**January's Tourism Matters: Empire of Light, Award Winners and Year of the Coast**

Dear Tourism Industry Colleague

Welcome to our first Tourism Matters of 2023. We hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year period.

Have you been to see Empire of Light? In this issue we give you details on our activities around the film and how you can get involved. We also bring you news of our Gold Award win, the latest Cambridge Model results and details on how you can get involved in ‘Year of the Coast’

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

**Margate on the big screen - Empire of Light**

Monday (9 January) saw the release of the much anticipated EMPIRE OF LIGHT, the new film from Academy Award®-winning director and writer Sam Mendes, that was filmed in and around Margate. Featuring a stellar cast, led by Academy Award winner Olivia Colman, BAFTA winner Micheal Ward, Tom Brooke, Tanya Moodie, Hannah Onslow, Crystal Clarke, with Toby Jones, and Academy Award® winner Colin Firth, EMPIRE OF LIGHT is a film about the power of human connection during turbulent times.

To support the film and promote it to visitors we have created a dedicated page on our website [www.visitthanet.co.uk/empireoflight](http://www.visitthanet.co.uk/empireoflight) giving details of why Sam Mendes chose Margate and some shots of the film locations.

Alongside this we have created a locations map showing some of the key locations used within the film. Copies can be picked up from Thanet Visitor Information Centre at Droit House Margate or venues around the town. If you would like copies and a poster to advertise this, please let us know at visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk

We have worked with partners - Dreamland, GuestHouse Hotels and Southeastern to put together a competition package to Margate, including a bundle of Empire of Light goodies.

We would be grateful of your support in helping us to promote the film map and the competition by sharing our social media posts and including this information in your customer newsletters or by displaying the map

**Tourism and Visitor Services News**

**Gold Visitor Information Service Award**

On Tuesday 13 December, the results of the Beautiful South East Awards for Excellence were announced in Brighton.

We are pleased to report the Visitor Information Service received GOLD in the Visitor Information Service of the Year category.

The team are over the moon with the result and would like to thank all of the hard working volunteers at Broadstairs Information Kiosk, Ramsgate Visitor Information Centre and all of our Thanet Visitor Ambassadors who work to give visitors a warm welcome to the Isle of Thanet. Thank you to all of our attractions, accommodation providers and hospitality businesses who all work tirelessly to ensure every visitor has a wonderful experience.

**Cambridge Model Results**

At the end of December the results of the Economic Impact Model for 2021 were published, showing promising signs of early recovery for our tourism industry. Results from

the report, commissioned by Visit Kent in partnership with Thanet District Council, show that

the value of Thanet’s visitor economy increased to £212 million, up 70% from 2020. In total

3.9 million combined day and overnight trips were undertaken in the area in 2021.

The number of total tourism jobs across the district also increased by 16% between 2020 to

2021. They accounted for 5,831 jobs or 14% of total employment in Thanet last year, despite

the Government furlough scheme finishing in September 2021.

While the tourism and hospitality picture remained challenging throughout the region in

2021, these latest findings do show that Thanet’s visitor economy performed above the

national average in several areas. To read the full report, [visit our business website](https://www.visitthanetbusiness.co.uk/business-support/research/cambridge-economic-impact-model-2021/)

**2023 The Year of the Coast**

2023 has been assigned ‘YEAR OF THE COAST’, a new awareness campaign from National Coastal Tourism Academy (NCTA/England’s Coast), showcasing the very best of the coastal assets to inspire more visitors to love, visit and protect our coastline. The campaign is linked with the creation of the new England Coast Path and includes a year-long programme of events occurring around the whole of England’s coastline, from major festivals to local food markets, arts trails and water sports

If you operate a visitor-facing business this is for you! NCTA and ourselves would like to promote all the events, experiences and holiday opportunities year-round to raise awareness of issues that impact coastal communities and businesses, and to highlight new developments and products.

* Do you offer coastal experiences - surfing, boat trips, creating coastal art
* If you are not on the coast do you display coastal images in your business/property?
* Do you have copies of our Visitors’ Map showing the location of the beaches and what they offer?

To get involved, [download the Year of the Coast Toolkit HERE](https://coastaltourismacademy.co.uk/resource-hub/resource/year-of-the-coast-2023). Include the logo in your planned activities - your website, social messaging, newsletters and blogs to amplify your marketing.

So we ask you to join in Year of the Coast 2023 and let’s make it the biggest celebration of the coast ever!

Please can we ask that you let us know of anything that you have available or are doing for the celebration on tourism@thanet.gov.uk so we can include it in our activity.

**2022/23 East Kent Coast Photography Competition**

Thanet Coast Project and Bird Wise East Kent have teamed up for a second photographic competition - with winning entries to be shown in local exhibitions throughout the summer of 2023

Participants can submit up to two images in any of the following six categories:

* Daring Dozen
* Good Coastal Conduct
* Coastal Wildlife
* Coastal Landscape
* Human Impact on the Environment
* Savvy Sea Dogs

There are categories for younger photographers aged 0-11 and 12-18 who can also enter photos for any of the above categories. **The deadline for all entries is Sunday 19 February.**

All terms and conditions can be found on the [Thanet Coast Project website](http://www.thanetcoast.org.uk/projects-and-issues/east-kent-coast-photographic-competition/)

**Visit Kent Workshops**

Over the coming weeks Visit Kent will be running a series of workshops that are open to Leisure, Tourism and Hospitality businesses

**Travel Trade Ready Workshop - Monday 16 January 3pm online**

Are you travel trade ready? Whether you are an experienced tourism business or new to the travel trade, you are encouraged to sign up for the session.

Visit Kent is hosting an online workshop with UKinbound to provide you with all the context and insights you will need to support you on your travel trade journey. Join virtually for a FREE enlightening tour of the travel and tourism world, and learn some top tips for how to get your product distributed through third-party resellers. [To register, click here](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=DVFnI5lfE0C0E4l6cBbH94Ap4MyeY_hChT3HEaJrXDxUNEI4RE4xVzYzUzlVUEFCWkczOUhTSERVUi4u)

**Maximising Opportunities Through Working with Influencers - Tuesday 17 January 10am online (PLEASE NOTE PLACES ARE LIMITED)**

Visit Kent would love you for you to join their next EXPERIENCE Peer Networking session, focusing on Maximising Opportunities Through Working with Influencers. For this session, they will be joined by expert Katy Towse, Marketing Consultant from Mint Rainbow to discuss the topic, including cost-effective ways of increasing your reach. [To register, click here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/visit-kent-experience-peer-networking-event-tickets-474761182477)

**Reducing Tourism Seasonality Through Sustainable Experiences - Friday 24 February 10am online**

In February, Visit Kent will be hosting a sustainability webinar focusing on ‘Reducing Tourism Seasonality Through Sustainable Experiences’. They will be joined by Dr Xavier Font, Professor of Sustainability Marketing at the University of Surrey, to discuss the six steps that small businesses and destination managers can undertake to design and market sustainable experiences. [To register, click here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/reducing-tourism-seasonality-through-sustainable-experiences-webinar-tickets-491775161747)

**Other News**

**Seasonality and Tourism Experiences**

On Monday 28 November, Xavier Font from the University of Surrey delivered a webinar for Experience West Sussex looking at improving business in autumn and winter seasons through experiences. [The presentation can be watched here](https://surrey-ac.zoom.us/rec/share/bLHMB9LYCF0bBjZxrLUo2JYjm_Z71zY10eg4bAljE2yz5pPWhWtzdZPlbINKoSR1.lIeqaDHMMuX7C1Iw)

**Federation of Small Businesses - free webinar**

Wellbeing Solutions for Small Businesses - Wednesday 18 January, 4:30 to 5:45pm

[For further information and to register click here](https://www.fsb.org.uk/event-calendar/wellbeing-solutions-for-small-businesses18jan23.html?utm_source=JAN10&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=WebAccs)

**Your News**

Congratulations to [**The Escapement Broadstairs**](http://www.escapementmargate.co.uk/) whose escape room ‘Atlantis’ was named ‘2022 Top Room’ in the TERPECA Awards (Top Escape Room Enthusiast Choice Awards), that attempts to find the very best escape rooms in the world.

**Ramsgate Tunnels are Recruiting**

Would you like to join the team of staff and volunteers in the promotion and management of Ramsgate Tunnels?

They are looking for a ‘Support Manager’ working alongside the volunteers to provide outstanding customer service, coordinator tours and help in the running of the cafe and retail operation. You would need to be organised, provide a high level of customer service, written and IT skills and understanding of Health and Safety.

To find out more about the role contact recruitment@ramsgattunnels.org by Wednesday 20 January.

**Broadstairs Tourism & Leisure Association (BTLA) New Website**

New year, new website for Broadstairs Tourism & Leisure Association (BTLA) who this week have re-launched their website [www.visitbroadstairs.co.uk](http://www.visitbroadstairs.co.uk) with information on the town’s accommodation, attractions, beaches and an interactive aerial tour with links through to businesses