**October’s Tourism Matters: Opportunities, Anniversaries and Welcomes**

Dear Tourism Industry Colleague

Welcome to October’s Tourism Matters

In this month's newsletter we give a warm welcome to our new Museums Manager, bring you details of a volunteer event and workshops, plus updates on council projects. We also wish two local businesses a happy anniversary.

**Tourism and Visitor Services News**

**Welcome to our new Museum Manager**

On Thursday 19 September we welcomed Darran Cowd to the team. Darran takes on the role of Museums Manager covering the council’s four museums, so you will be seeing him regularly in Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate.

Darran’s role encompasses museum operations, from collecting artefacts, collections care and management, through to visitor engagement and experience, with fundraising thrown in for good measure.

Luckily Darran’s previous experience means he can ‘hit the ground running’. This includes five years as curator/manager of Folkestone Museum, development of the Kent Mining Museum at Betteshanger Country Park and working at national museums such as the National Coal Mining Museum and RAF Museum.

Outside of work Darran’s passion is industrial heritage and archaeology, both separately and together. He’s a voracious reader and has been known to go on some very long walks!

More news to follow on works being undertaken on our museum buildings over the winter.

**Visitor Information Services opening hours**

The Thanet Visitor Information Centre at Droit House, Margate is open Tuesday - Sunday 10am-5pm throughout October with the exception of Half Term (Saturday 26 - Sunday 3 November) when it will be open daily. The centre will be open Wednesday to Sunday 10am-5pm during November and December.

**Ramsgate Visitor Information Centre** at The Custom House is open October to March, Monday - Saturday 11am - 3pm.

**Volunteer Event Invitation**

Join Kent Coast Volunteering (KCV) for their Thanet Network & Knowledge Session on Thursday 17 October 1pm-2.30pm at Margate Caves.

The event will see Thanet Heritage Hub introduce their invaluable, free Heritage Volunteer Toolkit and update on the work they have been doing. The afternoon will include networking, table discussions and peer sharing opportunities and is relevant to all those working in the heritage sector, and beyond.

To book a FREE place, [click here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/thanet-network-knowledge-session-recruiting-retaining-volunteers-tickets-949664651537?aff=ebdssbcategorybrowse&keep_tld=1&fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR1j0LRbPdUUwsK74_ppc-C6GYyrFfO5OP2Oo152KwrhW0Hfq7TiW78MmpA_aem_Rqj3m8oe1OeNVnetOi2TgQ)

The workshop is part of a series of events being supported as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Community Champions Programme

**Visitors’ Map copy request**

Calling all venues who close over the winter months or have reduced opening. If you have a generous supply of Visitors’ Maps that you think you might not get through, please let us know so that we can potentially redistribute. Contact us on tourism@thanet.gov.uk.

The current map will be valid until March 2025. We aim to have the Visitors’ Map 2025/26 available for distribution toward the end of March, in good time for the Easter holidays.

**Are you following us on social media?**

Please follow us on social media to keep up to date with events, new openings, celebrations, national days and inspiration.

Find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/VisitThanet) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/visitthanet/) at @visitthanet and please remember to tag us in your posts

Don't forget that our blogs are a great source of ideas to share with your guests and on social media - please feel free to reshare them on your channels to inspire future visits www.visitthanet.co.uk/blog

**Community Champions Programme**Have you heard about the Community Champions Programme? The programme has been set up to support the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector, by creating opportunities for free networking, training and funding support as well as working with the sector to help build capacity and promote collaboration.

The programme includes a free leadership course with Stronger Kent Communities, training with Social Enterprise Kent, volunteer support with Kent Coast Volunteering and funding support and mentorship with Funding for All.

There is a full range of training courses available for all types of volunteer organisations including tourism with [details here](https://www.kcv.org.uk/what-were-up-to/thanet-training-and-networking/)

**Training Courses**

* Thursday 7 November at Margate Football Ground - Best Practice Training: Volunteer Retention. [Book here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/949849353987)
* Thursday 5 December at Sugar Rush Ramsgate - Best Practice Training: Handling Difficult Situations [Book here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/949850116267)

**Networking Events**

* Wednesday 20 November at Discovery Planet Ramsgate - Network and Knowledge Open Forum: Volunteering. [Book here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/949678292337)
* Thursday 5 December at Sugar Rush Ramsgate - Network and Knowledge: Celebrating Volunteers. [Book here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/949682896107)

The programme is being managed by Thanet District Council as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and is commissioning local VCSE organisations to deliver.

To find out more, visit the [Community Champions Programme website](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/info-pages/community-champions-programme/)

**Thanet Community Champions Awards 2025**

We know that many of our attractions and tourism organisations rely heavily on volunteers and will have their own champions. The council has launched the Thanet Community Champions Awards, in partnership with SEK (Social Enterprise Kent). Funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Nominations are open to everyone, and could be for a volunteer at a local group, a charity worker who goes above and beyond or simply someone who has dedicated much of their life to charitable work.

Why not nominate one or more of your team via the [SEK website](https://sekgroup.org.uk/support/support-for-people/tcc-awards/), until the closing date of Tuesday 31 December. The winners will be announced at an event in March 2025. There’s more information on the awards in the [council’s newsroom](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/nominations-invited-for-thanet-community-champions-awards-2025/)

If you’re part of a local VCSE group, or know someone who is, please visit the [council website](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/services/uk-shared-prosperity-fund/), where there’s a wealth of information on the support available.

**Thanet District Council**

**Margate Main Sands and Stone Bay Broadstairs Toilet Development**

Works to refurbish the subterranean toilets and build new toilets above the entrance on Marine Drive, Margate near the Clock Tower have been approved by the [Council](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/council-considers-600k-investment-in-upgraded-public-toilets-for-margate-and-broadstairs/).

Also approved are plans for works to refurbish the existing toilet block at Stone Bay, Broadstairs and build a new accessible toilet block at promenade level.

It is anticipated that works will commence in 2025.

**Broadstairs Harbour Works**

Broadstairs Harbour Arm can often take a battering over the autumn and winter months. Work is needed to protect the harbour from erosion and weather damage, and to reduce the risk of flooding for properties nearby.

The council’s teams are replacing the sea wall and installing flood gates. The existing harbour structure is being repaired and stabilised, and the tarmac resurfaced.

Access to the eastern side of the Harbour car park will be restricted from Tuesday 15 October to Monday 2 December, while work takes place.

**Teenage Market is back!**

The Teenage Market is returning with a festive feel on Saturday 30 November at The Centre, Margate from 11am to 5.30pm.

Do you know a local young person aged 8-25 years who might like to register to be a stallholder or perform on the day? [Click here for more information](https://theteenagemarket.co.uk/events/festive-teenage-market/)

**Other News**

**Creative Isle Community Rail Partnership Accreditation**

The [Creative Isle Community Rail Partnership](https://turnercontemporary.org/community-rail-partnership/) (CICRP), a collaboration between Turner Contemporary, Thanet District Council and Southeastern, has been awarded accreditation by the Department for Transport.

The CICRP has been recognised for its effective community engagement, the transparency of their objectives, working in a safe and ethical manner and collaborating constructively with the rail industry to facilitate projects that focus on equality, diversity and inclusion.

This is a great achievement which creates access to new funding opportunities to support CICRP’s ambitious arts-led projects in and around the stations of Thanet.

**Beach of Dreams – you’re invited!**

Beach of Dreams, a UK-wide Coastal Arts Festival, is inviting lovers of the coast to embark on a month-long celebration and exploration of the UK coastline through a series of new artwork commissions, creative walks and coastal events from 1 May to 1 June 2025.

Supported by Arts Council England and Historic England, eight new artworks will be created across a range of disciplines including sculpture, soundscapes, dance, photography and writing. Individuals, community groups and organisations are invited to get involved, [find out more here](https://beachofdreams.org/get-involved/)

**Your News**

Happy 3rd Birthday to Margate’s [**Crab Museum**](https://www.crabmuseum.org/) on Tuesday 22 October. This is Europe’s #1 crab museum and a great addition to Thanet's tourism offering.

[**The Reading Rooms**](https://www.thereadingroomsmargate.co.uk/), Margate is celebrating its 15th anniversary since opening on Tuesday 29 October. The property was featured on Channel 4’s ‘Hotel Rescue’ with Ruth Watson (previously the Hotel Inspector) and is in the Margate Mercury autumn edition’s ‘Thanet Island Discs’ feature.

**Crampton Tower Museum Needs You**

Could you spare a few hours to join the team at Broadstairs’ [Crampton Tower Museum](https://www.cramptontower.co.uk) helping with small maintenance jobs or to steward visitors?

If so, the museum is looking for volunteers to assist for a couple of hours per week (one afternoon) during March - October with additional help required for Christmas.

If you are interested or for more information, please visit the Joyce Smith Hall, next to the museum on Wednesday mornings 10am-12pm or contact 07870 864770