

Cambridge Economic Impact Model 2017

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Thanet's tourism economy now worth £319m as visitor numbers rise to 4.2 million in 2017

Visits to Thanet increased by 8.6% in 2017 with the district welcoming a record 4.2 million visitors, according to research released this week. The value of Thanet's visitor economy grew by 9.2% in 2017 and is now worth over £319 million.

Independent research commissioned by Visit Kent showed that the number of day trips to the Thanet district leapt by 9.9% in 2017, meanwhile the total number of nights stayed in the district increased by 4.9%.

The total number of jobs supported by tourism rose by 8.7% to 7,950, with the industry accounting for an impressive 19% of total employment across Thanet.

Cllr Ash Ashbee, Cabinet Member for Coastal Development at Thanet District Council said: "The results clearly show that tourism in Thanet is going from strength to strength. *The number of day trips to the area is up by 10% which is a solid increase but in the context of the national figure of 0.8% it really is brilliant news."

'We have seen the popularity of Thanet steadily increase in recent years and its reputation as a go-to destination is now firmly established. We are so delighted that the growth we experienced previously has continued. We recognise the economic benefits that a thriving tourism offer brings to the local economy, creating jobs and driving spend in the local area.

'Our ambition is to continue to attract new and returning visitors to this beautiful destination - there are always reasons to visit Thanet. In 2019, Margate Caves is due to reopen in spring and from late September, the Turner Contemporary is hosting the Turner Prize.'

The tourism picture was rosy across the county in 2017, despite the challenges presented by ongoing Brexit negotiations. Kent welcomed 65 million visitors in 2017, and the visitor economy's value leapt by 7% to £3.8 billion.

Kent welcomed a record 64,970,000 visitors throughout 2017 with the county's tourism industry accounting for 76,828 jobs. Across the county, visitor numbers rose compared to the previous year with the highest volume of day trips, value of tourism and tourism related jobs recorded.

Kent also remains the third most visited destination outside of London for foreign visitors.

Chief executive of Visit Kent Deirdre Wells OBE said: "Tourism is the UK's fastest growing service sector and these figures demonstrate the contribution which our vital industry makes to the economy of Kent.

'The collective efforts of tourism businesses across the county have paid dividends and this partnership will be critical in ensuring that this growth continues during a challenging year ahead.'

She added: "Our challenge going forward will be to turn more of our day visits into overnight stays and short breaks, bringing even further growth to the county."

Leader of Kent County Council, Paul Carter, said: "The results from the 2017 survey commissioned by Visit Kent clearly show that the visitor economy is increasingly important to the county's future prosperity".

Thanet Cambridge Economic Impact Model 2017 (/media/3014/1-economic-impact-of-tourism-thanet-2017-1.pdf)

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