**October’s Tourism Matters: Workshops, Funding and Information Requests**

The weather has definitely taken an autumnal turn with the evenings getting darker earlier and a chill in the air.

This month we bring you details of a Creative Isle Community Rail Partnership workshop, 1-2-1 business advice sessions, a photography opportunity and ask for your assistance with 2022/23 information

**Tourism and Visitor Services News**

**Creative Isle Community Rail Partnership (CICRP) Biodiversity Stakeholder Group**

Next year the Community Rail Partnership will be instigating a community garden or rewilding project in or connected to several train stations in Thanet. It will exist as a resource for workshops, commissions and engagement around radical growing practices, foraging, permaculture and so on. The project's direction will be initiated by a series of Stakeholder Meetings; bringing together community groups and individuals interested in the project.

The event takes place on Saturday 16th October at The Garden Gate Project 11am. [To find out more and register click here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/invitation-cicrp-biodiversity-stakeholder-meeting-tickets-180150584247)

[Find out more about the Creative Isle Community Partnership here](https://turnercontemporary.org/community-rail-partnership/)

**What’s New and Anniversaries 2022/23**

If you have anything new of touristic appeal planned for 2022/23, or if your venue or event is celebrating a key anniversary, please let us know. This information will be sent to national and regional tourism bodies, plus be used in our PR activities. It will also appear on our website and in social media posts where relevant. Please send information, and image and link for further information to tourism@thanet.gov.uk

**What are you doing for Christmas and the New Year?**

If you are planning an event for Christmas and New Year, do please let us know so that we can add it to our website, include in social media and answer media and visitor enquiries that we may receive.

Events can be submitted using the [online form](https://www.visitthanet.co.uk/submit-your-event/) on our website, from where they will be authorised for publishing or by emailing to [visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk)

**Blog opportunities?**

Did you see our ‘[Ramsgate 200](https://www.visitthanet.co.uk/visit-thanet-blog/ramsgate-200/)’ blog ? Our blogs can be used as a source of ideas for your guests and shared on social media - please do reshare on your channels to inspire future visits.

Over the autumn period we will be working on a series of blogs from new attractions, new experiences through the Interreg Experience Development Programme, winter activities and plans for 2022.

If you would like to contribute a guest blog to appear on [www.visitthanet.co.uk](http://www.visitthanet.co.uk) that would be promoted through our social media channels, please let us know on [tourism@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:tourism@thanet.gov.uk)

**Thanet District Council**

**Totally Locally Fiver Fest**

During lockdown, the pivotal role that our local businesses played in the well-being of our communities became even more evident. The initiative ‘[Fiver Fest](https://totallylocally.org/fiver-fest/)’ is supported by the Welcome Back Project and is a way for independent businesses to encourage people back to town centres. Participating businesses are offering £5 bargains, so watch out for posters on your local high street. Fiver Fest takes place until Saturday 23rd October

Find out more about the offers available via the following ‘shop local’ Facebook pages or to see all Thanet businesses [please click here](https://tinyurl.com/Thanet-Fiver-Fest-Map)

* Margate – [facebook.com/groups/MARGATE.ItsHappening](https://www.facebook.com/groups/MARGATE.ItsHappening)
* Broadstairs & St Peters – [facebook.com/groups/1203309173512103](http://facebook.com/groups/1203309173512103)
* Ramsgate – [facebook.com/groups/ramsgatelocalshoppers](http://facebook.com/groups/ramsgatelocalshoppers)
* Birchington – [facebook.com/groups/1112816025739360](http://facebook.com/groups/1112816025739360)
* Westgate – [facebook.com/groups/shoplocalwestgateonsea](http://facebook.com/groups/shoplocalwestgateonsea)

Any independent business on the highstreets who wishes to participate in the Fiver Fest in Thanet, should contact Sharon Davies, Business Support Consultant at Thanet District Council via [highstreets@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:highstreets@thanet.gov.uk)

**Margate Town Deal Survey**

As you may be aware, [Margate has secured a Town Deal](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/campaigns/margate-town-deal/) from the Government which means investment of up to £22.2m for Margate from the Towns Fund. The various projects are being developed and business cases produced which will in turn start to release the funding to deliver the projects over a five year period.

Throughout the life of the Margate Town Deal, we want to work with local businesses to explore how it can help you grow and how you and your business could support the delivery of the Deal. Thanet District Council are starting this conversation with a [quick survey](https://wh1.snapsurveys.com/s.asp?k=163109332632) to find out how, where, and when businesses across Margate would like to get involved.

Please take five minutes to complete this short survey. The closing date has been extended to **Monday 18th October**. Thanet District Council wants to hear from as many Margate businesses as possible

Thank you for your support and if you have any questions or queries about the Margate Town Deal please contact the project team by emailing [margate-town-deal@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:margate-town-deal@thanet.gov.uk)

**Ramsgate Seafront Proposals - Highway & Pedestrian Movement Scheme**

A public consultation has recently launched on proposed improvements to Ramsgate High Street and surrounding areas. These improvements will be funded by the Future High Street Fund and aim to create a safer, more accessible and appealing environment for both local residents and visitors by:

* providing better pedestrian access and encourage walking between key areas of the town
* Helping to manage traffic flow
* reducing the dominance of vehicles

If you would like to take part in the consultation, please complete the [online survey](http://www.thanet.gov.uk/campaigns/ramsgate-future/?tab=6) which is open until 5pm on Friday 26th November 2021.

**Southern Water Update**Following a failure at Southern Water’s Wastewater Pumping Station in Broadstairs on Tuesday 5th October, beach users were advised not to enter the sea or the area of beach below the high water mark at 14 Thanet beaches. This covered the stretch of coast from Westbrook Bay to the Western Undercliff in Ramsgate.

Temporary signs were installed on all affected beaches and daily inspections were carried out to assess the impact.

The restrictions have now been lifted on all 14 bays and the signs have been removed.

The Council Leader has called for another meeting with Southern Water to express her frustrations and for reasurances around when improvements to the wastewater system in Thanet will be made.

**Response to motion on holiday rental properties**At a Full Council meeting on Thursday 14th October, a motion was put forward to Councillors to discuss issues raised by residents concerning the growth in holiday rental properties, and the current shortage of rented accommodation in Thanet.

A vote by Councillors determined not to debate the motion at the meeting to allow an opportunity to conduct a more informed discussion.

Cllr Jill Bayford, Cabinet Member for Housing, said: “*The issues surrounding rented holiday accommodation in the district are complex and need to be looked at in detail. Tourism plays a vital role in the economy of Thanet and we need to be sure that any decisions that may impact on it are interrogated thoroughly.*

*“As we are not in possession of all of the necessary information to review the broader landscape, this evening (Thursday 14th October) we took the decision against debating the motion. This will allow us the opportunity to conduct an informed discussion, based on accurate data and involving the appropriate experts.”*

**Visit Kent Business Support Schemes**

Visit Kent is working alongside Visit Britain and Quality in Tourism to promote two valuable business support schemes. Both schemes, designed to help reduce the spread of Covid-19, are part of the Government’s Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF), awarded to Visit Kent via Kent County Council. Both schemes are FREE and designed to help you reassure your customers that you are following Government requirements and guidelines to reduce the risk of transmission.

**'We're Good to Go' (WGTG) Industry Standard**

We're Good to Go, a UK-wide industry standard, is a recognised way of telling customers that clear Covid-safe processes are in place and that a business is safe to visit - a great sales message!

**Quality in Tourism (QT) 1-2-1 Sessions:** FREE Bespoke Covid Risk Assessments and Practical Operational Advice

An in-depth 1-2-1 session (virtual or face-to-face) following the ‘visitor journey’, run by experienced, personable, industry experts, providing practical operational advice and guidance.

To find out more and for details on how to apply, visit the [Visit Kent Business website](https://www.visitkentbusiness.co.uk/covid-19-business-support/guidance-and-advice-for-the-tourism-and-hospitality-industry/) or contact [Mark Sandberg](mailto:mark.sandberg@visitkent.co.uk)

**Other News**

**Federation of Small Businesses Awards Now Open**

Entries for the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) Awards are now open, with the awards recognising and celebrating the huge contribution that smaller businesses and the self-employed make to the UK.

Entries can be made in more than one category for FREE including Start-Up Business of the Year, Micro Business of the Year, Environmental/Sustainability Award and Business & Product Innovation Award

For more information on the awards and to enter by **Sunday** **6th February 2022,** [can be found here](http://www.fsbawards.co.uk)

**SELEP Grant**

The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) is making available grants of up to £2,000 for digital support for start ups and small businesses in Kent, East Sussex and Essex. The grants will be available from Monday 18th October and you will need to explain how the grant will be a solution to the impact of Covid-19 on you or your business. [Find out more and register on the online portal](https://digital.wsxenterprise.co.uk/)

**Great Exposure Photography Competition**

Open until Sunday 31st October, The GREAT campaign has launched a new competition with a unique opportunity for you to take a picture that captures the true spirit of the UK from your own personal perspective, and inspires others to see things differently. The winning image will be on display at Heathrow Airport. [To find out more and enter click here](http://www.greatbritaincampaign.com/greatexposurecompetition)

**Your News**

Congratulations to **The Reading Rooms**, Margate who are celebrating their 12th anniversary of opening. They have been selected to be featured in a new book 'British Boutique Hotels' out very soon published by Hoxton Press.