

February's Tourism Matters: Business Support, Insights and Activity Update

Dear Tourism Industry Colleague

It may have felt like a long, grey and wet January, but with the nights getting lighter, we're crossing our fingers that the brighter days are on their way!

In this issue, we're thrilled to share how Margate got a huge publicity boost thanks to a recent A-list visitor, and how we've used it to our advantage. We provide you with the key takeaways from our latest visitor survey, and highlight important support opportunities for your business, including details on an upcoming free webinar on accessibility.

[Tourism and Visitor Services News](#)

Thanet Tourism Industry Event

As we look toward a vibrant 2026 season, we are thrilled to invite you to the **Thanet Tourism Industry Event** on **Tuesday 24 March**.

Hosted at the stunning **Chapel House Estate** in Minster, this morning session is designed to bring our local tourism and hospitality businesses together. Whether you run an attraction, a boutique hotel, a cafe or high street business or offer an experience, this is your opportunity to hear the latest news and developments.

We have a packed agenda focused on practical resources and local growth:

- **B2B Website Launch:** Be the first to see our brand-new B2B website with new resources available for businesses.
- **New Accessibility Ambassador Course:** Learn about our latest accessibility training programme, designed to empower your staff and ensure we welcome everyone.
- **Accessibility Resources:** Discover new tools and guidance to help you welcome all visitors and ensure your business is inclusive.
- **Industry Insights:** Hear from guest speakers on the latest trends and upcoming opportunities for Thanet's tourism sector.
- **Networking & Tour:** Connect with fellow business owners over refreshments and enjoy an exclusive tour of the award-winning **Chapel House Estate**, exploring its beautiful grounds and restored architecture.

Event Details

- **Date:** Tuesday, 24 March
- **Time:** 10am - 1pm
- **Location:** Chapel House Estate, Thorne Hill, Minster, Ramsgate, CT12 5DS
- **Included:** Refreshments provided and free parking on-site.

[Reserve Your Place](#)

Please RSVP by Tuesday 17 March to secure your place. **We look forward to seeing you there and working together to make 2026 our best year yet!**

Visitor Survey Results

During May, June and August 2025, working with Acorn Tourism Consulting, we carried out a Visitor Survey. This included in-destination interviews across Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate, secondary research, and a social listening exercise.

The final full reports, plus a handy infographic of key results, can be found [here](#) . This is the only research we carry out, where we pull out results for each of the three towns.

We shall be running a series of interactive in-person workshops in Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate to highlight how these results can help you. The workshops will be facilitated by BeeBee Communications in the two weeks after Monday 20 April. There'll be a maximum of 20 places at each session. Dates will be confirmed soon.

Please contact julie.edwards@thanet.gov.uk to register your interest.

Madonna visits Margate - publicity you just can't buy!

After her recent visit and Instagram post about it to her 20 million followers, Margate has been mentioned everywhere, including across most national media publications. The visit also sparked a press interview for Councillor Kristian Bright with The Independent, and a press visit on Sunday 1 February from the Mail on Sunday.

Hands-up, we've jumped on the bandwagon too, using the visit as a hook to encourage others to do the same in our latest [consumer e-newsletter](#).

Kent's Creative Isle coverage

As part of our Kent's Creative Isle activity, in partnership with Ramsgate Town Council, we hosted Sam Huff from Huff Media on a press visit from Wednesday 14 to Friday 16 January.

Huff Media publishes three lifestyle titles, each engaging with a distinct audience:

- Average Janes - style-savvy women (8,090 monthly users)
- Average Joes - everyday men looking for smart recommendations (281,220 monthly users)
- Calibre - mature readers with a taste for the finer things (97,552 monthly users)

Please see below links to Huff Media's coverage:

- Coco Barclay Leather Workshop in [Average Janes](#)
- Thanet-wide feature across all three titles - [CALIBRE](#), [Average Joes](#) and [Average Janes](#)
- Review of Fort Road Hotel across all three titles - [CALIBRE](#) , [Average Joes](#) and [Average Janes](#)

Half Term Activities

It's hard to believe that the February half-term is already here. To support you and help your visitors we've put together a webpage with events going on across the Isle.

www.visitthanet.co.uk/februaryht

Visitor Information Services opening hours

The **Thanet Visitor Information Centre** at Droit House is open from 10am to 5pm, Wednesday to Sunday during February and March with the exception of February half term (Monday 16 to Friday 20 February) when open daily.

Ramsgate Visitor Information at The Custom House, Harbour Parade, is open daily 11am to 3pm through to the end of March. From April to September the centre will be open Monday to Saturday, 10am to 4pm.

Skills and Training/Business Support

These events and training are being delivered as part of the Thanet Business Support Programme, commissioned by Thanet District Council and funded by the UK Government.

FREE Webinar - Accessibility – It's good business!

We are hosting a free webinar with Tourism for All to help your business tap into the £14.6 billion accessible tourism market.

Improving accessibility is about more than ticking boxes, it's about ensuring every visitor feels welcome in Thanet. Most businesses are already more accessible than they realise; we'll show you how to make simple, manageable changes that drive growth.

Webinar details

Title: Accessibility – It's Good Business!

Date: Thursday 26 February

Time: 11am – 12pm

Cost: Free

What you'll gain:

- Insight into the massive growth potential of the 'Purple Pound'.
- Simple, immediate steps to improve your visitor experience.
- Expert advice tailored specifically for Thanet businesses.

[Register here](#)

FREE - Fully Funded Access Assessments for Thanet Businesses

We are offering local businesses the opportunity for a professional, guided assessment of their venue's accessibility. This is provided by AccessAble, a leading expert in the field, and is part of the Stronger Together project, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

These assessments are worth up to £205. We can provide these fully-funded on a first-come, first-served basis for a limited time.

How to register: To express your interest or to find out more, please contact lisa.powell@thanet.gov.uk

Become a Disability Confident Employer with FREE mentoring

Fully-funded, one to one mentoring sessions are available, with Shane Forster from The Education People (worth over £500 per business). Shane will help you to either start your journey to become a Disability Confident Employer or progress beyond your current level.

This free mentoring is your opportunity to unlock new visitor spending and invest in your business's future. To find out more please contact francesca.sayer-doyle@thanet.gov.uk

This opportunity is being funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Keeping Good People and Making Work Easier - A practical Lunch & Learn for Thanet employers

By Neurodivergent Friends in Thanet - Friday 13 March, 11am - 12.30pm at Pierremont Hall, Pierremont Park, Broadstairs CT10 1JX.

This Lunch & Learn is for employers and managers who want workdays that run more smoothly, with fewer misunderstandings, less burnout, and teams that are easier to

support and retain. The session focuses on practical, low-effort shifts that make a noticeable difference in how people work together, especially in small, fast-moving teams.

After this session, attendees will:

- Recognise common sources of friction
- Understand why good people disengage or leave, often unintentionally
- Explore practical ways to reduce pressure on managers and staff
- Reflect on what their business actually needs next

Who should attend: employers, team managers, team supervisors, HR managers, local recruiters. This session is designed to be relevant whether you employ two people or 20+.

To find out more and book a place [click here](#).

Thanet District Council

Local Government Reorganisation: Consultation Launched

Government ministers have launched a consultation on the future number of new unitary councils in Kent and Medway.

At the moment, Kent County Council delivers some services such as education, social services and roads. District or borough councils, like this one, deliver others such as emptying your bins and housing services.

Under the new structure, a smaller number of councils would deliver all services within their respective areas.

Each authority has chosen a preferred direction, but the final decision rests with the government. This is expected in the summer, 2026. You can review the [options here](#) and share your views on gov.uk. The survey's open until 11.59pm on Thursday 26 March.

The Clock House Museum

The Clock House in Ramsgate is being transformed into a museum for the community. We'd like you to tell us what kind of stories the museum should tell when it reopens.

Meet us in person:

- Westwood Cross Community Hub: Wednesday 18 February, 11.30am to 4.30pm
- Ramsgate Market: Friday 27 February, 9am to 1pm

Your views will help shape the plans for this historic landmark.

Visit thanet.gov.uk for more information about the plans for the Clock House.

The project is supported by government regeneration funding for Ramsgate.

Margate Parish Council Proposals

Unlike all the other towns and villages in Thanet, Margate doesn't have a parish or town council.

Last summer residents, businesses, community organisations and local groups were asked whether they wanted a parish council for their town. Almost everyone that responded, said that they do. The consultation is open until 5pm on Monday 16 March. Read and take part in the [survey here](#)

Broadstairs College Margate Digital Campus Opening

Students from East Kent College (EKC) training have already started classes inside this fantastic new space, marking the beginning of an exciting new chapter for the campus. The new EKC Broadstairs College Margate Digital Campus provision is due to transfer over after February half term, with students getting the full benefit of the inspirational learning environment. The state-of-the-art facility promises to bring lots of opportunities, not just for the students using the space, but for the wider Thanet community.

Pride in Place helps Ramsgate youth

Pie Factory Music officially completed the purchase of the Ramsgate Youth Centre from Kent County Council on Thursday 5 February.

This was made possible with a £535,000 capital grant from the Ramsgate Neighbourhood Board, through the government's Pride in Place Programme.

Your News

Bright Days - Makers of Tomorrow

Brighter Days is hosting an opportunity for makers and young people at Pie Factory Margate (5 Broad Street, Margate CT9 1EW) on Monday 16 and/or Tuesday 17 February with arrival at 10am, finishing at 1pm.

This is a practical session for young people aged 13 to 18 years to try textile making and find out more about craft careers. If you know any young people that would be interested, please encourage them/their parents/guardians/carers to sign up.

To find out more about the event and book [click here](#).

Little Ships return to Ramsgate Friday 22 to Monday 25 May - Ramsgate businesses opportunity

Chris Cox, Event Planning Leader is asking local businesses to join in the fun. How about dressing your windows in 1940s style, hosting an afternoon tea or tea dance, or decorating your venue with bunting? The whole town is welcome to take part.

If you're thinking of putting on an event, let Chris know so that it can be added to the programme - chriscox2227@gmail.com

A new look for Quex House & Gardens and the Powell-Cotton Museum

Over the past year, the team at Quex House & Gardens, home of the Powell-Cotton Museum, has been working behind the scenes on a fresh new look and website. Launched for 2026, the rebrand reflects the full breadth of experiences across Quex Park, uniting Quex House, Quex Gardens and the Museum under one identity. The brand helps showcase everything from family trails and seasonal garden events to specialist research and guided heritage tours.

A brand-new website has also launched, just in time for the seasonal reopening on Saturday 14 February and the Powell-Cotton Trust's centenary year. It features stories about the museum and the Powell-Cotton family, practical planning tools, an events calendar and a 'Create your perfect day' planner to help visitors shape their visit to their interests, ensuring they never miss out on the highlights of one of Kent's much-loved attractions.

Take a look at the new brand and website here. www.powell-cottonmuseum.org

