

KENT Business GARDEN of ENGLAND

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Summer Traffic Update

As you may be aware, Operation Brock was reinstated on the M20 last weekend to help with managing the expected increase in traffic heading out on cross-Channel journeys, with the first peak day expected on 29 July. The Brock traffic management system will be in place throughout the summer. In addition to this, further **rail strikes** are currently scheduled to take place on **Wednesday 27 and Saturday 30 July as well as Thursday 18 and Saturday 20 August**. All of this has the potential to have an impact upon our visitors coming into and traveling around the county.

This summer is such an important time for our tourism and hospitality businesses as they rebuild following the pandemic. With additional global challenges and rising costs, it's vital that we, as an industry in Kent, work together along with local authority and infrastructure partners to lessen the impact of potential travel disruption.

So, what does this mean for Kent businesses? This newsletter includes details on how we'll be **monitoring the impact** of any travel disruption on our businesses and **how you can contribute** feedback, as well as the work we're doing to **lobby on behalf of the county**. We've also included details on how we'll be managing our visitor communications over the summer and **useful links** to help you prepare and include travel messaging in your own comms.

While all of this might seem concerning, the pandemic has proved that we are a dynamic and resilient industry. By preparing and working together, we know that the incredible landscapes and experiences we have to offer in the county will shine through!

How are we monitoring the impact?

- We will continue to monitor the impact of any travel disruption through our Business Barometer. These monthly reports provide us data on business performance across the county, including visitor numbers and feedback directly from businesses. It is so important that we can back-up feedback with quantifiable data to help us build a really accurate and robust picture of the situation. **Please sign up today** to start contributing your own figures confidentially.
- Our Chief Executive, Deirdre Wells OBE, will chair a forum who will meet regularly with key partners including attractions and local authority partners to discuss the real-time impact and feed this directly to National Highways and the Department of Transport (DfT).
- We are now part of the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) Summer Traffic Communications Cell, which means that we attend weekly meetings and receive rolling chain email updates from partners including National

Highways, DfT, Kent Police and local authority partners, helping us to stay on top of the latest traffic situation and feed information into the group, as well as passing information back to you.

- If at any point you would like to share any information or concerns about the impact on your business, then **please get in touch with us.**

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE BUSINESS BAROMETER

Our lobbying activity

- We will use the data and information we gather through the barometer and the business forum to feed directly into wider stakeholders including KCC, National Highways, the Department for Transport and local MPs. The information you provide us with will help us to send a powerful message back to national Government.
- Last month, our Chief Executive, Deirdre Wells OBE, wrote a letter to MPs that highlighted the travel issues we face as a county and the need for support from national Government to secure a solution which addresses the short-term challenges but also provides a long-term, high-quality, solution to our role as a major UK gateway. We will continue to communicate with our local MPs to push for further collaboration and support from national Government.

READ DEIRDRE'S LETTER TO MPS HERE

Our visitor communications

- We will continue to share messaging through our inspirational features and social media activity on the many amazing and unique experiences we have to offer in the county, as well as all the reasons why Lonely Planet named our county as the 4th best region to visit in 2022. Sustainability, respecting the natural environment and our local communities, has always been a key part of our consumer messaging and this will be emphasised further.
 - Public transport - We will continue to encourage visitors to use public transport for travelling to and through our county.
 - Plan ahead - We'll be using KCC's Every Single Journey campaign messaging to encourage visitors to check for traffic updates on the routes that they plan to travel on, and reminding them to prepare for their journey, particularly if they are travelling onwards by ferry or Eurotunnel.
 - Hidden Gems - To help with visitor dispersal over peak days, we'll be encouraging people to explore quieter locations which will be supported by the point below...
 - Respect, Protect, Enjoy - Similar to our messaging during the pandemic, we want people to continue visiting our wonderful county while we protect our natural environment and respect our local communities.
- Flexibility is key! We're working closely with our local authority and infrastructure partners to keep an eye on the traffic situation across the county. This means that we can react quickly and adapt our messaging when needed. Should we have more rail strikes, we will of course move the focus away from public transport on those days and encourage visitors to plan trips later in the month and into the Autumn season.

Tools to help you prepare

We've created a page on our B2B website which has all of this information so you can return to it if needed. It also features links to pages where you'll find the most up to date situation on the road and rail networks, and we've linked to free assets you can use for communicating with your visitors, including graphics and imagery. We'll keep this page updated throughout the summer so please continue to check back.

CLICK HERE TO VISIT OUR B2B WEBSITE

Tourism support and advice

To discuss how you can work more closely with Visit Kent, please [contact us](#).



VISIT OUR B2B WEBSITE HERE

Read more about tourism business support and advice, Covid-19 updates, national tourism insights and resources and opportunities to get involved in our activity

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