



Kent Tourism Business Barometer February 2006

A big thank [put in business who replied first] for sending us back their statistics first! This month 24 businesses participated. Remember the more responses we receive the more accurate the data is for everyone so please ensure to fill in March's short questionnaire. For enquiries regarding the Kent Tourism Business Barometer please contact Sarah Belsom on 01622 221636 or email sarah.belsom@kent.gov.uk

February 2006

- Kent Attractions down by 5.8%
- Kent Carriers up by 0.6%
- Kent TIC's visits down by 3.5%

Attractions

Kent's attractions saw a drop in visitor numbers by 5.8%, which was attributed to the weather being cold. Those attractions who did see an increase found that visitor numbers particularly increased during half term. Two attractions in our sample are yet to open due to seasonal opening times. Many attractions expect business to be better or much better next month. 44% of attractions found overseas visitors were predominantly from France and Belgium. 33% of attractions consider competition from either overseas or other UK holiday destinations a threat to their business.

Carriers

Carriers saw an increase of 0.6% in February compared to February 2005. They still have business concerns about competition from low cost airlines and other cross channel operators. Repairs to a loading ramp in the Port of Calais has affected some cross channel services. Operators anticipate this disruption to last two to three months.

TICS

TICs saw an average drop of 3.5% in visitor numbers in February 2005 compared to February 2006. This was due to shorter opening times in some TICs and the use of the internet by visitors. Ashford TIC is the new agency for National Express and therefore has seen a rise in visitor numbers this year.

Good weather during half term was also considered a reason by those TICs who saw a rise.

Increase	%
Canterbury	2
Ashford	23.4
Gravesend	4.2
Herne Bay	9.8
Maidstone	10

Decrease	%
Ramsgate	38.7
Margate	8.5
Broadstairs	69.1
Medway	9

News

The UK Inbound Convention for inbound tour operators was held at Ashford International this month and was great success. It was the first time the conference has been held in Kent in 12 years and really put Kent on the map.

Events

Back to Basics, Gardening for Beginners at Scotney Castle Garden - 4th February 2006

Chinese New Year Celebrations in Rochester, 5th February 2006

Dover Film Festival, Dover, 6th February 2006

Totally Tudor Half Term at Leeds Castle and Gardens, 11th – 19th February 2006

Madness & Mayhem Half Term at The Hop Farm Country Park, 11th – 19th February 2006

Half Term Activities Week at the Museum of Kent Life, 13th – 17th February 2006

Birds at Bedgebury, Bedgebury Pinetum, 14th – 15th February 2006

Arrival of the Herne Bay Giant, Herne Bay Bandstand, 18th February 2006

Snowdrop & Hellebore Extravaganza, Goodnestone Park Gardens, 19th February 2006

DMG Antiques Fair, Ken County Show Ground, 26-26th February 2006



News from VisitBritain February

Industry Invited to comment on Business Venue Grading Scheme

VisitBritain is inviting venues that offers conference and meeting facilities throughout England to contribute to new research in the business and events sector.

The new study aims to establish whether the quality of England's conference facilities should be assessed and graded accordingly. The project will be undertaken in the form of focus groups and in depth interviews during February and March with professional and non-professional event planners based in the UK.

For more information about the research, or to get involved please email meetengland@visitbritain.org or contact Sian Brenchley Corporate Press Officer, Tel 020 8563 3220 mob: 07971 497 047.

The 'Best of English' Tourism Business line up for awards

The short list has been announced for the Enjoy England Awards for Excellence 2006.

Enjoy England Awards for Excellence 2006 are known as the tourism 'Oscars,' these Awards are organised by VisitBritain and sponsored by The Caravan Club.

The 33 short listed finalists showcase the broad range of tourism businesses England has to offer from a small local history museum in Suffolk to one of the most high profile attractions in London.

The winners will be announced at a national awards ceremony on Thursday 20 April (prior to St George's Day on 23 April) to be held at Madame Tussauds in London.

