



PRESS RELEASE

23 June 2011

ROLLING OUT THE BARREL FOR THE GARDEN OF ENGLAND

Londoners and visitors to the capital are being encouraged to step out into the Garden for a breath of fresh air – savouring a summer of culture, sampling award-winning wines and dipping their toes in the seas of Kent's history.

Striking views from the 21st Century Garden of England of such iconic attractions as the chalk stacks at Botany Bay, The Historic Dockyard Chatham and Hever Castle – the childhood home of Anne Boleyn – are brightening up rail stations and tube lines across the capital.

And taking a personal approach, Visit Kent's tourism champions brought the tastes and images of their county to the streets of London on Wednesday, June 22, rolling out their summer Kent Contemporary invitation to the capital at the Westminster Arms, Storey's Gate, Westminster – owned and run by Kent brewers Shepherd Neame.

Further unusual images of Kent will be appearing across the county itself on buses and trains during the summer to inspire more local travellers.

Plus, from July, visitors taking advantage of the excellent rail and bus transport links from London and across Kent with Southeastern, Stagecoach and Arriva can enjoy special summer two-for-one tickets to top county attractions.

Kevin Lynes, Kent County Council cabinet member responsible for tourism, said: “With superb rail links from the capital, Kent has so much to offer visitors and residents in London – from our dramatic coastline and family-friendly sandy beaches to our Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and our wealth of boutique hotels and restaurants specialising in the finest of Kent produce.

“Thanks to Visit Kent and our Kent Contemporary campaign partners, we will be welcoming visitors not only to our renowned castles and cathedrals but also to our many new venues, such as Turner Contemporary, and a wealth of special events this summer ranging from modern art installations to internationally-acclaimed music festivals.”

This is the second summer of the Kent Contemporary campaign encouraging visitors and residents in London and beyond to take a fresh look at the country’s oldest yet possibly most progressive county.

In its first year the campaign, featuring images of the county captured by top photographer Jean Luc Benard, generated 79,000 additional overnight trips and short breaks in Kent, 221,260 additional visitor nights worth almost £18 million, and 196,375 day trips from outside Kent with visitors spending £7,853,000.

Additionally, Kent Contemporary, designed by M&C Saatchi, encouraged Kent and Medway residents to take more overnight trips and day trips within the county – with an economic impact of almost £11 million.

Discover where to go, what to see and where to stay in Kent at www.visitkent.co.uk.

Ends

Caption: Tourism champions rolling out the barrel for Kent in the heart of London are, from left, Sandra Matthews-Marsh, chief executive of Visit Kent, John Humphreys, of Shepherd Neame, Amanda Cottrell, Chairman of Visit Kent, and Kevin Lynes, Kent County Council Cabinet member for tourism

For further media information, please contact Delphine Houlton or Andrew Metcalf, at Maxim, tel: 01892 513033, email: Delphine@maxim-pr.co.uk; or Julie Edwards, at Visit Kent, tel: 01227 812900, email: Julie.edwards@visitkent.co.uk. For images of Kent, go to <http://www.flickr.com/photos/visitkent/>

Notes to Editors

- 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 £3.2 billion tourism industry by targeting UK and overseas markets, improving quality and skills, and growing investment in the tourism product. For further information, go to www.visitkent.co.uk or www.visitkentbusiness.co.uk.
- Interreg IVA is an EU funding programme which aims to promote joint working and cross-border co-operation between partner organisations on either side of a European land or maritime border. Interreg is part of the European Regional Development Fund.
The '2 Seas' Interreg IVA programme is one of two programmes involving Kent. European partners in this programme are France, Flanders and The Netherlands.

For further information, go to www.interreg4a-2mers.eu

