, but are instead classed as a ‘top-up’ to the first payments.

Payments will be made automatically to the businesses that received a grant in May 2021 and can confirm our insolvency/Subsidy (State Aid) checks. Thanet District Council has already contacted the relevant businesses directly by email, and payments have begun.

Only those businesses who are contacted by the council are eligible for this latest top-up grant, and there is no new application scheme for businesses to complete.

The council received dedicated Government funding for the ARG scheme as part of the pandemic. When these final payments are made, this funding pot will have been almost used in its entirety.

**Revi-VE: Small Grants for the Visitor Economy**

[**The Revi-VE grant fund**](https://southeastbusiness.org.uk/revive/) is offering small 100% grants of between £1,000 - £3,000 to visitor economy businesses **that need to adapt** their offering as a result of COVID-19 and changed market conditions.

The fund will **open for applications at 9am Thursday 15th July 2021 until 11:59 Sunday 18th July 2021** and is part of a wider package of South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) [**COVID-19 Recovery programmes**](https://www.southeastlep.com/covid-19-recovery-funds-programme/). The Revi-VE programme is designed to support innovation and deliver long-term resilience in the hard-hit visitor economy and will be delivered by a consortium of partners across the South East (Visit Kent, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, Visit Essex, Sussex Modern, East Sussex County Council).

What can the funding be spent on?

The grants should be for purchasing tools, equipment, software, and trading approaches that are essential for the business to adapt or diversify its visitor economy offering or help it reach new visitor markets. This could include adaptations to increase capacity or changes to operations to improve consumer confidence. It could also help develop a new product or service that capitalises on changing consumer trends to generate a new revenue stream.

Examples of the types of projects that would be considered for this funding include:

* Online booking software
* Equipment or investment needed to deliver a new visitor experience that responds to a new trend
* Investment in outdoor spaces to increase capacity or offer all-weather areas
* Technology for contactless check-in
* Equipment to deliver hybrid events
* Creation of virtual tours or venue show-rounds

Who can apply?

This fund is targeted at hard-hit businesses within the visitor economy that need support to make adaptations to their business model or operations in response to COVID-19, and that meet certain criteria.

* Micro, small or medium enterprises in the SELEP region (East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock).
* Businesses operating primarily within the visitor economy including tourism, culture, leisure, events or hospitality. This includes groups of businesses who missed out on previous government grants such as event organisers, tour operators, key supply chains and businesses without premises.
* Viable businesses that have been heavily impacted by COVID-19 with innovative ideas that will help to protect jobs in the visitor economy.
* Businesses with project ideas that will help transition into the recovery phase and build resilience through innovative solutions and business adaptations**.**

**Applications open from Thursday 15th July**

It is anticipated that demand for these grants will be much higher than the total number available. Before starting your application, please check the eligibility criteria to ensure that this fund is the right fit for your business.

[For full eligibility criteria and details on how to apply, click here](https://southeastbusiness.org.uk/revive/)

**Rebuilding Confidence and Demand in the Visitor Economy Workshops**

As tourism and hospitality businesses begin to open again, Visit Kent is pleased to be hosting a series of virtual, interactive workshops to help you rebuild consumer confidence, increase demand in your business and drive the recovery of the sector.

**Wednesday 14th July - Design new packages in collaboration with other businesses 10am-11.30am**

This session will include practical tips such as how to manage the partnership or price a product, with success stories from across the region.

[Click here to register](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/design-new-packages-in-collaboration-with-other-businesses-workshop-tickets-156057493163?keep_tld=1)

**Association of Leading Visitor Attractions Messaging and Guidance**

Visitor sentiment research, commissioned by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA) and undertaken by Decision House between 17th to 22nd June 2021 and published on Wednesday 30th June, shows that a significant majority (75%) of the visitor-attraction-going UK public are not yet ready for social distancing and other measures to be removed or eased even if the Government allowed easing to occur.

ALVA have shared useful, sector-wide guidance for any businesses that may wish to continue to operate social distancing and safety measures in order to fulfil their social and legal obligations and their duty of care. Attractions, like all businesses, have the right to refuse entry or service, as long as that right is not based on any discriminatory basis.

[Read the AVLA guidance here](https://www.visitkent.co.uk/media/66126/alva-guidance-for-step-4.doc)

**Rebel Business School - New online courses for pre-start-up and start-up businesses**

Kent County Council is funding a pilot pre-start and start-up course, which will be delivered by Rebel Business School, which if successful will be rolled out across Kent & Medway, delivering a further 4 courses, concentrating on a specific area of Kent for each subsequent course.

Course details are as follows:

* Dates/Time: **Monday 19th July - Friday 30th July daily between 10am - 3pm**   
  Venue: Virtual via Zoom
* Content – Week One
  + Monday – How to Start a Business for free
  + Tuesday – Sales & Marketing
  + Wednesday – How to Build a Website with No Money
  + Thursday – Finding Customers on Social Media
  + Friday – The Rebel Guide to The Legal Stuff
* Content – Week Two
  + Monday - Mastering Pitching and Keeping Customers
  + Tuesday - Productivity and Networking Effectively
  + Wednesday – Getting Your Website on Google
  + Thursday – Staying Motivated & Live Business Coaching
  + Friday – Negotiation and Graduation

The following case studies help to illustrate the course benefits:

* [Tommy, entertainer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GcA2fqAfHg)
* [Thanos, Greek food](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=584524059134387)
* [Lisa, artist](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkFplHCjaHE)

[The event/registration link can be found here](https://events.popupbusinessschool.co.uk/KentJuly2021)

**Visitor Information Centre Opening Hours**

The Thanet Visitor Information Centre at Droit House in Margate will change their current opening hours to 7 days a week, starting Monday 19th July, until Sunday 5th September. Opening hours will be 10am-5pm, with the exception of Bank Holidays, which will be 11am-4pm.

**Visitors’ Maps Collection**

Businesses in Broadstairs and Ramsgate are able to collect a small supply of Visitors’ Maps locally from Lillyput Mini Golf and The Custom House. We would appreciate as many businesses as possible doing this and having them available for their customers.