**July’s Tourism Matters: Accommodation Consultation, Media Coverage and Award Success**

Dear Tourism Colleague

We hope you are all managing to stay relatively cool and hydrated during this hot weather. It makes us really grateful to be living by the coast with the sea breezes and so many wonderful beaches to visit for a swim.

In this issue we bring you news on the VIC summer hours, our recent media activity and green endeavours, plus how you can respond to the government's consultation on the holiday letting market. There's also a final call for those who wish to participate in Heritage Open Days this year - the deadline is Monday 1 August.

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**

**Have you got copies of our Visitors’ Maps?**

With the school summer holidays just a few weeks away, we want to ensure that businesses in the area have stocks of our Visitors’ Map.

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

**Visitor Information Services Summer Opening Hours**

The **Thanet Visitor Information Centre** at Droit House in Margate will open 7 days a week for the summer holidays starting Monday 25th July, until Monday 29th August. Opening hours will be 10am-5pm.

**Broadstairs Information Kiosk** is open daily 10am-4pm until Monday 12th September when it will change to Friday - Monday. For full details visit the kiosk website [www.broadstairsinfokiosk.co.uk](http://www.broadstairsinfokiosk.co.uk)

**Ramsgate Information Centre** at The Custom House is open April to September Monday - Saturday 10am - 4pm

**Thanet Visitor Ambassadors: FREE Online Training**

Have you completed our new FREE online Visitor Ambassador Training?

This interactive online training tool is designed for anyone who comes into contact with visitors in their day-to-day role. It covers tourism information about the Isle of Thanet and what’s on offer for visitors. It also covers customer service skills and the importance of a welcome, to ensure that every visitor has an excellent experience when they visit. The training takes around an hour and can be completed in bite-sized chunks around your busy schedule.

We have already seen so many people in our industry sign up and take the course since the launch. We can’t wait to welcome more of you to the team of Visitor Ambassadors.

To test your knowledge visit <https://thanetvisitorambassador.co.uk/>

**Press and PR**

**Coast Magazine**

We have achieved some wonderful coverage in the August edition of Coast magazine, the result of a press trip hosted in February, responses to media enquiries and image requests:

* Front cover, side heading: Discover Kent - Your guide to Margate and Ramsgate
* 5 Wonderful Wild Swimming Beaches - Walpole Bay Tidal Pool (media response)
* 10 Best Affordable Family Outings By The Sea - Coastal Explorer Packs (media response)
* The Kent Coast - A Weekend In Margate - 8 page feature (press visit)
* Marine Life - Ramsgate - 6 page feature (images supplied)

Circulation for Coast magazine is 38,000 copies and readership is 251,000 per issue. The value of a double-page spread is £6,200 and a full page is £3,400, so this is great value coverage.

**Italian Influencer Visit**

This month we worked with VisitBritain Italia to help host influencer Andrea Petroni (113K followers) and two tour operators, Paola and Valentina from Uniqueborn, on a visit to Margate. Andrea’s instagram coverage can be viewed [here](https://www.instagram.com/stories/highlights/17944871888087164/), where you see the group on arrival at Stansted Airport. The Margate section can be viewed after the Whitstable section.

**Irish Film Company**

We supplied destination information to an Irish film company, who visited from 7 to 10 July. They produce a series where three presenters with a large social media following go to a destination unknown to them until the day they depart. They have to navigate getting to the destination, their visit and the tasks they are set using their social media skills. Further information to follow when available.

**National Coastal Tourism Academy (NCTA) Opportunities**

We are working with the National Coastal Tourism Academy (NCTA) to provide information on the Isle of Thanet for their autumn campaign, to promote the wealth of options (accommodation, attractions, activities, hospitality) that the coastline provides both to staycationers and day-trippers.

It is **FREE** for businesses to sign up to appear on the [England’s Coast website](https://www.englandscoast.com/en), just done by [completing a short form](https://www.englandscoast.com/en/business-listing-hub/register)

The only criteria is that for accommodation providers you are within 5 miles of the coast or 15 miles of the coast for any other business. This is an opportunity to promote what we have to offer to new audiences and in doing so, it would be great to have your business onboard to be able to be included

**Call-out for Event Footage**

The NCTA is looking for event or festival footage, with all the correct rights for their usage, that can be used in the new ‘Year of the Coast’ video they are producing and for social media. If you have any you would like to submit for consideration, please liaise with julie.edwards@thanet.gov.uk.

**Are you a Water Refill venue?**

Refill is an award-winning campaign from City to Sea to help people live with less plastic. You can [download the free app](https://www.refill.org.uk/) to access a global network of places where you can reduce, reuse and refill.

We are promoting the Refill campaign, to encourage residents and visitors to find local businesses who will refill water bottles at no charge, and also shops, cafes and restaurants who are committed to reducing plastic consumption.

Thanet Visitor Information Centre at Droit House is now a Water Refill venue. Anyone can come along to the office and get a free refill in their reusable water bottle. Just pop in and see the staff who will be happy to help.

We would love to know if your business is part of the scheme so we can include the details on our website for visitors. If you are, please let us know at tourism@thanet.gov.uk. Broadstairs is part of the scheme with details available here [www.refill.org.uk/refill-broadstairs/](https://www.refill.org.uk/refill-broadstairs/)

Find out more about the Refill campaign at [www.refill.org.uk](https://www.refill.org.uk/) and [download the City To Sea app](https://www.refill.org.uk/), to find cafes, restaurants and other Thanet businesses who are participating.

**Government Update**

**The Government has launched a consultation calling for evidence on the holiday letting market**

Last year’s Tourism Recovery Plan sets out how the UK government will support a swift recovery from the pandemic and help the tourism industry move toward a more accessible, innovative, resilient and sustainable model.

In the Tourism Recovery Plan, it sets out an intention to consider a Tourist Accommodation Registration Scheme in England by the government.

The primary purpose of the consultation is two-fold:

* To enable the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to better understand the benefits and challenges of the increase in short-term and holiday letting in England, focusing on the size and shape of the market; the application, awareness and enforcement of regulations regarding the health and safety of customers; and on the impact on the housing market and local communities.
* To gather initial evidence on the potential impact of a range of possible policy responses in order to consider whether there are options that DCMS should pursue through a further consultation.

The Call for Evidence consists of 12 questions, [please see the following link](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/developing-a-tourist-accommodation-registration-scheme-in-england/developing-a-tourist-accommodation-registration-scheme-in-england-call-for-evidence#annexb)

Thanet District Council will be responding to the consultation and encourages accommodation providers to respond directly with evidence via the link above.

**Thanet District Council**

**Appointment of New Interim Chief Executive**

Colin Carmichael has been appointed as Interim Chief Executive of Thanet District Council, confirmed at a Full Council meeting last night (Thursday 14 July). Colin was Chief Executive of Canterbury City Council for over 25 years and will start in role on Wednesday 20 July on a one year contract.

**Margate Old Town Hall Lease**

We are seeking a tenant for the Grade II listed Old Town Hall in Market Place, Margate.

The entire two-storey building will be let on a long lease, and would suit conversion to a boutique hotel, business centre or retail unit. A significant amount of renovation work is required to bring the building up to standard and this will be reflected in any lease deal. The Margate Museum building does not form part of the offer.

The Old Town Hall is being marketed by Oakwood Commercial and full and final bids must be received in writing or by email by noon on Tuesday 12 August 2022.

To book a viewing, please contact Oakwood on commercial@oakwoodhomes.biz or call 01843 222704.

**Beach Management Plan Update**

Our Beach Management Plan is in place for the 2022 summer season, with a focus on the following, which we know are key priorities for residents and visitors:

Beach Cleansing

* Promenade bins - emptied twice a day
* Promenades and walkways - litter picked daily by a mobile squad
* Recycle bins - emptied daily
* Beach rake - Margate Main Sands and Viking Bay daily - other bays on an adhoc basis
* Dedicated litter pickers on all main beaches
* Working time - 6am till 6pm extended till 8pm (focusing on Promenade bins for Margate Main Sands and Viking Bay between 6pm to 8pm) if deemed necessary

Toilet Cleansing

* All toilets open from 8am with last toilet closed at 8pm dependant on location
* Temporary Portaloos in place at Margate Clock Tower and Botany Bay, each visited by cleansing staff 3 times a day
* Dedicated toilet cleaners on Viking Bay and Margate Main Sands
* Toilet Staff Security in place Friday to Sunday until start of summer holidays then to increased to daily 1pm till 8pm

Beach Safety

* We are conducting a full review of existing coastal signage, with the installation of new coastal safety signage starting soon.
* Council officers attend regular meetings with the Coastguard, RNLI and Kent Police to discuss safety issues and share good practice and intelligence.
* Police will be deployed to beaches and promenades over weekends at peak times throughout the summer and Civil Enforcement teams will focus on hotspot areas

Seaweed Clearance

Seaweed removal will commence on Monday 18 July, and will be removed to nearby farms. We have a new algae cleaning contract in place, which involves hot jet washing 38 coastal assets including tidal pools and the Margate steps every 4-8 weeks.

Communicating to the public

We continue to promote our **Respect, Protect, Enjoy** message, encouraging responsible beach behaviour and promoting the Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO).

The **Beach Check UK app** allows visitors to check how busy a beach is before travelling.

The aim is to help to cut down on congested beaches over the busiest summer period and encourage visitors to discover nearby alternatives that are quieter and less crowded, in line with our **More to Explore** campaign. Thanet District Council has adopted the app, with status updates for Margate Main Sands, Botany Bay, Joss Bay, Viking Bay and Ramsgate Main Sands.

Our Education Officer continues to work on a range of initiatives with partner organisations to promote litter awareness across the district. We are currently working on a project with the RNLI to broadcast anti-littering reminders to beach users via the tannoy on the lifeguard hut on Margate Main Sands.

**Avian Flu Advice**

Avian influenza (bird flu) is circulating in wild and sea birds in Kent. When out walking, please keep to footpaths, keep your dog on a lead and do not hand feed birds. If you see a sick or dead bird, do not touch or move it. Call Thanet District Council on 01843 577000 to report it for safe disposal.

**Installing new recycling stations**

Twelve new recycling stations will be installed across our main bathing beaches, in a project led by the Rotary Clubs of Thanet, with Thanet District council and Southern Water.

Each new unit will contain a 360L wheelie bin, and feature pro-recycling messages and designs from local school children.

**Five years of the Ramsgate Heritage Action Zone**

The Ramsgate Heritage Action Zone has now drawn to a close. Over the five year project, we have worked closely with numerous partners on a range of projects, to gain a better understanding of what makes Ramsgate’s heritage so special.

You can read more about the HAZ in our newsroom and find the full list of HAZ projects on our website: thanet.gov.uk/ramsgate-heritage-action-zone/

**Community Shield Scheme**

The Community Shield Scheme is a network of safe places for anyone who is lost, a victim of crime or in need of medical assistance.

You can download the [Safe Places app](https://www.safeplaces.org.uk/apps/) which identifies any Safe Places that are close to your location.

If you are interested in registering your business as a Safe Place, please complete the online form via this [link](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/info-pages/community-shield-registration-form/).

**World Ocean Day**

To celebrate World Ocean Day on Wednesday 8 June, Thanet Coast Project held an event to create a series of sand art using the World Ocean Day logo. Volunteers met visitors on Viking Bay, Broadstairs, and encouraged them to make a pledge to help to protect the ocean.

For more information and photos please visit the [Thanet Coast Project Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/nekmpa1/posts/5976267245733281). 

**Other News**

**Take part in Heritage Open Days**

Heritage Open Days is back between Friday 9 - Sunday 18 September with this year's theme ‘Astounding Inventions’. This is a great opportunity to promote your attraction to local residents, new and returning visitors with a number of Thanet venues already signed up - Hornby Visitor Centre, Monkton Nature Reserve, Margate Caves, Cliftonville Cultural Space, The Grange and St Edward’s Presbytery

**The deadline for final participating registration via the national website is fast approaching - Monday 1 August**

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

The Ramsgate Society is once again coordinating details of Thanet businesses taking part, so please let Sue Gyde know on 07769 605134 or suegyde@hotmail.co.uk if you will be participating

**Southeastern Advance Ticket Offer**

Southeastern Railway have launched their summer campaign on advance travel tickets, allowing you to book early for cheaper fares.

To find out more about the campaign and to book tickets visit the [Southeastern website](http://www.southeasternrailway.co.uk/destinations-and-offers/summer-leisure)

**Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) - free webinars**

Friday 22 July, 10.30am to 12pm **The value of print, radio and direct mail marketing for small businesses**

For further information and to register [click here](https://www.fsb.org.uk/event-calendar/the-value-of-print-radio-and-direct-mail-marketing-for-small-businesses.html?utm_source=JUL2&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=WebAccs)

Friday 22 July, 3pm to 4pm **Let’s Grow Business Together - LGBT+ led business networking**

For further information and to register [click here](https://www.fsb.org.uk/event-calendar/lgbt22july2022.html?utm_source=JUL2&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=WebAccs)

Thursday 28 July, 11am to 12pm

**Ethnic Minority led business networking**

For further information and to register [click here](https://www.fsb.org.uk/event-calendar/ethnic-minority-led-business-networkingjuly2022.html?utm_source=JUL2&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=WebAccs)

**Your News**

**Job Opportunity - Project Manager (Heritage Volunteer Programme)**

Margate Caves are launching a Heritage Volunteer Programme project and are recruiting for a Project Manager on a 2 Year Fixed Term Contract. The Manager will work with key stakeholders to set up and deliver a volunteer programme for heritage sites across Thanet

To find out more about the project and role description, please visit www.margatecaves.co.uk/post/Excitingtimes

**Award Success**

As mentioned in June’s Tourism Matters, two Thanet venues were shortlisted in the Muddy Stilettos Awards. We are pleased to report [**Buoy and Oyster**](https://www.buoyandoyster.com/)was announced ‘Best Restaurant’. Congratulations to them and to Artisans and Adventurers who were shortlisted in the Best Lifestyle Store category.

Congratulations to [**Broadstairs Town Shed**](https://www.broadstairstownshed.org.uk/)**,** named UK ‘Men’s Shed of The Year’ 2022 in the UK Men's Sheds Association awards.