



Kent Tourism Business Barometer March 2006

Welcome to the March Business Barometer. Now that spring is here we will be looking forward to better weather, school holidays and opening of seasonal attractions. Thank you to Shepherd Neame who were the first to return their questionnaire this month. We had 19 responses this month. Please remember the questionnaire is very short and the more completed responses we get the better the sample is for everyone!

For enquiries regarding the Kent Tourism Business Barometer please contact Sarah Belsom on 01622 221636 or email sarah.belsom@kent.gov.uk

March 2006

- Kent Attractions were down by 25.8%
- Kent Carriers were up by 34.4%
- Kent TIC's visits were up by 0.1%

Attractions

There was a slump in visitors to attractions reported this month when compared to March 2005. Easter falls in April this year unlike 2005 when it was in March. Half term and associated Easter events are in April which explains the drop in figures. One attraction noted that major refurbishment also had affected visitor numbers.

Carriers

Despite big differences in visitors numbers from 2005 due to Easter falling in a later calendar month, the carriers saw an overall rise in visitor numbers. Carriers thanked the improved weather and rise in airline fuel costs for the increase in trade.

TICS

Kent's Tourist Information Centres saw a very small rise in visitor numbers compared to March last year, which they attribute to the differing Easter date.

↑	Increase	%
	Gravesend	29.3
	Ashford	23.2
	Maidstone	20.3
	Tunbridge Wells	18.1

↓	Decrease	%
	Herne Bay	50.4
	Whitstable	28.1
	Margate	26.6
	Medway	10.8
	Dover	6.7
	Canterbury	5.4
	Ramsgate	9

Figures Not Provided	
Broadstairs	

News

The KTA welcomed lots of new investors this month including Brooks Hotels Ltd, Rochester Cathedral, Kent County Showground, Goodnestone Park Gardens, Canterbury Historic River Tours and McArthur Glen Designer Outlet.

Out and about in Kent!

The Kent Tourism Academy are running a series of fun and informative tours in Shepway and Thanet. The visits are a fantastic opportunity to gain local knowledge to pass on to visitors, to discover hidden gems on your door step and to network with local businesses.

To book a place on one of these tours please contact Kerstin Beeching on 01622 221915 or 01622 221908

Out and about in Thanet

Ramsgate Tour 25th April 2006
Broadstairs Tour 23rd May 2006

Out and about in Shepway

Tour One The Romney Marsh 11th May 2006
Tour Two Hythe and Folkestone Racecourses 11th May 2006
Tour Three Elham Valley Vineyards & Port Lympne 28th September 2006
Tour Four The Folkestone Warren & Burmarsh 28th September 2006



Events

- Lecture Lunch: 'English Place Names' with Phillip Lawrence – Ightham Mote
- Lecture Lunch; Michael Dobbs 'Snatching Triumph from Tragedy:– Chartwell
- Essential Beauty and Wellbeing – The Hop Farm Country Park
- Spring Garden Week – Heaver Castle and Gardens
- Spring Flower Festival – Leeds Castle and Gardens
- Armada Weekend - Penshurst Place and Gardens
- Spring bulb day - Smallhythe Place
- Bubbly & Blooms – The museum of Kent Life
- Sumptuous Lunch & Safari Special - Port Lympne Wild Animal Park

News from VisitBritain

An online survey of 35,000 consumers world-wide reveals that 'brand UK' is highly regarded. The results confirm Britain's appeal as a visitor destination – with heritage and culture particularly strong draws.

The fourth Anholt-GMI Nation Brands Index (NBI) interviews 500-1,000 consumers in each participating country. Participants rate each nation based on their perceptions of the cultural, political, commercial and human assets, investment potential and tourist appeal.

The UK's tourism is placed eighth out of the 35 countries in the Index and is third overall for culture. As well as countries in the developed Commonwealth (Australia, New Zealand, Canada), Central European nations – Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic – were particularly positive towards the UK's tourism assets.

VisitBritain Youth Conference

Held annually, the VisitBritain Youth Conference was held on 22 March 2006 which aims to bring together those in the tourism industry with a view to attracting the next generation of travellers to Britain.

"A major draw for young people visiting Britain is undoubtedly the "cool" associated with our contemporary culture. For fashion, music, art, film, even food, Britain is rightly seen as a capital of culture and this gives us a significant head start over the competition. But whilst we are keen to capitalise on these strengths we have to recognise that we are speaking to an increasingly savvy and cynical youth audience that needs more than a "Cool Britannia" message."

For further information, please contact Sian Brenchley, Corporate Press Officer on 020 8563 3220 or 07971 497047

