

Margate Press Pack www.visitthanet.co.uk

How to reach **Margate?**

Margate is a seaside town situated on the Isle of Thanet, the most easterly point in Kent the 'Garden of England'. In the past, Thanet was separated from the mainland by the river Wantsum but it is now no longer an island.

Margate is easily accessible by car, coach and train. The country's only high speed train service, HS1, brings travellers from London St Pancras, to Margate in just 90 minutes.

There are regular train and bus services, including the Thanet Loop, to the neighbouring resorts of Broadstairs (3.4 miles/5.5 km) and Ramsgate (5.3 miles/8.5 km). The City of Canterbury is 17 miles (27.4 km) away and the Port of Dover, with its cross-Channel services to mainland Europe, just 22.6 miles (36.4 km) distant.



Margate Harbour Arm



© Dreamland-Margate



Turner Contemporary

Escape to **Margate**

- World-class art and cultural exhibitions at Turner Contemporary gallery
- · Dreamland Margate, the UK's original pleasure park, re-imagined for the 21st century and celebrating the age of the Great British seaside amusement experience
- Classic seaside heritage magnificent sands, water sports, rock pools, cockles and whelks, fish 'n chips and candyfloss
- Time and space to relax and enjoy the resort's famous Turner sunsets, clifftop walks and contemporary culture
- · Margate Old Town independent galleries, vintage and retro hotspots, and quirky shops along cobbled streets
- · Vibrant and expanding creative sector, known as Shoreditch-on-Sea
- Major attractions and entertainment alongside many hidden gems
- Full diary of events and festivals

Margate is a classic seaside destination with deep roots in the original development of visits to the coast for the health benefits of exhilarating sea air and salt water bathing.

As the passion and fashion for seaside fun and frivolity became more accessible with boat trips from London and the arrival of the railways, Margate became synonymous with family holiday fun, weekend escapes (including romantic liaisons) and daytrips.

As more people came to visit and many wanted to set up home on the coast, new quality estates were built in adjoining Cliftonville. Initially these were detached and semi-detached houses with gardens, followed by the newly fashionable bungalows, set along wide open avenues leading down to the seafront.

Cliftonville accommodated the new residents and provided numerous guest houses and smaller private hotels for visitors to Margate. Larger hotels took pride of place high on the chalk cliffs overlooking the sea.

Visitors today soak up the sun, sands and sea with all the enthusiasm of previous generations of the bucket 'n spade brigade as well as a wealth of retro and vintage seaside pleasures presented in 21st century style.

Along with the resort's more than 57,230 residents, visitors find themselves at the heart of the cultural and creative arts revolution. sweeping along the coast of Kent – The Garden of England.



Margate Main Sands - children's rides



Westbrook Bay



Beaches and bays

Paddling, rock pools and sandcastles alongside swimming and watersports, Margate's many beautiful bays are perfect for all ages and abilities.

Margate Main Sands – a spacious family favourite with lovely golden sand, children's rides, surfing and all beach facilities. Plenty of ice creams, lollies, candyfloss, cockles and whelks, and fish 'n chips are available nearby. 'Seaside Award'.

Walpole Bay – opened in 1937 a tidal pool much-loved by swimmers. This long bay is perfect for exploring rock pools and crabbing. The bay is named in honour of the former British Prime Minister Robert Walpole.

Westbrook Bay – a beach popular with families and excellent for water skiing. 'Seaside Award'.

Discover more of Thanet's award-winning beaches at www.visitthanet.co.uk/beaches-bays

Galleries

Turner Contemporary

(www.turnercontemporary.org) – the internationally-acclaimed art gallery overlooking the sea and Margate Main Sands has attracted over 2 million visits since opening in 2011. The gallery's programme of exciting world-class exhibitions and creative activities promises that success is set to continue for many years to come.

Since the opening of Turner Contemporary in Margate, a wealth of independent art galleries and studios have opened in the historic Old Town featuring the works of international, national and local artists in a range of media.

There are also opportunities to release your inner artist at a variety of creative classes and workshops, including ceramics.

Discover more art destinations in Thanet, including galleries and studios at www.visitthanet.co.uk/galleries

Attractions

The Shell Grotto

(www.shellgrotto.co.uk) – tucked away just a short walk from the coast, this memorable attraction and its myriad of shell patterns still intrigues visitors as the mysteries of its meanings and origins have never been conclusively resolved.

Walpole Bay Hotel, Living Museum and Napery

(www.walpolebayhotel.co.uk) – popular with celebrity guests, this unusual hotel offers a unique experience whether for an overnight stay or enjoying afternoon tea or an evening meal. The Napery is a gallery of textile art on table linen.

Margate Museum (www.margatemuseum.org) - a real gem set in a former police station and magistrate's court. Exhibitions and standing exhibits reflecting Margate's history and its wartime experiences.

The Tudor House (www.margatemuseum.org) one of Margate's oldest buildings dating from the first half of the 16th century

Hornby Visitor Centre

(www.hornby.com/uk-en/hornby-visitor-centre) - a journey through the history of Britain's bestloved toys.

Quex Park, The Powell Cotton Museum, The Secret Garden Centre, Jungle Jim's , Quex

Barn and more in nearby Birchington (www.quexpark.co.uk) – year-round entertainment and fun for all the family. The Powell-Cotton Museum has been named as the most inspiring museum and heritage attraction in the UK (The Guardian Culture Professionals Network). Large outdoor and indoor play areas for younger visitors are set alongside Quex Barn where you can enjoy and buy top quality local produce. Restored Victorian Gardens and garden centre.

Dreamland

(www.dreamland.co.uk) - The UK's original pleasure park is full of a host of stylishly restored, recreated and retro-fitted rides and amusements from the Golden Age of British seaside hols. Plus there is the Roller Room and Octopus's Garden, an indoor children's playground.

Drapers Windmill

(www.draperswindmill.org.uk) – a 19th century Kentish smock windmill, built in 1845 by master millwright John Holman of Canterbury. Worked by wind until 1916 and then by gas engine, restored in the 1970s.



Shell Grotto



Powell-Cotton Museum



Hornby Visitor Centre

Entertainment

The Theatre Royal

(www.theatreroyalmargate.com) - a regional theatre with a great reputation for offering a lively programme of professional and community entertainments.

The Winter Gardens

(www.margatewintergardens.com) – set on the clifftops, the famous large venue stages a wide range of events, concerts and entertainments throughout the year.

The Tom Thumb Theatre

(www.tomthumbtheatre.co.uk) – one of the smallest theatres in the world created in a former coach house. Look out for comedy nights, burlesque, off-beat cinema, live music and more.

Outdoor adventures

Take the opportunity to swim or waterski at the resort's main bays. Stride out for exhilarating walks on the cliffs along the foreshore or take to two wheels on the Viking Coastal Trail. The Viking Coastal Trail (32 miles/51.4km) with its mini routes for walkers and cyclists exploring Smugglers Haunts and Beaches & Bays. Alternatively create your own path along the trail walking or cycling from Margate and Birchington to Reculver Towers or heading off from Margate to the popular resorts of Broadstairs and Ramsgate.

The Active Coast itinerary planner gives more detail on outdoor fun and adventure www.visitthanet.co.uk/activecoast. Download the Viking Coastal Trail map on www.vikingcoastaltrail.co.uk

Uncover the hidden depths of Margate past and present along the Margate Heritage Trail or step out along a restored ancient footpath between Turner's Margate and Dickens' Broadstairs (4 miles/6.4km).

www.turneranddickenswalk.co.uk

Great Days Out Whatever the Weather - find out a wealth of ways to discover and explore different aspects of Margate and its neighbouring towns and villages at

www.visitthanet.co.uk/itinerary-planner

NEW COASTAL EXPLORER PACKS

The packs enable self-guided exploration of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate, linking coast and heritage. Materials include trails, historic maps, binoculars, compass, rock pooling nets and marine life identification sheets. www.visitthanet.co.uk/coastalexplorers

Winter Gardens



Tom Thumb Theatre



Viking Coastal Trail at Minnis Bay





'Mrs Booth' Shell Ladv



T.S. Eliot shelter



Artistic impressions

JMW Turner's time living with his landlady and companion Mrs Sophia Booth in Margate made a lasting impression on his work as he rose to the challenges of capturing the qualities of light. Turner Contemporary now stands where he used to live. Turner (1775 – 1851) wrote: "The loveliest skies in Europe are over the Isle of Thanet."

Tracey Emin, one of the famous Britartists, grew up in Thanet and has announced to Margate in green neon: I Never Stopped Loving You.

TS Eliot (1888 – 1965) wrote large sections of The Waste Land while convalescing in Margate.

David Watkin (1925 – 2008) the awardwinning cinematographer was born in Margate. He worked with such directors as Ken Russell and Franco Zeffirelli. His work can be seen in such classics as Out of Africa and Chariots of Fire.

Famous entertainers with Blue Plagues to be discovered in Margate include Eric Morecambe, Hattie Jacques and John Le Mesurier.

Download a copy of the Margate Heritage Trail on www.visitthanet.co.uk

YEAR OF THE LITERARY HEROES

VisitEngland has declared 2017 the 'Year of Literary Heroes'. Discover more about Thanet's literary heroes in 'Write around Thanet – Literary Heroes in Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate' www.visitthanet.co.uk/literary



Key Annual Events



©Pete Cobb



FEBRUARY

GEEK (Games Expo East Kent) – A place to meet, make and play with a collection of digital and analogue activities for casual and dedicated

www.geek-play.com or www.dreamland.co.uk

MARCH

Margate Beach Cross – Watch the thrills and spills of quad bikes racing over the challenging course of Margate Main Sands. www.qrauk.com

MAY

Margate Mod and 60s Festival - celebrate the town's connections with the Mods and 60s over the bank holiday weekend. www.gbmusicculture.co.uk.

Margate Meltdown is a major motorcycle ride from the Ace Café, London, to Margate for a celebration of motorcycles and memorabilia, music and entertainments. www.ace-cafe-london.com

JULY

Skagate – the best in original 60s Ska, Reggae and Soul with guest live performances and DJs. www.oblyssoulcafe.co.uk

AUGUST

Margate Soul Festival – visitors from across the world enjoy the best of soul music and the resort's traditional seaside carnival filled with colourful floats.

www.margatesoulfestival.co.uk

OCTOBER

Screamland – the multi award-winning Screamland, dubbed by industry experts as 'the best scare event on any UK park", returns to Dreamland Margate. www.dreamland.co.uk

Food and drink, where to stay

ON THE MENU

Look out for the opportunity to enjoy a great Kent Breakfast – fare to suit all tastes for a morning boost with more than 60 per cent of the food and drink served produced in Kent. www.producedinkent.co.uk/kent-breakfast

Margate is home to a wide range of eateries and fine dining opportunities, with new venues popping up all the time. Enjoy a variety of cuisines alongside award-winning fish 'n chips. Restaurants serving local produce, including seafood, in original and unexpected dishes, such as Michelin Guide 2017 listed. The Ambrette (www.theambrette.co.uk) in the Old Town, are always popular and booking is advised.

Check out a wide range of local produce at Cliftonville's Farmers Market, a regular winner in the Produced in Kent Awards, or in local shops such as Kent Crisps and Quex Oils, or a pint or two from one of the many micro-pubs opening

across the Isle of Thanet. For a real taste of the traditional seaside sample some of Mannings' Cockles and Whelks on Margate harbour arm.

Find out more at www.visitthanet.co.uk

WHERE TO STAY?

Visitors are spoiled for choice for places to stay in Margate and its environs, from new and restored state-of-the-art boutique hotels alongside the Old Town, to embracing views over the sea and sands; contemporary guest houses and B&Bs, as well as self-catering cottages and houses or camping. Discover the full range of quality assessed accommodation at www.visitthanet.co.uk/accommodation

New for 2017 12 Arthur Road, Cliftonville

In the 1950/60s, 12 Arthur Road was the Cecil Hotel and accommodated up to 50 people. Redesigned by architect Sam Causer, this 1890s Cliftonville townhouse will be available for hire for groups of 10 to enjoy historic reception rooms, five ensuite bedrooms and a walled garden. Furnishings are being selected to reflect its Victorian beginnings, its 50/60s heyday and the needs of today. Supported with funding from the Dalby Square Townscape Heritage Initiative.













Roots, revival and regeneration

Once a small coastal village, Margate's development as a health and pleasure destination and then into one of the most popular seaside holiday spots in the country led to rapid expansion along the seafront and inland.

Growth was fuelled by the need for accommodation not only for visitors but all the people working in the tourism industry as well as people keen to acquire permanent and retirement homes for all-year enjoyment of the coast and its many differing and stunning landscapes.

Thanks to public and private investment, including the arrival of the internationallyacclaimed gallery at Turner Contemporary in 2011 and the re-opening of Dreamland in 2015, re-imagined for the 21st century, the resort is once again a leading, must-see UK destination meeting the needs of weekenders, day trippers and classic family holiday fun enthusiasts.

Luxury and themed boutique hotels, stylish B&Bs and guest houses and a range of restaurants have opened to welcome the new generation of visitors.

The golden sands of Margate and the rock pools of Walpole Bay promise hours of entertainment in the fresh air while the energetic can test their skills in a wide range of watersports, coastal walking routes and cycle paths.

A visit to the regular changing exhibitions at Turner Contemporary can be followed by gentle strolls through the cobbled streets of Margate Old Town now all an artistic buzz with galleries and workshops, vintage and retro shops, and a wide range of contemporary eateries and cafés for relaxing and people watching.

Visitors can regularly sit back and marvel at the dramatic sunsets over the sands that so inspired IMW Turner when he lived and painted in the town, before selecting from an excellent choice of fine dining venues and exploring the numerous entertainments on offer at the town's theatres and venues.

COMING SOON

Dreamland is one of Britain's oldest surviving amusement parks and has been an essential part of Margate's identity for nearly 100 years. Thanet District Council's efforts to secure the site has unlocked significant regeneration works and, along with other public organisations and the Dreamland Trust, helped secure £18m of public funding. It is likely that the site's jewels, the Grade II*-listed Scenic Railway, Grade II* - listed cinema complex and Grade II-listed menagerie cages, would have further degenerated without this intervention.

Alongside the operator's plans for a new and rejuvenated offer on 26 May, the council is undertaking the next phase of redevelopment which will see the iconic Sunshine Café brought back to life and the front of the cinema building restored. www.thanet.gov.uk/dreamland

Margate Caves – Planning permission has been granted for a Visitor Centre, including café, shop and community room. Early stage funding passes and development funding has been received from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund. www.margatecaves.co.uk





©Dreamland Margate









Theatre Royal



The Shell Grotto

Interesting Facts

- · Originally, Margate was named Meregate (meaning marsh gate) because, until modern times the town lay between two tidal creeks.
- · Margate was one of the first seaside resorts, the first to have donkey rides and the first to introduce deckchairs.
- Margate was one of the pioneers to offer bathing facilities and with its close proximity to London was a perfect resort for the London middle classes to enjoy the horse drawn 'Bathing machines' which offered privacy whilst bathing.
- The dome in the Shell Grotto acts as an accurate solar calendar.
- · Margate's Theatre Royal is Kent's oldest theatre.

- · Walpole Bay Tidal Pool celebrates its 80th year in 2017.
- The most famous self portrait of JMW Turner aged 24 - will appear on the £20 note by 2020.
- Comedian Eric Morecambe (1926-1984) held his wedding reception at the Bull's Head, Market Place.
- George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), regarded by many as the greatest English dramatist since Shakespeare, visited Margate in 1907. Arriving on the Granville Express, he went straight to the Theatre Royal to coach a new actor appearing in his play John Bull's Other Island. He was then at the peak of his powers, and celebrated as something of a cultural phenomenon.
- · Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), one of the founders of the pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, moved to Birchington near Margate in 1882 to recover from a serious illness. Sadly, he died soon after his arrival – his grave is marked by a Celtic cross, situated by the south door of All Saints Church, Birchington.
- TS Eliot (1888-1965), Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) all cited their time in Margate as being pivotal in the creation of their most famous works – The Waste Land, Das Kapital and The Lark Ascending respectively.
- Margate pioneered mixed bathing in the early C20th.
- Samuel Pepys used to get his colleagues drunk on 'Northdown Ale' imported from Margate.

- When the Beatles played for six consecutive nights at the Winter Gardens in July 1963, it was very early in their career, but they topped the bill. Their debut album, Please Please Me, had been released a few months earlier, and had been at the top of the charts for many weeks. Already they were being mobbed by fans, and in order to escape at the end of their shows, they had to use a little-known tunnel leading out to a side entrance. The Beatles didn't know that during the Second World War, the cells leading off the same tunnel had been used to hold and interrogate German prisoners of war – usually pilots who had to bale out over Thanet...
- · Self-styled nobleman 'Lord' George Sanger was a showman, circus proprietor and legend in his lifetime. He was the founder of the Hall-bythe-Sea in Margate (now part of the Dreamland complex) a combination of pleasure gardens, zoo and entertainment centre. His burial place in Margate Cemetery is marked by a striking horse statue and can be seen on a Margate Cemetery Tour.
- The Margate Museum of today, in the booming Old Town, was, prior to 1972 the Magistrates' Court. And as such it was the scene of two trials which marked the high point of major outbreaks of 'Moral Panic' in the post-war nation, both to do with the sale of saucy postcards, which were banned. Roll on to 1964, and another 'Moral Panic' also came to a head in Margate Magistrates' Court. It was the Whitsun Weekend, and the Mods and Rockers had come to Margate. What follows caused press outrage and public outcry and has remained notorious in popular memory as 'gang warfare' and 'the battle of the beaches'.
- At the outbreak of WWI a Royal Naval air Service Station, used by both seaplanes and land planes, was opened at St. Mildred's Bay, Westgate. Despite early optimism, the site was soon the scene of several night time accidents, so, in the winter of 1915-16 aircraft started to use open farmland at Manston as a site for emergency landings. Shortly afterwards Manston was officially developed into a Royal Naval Station and in WWII it became a frontline Battle of Britain airfield.



Margate Museum



Walpole Bay, Tidal Pool



West Bay, Westgate-on-Sea









Viking Bay

So close

BROADSTAIRS

Broadstairs succeeds in more than satisfying the needs of today's generations of short break, weekend visitors and daytrippers who flock to its beaches. Yet the coastal honeypot retains all the charms and features of a traditional seaside destination.

Morelli's, the quintessential 1950s ice cream parlour, still stands at the top of the chalk cliffs overlooking the flowers planted along the promenade and the gently sloping sands and rock pools of Viking Bay.

Charles Dickens, one of the town's most famous former visitor and resident, would easily recognise the narrow streets and flint walls in the older parts of the town and the streets winding down to the small fishing harbour.

Throughout the summer demand is high for the town's many guesthouses and B&Bs, self-catering houses and apartments.

As a resort, and a long-standing favourite destination for people of all ages and interests, Broadstairs has more than held its own and is thriving in the 21st century.

- · Seven sand-filled, family-friendly beaches and bays, 4 with Blue Flag or Seaside Awards
- · Stunning chalk cliffs including caves and muchphotographed stacks at Botany Bay
- · Closest surfing beaches to London and best in the south east
- · Timeless seaside charm

- · Traditional fishing harbour, cobbled squares and narrow streets
- · Vibrant nightlife economy and exciting eateries
- · Classic ice cream parlours and coffee shops
- · Clifftop gardens and bandstand
- · Clifftop and foreshore strolls, cycling and golf
- · Blues Bash (February), Spring Fair (Easter), Dickens Festival (June), Folk Week and Water Gala (August), Wheels and Fins (September), Broadstairs Food Festival (October).

A Broadstairs press pack is available, see back cover.







Royal Harbour



Ramsgate Tunnels

RAMSGATE

Ramsgate, a favourite seaside destination of Princess Victoria, is an architectural jewel in the coastal crown of the Isle of Thanet.

The town's long maritime history as a port, with the country's only Royal Harbour, and its thriving modern marina have contributed to the development of a relaxing Mediterranean-style waterfront filled with a wealth of bustling bistros and restaurants.

The resort's fine weather, superb sands, sea air and stunning views from the chalk cliffs alongside elegant side streets, independent shops, galleries and seaside entertainments add even more flavour to Ramsgate's popular café culture.

- UK's only Royal Harbour
- · Golden sands, famous family-friendly beach and bay, boat trips and clifftop walks
- Modern marina filled with luxury yachts
- · Augustus Pugin's house The Grange and St. Augustine's Church
- Elegant Georgian, Regency and Victorian architecture – hundreds of listed buildings
- Ramsgate Tunnels deep shelter tunnels built to protect civilians during WWII
- Active Ramsgate itinerary including two new canoe trails and a new coastal walk

- Thriving continental café culture along the south-facing waterfront
- Fine eateries serving local produce including seafoods
- · Retro and contemporary boutique hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs and self-catering
- Events include Great Bucket and Spade Run (June), Ramsgate Week, an alternative to Cowes, including Ramsgate Festival (July) and Heritage Open Days (September).

A Ramsgate press pack is available, see back cover.







Spitfire and Hurricane Memorial Museum



Minnis Bay

THANET VILLAGES

Just a short distance from the coast visitors discover a treasure chest of delights in Thanet's traditional villages.

Popular visitor gems include:

- Ouex Park Estate and the Powell-Cotton Museum, plus their annual events diary, including I Love Vintage (April), Museum at Night (May), Gears of Change and Fought for Freedom (June), Quexmas (November)
- The Spitfire and Hurricane Memorial Museum at Manston
- RAF Manston History Museum
- Minster Show (www.minstershow.org.uk) celebrating its 131th anniversary in July 2017. Minster and neighbouring villages work together to present action-packed entertainment, celebrating the success of flower and vegetable growers, cooks, jam and preserve makers and more.

- Minster Abbey at Minster possibly the oldest inhabited house in the country near where St Augustine led the first Christian mass in Britain
- Monkton Nature Reserve and Observatory trails. UK's first artificial bat cave, fossils and visitor centre
- Birchington and Westgate coastal villages with Blue Flag beaches at Minnis Bay, West Bay and St. Mildred's Bay
- St. Mary the Virgin Church A large Norman church with later additions and some unusual architecture. Also, eighteen fine medieval misericords, which are amongst the best in south east England.







Margate, Broadstairs, Ramsgate – why visit?

Londoners have been **escaping** to the Isle of Thanet for more that 200 years ... for the **laidback** seaside vibe ... breathtaking sandy beaches ... fresh sea air ... and romantic Turner skies ...

Here at the very **edge** of the **Garden of England**, three **Georgian and Victorian** resorts, each with its own distinctive character - Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate – **cluster** around the bays at the far end of the peninsula.

There's a **retro** feel to these harbour towns, with their remarkable 18th and 19th century architecture, their classic seaside heritage and kitsch, their eclectic attractions and live arts and music venues. And there is a variety of **independent** places to shop, eat, drink and stay.

Miles of low **chalk cliffs** edge the peninsula, sheltering a string of **secluded**, **unspoilt sandy** bays. Chalk rockpools, chalk stacks and rare

chalk reefs teem with **wildlife**. These are the closest surfing beaches to the capital city: a popular choice with southeast boarders.

Artists, writers and musicians have long been inspired by this almost-island ... and continue to be drawn here. **Turner** said Thanet had "the loveliest skies in all Europe" ... for **Dickens**, Broadstairs was "the freshest, freest place" ... and Tracey **Emin** declares in pink neon on Margate seafront: "I never stopped loving you".

The Isle's a historic landing place steeped in symbolism for the story of Britain ...the first Saxons, Hengist and Horsa, arrived and settled here ... and **St Augustine** first stepped onto these shores on his way to nearby **Canterbury**.

For this is the **furthest** south east you can go in Britain ... almost touching mainland **Europe** ... yet these days only 75 minutes from central London ...

And now with the **Turner Contemporary** gallery, the return of the iconic pleasure park Dreamland, reimagined for the 21st century, and high-speed trains from the capital ... a new generation is discovering this original seaside escape.

For further media information including packs on Thanet, Broadstairs and Ramsgate, press trips and access to up-to-date images, please contact Julie Edwards, Senior Tourism Officer at Visit Thanet, tel: 01843 577671 or email: julie.edwards@thanet.gov.uk

For further information about all Thanet visitor destinations and attractions go to www.visitthanet.co.uk

Visitor Information Services

The Droit House, Stone Pier, Margate, CT9 1JD T: 01843 577577 e: visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk









