**April’s Tourism Matters: Heritage Open Days Registration, Accessible Kent Training and Project Updates**

Dear Tourism Colleague

We hope that you all had a good Easter. There is definitely a sense of spring in the air with the temperature rising, days lighter for longer and flowers blooming.

In this issue we bring you details of registering for Heritage Open Days, the last chance to respond to VisitEngland’s attraction survey, details of Accessible Kent online training and updates on Thanet District Council’s projects

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](http://www.visitthanet.co.uk/tourismmatters)

**Tourism and Visitor Services News**

**Visitors’ Map 2022/23**

We have taken delivery of our Visitors’ Map 2022/23. 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 to make arrangements so that we can ensure we have a supply ready for you.

Copies can also be collected from Lilllyputt Mini Golf in Broadstairs and The Custom House in Ramsgate

**Bank Holiday Opening**

Thanet Visitor Information Centre will be open on Bank Holiday Monday 2 May, 10am-5pm.

**Thanet District Council**

**Dickens House Reopening**

Dickens House Museum in Broadstairs reopened on Good Friday 15 April after a two-year closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The museum celebrates Charles Dickens’ connection with Broadstairs (1837-1851) and displays items that once belonged to Dickens, alongside displays of Dickensian memorabilia, Victorian costumes and Victoriana.

More volunteers are needed. If you know someone who would be interested in volunteering and helping visitors to enjoy their experience, they can find out more by contacting dickenshouse@thanet.gov.uk or calling 01843 861 232. Full support and training is provided.

[Find out more about Dickens House here](https://www.visitthanet.co.uk/attractions/dickens-house-museum-1999/)

**Margate Theatres Update**

Bookings are set to pause at both the Theatre Royal in Margate from Thursday 28 April and at the Winter Gardens in Margate from Sunday 14 August.

[The decision was announced by Thanet District Council and Your Leisure in August 2021](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/securing-a-long-term-future-for-the-theatre-royal-and-winter-gardens/) and was made in order to identify a more viable long term direction for both Margate entertainment venues.

The impact of COVID-19 has been profound, not just on the Margate venues but on the leisure industry as a whole. Although entertainment venues were able to reopen to the public from 21 June 2021, income has been substantially impacted and both the Theatre Royal and Winter Gardens buildings are in need of significant refurbishment works. Like many attractions across the country, they now need to secure a more sustainable future.

Your Leisure will honour all tickets and events up to these dates at both venues.

**Winter Gardens**

An in-depth appraisal is to take place looking at the best options to ensure a sustainable future for the heritage asset. The objective is to review how best to reinvigorate this underused asset to support footfall and income into the town.

The building will need significant renovations to ensure its sustainable future for the next 100 years. It is likely that in order to facilitate this work and to secure a longer, more viable future, that the building would need to close for a period of time to allow this to be safely completed. Until the options appraisal has been completed however the details around this are not yet known. Key stakeholders and the wider community will be kept informed as this work progresses.

**Theatre Royal**

The Margate Town Deal has allocated £2 million for a renovation project for the Theatre Royal. As part of this the council will be looking for an operator, project partner and making a funding submission to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

**Update on Ramsgate Heritage Action Zone**

**Publication of the Ramsgate Conservation Area Appraisal**

Thanet District Council has recently published the ‘Ramsgate Conservation Area Appraisal’. The project included survey work carried out by community volunteers, as well as a six-week public consultation. The appraisal document includes a chapter focusing on climate change, and is one of the first of its kind to include climate considerations. [Find out more here](http://www.thanet.gov.uk/publication-of-the-ramsgate-conservation-area-appraisal/)

**Launch of Ramsgate’s Seafront Placemaking project**

Seafront Placemaking is the final project as part of the Ramsgate Heritage Action Zone.

This project focuses on Ramsgate’s seafront from West to East Cliffs and along the seafront promenades.It explores the past, present and future of the seafront, recording what it means to the local community. [Find out more here](http://www.thanet.gov.uk/launch-of-ramsgates-seafront-placemaking-project/)

**Beach management preparations**

The summer season is fast approaching and Thanet District Council is busy working with partner agencies to review and update the Beach Management Plan.

The following initiatives are in place to encourage people to respect, protect and enjoy our beautiful coastline:

* Sand levelling and litter-raking on main bathing water beaches
* 50 extra bins (the colourful recycling beach bins put out at the start of the summer season)
* All toilets around the district have been open from Saturday 2 April and cleaned three times a day
* Viking Bay lift reopened Friday 1 April and is cleaned daily
* Cleansing teams out 7 days a week
* Enforcement officers patrolling across the district, supported by 24 hour CCTV control room and Kent Police
* Dog warden patrolling from Friday 1 April

[Find out more here](http://www.thanet.gov.uk/pre-easter-beach-management-preparations/)

**Business opportunities for beach concessions**

Thanet District Council is launching an opportunity for business owners to register their interest in taking up a beach concession for the 2022 summer season and beyond. Business plans will be considered for all ideas ranging from beachfront venues or watersports hire to retail outlets.

Interested parties should email their expressions of interest to [propertyandassetmanagement@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:propertyandassetmanagement@thanet.gov.uk) by **Friday 6 May 2022.**

A full list of requirements can be found [here](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/business-opportunities-for-beach-concessions/).

**VisitBritain/VisitEngland**

**Annual Survey of Visits to Visitor Attractions**

VisitEngland is inviting responses to their Visitor Attractions Survey for 2021, to gauge the performance of visitor attractions, key trends and the impact of the pandemic.

Attractions may have been contacted directly to take part in the survey by **Sunday 8 May**. Participating attractions will receive their own benchmarking report. If you would like to take part please contact VisitEngland on [Annualattractionssurvey@visitengland.org](mailto:Annualattractionssurvey@visitengland.org)

[To find out more about the survey and to take part head to the VisitEngland website](https://www.visitbritain.org/take-part-visitenglands-annual-attractions-survey-2021)

**Visit Kent**

**Making Kent More Accessible**

Visit Kent is now on the second wave of onboarding for the Access Guides we have featured previously. If you're interested or want to find out more, visit their [website](https://visitkentbusiness.co.uk/get-involved/accessible-kent/accessable-guides/) The deadline for the second wave of onboarding is **Saturday 30 April.**

**Accessible Kent E-Learning**

In partnership with AccessAble, Visit Kent is launching FREE disability equality training, to help businesses provide a great service to disabled people and carers.

The module is for everyone, takes just 45 minutes to complete, and covers the following topics;

* What do we mean by ‘disability’?
* Disability equality and the law
* Types of impairments
* Providing a greater service to everyone
* Language

For further information and sign-up, [click here](https://visitkentbusiness.co.uk/get-involved/accessible-kent/accessible-kent-e-learning-page/)

**Other News**

**Heritage Open Days**

Heritage Open Days is back between Friday 9th - Sunday 18th September with this year's theme ‘Astounding Inventions’. This is a great opportunity to promote your attraction to local residents, new and returning visitors

There are a number of key deadlines to beware of if you wish to participate

* 1st May - deadline to register for national press releases
* 1st June - directory goes live
* Wednesday 6th July - media team’s webinar on how to get good press and publicity
* 1st August- final registration deadline

To find out more about the scheme and to register your interest please visit the [Heritage Open Days website](https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/organising/how-to-get-involved)

The Ramsgate Society will once again be coordinating details of Thanet businesses taking part, so please let Sue Gyde know on 07769 605134 if you will be taking part

**Federation of Small Businesses - Free Webinars**

**Tuesday 26th April - Financial Planning for your Business 12pm-1pm**

It’s the start of a new tax year, this webinar seeks to provide you with advice to help you put a sound plan in place for your finances no matter how small your business.

For further information and to register [click here](https://www.fsb.org.uk/event-calendar/financial-planning-for-your-business-26042022.html?utm_source=APR16&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=WebAccs)

**Friday 29th April - Selling Online : From start-up to success 12pm to 1pm**

Hear from real businesses that have grown online and come out with plenty of ideas to help you drive your own e-commerce business forward.

For further information and to register [click here](https://www.fsb.org.uk/event-calendar/selling-online-from-start-up-to-success.html?utm_source=APR16&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=WebAccs)

**Wednesday 4th May - Make your business ‘appy 11:30am-12:30pm**

Get ahead of your competition by streamlining your business and take advantage of everything modern technology can offer.

For further information and to register [click here](https://www.fsb.org.uk/event-calendar/make-your-business-appy.html?utm_source=APR16&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=WebAccs)

**Friday 6th May - Let’s Grow Business Together 3pm-4pm**

A monthly LGBT+ led business networking event - a virtual ‘network and learn’ event that is open to all businesses.

For further information and to register [click here](https://www.fsb.org.uk/event-calendar/lgbt6may2022.html?utm_source=APR16&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=WebAccs)

**Taste of Kent Awards Finalists Announced**

Congratulations to the Thanet businesses who have been announced as finalist in the Taste of Kent Awards, that celebrate the food and drink of Kent

* Kent Beer of the Year - Gadds' No 3 Ramsgate Brewery
* Kent Food and Drink Business of the Year - Provenance Potatoes, Thanet
* Kent Diversification Award - Buoy and Oyster, Margate
* Kent Sustainable Food and Drink - Ramsgate Brewery

Good luck to you all, with the winners announced at a ceremony on Thursday 12th May

**Great British Rail Sale**

**Trainline** have announced the Great British Rail Sale, with up to 50% off tickets across the UK. The offer is open until Monday 2 May with travel between Monday 25 April – Friday 27 May. To find out more and get tickets, [click here](http://www.thetrainline.com/trains/deals-discounts/great-british-rail-sale)

**Your News**

**Dreamland** has announced the park will reopen for the season on Sunday 29 May

Welcome to Thanet’s newest attraction **Clip ‘n Climb Thanet** which opened on Friday 19 March. This is a great offering for residents and guests to try out. Find out more at [www.clipnclimbthanet.co.uk](http://www.clipnclimbthanet.co.uk)