



7 March 2011



## **SEARCH IS ON FOR MID KENT GREETERS TO WELCOME VISITORS**

People from Maidstone and the surrounding villages are being encouraged to join the growing band of Kent Greeters – local volunteers prepared to meet visitors to the county and talk about the sights and services they can enjoy during their short break or holiday.

Visit Kent is holding a free information event for local residents interested in signing up as a Greeter at Kent Life, Sandling, on Thursday, March 24. The event will include a river trip on the Allington Belle and the opportunity to experience a Kent Greeter introduction to the county town.

Kerstin Andrews, of Visit Kent, the county's tourism champions, is organising the Kent Greeters event for Maidstone.

She said: "We launched our first Greeter project in Thanet four years ago, based on the New York Big Apple Greeter programme, and it was the first of its kind in Europe. We are now recruiting Greeters right across Kent to welcome visitors to our county.

"Visitors planning a trip to Kent can book a meeting with a local volunteer Greeter who shares their interests and can offer advice on what is available in their area.

“Visitors may want to find out about suitable places to go with young children and activities they will enjoy, or they may want to discover more about local history, art, cycling, walking or shopping.

“Our aim is always to match the interests of the visitor with the interests of the Greeter so that they will have plenty to talk about. The more volunteers we have covering a wide range of ages and interests, the easier it will be to make the right matches.

“Kent is expecting lots of visitors in the run-up to the 2012 Games and beyond. We want to ensure that our guests enjoy a great welcome which will encourage them to return to the county and recommend Kent to all their friends and family as a superb destination.”

Kent Greeters are active members of the Global Greeter Network and have helped set up Greeter projects in London and Brighton as well as in France and Belgium.

The Kent Greeter event for Mid Kent at Kent Life will start at 10.45 am and last approximately three hours.

To book a place at the Mid Kent Greeter event, call Visit Kent on 01622 696935. To find out more about volunteering as a Kent Greeter visit [www.kentgreeters.co.uk](http://www.kentgreeters.co.uk).