

October's Tourism Matters: Escape the Everyday and TXGB

Welcome to October's Tourism Matters

In addition to Government updates, this issue also includes potential opportunities for you to promote your business through VisitBritain/VisitEngland's 'Escape the Everyday' campaign and TXGB, which is being supported by Visit Kent.

We have been busy planning our autumn/winter activity and will have details to share with you next week.

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 visitthanet.co.uk/tourismmatters

Thanet District Council

Reopening High Streets Safely Fund

Back in July, Thanet District Council put in place several temporary highway measures in the district in order to help facilitate social distancing through the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund.

These measures have now been trialled for an initial period of three months and last week the decision was taken to extend the suspension of the parking bays along Harbour Parade in Ramsgate. Planters will be installed in place of the red and white barriers which we hope will be welcomed by businesses and residents. Ramsgate Town Council will be installing and maintaining these planters.

In Margate Old Town, a decision was made to reinstate six parking spaces along Lombard Street, opposite Market Place from Wednesday 7th October. The other spaces will remain suspended for the time being, however this will be kept under constant review.

The council has also appointed an external consultant, part time Business Support Officer, Sharon Davies, who will be working to understand the needs of our high street businesses and provide timely and relevant support in response. The postcard pictured below is being sent to all high street businesses and Sharon begins meeting them from next week.

Government Advice

New government proposals to protect small businesses with action on late payments

[New proposals](#) have been outlined by the Government to give the Small Business Commissioner (SBC) new powers to support businesses and resolve late payment issues. Proposed new powers include ordering businesses to pay in good time and issuing fines if they do not, ordering companies to share information on payment practices and the power to launch investigations.

New Job Retention Bonus guidance

The [new guidance](#) sets out the information employers who have furloughed employees need to know in order to claim the bonus. The Job Retention Bonus is a £1,000 one-off taxable payment to employers for each eligible employee that they furloughed and kept continuously employed until 31st January 2021. The bonus will work alongside the [Job Support Scheme](#).

Who can claim

- Employers can claim the bonus if they have furloughed employees and made an eligible claim for them through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. Employees must have been eligible for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme grant for employers to be eligible for the bonus.
- Employers can still claim the bonus if they make a claim for that employee through the Job Support Scheme. Guidance on the Job Support Scheme will be published soon.

The bonus will be able to be claimed between 15th February and 31st March 2021, employers do not have to pay the bonus to their employees.

Updates to Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme Guidance

The [last day businesses can submit claims](#) for periods ending on or before Monday 30th October is 30th November 2020. After this date you will not be able to submit any further claims or add to existing claims.

Guidance clarifications

Following queries from industry around details in the guidance, please see below some clarifications, which you may find useful.

- **Wearing face coverings behind perspex screens:** Face coverings must be worn by retail, leisure and hospitality staff working in areas which are open to the public and where they come or are likely to come within close contact of a member of the public. If businesses have taken steps in line with HSE guidance for COVID Secure workplaces to create a physical barrier (e.g. perspex) between workers and members of the public, then staff behind the barrier will not be required to wear a face covering. This position has been cleared by DHSC legal in conjunction with HSE.
- **Event venues and hotel function spaces:** DCMS has confirmed with BEIS that if venues comply with the COVID Secure guidance and all the relevant planning and alcohol licencing requirements they can operate in the same way as restaurants with tables of six in a function room.
- **NHS QR Code Posters and self-catering properties:** The Department of Health and Social Care has confirmed that operators need to put QR code posters in self-catering properties.

Other guidance updates

- The deferral of VAT payments guidance has been updated. [Businesses who deferred VAT](#) due from 20th March to 30th June 2020 will now have the option to pay in smaller payments over a longer period. Instead of paying the full amount by the end of March 2021, businesses can make smaller payments up to the end of March 2022, interest free.
- The [safer travel guidance for passengers](#) reflects latest rules on social contact and face coverings.

- The [Self-Employment Income Support Scheme](#) video guidance has been updated with information on how to claim the second grant.
- Updates have been made to the guidance on [how to self-isolate when arriving in the UK](#), including exemptions for people arriving from countries on the travel corridors list and clarifying that the self-isolation period begins on the day the person leaves the non-exempt country or territory.

[VisitBritain/VisitEngland](#)

We're Good To Go

Recently VisitEngland launched a new TV ad, in partnership with the national tourism organisations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, to support their UK-wide industry standard and consumer mark, 'We're Good to Go'.

'We're Good To Go' provides a 'ring of confidence' for tourism, enabling businesses to demonstrate to customers that they are adhering to the respective Government and public health guidance around COVID-19.

The new ad, funded by the Government as part of a wider campaign, will run across TV and social channels, including ITV and Channel 4 until Saturday 11th October.

A website has been created listing businesses that have achieved the mark <https://goodtogo.visitbritain.com/discover>

Escape the Everyday campaign goes live

VisitBritain/VisitEngland's Escape the Everyday campaign is now live and aims to inspire UK residents to book a trip this autumn and winter.

The £5 million campaign was developed in partnership with the tourism organisations of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and highlights the quality destinations, visitor attractions and experiences on offer across the UK.

Download their [toolkit](#) to participate in the campaign.

[Visit Kent](#)

Distribute your bookable product via TXGB

VisitEngland has launched TXGB, a brand-new digital marketplace that enables attractions, accommodation, and experience-providers to sell and manage multiple booking channels via one simple platform.

Visit Kent is supporting a three-month trial as a Distributor on the platform, to see how it works, and to understand if their partners find it useful and beneficial to their businesses.

As part of this trial, Visit Kent are encouraging all tourism businesses in Kent to sign up for free and get involved. To find out more about the platform, take a read of the [Onboarding Document here](#).

Key benefits of getting involved include:

- Quickly and easily add book-ability to your website and social channels, so that you can maximise direct bookings
- Use the platform's own TX-LOAD for free if you do not have an existing booking system
- Integrate your bookable product with local and national destination marketing campaigns, via Visit Kent, or large Online Travel Agents such as Booking.com
- Manage all of your distributors in one place, so that you can reduce admin resources that can arise from selling your product via multiple channels. This is particularly helpful in the current situation when you may book up quickly due to reduced capacity. This solution will help you to close off availability on multiple channels in one easy step.
- No sign up fees, and no commission unless you confirm a booking

Still have questions? Watch this introductory video on TXGB (<https://www.txgb.co.uk/>)

As a distributor, Visit Kent will be able to distribute your bookable product via their consumer-facing website, www.visitkent.co.uk, and as part of the trial, welcome all feedback on how TXGB is working for you. As a not-for-profit organisation, the small 2.5% commission fee (when you opt in to choose Visit Kent as one of your distributors) will be reimbursed back into their marketing to drive traffic to their channels, thus increasing bookings.

If you have any questions please contact [Josh Carter at Visit Kent](mailto:josh.carter@visitkent.co.uk), or for technical questions please contact TXGB directly on support@txgb.co.uk or 0330 223 5050.

Tourism Service News

Maternity Leave News

Lisa Powell, Visitor Services Officer, will be going on maternity leave on Thursday 15th October. Her job share Francesca Sayer-Doyle will be picking up anything in her absence francesca.sayer-doyle@thanet.gov.uk. Francesca works Wednesday to Friday 9:30am - 3:30pm. Outside of these times the Visitor Services Team will be able to help visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk

Your News

Congratulations to **The Reading Rooms, Margate** who celebrate their 11th anniversary of opening on Wednesday 28th October. Along with this they have been shortlisted in the [Food and Travel magazine](#) 2020 Reader Awards in the Hotel of the Year: Bed & Breakfast category. The winners will be announced in the January issue of the magazine, on sale from 18th December.

Events

- 10th, 11th, 17th, 18th, 24th and 25th October: Artist Open Houses www.visitthanet.co.uk/events/artists-open-houses-19516/
- 10th, 11th, 17th, 18th, 24th - 31st October and 1st November: Pumpkin Picking And Trick Or Treat Trail www.visitthanet.co.uk/events/pumpkin-picking-and-trick-or-treat-trail-66145/
- Until 11th October: Margate NOW <http://margatefestival.org/>
- From 23rd October: Back and Fill Festival, Margate and Ramsgate <https://backandfill.uk/>