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PRESS RELEASE

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Successful partnership between Visit Kent, Golfbreaks.com and Shepherd Neame opens up Kent as a 'premier destination for golf breaks'

(Canterbury, Kent – July xx, 2011) A successful partnership between Visit Kent, Golfbreaks.com and Shepherd Neame is opening up Kent – host county of the 2011 Open Championship at Royal St George's Golf Club – as a top golfing destination.

Visit Kent (www.visitkent.co.uk) joined forces with Golfbreaks.com (Europe's largest golf travel company) and Shepherd Neame (the renowned Kent-based brewer, pub and hotel operator) in the spring.

As a long-term legacy for Kent as host of the prestigious event, the strategic partnership is designed to position the county – the closest Open venue to London – as one of Europe's premier golfing destinations in the years following the 2011 Championship.

Working closely in tandem, the three organisations have already – in the period leading up to the Open – successfully promoted an array of carefully selected golf breaks and special-offer packages, many featuring the Garden of England's collection of more than 100 courses.

Packages covering two golf resorts, 15 courses and 30 hotels are currently being offered generating an immediate uplift in bookings. All packages are available via the Visit Kent website and a dedicated 12-page Golfbreaks.com brochure, the latter which can be picked up at the Visit Kent stand, supported by Golfbreaks.com staff, at The Open.

A wide selection of the Garden of England's most celebrated links and parklands courses, and high-quality, graded hotel, guesthouse, inn and B&B accommodation, are playing their part in promoting the county's myriad tourist attractions by participating in the scheme.

Kent offers golfers a choice of more than 100 courses to play. Royal St George's is part of Kent's 'Regal Golf Coast', which includes Royal Cinque Ports (venue of The Open Championship in 1909 and 1920), Prince's (the Open venue in 1932), Littlestone (a Final Qualifying course for this year's Open) and North Foreland.

Complementing this quintet are London Golf Club (a European Tour Destination and home of the 2009 European Open and where work will soon start on the county's first five-star golf and spa hotel resort) plus Chart Hills (designed by Sir Nick Faldo and ranked 82nd in *Golf World Magazine's* Top 100 Courses in the UK and Ireland).

Shepherd Neame – the award-winning brewer of the Spitfire, Bishops Finger and Asahi brands – boasts an impressive collection of more than 350 pubs across the south-east, including 11 hotels/pubs in Kent, that can be booked at special rates through the initiative.

Each offers golf tourists the opportunity to relax and unwind in comfortable surroundings while enjoying fine food and Shepherd Neame ales. They are also ideally placed for visiting many of

Kent's popular attractions, such as Canterbury Cathedral, Leeds Castle and the White Cliffs of Dover.

Sandra Matthews-Marsh, Chief Executive of Visit Kent, said: "This strategically important partnership is designed to attract golfers and leisure visitors, both from home and abroad, to enjoy long and short breaks our county. Since the tie-up was announced in April, we have already seen a significant upturn in the number of golf visitors to the Garden of England – and, as a long-term legacy of being the closest Open venue to London, this should help firmly establish Kent as one of the foremost golfing destinations in Europe."

Keith Mitchell, Marketing Director of Golfbreaks.com, commented: "Kent is blessed with some amazing golf courses and our fantastic new tour packages provide a great way to open up this county to the wider golfing audience – during the year of The Open and those to come."

Nigel Bunting, Retail Director of Shepherd Neame, added: "We are delighted to play our part in promoting Kent as a leading golf destination. We invite tourists to enjoy all the high quality attractions – including food and drink and, of course, golf – the county has to offer."

For more information about golf in Kent, visit www.visitkent.co.uk/golf. For further details on Golfbreaks.com and Shepherd Neame visit www.golfbreaks.com and www.shepherdneame.co.uk.

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Press release issued on behalf of Visit Kent by Landmark Media

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About Visit Kent

Visit Kent Limited is a public/private sector partnership supported by Kent County Council, Medway Council, the district and borough councils, Tourism South East and the leading sector tourism businesses in Kent. Visit Kent champions Kent's £2.5 billion tourism industry by targeting UK and overseas markets, improving quality and skills and growing the tourism product.

Notes to Editors

Visit Kent is working with Dover District Council, Kent County Council, Canterbury City Council, Shepway District Council and Thanet District Council, with Kent Police and other partners, to support and deliver a safe and successful Open Golf Championship, and maximise the benefits to the county.

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