

THANET AREA PROFILE

The district of Thanet is located at the eastern end of Kent and includes the coastal towns of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate, with a population of around 126,000.

Transport Links

Thanet has a fast dual carriageway link directly to the M2, making London a little under 2 hours away. Several local companies provide containerized trailer road haulage and distribution services throughout the UK and internationally. High Speed rail services provide links to St. Pancras International in 80 minutes from Ramsgate and 91 minutes from Margate as well as services to London's Victoria and Charing Cross stations. The port of Ramsgate is a busy cross-Channel port for freight as well as offering passenger ferries to Belgium. The port of Dover can be reached in 30 minutes and Eurotunnel's terminal at Folkestone in 50 minutes. Thanet has its own airport, Kent International Airport owned by Infratil as well as having easy access to both London Gatwick and Heathrow, which can be reached in 1 hour 30 minutes and 2 hours respectively.

Business Potential

The availability of a skilled and relatively low cost workforce, together with low land costs are all positive factors in encouraging inward investment and job creation. There are numerous successful business parks in the area including the EuroKent Business Park at Ramsgate. This site has an ideal location with direct road links to both the nearby Port of Ramsgate, Kent International Airport and the Thanet Way. Situated on the edge of town, it is at the core of Thanet's retail and service hub. Manston Business Park is another ideal location beside Kent International Airport. Cummins Plc, Cohline and Summit Aviation already operate from the site and it has planning permission for both industrial and commercial use. It is also home to the Kent Innovation Centre and its sister branch the Margate Media Centre. Both locations offer quality workspaces and professional business support for high-tech and knowledge based industries.

Future Developments

East Kent Opportunities (EKO) LLP has been established as a joint venture vehicle by Kent County Council and Thanet District Council to develop the two key sites, Manston Park and EuroKent. At Manston Park the intention is to provide high quality jobs for the area. The masterplan for the site has been completed and the site has planning permission for B1, B2 and B8 uses. A £25 million leisure development, including 10 screen multiplex cinema, pubs / restaurants, casino and bingo hall is now open on EuroKent Business Park, adjacent to the Westwood Cross shopping centre.

In Margate, a major programme of work is underway to regenerate Margate's eastern seafront. The David Chipperfield designed Turner Contemporary opened in April 2011 on what is known as the Rendezvous site. Kent County Council is in the process of developing a mixed-use scheme that includes a hotel for the remainder of the site. Alongside this, there have been major improvements in the creative and cultural quarter of Margate's Old Town with new and exciting cafes, bars and creative businesses.

Dreamland, Margate is one of Britain's most famous seaside amusement parks. The park, which opened in 1920, is home to the Grade II listed Scenic Railway roller coaster, the oldest operating roller coaster in the country and Britain's first listed amusement park ride.

Margate's listed pier is being improved with cafés and artists' workshops and decorative lighting. The conversion of the old Sea Bathing Hospital into apartments and the construction of new build apartments on the site are underway. The Lido site has been acquired by Paigle Properties. A planning application is expected to include the restoration of the lido swimming pool, a 200-bed hotel with associated leisure development and 400-500 apartments.

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Other exciting developments include the Pleasurama development in Ramsgate, which will see a quality hotel, retailing outlets and housing development. This is just the beginning of Ramsgate's renaissance, which will eventually see the creation of a world-class marina. Work is now well underway on the London Array wind farm, a development of up to 341 turbines in the Thames Estuary, 12 miles off the Kent coast, which once completed will supply around 750,000 homes.

Useful Links

Thanet Council - www.thanet.gov.uk

Visit Kent - www.visitkent.co.uk

East Kent - www.east-kent.co.uk