**September’s Tourism Matters: Local updates, regional awards and a national opportunity for attractions**

Dear Tourism Industry Colleague,

Welcome to September’s Tourism Matters and can you believe that the next bank holiday will be Christmas?! (Oh no it isn’t, we hear you cry). The weather has definitely taken a turn for autumn.

In this issue we bring you details of a new audio installation at Thanet stations and an update on the progress of works at Ellington Park. It’s also the last chance to enter the Beautiful South Tourism Awards 2021/22

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](https://2uz0w.r.a.d.sendibm1.com/mk/cl/f/DekBBfZP3LAIZ-s6vUtRdj2N3K0y9mOgkDSXrPdjnBptAw5_g3qnkpbc3nY0Ti7O4OJDZheJXea8dAs-1I8cMWmZwuNL1uBECjUAjae1COLO5BSBu9Amwl-_FnLMN4y4Ur9vuZWt93hNbyCaQXcpvu1RN_aPF4EFqDhJHOu37zzAckDlc36sUzskHOsqmg)

**Tourism and Visitor Services News**

**Visitor Services Hours Update**

The Thanet Visitor Information Centre at Droit House in Margate will change their current daily opening hours to opening Wednesday - Sunday 10am - 5pm from Sunday 5th September. In addition to these opening times, the centre will be open 7 days a week for October Half Term.

**Broadstairs Information Kiosk** is open daily 10am - 4pm until Sunday 12th September, it will then operate as follows

* w/c Monday 13th September open Friday - Monday (Closed Tuesday - Thursday)
* w/c Monday 27th September open weekends only until Sunday 24th October
* Open daily from Monday 25th to Sunday 31st October for half term and then closed until spring 2022

**Ramsgate Visitor Information Centre** is open daily 10am - 4pm until the end of September when it changes to its winter hours October to March open daily 11am-3pm.

**‘Isle of Sound’ at Thanet Train Stations**

If you’ve used one of Thanet’s train stations lately you may have heard a series of new soundscapes celebrating the area.

[‘Isle of Sound’ by Emily Peasgood](http://www.visitthanet.co.uk/events/isle-of-sound-by-emily-peasgood-73886/) is the first artwork created for the new Creative Isle Community Rail Partnership, a new initiative by Turner Contemporary in collaboration with Thanet District Council and support from Southeastern. The uniquely created soundscape for each of the seven Thanet train stations, with sounds familiar to each Thanet town contributes to the composition. Each soundscape has been composed using field recordings and sounds recorded and submitted by community groups local to each of the stations, with over 100 people from across the Isle attending online workshops with Emily to develop and record sounds to contribute to the project.

So if you are using the stations between now and Friday 17th December, listen out for ‘Isle of Thanet’.The full composition of the seven works can be heard online

**Heritage Open Days 10th - 19th September**

Back for 2021 with a theme of ‘Edible England’, Heritage Open Days is your chance to visit and participate in activities at some of Thanet’s hidden gems. From heading underground at Margate Caves, experiencing wartime cooking in Ramsgate Tunnels, learning about Powell-Cotton’s collection or delving into the history of Broadstairs’ Palace Cinema

Find out more about these and other Thanet venues taking part at [www.visitthanet.co.uk/heritageopendays](http://www.visitthanet.co.uk/heritageopendays) or pick up a leaflet at Visitor Information Centres or participating venues

**Thanet District Council**

**Ellington Park Works Update**

Since 2019, work has been undertaken at Ramsgate’s Ellington Park to regenerate and renovate the park including the creation of a new cafe, toilets and children’s playground, renovating the bandstand and new landscaping.

This stage of the works is nearing completion with the cafe, playground and bandstand now open for residents and visitors to view and use.

[Read more about the project here](http://www.thanet.gov.uk/playground-and-cafe-opening-in-ellington-park/)

**Update on the Ramsgate Levelling Up Fund**

In June, a bid was submitted with ambitious plans for the future of Ramsgate to the government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF). It can be viewed in full on the [Thanet District Council website](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/thanet-submits-two-bids-to-the-levelling-up-fund), as well as the accompanying Engagement Summary and Ramsgate Evidence Atlas which helped inform it.

The outcome of the bid is expected later this year.

**Theatre Royal and Winter Gardens**

Securing a long term viable future for the Theatre Royal and Winter Gardens in Margate is the aim behind operational changes recently announced by Thanet District Council and Your Leisure.

Bookings are scheduled to pause at both Margate entertainment venues in 2022, in order to identify a new long term direction with tickets and events honoured until this time. This will be supported by proposed funding of £2.5m from the Margate Town Deal.

[Read the press release for more information](http://www.thanet.gov.uk/securing-a-long-term-future-for-the-theatre-royal-and-winter-gardens/).

**Recruitment of Margate Town Deal Chair**

Applications are now open for the voluntary position of Chair of the Margate Town Deal Board. It is an exciting time to join the Board, which has already secured a provisional allocation of up to £22.2m of Government funding. The next phase is about business case development and engaging with the private sector and investors to leverage further funding and deliver a legacy for the town.

The full job description is available [here.](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/campaigns/margate-town-deal/?tab=2) **Closing date Monday 13th September.**

**Beautiful South Tourism Awards**

Would you like to be recognised as one of the top tourism and hospitality businesses in the South East? The Tourism South East ‘[Beautiful South Tourism Awards](https://2uz0w.r.a.d.sendibm1.com/mk/cl/f/JX9dVwAhNHlMH3CnLaMpHEXFKmACr9MNccaLwcUfE9UOAw2SKRdkv3Fcj13DdspC2lIW5j02ieJ1YVMCfRekjf6t4-KlqiqsJRUexCHHdA5ux-ovocKLklQ4yPWCkmy_ghI7V3WE64ffR5JN0ihcIgSHQJaRAt-6BF5oLHSjX_BJWjwk7Bt-Z3cC9A)’ are now open for [applications](https://2uz0w.r.a.d.sendibm1.com/mk/cl/f/Qs_MT_s9iJPl98Ojl_OtPyUtyJ1iF8FWXAev-KtIP6tMOp9GfzvDaM3MCRv0MVS4bxPkhsh_Y3mHmRg2a6VePS9Yu-pNzyHkBPUX45qEzZ0sFezhdwsHN-cEbohDaTBtHtio77ar7lm0w2SVdlbb3QJvbkU_ufLdp4ZN5bXfdYUYqAVHhTLiFtXK_Kte75LLjFwMJMli)

There are many different categories e.g. accommodation, food and drink, dog-friendly businesses and attractions, events, and experiences. This year there is a new award for ‘Resilience and Innovation’

If you are a member of [Tourism South East](https://2uz0w.r.a.d.sendibm1.com/mk/cl/f/KFH8EF8thZSLcsafxAppLzjJod6F8Ft9IeLuEnimK41wsre7t2js7NaFPecSNTPeE2RUUSDekhOzkcFAgO6mwfZ1EuVJwmhN7MUa8BK2RUlWyO7CvqZlLfKJsEizOBs2psQwiDkaivgSJa_lamQsqGxcyfaaOEbSKWq7yAJZNt3h6vzh) the awards are free to enter. Non-members are required to pay a fee of £70 (plus VAT). Entries in the New Tourism Business, Resilience and Innovation and Unsung Hero categories are FREE for members and non-members.

**All entries must be submitted by midnight Sunday 12th September**

**Join the National Lottery Days Out campaign**

VisitBritain are looking for UK-based attractions with paid admission fees suited to domestic families and younger audiences. If this applies to your attraction, you could take part in the £10 million National Lottery Days Out campaign.

Hundreds of thousands of £25 vouchers will be available to National Lottery Lotto players this autumn to redeem against a day out in the UK, backed by a multi-million-pound national advertising campaign, launching on primetime television during the National Lottery Lotto draw in October.

What are the benefits?

* Potential to boost sales and extend the season for your attraction
* The £25 voucher value will be funded by the National Lottery and all the administration around this undertaken by the VisitBritainShop
* A promotional toolkit with campaign assets and messaging to support your marketing will be availableOpportunity to drive additional bookings by remaining on the VisitBritain Shop and TXGB distribution platform post the campaign

Express interest now by emailing [daysoutcampaign@visitbritain.org](mailto:daysoutcampaign@visitbritain.org) to make sure you are registered in time for the campaign launch.

[Further information can be found here](https://www.visitbritain.org/join-national-lottery-days-out-campaign)

**Visit Kent’s Business Barometer**

Visit Kent is actively working to increase the sample of businesses that contribute to the barometer. They encourage any businesses that do not currently take part to sign-up, as the barometer has proven to be a valuable and timely benchmarking tool for tourism organisations.

[To find out more and to sign up, head to the Visit Kent Business website](http://www.visitkentbusiness.co.uk/insights-and-resources/business-barometer/)