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### **WHITE HORSE OF KENT GOES GLOBAL**

A stunning image of historic Hever Castle featuring a “white” horse and rider from Kent is at the heart of a major international campaign being launched by Visit Britain to attract visitors from across the world in 2012.

Visit Kent worked with Visit Britain to identify a Kent image to include in the campaign that would appeal to overseas visitors interested in exploring the Garden of England during the year of the London Games celebrations.

Visit Kent Chief Executive Sandra Matthews-Marsh said: “This photograph, taken by Craig Easton of Visit Britain, says it all – a beautiful Kent white horse and rider alongside one of our fabulous castles in outstanding scenery.

“I am confident this image of Kent will not only promote our county during 2012 but contribute to a much longer lasting legacy raising awareness of Kent as a great destination across the world.”

Duncan Leslie, Chief Executive of Hever Castle, said: “We are honoured and flattered to be chosen as part of this campaign and are confident that this image

will help both Visit Britain and Visit Kent highlight the diversity of culture that our fair Island has to offer not just to the Olympians, but all visitors to our shores.”

Karla Knapp, 29, was delighted to star in the dramatic photograph with her horse, Mouse.

Chislehurst-based Karla, a former pupil of Maidstone Grammar School for Girls, has been riding since she was three years old and took lessons at a riding school in Sevenoaks.

Karla, a freelance dressage instructor for the North and West Kent area, has owned Mouse for nine years, buying him and beginning his training as a four year old. Since then the pair have never looked back, competing in four regional dressage championships, an equestrian sport in which horse and rider perform a test of specific movements, and representing the Southern team in inter-regional competitions. Karla and Mouse are currently competing at Prix St Georges level.

Karla said: “Mouse and I have never been models before but we had really good fun, and would definitely be interested in doing it again.

“Mouse was impeccably behaved, which was surprising as he can tend to be a bit jumpy. He even stayed calm when we had to trot towards a man on a ladder holding the flashlight on a stick! My only explanation for his good behaviour is that he was being a bit of diva, and decided to soak up all the attention.

“Taking photos of horses can be tricky due to their unpredictable movements. However, after three hours, we had the photo for the campaign.”

Mouse, whose real name is Vinds-Mindes Midway, is a 13-year old, grey Danish Warmblood. He is currently stabled in West Peckham and, according to Karla, his favourite occupations include eating and getting muddy.

To discover more about how the Visit Britain image of Kent was made visit  
<http://digital.kent.gov.uk/3295/>

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*For further information, please contact Delphine Houlton, Victoria Grigg or Andrew Metcalf, at Maxim, tel: 01892 513033.*

- 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 investment in the tourism product.
- The Kent Campaign for the 2012 Olympic Games, a partnership led and managed by Kent County Council to maximise the benefits and long term legacy to the County off the back of the 2012 Games. The award winning Campaign primarily works across eight sectors, including tourism, sport, the arts, and education. Further details can be found at [www.kentsport.org/london2012](http://www.kentsport.org/london2012) <<http://www.kentsport.org/london2012>>