**Tourism Matters: Tourism Recovery Plan and Busy Beaches**

Dear Tourism Industry Colleague,

It’s been a week of changes, firstly those relating to the delayed lifting of final restrictions and now with the weather - what a storm on Wednesday night

We appreciate how hard things are for some of you right now, with not being able to trade to capacity, or indeed at all until the final restrictions are lifted. Please know that we are here for you and will help in any way we can tourism@thanet.gov.uk

In this issue we bring you an update following the Prime Minister’s statement on Monday and information on the recently launched Tourism Recovery Plan. There is also news on the recent Southern Water Incident, new litter stations being installed along the coastline and an update on the work being done to tackle the management of our 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](http://www.visitthanet.co.uk/tourismmatters)

**Governement Update**

**Coronavirus Restrictions in England**

On Monday 14th June The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson provided an update on the easing of Coronavirus restrictions in England

As not all of four tests for proceeding to step 4 in the UK Government roadmap have been met, step 4 openings will be delayed until Monday 19th July, with the exception of weddings and wakes of more than 30 guests which still can go ahead with social distancing.

The situation will be monitored daily and if after 2 weeks, the risk looks like it has diminished, it would be possible to move to step 4 earlier. In the meantime, pilots for sporting events, such as the Euros, and some theatre performances will continue.

View the [**Prime Minister's statement**](https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-statement-at-coronavirus-press-conference-14-june-2021) and the [**slides and dataset**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slides-and-datasets-to-accompany-coronavirus-press-conference-14-june-2021) from the briefing.

**The guidance on what you can and cannot do in England**

The guidance on [**what you can and cannot do in England**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do)  has been updated with a summary on changes from Monday 21st June, including more information on weddings, civil partnerships and commemorative events.

From Monday 21st June, the rules on the number of people who can attend a wedding or civil partnership ceremony, a wedding reception or civil partnership celebration, and a commemorative event following a funeral such as a wake, stone setting or ash scattering, will change.

The number of people who can attend these events in a COVID-Secure venue or other venue (such as a garden of a private home) will be determined by how many people a venue can safely accommodate with social distancing measures in place, including guests of all ages and anyone working at the event.

Some restrictions on these events will remain in place to enable them to take place safely. This includes table service requirements, face coverings, social distancing, and restrictions on dancing and singing, as at present.

There is a little more information on these events if taking place in a private setting. The [**guidance on wedding and civil partnership ceremonies**, **receptions and celebrations**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-wedding-and-civil-partnership-ceremonies-receptions-and-celebrations)  was due to be updated by Tuesday 15th June. The guidance on [**arranging or attending a funeral during the coronavirus pandemic**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic) was due to be updated by Thursday 17th June.

**Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) guidance updates**

The [**guidance for businesses**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-youre-eligible-for-the-coronavirus-additional-restrictions-grant) to check if they are eligible for the ARG grant has been updated to clarify which sectors are eligible to receive it. Whilst local councils have the freedom to determine the eligibility criteria for these grants, the Government has set out an expectation that the funding should help businesses that are severely impacted by the restrictions. Local councils are encouraged to support:

* Businesses from all sectors that may have been severely impacted by restrictions but are not eligible for the Restart Grant scheme, including those which do not pay business rates.
* Businesses from sectors that remain closed or severely impacted by the extended restrictions, even if those businesses have already been in receipt of Restart Grants. This may include the travel and tourism sector, wedding industries, nightclubs, theatres, events industries, wholesalers, English language schools, breweries, freelance and mobile businesses including caterers, events, hair, beauty and wedding-related businesses.

The spending allocation deadline for the ARG has been extended to Friday 30th July 2021 and the [**guidance for Local Authorities**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-restrictions-support-grants-lrsg-and-additional-restrictions-grant-arg-guidance-for-local-authorities) has also been updated.

**Eviction protection extended for businesses**

[**Businesses that have had to remain closed**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/eviction-protection-extended-for-businesses-most-in-need) during the pandemic and are unable to pay rent on their commercial property will continue to be protected from eviction. Legislation will be introduced in this session to ring-fence outstanding unpaid rent that has built up when a business has had to remain closed during the pandemic.

Landlords are expected to make allowances for the ring-fenced rent arrears from these specific periods of closure due to the pandemic, and share the financial impact with their tenants. The legislation will help tenants and landlords work together to come to an agreement on how to handle the money owed – this could be done by waiving some of the total amount or agreeing a longer-term repayment plan. This agreement should be between the tenant and landlord and, if in some cases an agreement cannot be made, the law will ensure a binding arbitration process will be put in place so that both parties can come to a formal agreement. This will be a legally binding agreement that both parties must adhere to.

In order to ensure landlords are protected, the Government has said that businesses who are able to pay rent, must do so. Tenants should start paying their rent as soon as restrictions change, and they are given the green light to open. The existing measures in place to protect commercial tenants from eviction will be extended to 25th March 2022.

**Temporary insolvency measures extended**

The [**Insolvency Service**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-extends-business-support-measures) has announced that regulations are set to be laid that will mean restrictions on statutory demands and winding up petitions will remain for a further three months until Thursday 30th September 2021 with a view to protecting companies from creditor enforcement action where their debts relate to the pandemic.

[**Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme guidance**](http://maxemail.visitbritain.com/rsps/m/SCOu5diKeetJPr9btoeTDVhIY20PEkCuaFwIRkjAiTc)

The [**Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme guidance**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme)  has been updated with a reminder that from Thursday 1st July 2021, the Government will pay 70% of wages up to a maximum cap of £2,187.50 for the hours the employee is on furlough.

**Tourism Recovery Plan launched**

Tourism Minister Nigel Huddleston MP announced on Friday 11th June the [Government’s Tourism Recovery Plan](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tourism-recovery-plan)

A welcome and important step on the industry’s road to recovery, the Plan recognises the economic potential of the sector, sets out a clear policy direction for the future and outlines the ambitions for domestic and international tourism, with the aim to:

* Recover domestic overnight trip volume and spend to 2019 levels by the end of 2022, and inbound visitor numbers and spend by the end of 2023 – both at least a year faster than independent forecasts predict.
* Ensure that the sector’s recovery benefits every nation and region, with visitors staying longer, growing accommodation occupancy rates in the off-season and high levels of investment in tourism products and transport infrastructure.
* Build back better with a more innovative and resilient industry, maximising the potential for technology and data to enhance the visitor experience and employing more UK nationals in year-round quality jobs.
* Ensure the tourism sector contributes to the enhancement and conservation of the country’s cultural, natural and historic heritage, minimises damage to the environment and is inclusive and accessible to all.
* Return the UK swiftly to its pre-pandemic position as a leading European destination for hosting business events.

Through their marketing, business support, grant funding programmes and position as the government’s statutory advisor on tourism policy, VisitBritain/VisitEngland have been tasked with leading on delivering many aspects of this Plan and will have a key role in achieving the overall objectives.

In the short-term, the focus is to drive immediate tourism recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by building back visitor spend as quickly as possible and supporting the industry.

Looking further ahead, VisitBritain/VisitEngland spending review bid this year will seek to support the plan’s ambitions and to build on the successful projects they have been running, working with the UK Government and across the industry to cement the recovery and the future of one of this country’s greatest industries.

By working together to drive demand and build back visitor spend as quickly as possible we can emerge from the pandemic and look towards a brighter future building an industry that is more resilient, sustainable, inclusive and innovative.

[Download a copy of the Tourism Recovery Plan](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tourism-recovery-plan)

**Thanet District Council**

**Levelling up bids submitted**

Today (Friday 18 June) Thanet District Council have submitted two bids as part of the Government’s £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund to support town centre and high street regeneration, local transport projects, and cultural and heritage assets.

A press statement about the bids will be published on the [Council’s website soon](http://www.thanet.gov.uk)

For information on the Ramsgate Futures project visit [www.thanet.gov.uk/campaigns/ramsgate-future/](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/campaigns/ramsgate-future/)

**Southern Water Incident at Thanet Beaches**

Thanet District Council was alerted by Southern Water to an incident at the Margate Wastewater Pumping Station following a lightning strike overnight on Thursday 17th June. As a result of this incident wastewater was released via the emergency outfall of the Southern Water pumping station at Foreness.

As a result and in liaison with the Environment Agency, the council is advising members of the public not to enter the sea or the area of beach below the high water mark on the following bays:

* West Bay
* St. Mildred's Bay
* Westbrook Bay
* Margate Main Sands
* Walpole Bay
* Palm Bay
* Foreness
* Botany Bay
* Kingsgate Bay
* Joss Bay

Signs have been placed on these beaches and bays to inform beach users.

A clean up operation around the coast led by Southern Water continues with extra resources being deployed over the weekend. Southern Water has confirmed that the pumping station is now operating as it should and will continue to be closely monitored.

Separately to the incident, following the significant rainfall which also impacts the quality of the water, advice against bathing has now also been extended to include Viking Bay in Broadstairs. Beach users are urged to follow the advice on signs in place at bathing beaches and can also check the [bathing waters webpage](https://www.gov.uk/quality-of-local-bathing-water) for information.

Thanet District Council teams remain out to assess the impact of the Southern Water incident and will continue to monitor the situation closely over the weekend.

Advice against bathing will only be lifted once it is considered safe and appropriate to do so. The Environment Agency will be completing water quality testing in the area and inspections of the beaches will take place following every high tide.

**Busy beaches in the heatwave**

Ahead of the recent rainfall, the beautiful weather has meant our beaches were filled with people enjoying our beautiful bays and 19 miles of coastline. It has been great to welcome people back to our beaches and see all the beachside and surrounding businesses busy with people spending money after a tough winter for the tourism and leisure industry.

Thousands of visitors and people using our beaches and open spaces does however put a great deal of pressure on local resources.

Sadly, the actions of a minority of people leave the biggest impact and we have seen significant litter dropped, people parking inconsiderately and even examples of our hard working staff being subjected to abuse.

The council has worked tirelessly to prepare our coastline and has dedicated significant resources to the provision of extra bins, cleansing staff and security.

We continue to develop our beach management plan to tackle some of the issues we are faced with during spells of good weather. This year we have more resources than in any previous years, which includes three dedicated officers enforcing around the coast and eight coastal security wardens supporting them. Our education enforcement officer is also focusing on the coast over the season and responding to issues where they happen, such as issues related to dogs on beaches.

You can read more about the behaviour we deal with during hot weather spells in our latest [social media posts](https://www.facebook.com/ThanetDistrictCouncil/posts/10157826732571373)

**New litter stations**

We're delighted to share a sneak preview of the designs for our new litter stations. There will be 10 new stations for litter - in addition to our existing dog poo stations - all to be installed across the district very soon. This will bring our total of litter/dog stations to 65!

The stations will be located at various places along our coastline, including entrances to Botany Bay, Viking Bay and Ramsgate Main Sands. The stations have a QR code on them which when scanned can indicate to our teams they need re-filling with bags.

The stations are currently being made and we expect them to arrive ready to be installed in the next few weeks.

Get involved! If you're part of a local community group or a litter picking volunteer, we’d be keen to hear from you. We are looking for groups to 'sponsor' one of the stations. Not only will this help support our teams to ensure the stations are regularly re-filled, but we hope through fundraising initiatives we can create a dedicated fund to help with the cost of the recycling bags used in them. For more information, please contact education@thanet.gov.uk.

These new stations are in addition to the existing stations in Margate which were launched with Margate litter picking group, Rise.Up.Clean.Up, earlier in the year.

**National Coastal Tourism Academy Survey**

We would appreciate as many businesses as possible spending a little bit of time completing the [National Coastal Tourism Academy Wave 3 Survey](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NCTA_ThanetJun21) by **Friday 2nd July.** Any information you provide is kept strictly confidential and if we achieve a large enough sample size, we get a general report for Thanet (no individual business information is shown). This information helps us to see how Thanet compares to the national figures and is used to update members, to understand the impact of the pandemic over the last year, and to help us plan for recovery and the support that is needed.

You can view the national data from the first two waves [here](https://coastaltourismacademy.co.uk/resource-hub/resource/impact-of-covid19-on-tourism-businesses--2021-business-barometer)

Thank you to everyone who has already completed the survey, the information you provide is extremely valuable.

**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 23rd June - Rebuilding Consumer Confidence 2pm-3.30pm**

This session will discuss practical tips and best practice examples of how to encourage visitors back and help your customers feel comfortable.

[Click here to register](https://2uz0w.r.a.d.sendibm1.com/mk/cl/f/veaVDwjnT7TxaraOnakgh5SDUcU1c30WR5G4pYPnMsSW2M4keL9CJMisKGRt9Z8MKKDSpO7Me3s9MfEQRP0p9KYV040Vbj_nFaLH1VmX7R7YxgLGjfDPeMM7En0KFUXt_5KqPYl8hSCCpanaCDkmT2OnIBagK8MjumH7yK_56ffVOQG72KA9m9-bLLM9Zg-nJ9J1JxSrXhEerAdHtPCpqpzxk-UvkmbcZ8sxjgDml_n_cSUSw253kQAUNgYbXNiiI22mwszS1T-taOBR7rbbeA)

**Wednesday 30th June - Co-produce marketing messages with your destination 10am-11.30am**

This session will discuss how to maximise tools and messages created by your DMO and how you can increase reach through collaboration with destination partners.

[Click here to register](https://2uz0w.r.a.d.sendibm1.com/mk/cl/f/4uQ1rqOfgtbebocc_BEIbYHC9ToX6H7EHA2dgYBfYD_t1k9jUxqd5ExtE6EudXUgRZAqPvuY6b0fyRKRNvgL-48u7fZmOAEu51zeMiCNQmgbqgnQpDOTRdZMWMuv9D_j9Ztuimi1qkwNMCciCnG8OAHYtbnwu1tQ845i3gq3ettYZOUmSnT3bd-12c1IEZRXGDCX9eAW5BXXXehna2xQ7Qe_aL2dHdh67AiPxfcXis6mbu5M1JbiE0l6j_ngI4dZOIeddRe6D1OfhY1GIqdBL3csWBYgJUR7lf54bj-iHDia7zycrA)

**Wednesday 7th July - Adapt your business model to new trends 2pm-3.30pm**

This session will discuss how you can respond to these trends in your business to create new revenue streams or reach new audiences to support your recovery.

[Click here to register](https://2uz0w.r.a.d.sendibm1.com/mk/cl/f/fUtcf5uuEcj7CEd-DCadZTRoHNxFyPMHQoDczR4IgBKvTn_Z1x7VPVx0NHEf2vkGfBeiH4EIDDsQhZxRLYiCwEALhdtBQFRe6MAsGWOyqiq_XzZyezcZmJls57idq1xtwFkPmvmftOwFHkfLUgmjKP7DapnxRwSC1kTMOxA2SA_Tac1mCA_i6jB-n3On8e9GHajzbNQNewk3DQ_eIgWNOB8_b-T744xkK5o49owyyoxZ1ieMpGB495elASLtD4-nFp3mTf6ZCc4pNA)

**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://2uz0w.r.a.d.sendibm1.com/mk/cl/f/EVmJPQtYawolXbj4ZJewbcgjGNMDRErxOTvi7RNYMTwZahmUG0DIWSODeFAJzOkFdqeDbEhJ5jbgEs4_x6X7NH6l85Yoz2OXZIY2OeUXgfJYghT2NS-eaiM5osWe_sZOO5n-HwoDYDcDB0sjXYWMe-Z2oqIepkaOlhnIMF8xrxH-KOkeFz_5wSSFMk-mCoFAvQu58hilhw98Z6SKPZkPXrnXAiLEJ_sbko8Hn7NSqMOlVo6gNtuyMgknvdi0spMFrkAV3RGQwpRN-F430fPB-Dp2dmj9lwJ-JmLfy7c)

**Other News**

**Experience-based Tourism Academic Survey**

The research team at the University of Surrey, who are a partner in the Visit Kent Experience project, are launching an online survey to study experience-based tourism as an opportunity to recover from the COVID-19 outbreak.

[The survey](https://surreyfbel.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6LJGR6XNDYBOCge) takes about 10 minutes to complete and is targeting people with management responsibilities in the hospitality, tourism, and event sectors

For those who participate, they will receive a 2-hour training session on experiential marketing during Autumn-Winter.