



## **Case Study – Training**



### **Tom Hart Dyke – Lullingstone Castle and World Garden**

Lullingstone Castle is one of England's oldest family estates, set in 120 acres near Sevenoaks. The manor house and gate house overlooks a 15 acre lake. Both Henry VIII and Queen Anne are known to have been regular visitors.

Lullingstone's two acre walled garden has been turned into the "World Garden of Plants" by self -confessed plant enthusiasts Tom Hart Dyke.

The estate came under huge financial pressure at the start of the new millennium and needed new ways to increase visitors and revenues.

Tom found the whole Welcome E-Learning project extremely helpful and feels that it helped develop his business skills. Tom wanted to increase visitor numbers and found the Smarter Marketing course superb. He said "It really helped develop the website, even though a web designer actually created it, it helped me to understand what needed to go in, by way of pictures, maps, and information. It is crucial that people could find where Lullingstone Castle is located for example"

Tom added " More than anything else it was a huge confidence booster meeting other people in the same position and taking in really useful information. It helped me get the marketing effort on its feet."

Overall the project exceeded Tom's expectations as it has enabled Lullingstone Castle to increase profitability through increasing/improving

knowledge of practical low costs or free marketing techniques and has enabled better use of internet.

The website is now even being used for “blogging” about latest development in the World Garden. The updated directions on the website made it much easier for visitors to find the castle and the addition of a “frequently asked question” section saves people having to phone up to ask about prices and opening dates. Inbound links from the Visit Kent website and local district sites have greatly helped with directing traffic to the Lullingstone Castle site.

Visit Kent working in partnership with Tourism South East and Business Link provide a range of free and subsidised training course covering lots of different areas including customer care, marketing and finance as well as advise on quality, accessibility and becoming more green.

For the latest details go to [www.visitkentbusiness.co.uk](http://www.visitkentbusiness.co.uk)