



Ramsgate Press Pack

www.visitthanet.co.uk

How to reach Ramsgate?

Ramsgate 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 long an Island.

Ramsgate is easily accessible by car, coach and train. The country's only high speed train service, HS1, brings travellers from St Pancras, London, to Ramsgate in just 75 minutes.

There are regular train and bus services, including the Thanet Loop, to the neighbouring resorts of Broadstairs (2 miles/ 3.2km) and Margate (5.3 miles/ 8.5km). The City of Canterbury is 17.3 miles (27.8km) away and the Port of Dover, with its cross-channel services, just 20.5 miles (33km) distant taking the A256.



Escape to Ramsgate



Westcliff Arcade



Madeira Gardens



Royal Harbour

- UK's only Royal Harbour
- Elegant Georgian, Regency and Victorian architecture – hundreds of listed buildings
- Golden sands, famous family-friendly beach and bay, boat trips and clifftop walks
- Modern marina filled with luxury yachts
- Thriving continental café culture along the waterfront, cosmopolitan feel
- Fine eateries serving local produce including seafoods
- Retro and contemporary boutique hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs, self-catering
- Active Ramsgate itinerary, including two new canoe trails and a new coastal walk
- Ramsgate Tunnels – deep shelter tunnels built to protect civilians during WWII
- Events include Great Bucket and Spade Run (June), Ramsgate Week, an alternative to Cowes, which includes Ramsgate Festival (July), Heritage Open Days (September).

Ramsgate, a favourite seaside destination of Princess Victoria, is an architectural jewel in the coastal crown of the Isle of Thanet on the north eastern edge of Kent – the Garden of England.

The importance of the town's long maritime history as a port and its fine hospitality were recognised by King George IV when he awarded the harbour Royal status – a unique accolade in mainland Britain.

He was particularly impressed by the harbour, the warm welcome and the hospitality he received when he set off from Ramsgate with the Royal Squadron for Hanover in 1820.

Today the historic harbour and its thriving modern marina are the perfect setting for 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.



Ramsgate Main Sands



Pegwell Bay



Beaches and Royal Harbour

Ramsgate Main Sands – a south-facing Seaside Award winning spacious sandy beach, next to the Royal Harbour, popular with visitors and local people of all ages, throughout the day and into the long summer evenings. The sands slope gently into the sea and are ideal for young children as well as more confident swimmers. There are plenty of beach activities to enjoy with ice creams and fish 'n chips readily available just a few steps away.

Pegwell Bay – a superb destination for landscape lovers, geologists seeking rare cliff faces, bird watchers, photographers and outdoor enthusiasts. Country park.

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

Ramsgate Royal Harbour – www.portoframsgate.co.uk - historic buildings and attractions in a working harbour. The harbour was at the heart of the WWII Operation Dynamo when the "little ships" sailed to Dunkirk to ferry members of the armed forces to ships waiting in the Channel. The stunning Royal Harbour Marina has a Four Gold Anchor Award and 700 moorings serviced by first class facilities.

Galleries

Ramsgate's galleries offer artworks and crafts, many inspired by Thanet and the surrounding countryside, to suit all tastes.

Something Fishy – The Little Arch Gallery - ceramics and crafts by Suzy Curtis.

Silverland Studios
www.joe-allen.de – Artists' studios of two European recognised artists, gallery and teaching centres offering painting courses.

York Street Gallery
www.yorkstreetgallery.co.uk - home to the works of Thanet and Kent artists, and regular exhibitions throughout the year.

Attractions

Maritime Museum

www.ramsgatemaritimemuseum.org – recording the harbour’s seafaring history and including Ramsgate’s own Meridian – five minutes and 41 seconds ahead of GMT.

Also **Steam Tug Cervia** - a 320-ton steam tug moored next to the Maritime Museum. Open to visitors during summer weekends.

The Ramsgate Tunnels

www.ramsgatetunnels.org - Two miles of bomb-proof, deep shelter tunnels built to protect civilians during WWII and home to over 1,000 residents during this time.

Defence of the Nation Museum

www.defenceofthenationeducationcentre.org

The Grange

www.landmarktrust.org.uk - the first “modern house” and Grade I listed, designed and lived in by Augustus Pugin, who designed the interiors of the Houses of Parliament.

St. Augustine & Pugin: Shrine and Visitor Centre

www.augustine-pugin.org.uk – Shrine of St. Augustine, personal church and burial place of Augustus Pugin. New visitor centre opening in June 2017.

Italianate Greenhouse

www.italianateglasshouse.co.uk – an early 19th century delight constructed for Sir Moses Montefiore and now exquisitely restored.

The Micro Museum

www.themicromuseum.org – a celebration of personal computers and their roles in our lives.

Montefiore Mausoleum

www.ramsgatemontefioreheritage.org.uk – a replica of Rachel’s Tomb on the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. The resting place of Sir Moses and Lady Judith Montefiore.

St Augustine’s Cross

www.english-heritage.org.uk – the 19th century cross with Saxon design marking where it is thought the missionary Augustine landed in AD 597 bringing Christianity to England.

Spitfire and Hurricane Memorial Museum

www.spitfiremuseum.org.uk and **RAF Manston History Museum** www.rafmanston.co.uk - an RAF airfield was established at Manston in 1916. Manston served as a forward airbase in the Battle of Britain. The museums capture the lives of the pilots and the challenges they faced. Admire the Spitfire and Hurricane aircraft.

Petticoat Lane Emporium

(www.petticoatemporium.com) A city of paraphernalia with over 175 stalls.

Viking ship 'Hugin'

Replica Viking ship which sailed from Denmark to Thanet in 1949 commemorating the 1500th anniversary of the invasion of Britain.



Ramsgate Tunnels



Pugin Tomb at St. Augustine's Church. Photo: Ludmila Griffin



Spitfire and Hurricane Museum

Entertainment

Look out for impromptu entertainment on the waterfront overlooking Ramsgate Royal Harbour, from theatrical performances to cinema screenings, after enjoying the many outdoor activities on offer.

Granville Theatre

www.granvilletheatre.com

Cinema and theatre on Ramsgate's East Cliff.

Ramsgate Music Hall

www.ramsgatemusichall.com

An intimate venue with a capacity of just 125, offering a passionate music experience.

Granville Theatre



Outdoor adventures

Active Ramsgate has introduced 4 themed walks in the area, e-cycle itineraries of the Viking Coastal Trail, geocaching and two canoe trails, one guided and one self-guided. www.ramsgatetown.org/activeramsgate

Head out on bike or on foot along the 32 mile (51.4 km) **Viking Coastal Trail** and discover dramatic scenery and a wealth of local historical gems. The trail can be split into smaller themed sections and is also known as Regional Route 15 of the National Cycle Network – www.vikingcoastaltrail.co.uk

Sandwich & Pegwell Bay National Nature Reserve – www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk part of a Natural England Green Flag National Nature Reserve. In winter, thousands of wading birds gather here. In summer, orchids and other wild flowers flourish in the grasslands. Hugin, a reconstructed Viking longship overlooking Pegwell Bay is a longstanding family favourite.

King George VI park



Boat trips – see the seals on the Goodwin Sands, admire the beauty of one of the world's largest offshore windfarms, tour the harbour or go fishing. www.ribrequest.com/ www.seasearcher.co.uk

Join a **Costumed Walk** for a fresh look at some of Ramsgate's more colourful past, or follow a themed trail to discover the town during the Blitz. There's also the Pugin Town Trail, which traces Augustus Pugin's architectural legacy – www.visitthanet.co.uk

Golfing opportunities include St. Augustines Golf Club (www.staugustinesgolfclub.co.uk), Manston Golf Centre (www.manstongolfcentre.co.uk) and Stonelees (www.stonelees.com). There is also the newly opened Rascal Bay Mini Golf featuring huge dinosaurs.

Guided canoe trip





Montefiore mausoleum



Pugin's Grange



St. Augustine's Church

Artistic impressions

Princess Victoria enjoyed visiting and staying in the resort and, as Queen, she was eager to capture those memories and buy **William Powell Frith's** popular painting *Ramsgate Sands* (Life at the Seaside) completed in the 1850s.

Artist **Vincent Van Gogh** taught at a local school when he was 23 years old and made his home at Spencer Square. **Karl Marx** (1818 – 1883) stayed in the town on several occasions as did his mentor and supporter Frederik Engels.

Jane Austen's brother Frances Austen (1774 – 1865), who served as Admiral of the Fleet, lived in Ramsgate. Jane Austen visited him in the town and in her novel *Pride and Prejudice* Georgiana Darcy spends a summer in the town.

Victorian Gothic architect **Augustus Pugin** created his family home at The Grange. Pugin's son Edward completed the work his father had started at St Augustine's Church.

A Blue Plaque in Wellington Crescent marks the lodgings of **Samuel T Coleridge** (1772 – 1834) poet and author famed for *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. A plaque in Nelson Crescent records time spent in the town by **Wilkie Collins** (1824 – 1889) who wrote the detective novel *The Woman in White*.

Other celebrated residents include: **Anthony Buckeridge** (1912 – 2004) author of the Jennings school stories; actor **John Le Mesurier** (1912 – 1983) much remembered as *Sgt Wilson* in the BBC comedy series *Dad's Army*; and Golden Globe winner and Academy Award nominee **Brenda Blethyn OBE**.

YEAR OF LITERARY HEROES

VisitEngland has declared 2017 the 'Year of Literary Heroes'. Discover more about Ramsgate's literary heroes in 'Write Around Thanet – Literary Heroes in Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate'.



Great Bucket and Spade Run



Pugin's The Grange



Ramsgate Illuminations

Annual events

MARCH

Ramsgate International Film and TV Festival - new for 2017 and focussing on showing new works, helping to promote film makers.

www.ramsgateiftvfest.org

MAY

Spring Spectacular - family festival featuring world class cycle show, bi-plane aerobatics and a display from the 'Spirit of Kent' Spitfire.

www.defenceofthenationeducationcentre.org

JUNE (first weekend)

The Great Bucket and Spade Run - classic cars head to Ramsgate gathering at Government Acre. This fun event for all the family is presented by the Ramsgate Old Motor and Motorcycle Club. Vehicles date from the 1920s to the 21st century. Sideshows and children's rides.

www.rommcc.org.uk

JULY

Ramsgate Week the Royal Temple Yacht Club's annual international regatta, known as the friendly alternative to Cowes, including special events and entertainments around the harbour and waterfront.

www.ramsgateweek.com

Ramsgate Festival, part of Ramsgate Week offers a feast of creative and performance workshops, exhibitions, film, theatre and dance at venues across the resort.

www.ramsgatearts.org

SEPTEMBER

Heritage Open Days – explore behind the scenes in historic and heritage buildings many of which are not usually open to the public.

www.heritageopendays.org.uk

DECEMBER

Ramsgate Illuminations – Boats in the Royal Harbour and surrounding businesses get dresses for Christmas.

www.rtyc.com

Food and drink, where to stay

As King George IV noted, Ramsgate has a long tradition of providing great hospitality for all its guests. Today that tradition flourishes.

ON THE MENU

Restaurants and cafés across the town serve local fish and seafoods often alongside chips made with Thanet potatoes.

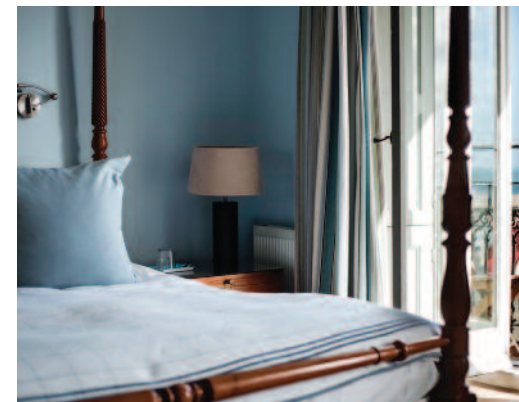
Meanwhile, as well as sampling a growing range of wines, ciders and fruit juices produced in Kent, there are plenty of opportunities to try *Gadd's No 3* from Ramsgate Brewery, a finalist for Kent's best beer in the 2016 Taste of Kent Awards.

Look out for Sorbetto Ice Cream Parlour, at Harbour Parade, Ramsgate, with its freshly-made traditional recipes and a wealth of different flavours www.sorbetto.co.uk

WHERE TO STAY?

Ramsgate has a long tradition of providing visitor accommodation from clifftop hotels overlooking the sea, quality guesthouses and B&Bs, self-catering town houses and cottages to camping. One of the latest additions to the long list of places to stay is the restored late 18th century Albion House boutique hotel - once popular with Royalty and politicians. The Falstaff Inn has also undergone an extensive and sympathetic regeneration and is now a boutique hotel and restaurant with eight individual designed bedrooms. The ever popular Royal Harbour Hotel now has additional rooms and a new restaurant – The Empire Room – which serves good quality food in a club-style setting.

find out more about quality assessed places to stay in Ramsgate at www.visitthanet.co.uk





Viking Ship Hugin



Ramsgate Arches



Ramsgate Town

Roots, revival and regeneration

Ramsgate's roots lie in fishing, boat building and farming – a history still reflected in the town's passion for local produce and fish dishes. Construction of the Royal Harbour started in the mid-18th century and finished approximately 100 years later. Much of the fine maritime architecture around the harbour – the main embarkation point for the Napoleonic Wars – still stands today.

The town was perfectly placed to be adopted as a fashionable health and pleasure destination by the wealthier aristocracy during the 18th century with many aspiring to have a second residence at the seaside.

Development of the railways in the mid-19th century made the town and its beaches even more accessible to holiday makers, group excursions and day trippers from the capital and beyond. The growing number of tourists gave a welcome boost to the local economy well into the 20th century.

Today Ramsgate's many visitors are a new generation of weekend breakers, day trippers, family holiday makers, outdoor enthusiasts seeking sailing and water sports alongside walking and cycling opportunities, second homers and boat owners taking advantage of the marina and its service trades.

Their enthusiasm for coastal escapes, staycations and short breaks away from major towns and cities in exhilarating landscapes is rapidly regenerating Thanet's three distinctive resort towns and their neighbouring villages.

Exciting 21st century attractions, entertainments, activities for outdoor

enthusiasts and events are now on offer alongside state-of-the-art boutique hotels, B&Bs, waterfront cafés, bistros and restaurants.

The revival of Ramsgate's visitor economy is greatly enhancing the quality of life for the town's 42,000 plus residents and leisure and pleasure seekers alike.

Ramsgate has been named as one in ten of the first Heritage Action Zones (HAZ) in the country by Historic England following a successful bid from Thanet District Council and Ramsgate Coastal Community Team. Funding and resources will be awarded to help breathe life back into Ramsgate's history.

Further investment in the seaside town includes:

Royal Victoria Pavilion

The Grade II listed building, next to Ramsgate Main Sands, is being developed by J D Wetherspoon into one of the largest public houses in the UK. It is due to open on 29 August.

St. Augustine & Pugin: Shrine and Visitor Centre

The Heritage Lottery Fund is supporting the development of a state-of-the-art Pugin and St Augustine education, research and visitor centre at St Augustine Church. The visitor centre will officially open on 3 June 2017.

www.augustine-pugin.org

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



Maritime Museum



Pugin's The Grange



St Augustine's Cross

Interesting Facts

- In 597AD St. Augustine's arrival marked the introduction of Christianity to this country. St. Augustine was the first Archbishop of Canterbury. St. Augustine's Cross marks the area where he is thought to have landed.
- The Vikings landed at Pegwell Bay in 449AD conquering first of all Thanet, then the rest of Kent. A replica Viking Ship 'Hugin' sits on the clifftop above Pegwell Bay.
- Ramsgate has the only 'Royal' harbour in the country, a status granted by King George IV in 1820, when he set off from Ramsgate to Hanover with the Royal Squadron, in honour of the hospitality he received.
- Ramsgate has its own 'mean time', being 5 minutes and 41 seconds faster than Greenwich Mean Time. This can be seen at the Maritime Museum.
- Sir Moses Montefiore (1784-1885) – Sheriff of London, financier, banker and philanthropist lived at East Cliff Lodge, now demolished, but the gatehouse still remains in King George VI park. Synagogue and Mausoleum at Hereson Road.
- Ramsgate Tunnels are the largest WW2 civil defence system in the United Kingdom
- The Goodwin Sands between Ramsgate and Deal are said to be the most navigationally dangerous stretch of water in the world
- Augustus Pugin and Sir Moses Montefiore both chose Ramsgate as the place to build their ideal communities.
- Above Ramsgate's Harbour at Nelson Crescent sits one of the few remaining Tidal Ball Towers in the country. The Ball used to be raised and lowered in a basket to indicate the depth of water within the Harbour, allowing ships outside of the Harbour to enter safely.
- Wilkie Collins, author of The Moonstone and The Woman in White (among 30 novels and more than 60 short stories, 14 plays and over 100 non-fiction pieces) was a frequent visitor to Ramsgate from the early 1870s. He would stay at No 14 Nelson Crescent, accompanied by Caroline Graves, described as his 'housekeeper' (though on census forms she appears as his wife).



Dreamland ©Oliver Dixon



Margate Main Sands



Margate Old Town

So close

MARGATE

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 and neighbouring Cliftonville became synonymous with family holiday fun, weekend escapes (including romantic liaisons) and daytrips.

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.

The re-opened and re-imagined Dreamland Pleasure Park is the newest addition and

celebrates the age of the Great British seaside amusement experience, including the country's oldest wooden roller coaster, the Grade II* listed Scenic Railway.

Along with the resort's 50,300 residents, visitors find themselves at the heart of the cultural and creative arts revolution sweeping along the coast of Kent.

- World-class art and cultural exhibitions at Turner Contemporary gallery
- Dreamland, the UK's original pleasure park - Lonely Planet named Kent the Best in Europe for family holidays 2015 citing the retro thrills of Dreamland
- Margate Old Town, vibrant and expanding creative sector, affectionately referred to as Shoreditch-on-Sea

- Classic seaside heritage – magnificent sands, beaches and bays, water sports, rock pools, cockles and whelks, fish 'n chips and candyfloss
- Major attractions and entertainments alongside many hidden gems
- Time and space to relax and enjoy the resort's famous Turner sunsets, clifftop walks and trails, and contemporary culture
- Independent galleries, vintage and retro hotspots, and quirky shops along cobbled streets
- Easter Beer Festival (April), GEEK (Games Expo East Kent, February), Margate Beach Cross (March/October), Mods and 60s Festival, Margate Meltdown (May), Skagate Play Expo Margate (July), Margate Soul Festival and Carnival, Beach Volleyball England Finals (August), Screamland (October).

A Margate press pack is available, see back cover.



Botany Bay



Joss Bay



Viking Bay

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 visitors and residents, 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 Blue Flag and Seaside Award beaches and bays
- Stunning chalk cliffs including caves and much-photographed 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.



Quex House



Spitfire and Hurricane Memorial Museum



West 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:

- Quex 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 131st 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 – including 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 than 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**.

In person

Ramsgate Visitor Information
Customs House
Harbour Parade
Ramsgate CT11 8LN

Visitor Information

Thanet Visitor Information Centre
The Droit House
Stone Pier
Margate CT9 1JD
Tel: 01843 577577
visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk



@VisitThanet



VisitThanet

www.visitthanetblog.com

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

VISIT THANET
Margate • Broadstairs • Ramsgate

