

November's Tourism Matters: Award Finalists, Accessibility Workshop and Christmas Hours

Dear Tourism Industry Colleague

We are grinning with joy following the news that the Thanet Visitor Information Centre is a finalist in the Beautiful South Awards.

This month we bring you details of a change to the opening hours at the Visitor Information Centre in Margate, workshop details to improve accessibility, updates on Thanet District Council projects and a request for you to send us your christmas opening hours.

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 at www.visitthanet.co.uk/tourismmatters

Tourism and Visitor Services News

Beautiful South Awards Finalists

We are pleased to announce that the **Thanet Visitor Information Centre** in Margate is a finalist in the 'Visitor Information Service of the Year' category in this year's [Beautiful South Awards](#), operated by Tourism South East. The final results of the awards (bronze, silver and gold) will be announced on Tuesday 13 December at a ceremony in Brighton

Visitor Information Centre - Change to Opening Hours

We are trialling new opening hours at the Thanet Visitor Information Centre in Margate, from now until Sunday 5 February. The centre will be open weekly from Wednesday - Saturday, 10am-5pm.

Over the festive period the Visitor Information Centre will be operating as below:

- OPEN: Wednesday 19 - Friday 23 December and Wednesday 28 - Friday 30 December, 10am-5pm
- CLOSED: Saturday 24 (Christmas Eve) - Tuesday 27 December and Sunday 1 - Tuesday 3 January
- OPEN: Saturday 31 December (New Year's Eve), 10am - 4pm
- OPEN: From Wednesday 4 January 2023, we return to winter opening hours, Wednesday to Saturday, 10am-5pm

Ramsgate Visitor Information Centre will be closed from Saturday 24 December, reopening on Tuesday 3 January. The centre will be open weekly from Monday - Saturday, 11am-3pm.

If your attraction will be open over the festive period, please let us know so that we can include details on our website and advise visitors. Please email us on visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk

Green Tourism update

Electric charging points: Government funding available

Registered charities and accommodation businesses with fewer than 250 employees may be eligible to apply for a £350 grant to install an electric charging point on their premises.

The Workplace Charging Scheme is a voucher-based scheme that will contribute up to 75% of the cost of purchasing and installing electric charging points, up to £350 per socket. Find out more and how to apply on the [Gov.uk website](#)

Reduce food waste and save money

Each year, the tourism, leisure and hospitality industry wastes 1.1 million tonnes of food, costing businesses a staggering £3.2 billion.

WRAP's 'Guardians of Grub' campaign encourages the hospitality and food service industry to come together to save perfectly good food from the bin, reduce greenhouse gases and protect profits.

You can find free resources help you reduce food waste on the [dedicated website](#), including a food tracking calculator, a menu planning guide and tips on creating your own food waste reduction action plan.

[Visit Kent Updates](#)

Visit Kent Accessibility Information

With the help of the Interreg EXPERIENCE project, Visit Kent have partnered with AccessAble – the UK's largest provider of access information – to create FREE training and FREE access guides for your venue.

Access Guides

If you're a tourism and hospitality business with a venue, this is a huge opportunity to have an access guide created for your business for free. It's important that all venues have an access guide so that those visiting are aware of how they can make the best of the environment and your facilities, and prepare before they travel. You'll also receive a guidance document that will help you to prioritise adjustments you can make to enable a wider range of people to access your business. There is a limited allocation for free guides, so sign up today to ensure you don't miss out. [For more details, visit the Visit Kent B2B website here](#)

Online Training

This free online training programme is for everyone in customer-facing roles, with five modules designed to help you and your team be more confident in engaging with your visitors. The modules include:

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

[Click here for more information](#)

Free webinar: Top Tips to Improve Accessibility - Thursday 24 November 10-11am, via Zoom

Hear from industry experts, AccessAble on how you can make your business more accessible for people with a range of disabilities. This session will help you to understand how you can make some quick, low-cost improvements that will help a wider range of people to access your business. [Click here to sign up today](#)

Content Call Outs

Visit Kent are working on their content (website and social media) for the start of 2023 and have identified the following themes. We will be supplying relevant content and would welcome your input, though we can't guarantee inclusion.

- **New hobbies for 2023** - We're encouraging our residents to try their hand at something new this year, from cooking and cocktail making, to upcycling furniture. Tell us about your bookable experiences and workshops.

- **Early bird and saver tickets** - We're continuing to promote Kent as a destination for good value days out and breaks. We'll be sharing some of Kent's best saver tickets, from year-long family tickets, to group passes and early bird discounts.

If you have any content that you would like us to consider, please email tourism@thanet.gov.uk by Friday 2 December. We will also consider it for our own content over the coming months.

Tourism South East Sentiment Survey

Tourism South East are carrying out a survey to understand people's feelings regarding holidays and days out in South East England now and for 2023.

The survey **closes on Thursday 17 November** and you can [take part here](#). Everyone who completes the survey will be entered into a prize draw to win a £50 Amazon voucher.

Thanet District Council

Business Support

Thanet District Council has been awarded £78,750 funding from Kent County Council to provide a Business Support programme for small, medium and independent businesses across Thanet in the form of networking, training and 1:1 support. The council's Business Engagement Officer, Sharon Davies will be working alongside a local business advisor, Karen Brinkman from Social Enterprise Kent (SEK) to provide a package of practical and targeted business support until October 2023.

If you are a business owner and you would like to be updated on the various initiatives and opportunities available, sign up to our dedicated email list by contacting: Sharon Davies, Business Engagement Officer at Thanet District Council, by email on highstreets@thanet.gov.uk

Alternatively if you just want to find out more about the training or one to one support you can contact Karen Brinkman, SEK Business Advisor for an initial conversation on 01843 210005 or by emailing thanetbusiness@sekgroup.org.uk

Social media skills training

Businesses in Thanet are being given access to expert digital skills training to improve their social media expertise, and drive sales as part of a county-wide scheme, supported by Kent Invicta Chamber.

The training, delivered by the team of experts at Maybe*, includes everything from getting started with social media to advanced strategies on how to use the Facebook ads networks to develop winning sales tactics. Businesses can access the training and grants by signing up at www.maybetech.com/Thanet

Levelling Up Fund Update

You may have heard about Ramsgate's successful Levelling Up Fund bid, but what does it mean for the Port of Ramsgate?

Thanet District Council recently published a new Port Narrative online, which sets out the vision for the Port's future: a functional, green transport and fishing hub, bringing skilled trade and tourism opportunities to the district.

You can find the Port Narrative by clicking on the '[Green Port - Port Infrastructure](#)' tab on the Ramsgate Future Project page.

Update on council's plans to reinstate Ramsgate Market

In June, Cabinet approved proposals to secure a new operator for Ramsgate Market, and to remove existing street trading and hawking restrictions on the High Street, King Street and Queen Street.

We are now starting the process to relaunch the market. This involves talking to possible operators and choosing a location to hold the market. Two potential locations have been identified: Ramsgate High Street and Government Acre, though we would also consider other locations.

We will advertise the opportunity to operate the market on Contract Finder and the Kent Business Portal. Interested operators then have the opportunity to submit an Expression of Interest (Eoi) via the Kent Business Portal, and take part in the tender process.

Granville Theatre, Ramsgate, transferred to new owners

On Monday 24 October, we completed the sale of the Granville Theatre in Ramsgate. The building has now been transferred to its new owners, Westwood One Ltd, a local family-run organisation with experience of operating successful businesses in Thanet. Under their ownership, the theatre will be refurbished to provide a high quality production, dance and cinema space for the communities of Ramsgate and the wider district.

Your Voice Thanet

The council's new online engagement platform, Your Voice Thanet, has recently launched. It's a space where residents and businesses can engage with the council and get involved in shaping decisions and will sit alongside activities such as in-person meetings and events, to pull together public engagement and consultation activities into one easy to navigate place.

We hope the space will encourage feedback, discussion, engagement and involvement. It offers greater scope for the local community to shape and improve what the council does. You can sign up at YourVoice.Thanet.gov.uk

Other News

Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) Training Courses

The FSB has teamed up with Amazon to bring you a series of free events designed to help you protect your business. The series covers relevant and contemporary topic areas, accessible and open to all businesses - [Products and brand](#) and [Finances and fundraising](#)

The FSB is running the following free courses this month:

- Monday 14 November -Small Business Night School:Understanding accounts and cash flow 6:30pm to 8:30pm [Click here for further information and to register](#)
- Tuesday 15 November - How to be an award-winning business and why it matters 10am to 11am [Click here for further information and to register](#)
- Wednesday 16 November- Let's Talk Technical 10am to 11:15am [Click here for further information and to register](#)
- Wednesday 16 November- Small Business Night School: Business Planning 6:30pm to 8:30pm [Click here for further information and to register](#)

The FSB's most popular national webinars and events are available on demand. [Click here to find out more.](#)

Your News

Congratulations to [Dreamland](#), announced as a finalist in the 'Venue of the Year' category of Live Awards 2022. The prestigious awards will celebrate outstanding individuals and companies across the UK's world leading live music sector. The winner will be announced on Tuesday 13 December