**November’s Tourism Matters: Survey Assistance, Tourism Superstar and Congratulations**

Dear Tourism Industry Colleague

It's hard to believe that we are getting so close to Christmas now that Halloween and Bonfire Night have been celebrated.

In this issue we bring you details of how to apply for VisitEngland’s Tourism Superstar, news of award shortlisting and wins and seasonal content that can be shared with your guests. There is the chance to have your say in the latest Boundary Change review and public toilet renewals.

**Tourism and Visitor Services News**

**HOLD the Date: Monday 27 January 2025**

**Stronger Together - Hospitality industry event with East Kent College**

We are holding a networking workshop for Thanet hospitality businesses, in partnership with East Kent College, as part of our UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme of activity.

Industry speakers will provide updates on changes affecting businesses nationally, with advice on the support available, plus practical discussion on how the college and our local hospitality industry can work together effectively for mutual benefit. The programme is still being finalised, more information will follow soon.

This event will complement Visit Kent’s event (see details below) which will provide information on Sector-based Work Academy Programme (SWAPs), funded by the KCC Helping Hands Fund.

**National Coastal Tourism Academy Business Survey**

We would encourage as many businesses as possible to complete the latest National Coastal Tourism Academy (NCTA) Coastal Business Survey for Visitor Economy. The survey focuses on performance over 2024, the impact of the recent budget, future bookings and challenges.

[The survey can be found here](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NCTA_Thanet). **The deadline for completion is Sunday 15 December**.

Any information you provide is strictly confidential. If enough businesses take part, we receive a general report for Thanet (no individual business information is shown). This information helps us to understand how Thanet compares nationally. The results will be used by NCTA to lobby the government for further support.

**Visitor Information Services Seasonal Opening Hours**

The Thanet Visitor Information Centre at Droit House, Margate is open Wednesday to Sunday, 10am to 5pm throughout November and December, with the exception of the festive period:

**OPEN:** Wednesday 18 - Sunday 22 10am-5pm and Friday 27 - Sunday 29, 11am-4pm

**CLOSED**: Monday 23 - Thursday 26 and Monday 30 December - Wednesday 1 January

**REOPEN:** Wednesday - Sunday from Thursday 2 January 2025, 10am-5pm

**Ramsgate Visitor Information Centre** at The Custom House is open October to March, Monday - Saturday, 11am - 3pm with the exception of the festive period. Closed from 1pm Tuesday 24 December until 11am Friday 3 January.

**Christmas Events and Attraction Opening Hours**

As so many events have already been announced in the lead up to Christmas, we have created a dedicated page on our website [www.visitthanet.co.uk/christmas](http://www.visitthanet.co.uk/christmas). You can share this with your guests, visitors, friends and family or use it for further information.

Within the section we have a page dedicated to attractions open [www.visitthanet.co.uk/xmasopen](http://www.visitthanet.co.uk/xmasopen) over the festive period. If you are not included please let us know at [visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:visitorinformation@thanet.gov.uk)

We have updated our series of Christmas-themed blogs and added new ones that can be reached through this dedicated section [www.visitthanet.co.uk/christmas](http://www.visitthanet.co.uk/christmas)

**Visit Britain /VisitEngland**

**Who is your Tourism Superstar 2025?**

Nominations are now open for VisitEngland’s annual [Tourism Superstar competition](https://www.visitbritain.org/working-us/visitenglands-tourism-superstar-award) championing those people in the tourism industry who provide an unforgettable visitor experience.

People can be nominated by the business or organisation they work for, their local destination organisation (DMO), a co-worker or by themselves.

**Nominations are to be made** [**online via the form**](https://visitenglandawards.secure-platform.com/tourismsuperstar/organizations/main/home) **by Sunday 1 December with the 10 Tourism Superstar finalists announced by Friday 6 December.**

The winner will be crowned at the end of the competition, based on the highest number of public votes received.

**Visit Kent**

**Tourism & Hospitality Skills Boost Events**

Visit Kent is holding a series of events in November. You’ll hear about their Tourism & Hospitality Skills Boost Project funded by Kent County Council through the Helping Hands Scheme. There will also be information on the upcoming initiatives to help with recruiting skilled staff and volunteers, a new dedicated online tourism talent hub, as well as help with recruiting and supporting staff with disabilities.

You'll have the chance to connect with representatives from your local college, who will share insights into their work with students. There will be representatives from the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) who will explain how they, in partnership with the colleges, can support your recruitment efforts through Sector-based Work Academy Programmes (SWAPs). This is an excellent opportunity to access tailored recruitment support for any roles you're looking to fill in the upcoming year.

**What are SWAPs?**

SWAPs are fully-funded through the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and provide pre-employment training to job seekers, based on a programme of tailored training. The DWP and training provider will match newly trained job seekers with employers who are engaged with the programme and have vacancies to fill. This means that businesses such as yours can recruit staff with the right training and skills from the outset.

**Monday 25 November 2pm-4.30pm at East Kent College, The Yarrow Hotel, Ramsgate Road, Broadstairs CT10 1PN**

To find out more and register to attend, [click here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/visit-kent-tourism-hospitality-skills-boost-event-with-east-kent-college-tickets-1067315933689?aff=oddtdtcreator)

**Thanet District Council**

**Repairing two Thanet museums**

Work has started to repair the roof and joinery on Margate Museum, as well as the Old Town Hall in Margate. Scaffolding has been installed, and the work is expected to take four weeks. During this time, the pathway that runs between the buildings will be closed.

Following completion of the work in Margate, focus will move to Dickens House Museum in Broadstairs, with repairs to the roof. The work is expected to be completed ahead of the museum’s planned Christmas events. [Find out more](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/repair-work-to-start-on-thanets-publicly-owned-museums/)

**Explore Ramsgate’s regeneration projects in virtual reality**

Thanet District Council is inviting local people to a two-day event, for a fresh look at Ramsgate’s Levelling Up Fund projects. Take part in a virtual reality tour of Ramsgate, showcasing the designs for the sites.

The events take place on Friday 22 November 1pm - 6pm and Saturday 23 November 11am - 4pm at Discovery Planet, 47 High Street, Ramsgate CT11 9AG. There are bookable time slots for the free tour, and drop-ins are also welcome. To book a slot and take a look at the virtual reality trailer, [click here](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/info-pages/ramsgate-virtual-reality-vr-experience/).

**The Teenage Market returns with a festive twist!**

The Festive Teenage Market is happening on Saturday 30 November, 11am- 5:30pm at The Centre, Margate CT9 1JG (in front of Peacocks). This Christmas market builds on the success of the first Teenage Market event, which was held in Margate in July this year. [Find out more](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/the-teenage-market-returns-with-a-festive-twist/)

**Margate Town Deal update - Walpole Bay Beach Facilities**

An update on the Margate Town Deal projects has been shared with subscribers to the mailing list, and you can [read it here](https://mailchi.mp/thanet/mtd-oct2024-newsletter?e=19a1f94319).

To hear news on the programme at first hand, [click here to join the Margate Town Deal mailing list](https://form.thanet.gov.uk/margate-town-deal-mailing-list/)

**Thanet Community Champions Awards 2025**

A reminder that nominations are open for the Thanet Community Champions Awards.

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/), before 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 (voluntary, community and social enterprise), or know someone who is, please visit the [council website](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/services/uk-shared-prosperity-fund/), where there’s information on the support available for local community groups.

**Community Champions Event Programme**

The Community Champions Programme supports the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. It includes free courses and network activities aimed at the sector. [Find out more about all of the opportunities here](http://thanet.gov.uk/community-champions-programme/).

**Training Courses**

* Thursday 5 December, 10am-12pm at Sugar Rush, High Street, Ramsgate - Best Practice Training: Handling Difficult Situations. [Book here](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/best-practice-training-handling-difficult-situations-tickets-949850116267)

**Networking Events**

* Wednesday 20 November, 10.30am-1pm at Discovery Planet, 47 High Street, Ramsgate - Network and Knowledge Session: Neurodivergent led organisations/leaders/volunteers. [Book here](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/thanet-n-k-session-neurodivergent-led-organisationsleadersvolunteers-tickets-949678292337)
* Thursday 5 December, 12pm -1.30pm at Sugar Rush, High Street Ramsgate - Network and Knowledge: Celebrating Volunteers. [Book here](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/thanet-network-knowledge-session-celebrating-volunteering-tickets-949682896107)

**Local Government Boundary Changes**

Thanet is currently divided into 21 wards. Each ward has either one, two or three Ward Councillors, who are elected by local residents to Thanet District Council to represent the views of the people who live in their area.

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is proposing 42 District Councillors representing 20 wards across Thanet.

**A consultation on the draft recommendations is now open until Monday 16 December**. [To find out more and have your say click here](https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/thanet)

**Further Public Toilet Repairs**

In last month's Tourism Matters we brought you news that work on the public toilets at Margate Main Sands and Stone Bay Broadstairs had been approved.

We can now inform you that repairs to the public toilets at Minnis Bay and Victoria Gardens, Broadstairs have also been approved.

The men’s toilets at Viking Bay in Broadstairs will be closed for one week, from Thursday 14 November. This is to enable the ongoing work to the sea defences on Broadstairs Harbour Arm.

**New tenant for Northdown House in Margate**

Thanet District Council has secured a new tenant for the Grade II listed Northdown House in Margate. Life Skills Enterprise was selected and took over the lease on Friday 8 November. They will set up a day school for young people with Autistic Spectrum Condition with a planned opening in 2025.

Life Skills Enterprise will carry out improvements to Northdown House, and will reinstate the Secret Jungle, Northdown Park’s walled garden. [Find out more](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/council-confirms-new-tenant-for-northdown-house-in-margate/)

**Looking for office space?**

The Kent Innovation Centre offers a wide range of serviced offices, perfect if you’re looking to move away from the kitchen table or spare room. Centrally located in Broadstairs, and close to transport links, the centre offers flexible occupancy, free on-site parking, high speed internet and spaces for meetings and conferences. [Find out more](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/info-pages/kent-innovation-centre/)

**Sign up to The Wave**

Did you know that Thanet District Council sends out a monthly resident newsletter, The Wave? It includes updates on key council projects and opportunities to have your say on a wide range of issues. [You can sign up to receive The Wave here](https://www.thanet.gov.uk/newsletter/).

**Other News**

**Museum + Heritage Awards Entries Open**

Entry into the The Museums + Heritage Awards is now open until Friday 31 January 2025.

The awards celebrate the very best in the world of museums, galleries, and cultural and heritage visitor attractions. There are 18 categories including Volunteer of the Year, Visitor Welcome Award, Learning Programme of the Year and Best Use of Digital.

Further details on the awards, the criteria and how to enter can be found [on the website](https://awards.museumsandheritage.com/)

**Southern Water opens applications for Business Partnership Fund**

Southern Water is inviting applications for the third round of their Business Partnership Fund.

The Fund is open to retailers, businesses and third-party conservation providers across Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Sussex and Kent. Eligible organisations are invited to submit innovative ideas to help reduce the amount of water used in those areas.

You can find more about the process on the Southern Water [website](https://www.southernwater.co.uk/latest-news/business-partnership-fund-is-open/). **Applications close on Tuesday 31 December.**

**Your News**

**Looking for a new role?**

[**Margate Caves**](http://www.margatecaves.co.uk) is looking for an innovative individual with strong leadership skills, a grip on finances and a passion for great customer service to become their new Centre Manager.

To find out more about the role, click here (<https://www.margatecaves.co.uk/support>). Applications are open until Monday 18 November.

The [**Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex House and Gardens**](https://powell-cottonmuseum.org) is seeking a creative, audience-focused Marketing Officer to lead impactful campaigns across digital and print media. Join the team in amplifying the unique stories of the museums collections, gardens, and heritage to inspire, educate and increase visits To find out more about the role, [click here](https://powell-cottonmuseum.org/support-us/work-with-us/). Applications are open until Monday 2 December.

**Tourism South East Beautiful South Tourism Awards Finalists**

Congratulations to the [No 9 Restaurant](https://chapelhouseestate.co.uk/no-9-restaurant/) at Chapel House Estate, Minster and [Sea Scrub Sauna](https://www.seascrubsauna.co.uk/), Margate who have been announced as finalists in the Beautiful South Tourism Awards ‘New Tourism Business Award’ category. The winners will be announced on Tuesday 10 December. Good luck to them both!

**Family Friendly Museum Awards**

Congratulations to [**Turner Contemporary**](https://turnercontemporary.org/), which was named winner in the ‘Best Medium Museum’ at the Family Friendly Museum Awards 2024.

The national awards, run by [Kids in Museums](https://kidsinmuseums.org.uk), celebrate museums, galleries, historic homes or heritage sites in the UK that go the extra mile to provide a great experience for families.

**Happy Birthday**

Wednesday 30 October saw Margate’s [**The WonderWorks**](https://www.wonderworksmargate.co.uk/) celebrate its first birthday. In that time it has started its own Warlord group and evenings once a month, held over 10 car meets, had a visit from His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent, held a variety of workshops and much more.