



VISIT KENT

TRADE AND GROUPS INFORMATION 2016

KENT GARDEN *of* ENGLAND visitkent.co.uk

WHERE IS KENT?

Kent is located in the south-east corner of England, just 30mins drive from London. Access to Kent is easy with the high speed rail link direct from St Pancras International in London (37mins to Ashford, 56mins to Canterbury), or by car via the M20 or M2 motorways. The county also has enviable fast links to mainland Europe via the Port of Dover, Eurotunnel le Shuttle service at Folkestone, and Eurostar (stopping at both Ashford & Ebbsfleet). Kent also has both excellent road and rail connections to London Heathrow and London Gatwick airports. Kent is an easy day-trip for London-based tours, and is also an excellent, cost-effective base for people wanting to visit London.



KENT GARDEN of ENGLAND visitkent.co.uk

WHY VISIT KENT?

LOCATION

- Close to London - Kent can make an easy day-trip for London-based tours
- Close to continental Europe - easy access from France, Belgium, Holland and Germany
- P&O Ferries and Eurotunnel le Shuttle carry visitors across the channel every day
- London is less than an hour away (with Southeastern's high speed rail links)

ACCOMMODATION

- Oast Houses
- Canterbury Cathedral Lodge
- Officer's Accommodation, Historic Dockyard Chatham
- Livingstone Lodge, Elephant Lodge, Pinewood and the Treehouse Hotel at Port Lympne Reserve
- Castle accommodation (Leeds, Walmer, Hever and Dover)

ICONIC ATTRACTIONS

- Canterbury Cathedral – Britain's oldest Cathedral
- Leeds Castle
- Dover Castle
- White Cliffs of Dover
- More castles and historic homes than any other county

COASTLINE

- The White Cliffs of Dover
- Dozens of Blue Flag beaches
- Watersports – sailing, jet-skiing, surfing
- Boat trips – seal colony, fishing, wind farm
- Traditional beach huts and seaside – Whitstable, Herne Bay, Sheppey, Broadstairs

ART & CULTURE

- Turner Contemporary
- Folkestone Triennial
- Canterbury Festival
- Creative Quarter, Folkestone
- Theatres and Museums

GARDENS

- Kent is world-renowned as "The Garden of England"
- From well-known gardens like Sissinghurst, to family-run gardens like Goodnestone Park Gardens
- Over 180 open to visitors throughout the year

FOOD & DRINK

- Romney Marsh lamb, Dover sole and Whitstable oysters
- Award-winning vineyards – Chapel Down, Biddenden and Hush Heath
- Shepherd Neame, Britain's oldest brewer
- Brogdale – over 2,300 types of apple
- Michelin-starred restaurants
- Thanet has the most micro pubs

FAMOUS FACES

- Charles Dickens
- Geoffrey Chaucer
- Charles Darwin
- Sir Winston Churchill
- Ian Fleming and James Bond
- Henry VIII and the Tudors

WHAT'S NEW IN 2016?

Command of the Ocean, The Historic Dockyard Chatham

In spring 2016, the Historic Dockyard Chatham will be opening its £9 million 'Command of the Oceans' project including a brand new orientation centre for the Dockyard and its defences. The project also sees four new museum galleries centred on the conservation, preservation and interpretation of the NAMUR warship archaeological find (Ship Beneath the Floor). Restoration has taken place of over 4.5 hectares of historic landscape for a brand new visitor arrival experience to both the Dockyard and Chatham's naval and military historic sites. There will also be a new free coach park with drop-off point, and a restaurant and shop.

www.thedockyard.co.uk

The Great Store exhibition, Knole

Currently undergoing a major conservation project, the National Trust's Knole will be transforming the historic Great Hall into the Great Store, filling it with the most significant objects in their collections that will be transferred to the brand new conservation studio later in 2016. The Great Store will have objects in it from around the house, including objects from the ballroom, Reynolds room, carton gallery, King's bedroom and King's closet (these showrooms will be closed for conservation during this time). Objects will be presented in different ways and curators and conservationists will run up close sessions with them – ideal for specialist groups.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/knole

Fan Bay Deep Shelter, White Cliffs of Dover

Following nearly two years of excavation work by the National Trust, specialist guides lead hard hat and torch-lit tours deep into the heart of the White Cliffs, into Fan Bay Deep Shelter, a labyrinth of tunnels ordered to be built by Sir Winston Churchill.

The shelter is the largest of its kind in Dover and one of the deepest recovered from the time, at 23 metres below the surface. Visitors can descend the original 125 steps into more than 3,500 square feet of tunnels, reinforced with heavy duty iron girders and metal sheeting, which were once manned by troops from the 203rd Coast Battery, Royal Artillery, later becoming the 540th Coast Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Visitors to the tunnels can also see two historic sound mirrors which form part of the site. Uncovered by the Trust in November 2014, a rare First World War mirror and an older inter-war mirror were incorporated to form part of the tunnel's blast walls and exits onto the cliff face. The guided tour is a 45 minute adventure in a dark, dirty and wet environment – visitors must be over the age of 12 and in good health.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/white-cliffs-dover/things-to-see-and-do/fan-bay

100th anniversary at Oare Gunpowder Works

At 14.20 on Sunday, 2 April, 1916, 109 men and boys were killed by an explosion at the Explosives Loading Company factory at Uplees, near Faversham. Fifteen tons of TNT and 150 tons of ammonium nitrate blew up when some empty sacks caught fire. So great was the explosion that windows across the Thames estuary in Southend were shattered and the tremor was felt in Norwich. The crater made by the explosion was 40 yards across and 20 feet deep. 2016 is the 100th year anniversary of the great explosion that took place in 1916. A group trip to the Chart Gunpowder Mills and Oare Gunpowder Works provides an insight to Faversham's first gunpowder factory and one of the first in Britain.

www.gunpowderworks.co.uk

Port Lympne at 40

Port Lympne Reserve near Ashford offers walks through stunning grounds to see some of the world's most endangered animals and the African Experience – a safari-style drive through Kentish savannah. In 2016, the attraction celebrates its 40th birthday with a variety of events taking place to explain how founder, John Aspinall's, dream to protect endangered species became a reality. Further developments include an app, designed with augmented reality to enhance visitor experiences, and a new Asian Experience with free roaming Asian species.

www.aspinallfoundation.org/port-lympne

Walmer Castle Renewed

The displays at English Heritage's Walmer Castle and Gardens close to Deal have been transformed with new interpretations and multimedia guides giving insights into the castle's history from Tudor times onwards. Exhibitions cover its role as home of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, with famous residents including the Duke of Wellington, William Pitt the Younger and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. Newly opened, after a four-year restoration programme, is the Broadwalk Garden with a magnificent double herbaceous border planted in a style inspired by garden designer Gertrude Jekyll.

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/walmer-castle-and-gardens

Sharpshooting at Hever Castle and Gardens

New for 2016, the Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Military Museum at the 13th century Hever Castle in Edenbridge, the childhood home of Anne Boleyn, tells the story of one of Kent and London's proudest regiments. The museum, inside the castle grounds, has been designed to resemble a military operations tent and displays include a Saladin armoured car and a 25lb field gun.

www.hevercastle.co.uk

Dreamland – Phase 2 Openings

During 2015, Dreamland opened in Margate regenerating a derelict site and using historic amusement park rides including the Scenic Railway, the UK's oldest roller coaster, to recreate the thrill and nostalgia of traditional seaside entertainment with classic side shows and fairground rides. Phases due to open in 2016 will include new restaurants, renovations to the main building façade, cinema, bingo hall and arcade, and the development of inside and outside spaces that can be used for festivals and large-scale events.

www.dreamland.co.uk

Wartime at Dover Castle

English Heritage's Dover Castle has commanded the English Channel and gateway to Britain for nine centuries. During WWI, the Dover area was officially designated as a fortress, with a garrison of over 10,000 men centred around the military headquarters at the Castle. Here, the Fire Command Post and Naval Signalling station was crucial in protecting and monitoring the thousands of naval and merchant ships in the harbour and Straits of Dover. A major conservation and reinterpretation programme at the Post has recently been completed and a rare WWI anti-aircraft gun added to the displays.

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/dover-castle

Yarrow House Training Hotel, Broadstairs

A multi-million pound project is transforming East Kent College's historic, Grade—II listed Yarrow Building in Broadstairs into a 4- star Training Hotel, scheduled to open in early 2016. The purpose of the new hotel is to provide a dedicated base for training in the Travel, Tourism and Hospitality industries.

www.eastkent.ac.uk

COMING UP IN 2017

400th Anniversary of the Battle of Medway

Medway will commemorate the 350th anniversary of one of England's greatest naval disasters, which saw the River Medway engulfed in flames, with a special event programme. In the Dutch Raid of June 1667, a Dutch fleet sailed up the Medway and surprised the English fleet at anchor, burning a number of ships before towing away the Royal Charles, England's flagship.

Eastgate House, Rochester reopens as new exhibition and community space

Eastgate House is a Grade I listed building and a treasured landmark in the heart of historic Rochester. This beautiful Elizabethan townhouse was built in the late 1590s for Sir Peter Buck, who was Clerk of the Cheque at Chatham's Royal Dockyard and Mayor of Rochester. Throughout the centuries the house has been a girls' boarding school, a restaurant, the city museum and the Dickens Museum as well as a family home. It also features as Westgate in Dickens' novel, *The Pickwick Papers* and as the Nun's House in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. The gardens, annexe building and cottage were designed by Sir Guy Dawber in the 1920s. Here you will find the Swiss chalet where Dickens worked on some of his most famous novels. Previously sited at Dickens' home in Ga

2017 Folkestone Triennial

Following a hugely successful triennial in 2014, which saw gold buried in the sands of Folkestone beach, and the notorious street artist Banksy delivering a brand new artwork, the Folkestone Triennial will once again return to Kent in 2017, with even more exceptional artists, performances and eclectic variety of art events around the town.

St Augustine's Visitor Centre, Ramsgate

A Pugin and St Augustine Education, Research and Visitor Centre is being developed at St Augustine's Church in Ramsgate, next to the home designed, built and lived in by English architect, Augustus Pugin. Work on the project has already begun, with the launch in early 2017.

MORE TO COME IN 2018...

- 400th Anniversary of **The Historic Dockyard Chatham**
- **Expansion of McArthur Glen's Ashford Designer Outlet** – the second phase of its development will see 38 new luxury and premium brands added to the existing 80 names already trading in the famous tented shopping centre

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT IN 2015...

- Kent was voted by Lonely Planet as the best European destination for families in 2015
- New accommodation opened – The Royal Wells in Royal Tunbridge Wells, brand new campus accommodation at the Canterbury Christ Church University and the launch of the Treehouse Hotel and Pinewood eco-pods at Port Lympne Reserve,
- Dreamland opened in Margate, with its original and retro, vintage feel of the classic seaside amusement park
- The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh opened the Scramble Experience at Battle of Britain Museum at Capel le Ferne
- Buckmore Park Karting Circuit unveiled an all-new fleet of 50 2016 model karts in the striking blue and yellow Team Surtees livery of the successful European Championship Winning Formula Two TS10 Car.

ITINERARY SUGGESTIONS

We have a variety of inspirational itineraries to help you plan your visit to Kent. Take a look in the itineraries folder or discover plenty more on our website at www.visitkent.co.uk/trade

TRUE GARDEN OF ENGLAND

Dazzling colours, seductive scents, superb seasonal shows – Kent's gardens are rightly world renowned. With 180-plus to choose from, there's one to match every mood and interest: grand and historic, exotic and informal, Discover just some of Kent's many gardens and see why the county is known as the 'Garden of England'

ENJOY JAMES BOND'S KENT

Sharpen your wits, pick up clues and follow James Bond across Kent for an exhilarating adventure!

FRONTLINE KENT

Kent invites you to come on a friendly invasion. Visit the house that hid code breakers, the coast where bouncing bombs were tested, the secret tunnels from which Operation Dynamo was masterminded and airfields from which Spitfires and Hurricanes flew.

KENT'S CATHEDRAL CITIES

Reach deep into the country's spiritual heartland at some of the mightiest cathedrals in England, then get off the beaten track to some of the lesser-known treasures

HIDDEN GEMS

Kent is rightly famous for its magical heritage, countryside and coast, but it's also full of surprises, quirky and unique attractions and distinctly different experiences and this itinerary takes you to some of the little gems you must not miss.

GOURMET KENT

Kent has been known as the 'Garden of England' ever since Henry VIII tucked into a bowl of juicy Kentish cherries and developed a passion for the fruit. Enjoy a gourmet tour of Kent and sample all that's flavoursome and unique in the Garden of England

CELEBRATING CHARLES DARWIN

Darwin's famous theory of evolution sought to explain the beauty, diversity and complexity of life, and was partly written in Kent!

HERITAGE KENT

Where does the 'Key to England' unlock centuries of enthralling history? Take a fresh look at Kent, England's oldest county and get in touch with thousands of years of heritage

A ROYAL PROGRESS IN KENT

As the monarchy celebrates such momentous occasions as the Royal Wedding and Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee, there's never been a better time to come and share Kent's wealth of Royal connections

ENJOY A DICKENS OF A TIME

Visit the real-life settings that fired the famous author's imagination, to and from Portsmouth to London and Kent.

LITERARY KENT

Come and be inspired – like so many great writers – by Kent's idyllic rural landscapes, captivating cities, castles and gardens

KEY ANNUAL EVENTS

Kent hosts hundreds of exciting events throughout the year. For a comprehensive events listing, search our extensive events database at www.visitkent.co.uk/trade or contact us for more details.

March	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Spring Gardens (various locations)	Sweeps Festival, Rochester	Dickens Festival, Rochester	Whitstable Oyster Festival	Broadstairs Folk Week	Hop Festivals (various locations)	Broadstairs Food Festival	Folkestone Book Festival	Christmas Carol concerts, Rochester Cathedral & Canterbury Cathedral
Festival of Steam and Transport, Historic Dockyard Chatham	Jousting Tournaments, Leeds Castle	Broadstairs Dickens Festival	Cherry Festival, Brogdale	Jousting Tournaments, Hever Castle & Gardens	Salute to the 40's, Historic Dockyard Chatham	Flower Festival, Leeds Castle	Bonfire Night and Fireworks (various locations)	Dickens Christmas Market, Rochester
	WW2 Weekend, Dover Castle	Hever in Bloom, Hever Castle & Gardens	Kent County Show, Maidstone	Jousting Tournaments, Leeds Castle	Canterbury Food and Drink Festival	Canterbury Festival		
		Medway Fuse Festival	War and Peace Revival, Folkestone Racecourse					

HOW CAN VISIT KENT HELP?

The Visit Kent team can provide assistance with:

- Itinerary planning and sample itineraries
- Familiarisation visits
- Introductions to attractions, accommodation and destinations
- Free Images on our online image library www.flickr.com/photos/visitkent
- Regular newsletter updates
- Events listings
- Comprehensive online information on group accommodation, restaurants, events, special offers and more at www.visitkent.co.uk/trade



WHO DO I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?



Alanna Kite, Travel Trade Manager

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Phone: 01227 812910

KENT SUPPLIERS

Visit Kent is a partnership organisation and works closely with all of the majority suppliers of tourism services across the region.

The rest of this pack contains information about those suppliers who are dedicated to working with the travel trade, and a wider list of the rest of the stakeholders in the county.

visit CANTERBURY

<p>NAME: Liam Knight (Canterbury City Council) Therese Heslop (Canterbury Cathedral), Sarah Hirsch (Canterbury Tales)</p>		<p>COMPANY: Canterbury / Canterbury Cathedral / Canterbury Tales Visitor Attraction</p>
<p>CONTACT DETAILS:</p> <p>Email liam.knight@canterbury-cathedral.org thereseh@canterbury-cathedral.org shirsch@canterburytales.org.uk</p>	<p>Web www.canterbury.co.uk www.canterburygroups.co.uk www.canterbury-cathedral.org www.canterburytales.org.uk</p>	<p>WHAT'S SUPPORT / SERVICES ARE ON OFFER? As one of the UK's top visitor destinations, Canterbury and its attractions offer the travel trade extensive professional support and advice, from promotional print material to familiarisation trips and tailor-made packages. From images to itineraries, please contact us and we will provide solutions to all your problems.</p>
<p>PROFILE Canterbury's past is as rich as it comes" says the latest Lonely Planet guide to Britain. This world-famous cathedral city was one of medieval Europe's great places of pilgrimage and knowledge. Today – with its international visitors and three public Universities – it still has a distinctly cosmopolitan feel. Less than an hour from London, it's in that corner of England that's almost touching France.</p> <p>People come here from across the globe for world-class heritage, for culture and festivals, to visit and to study, to shop, eat and hang out. The extraordinary Cathedral dominates the medieval streets within the city walls. Among the listed buildings, a boldly modern theatre – named after the city's famous son Christopher Marlowe – has been built on the river bank, and an art museum has been restored and doubled in size. To the south is St Augustine's Abbey, part of the World Heritage Site, and England's first seat of learning.</p> <p>There's something warm and mellow about this intimate city. Crowds throng around the entrance to the Cathedral and in the busy high street. Thousands of students add to the vibe. It's lively and fun. But it's also remarkably easy – in a moment – to step off the beaten track into some quiet oasis where you'll hear nothing but birdsong, and the splash of oars on the narrow, gently flowing River Stour.</p> <p>You may be in a city, but you get a strong sense of being in the Garden of England too. There are riverside gardens and even a cider-making orchard within the city itself. Then there's all the local produce in cafes, pubs and restaurants: Romney Marsh lamb, Kent cherries, ale from local hops, and award-winning fizz from Kentish vineyards. To the north of the city is one of England's largest ancient woodlands, the Blean. And, less than a 7-mile cycle away at Canterbury's coast, there's the seaside town of Whitstable and Herne Bay.</p>		<p>WHAT'S NEW?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revitalised, extended and restored Beaney House of Art & Knowledge offering state of the art special and permanent exhibition galleries and a varied programme of events and activities for all ages. • Canterbury Festival, Kent's International Arts Festival - two weeks of world class art and culture in October every year. • Canterbury Cathedral – explore beautiful manuscripts dating back to the 7th century, learn how stained glass was made or see the Cathedral stonemasons in action through our 'behind the scenes' programme. • The Canterbury Tales – through Chaucer's famous tales, follow the medieval pilgrimage from London to the shrine of Thomas Becket in Canterbury and join our costumed characters for an interactive tour. • Following a rejuvenating makeover, the Canterbury Roman Museum provides a fascinating and family friendly insight into Roman Canterbury. • Events – Canterbury Food & Drink Festival (September) Whitstable Oyster Festival (end July/beginning August), Herne Bay Festival (August) and much more! • Kent County Cricket Club – learn to bat, bowl and field; great for youth groups.



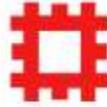
<p>NAME: Stef Harlow</p>	<p>COMPANY: Leeds Castle</p>
<p>CONTACT DETAILS: Leeds Castle Maidstone Kent ME17 1PL Tel: +44 (0)1622 767865 Email: stefharlow@leeds-castle.co.uk Web: www.leeds-castle.com</p>	<p>WHAT'S SUPPORT / SERVICES ARE ON OFFER?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group discounts • Free admission for one tour leader & coach driver • Professional support and advice • Press and familiarisation visits • Special tours for groups – Guided Castle Tours and audio tours in a range of languages
<p>PROFILE “The loveliest castle in the world” set in 500 acres of beautiful parkland and with over 900 years of history, is the perfect backdrop to your day out. A group visit to Leeds Castle in the garden of England is full of discovery. The Castle has been a Norman stronghold, a royal residence for six medieval queens of England, a favourite palace of Henry VIII and a country house retreat for the rich and famous.</p> <p>Its blend of history and heritage, glorious gardens, falconry show, maze and grotto, dog collar museum, punting, gift shops and licensed restaurant make it the perfect choice for a group day out. Leeds Castle hosts an extensive programme of special events throughout the year, many of which are included in the group ticket price. Visit the regularly updated website at www.leeds-castle.com/events for the full programme of special and ticketed events.</p>	<p>WHAT'S NEW?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Specialist Talks: ‘Leading Ladies of Leeds Castle’, ‘Flowers of Leeds Castle’, ‘Arms & Armour’, ‘The History of Leeds Castle’ and ‘High Society Secrets’. <p>Key Annual Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring: Chelsea Fringe (May/June) & The Grand Medieval Joust (May) • Summer: Leeds Castle Classical Concert (July) • Autumn: Food Festival (September), Festival of Flowers (September) & Fireworks Spectacular (November) • Winter: Christmas at the Castle (December) & The Christmas Market (December)



<p>NAME: Emma Dadds (Tourism Officer) and Julie Edwards (PR Contact)</p>	<p>COMPANY: Thanet District Council (Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate)</p>
<p>CONTACT DETAILS: Thanet Visitor Information Centre The Droit House Stone Pier Margate Kent CT9 1JD Tel: +44(0)1843 577637 Email: emma.dadds@thanet.gov.uk Web: www.visitthanet.co.uk/groups</p>	<p>WHAT'S SUPPORT / SERVICES ARE ON OFFER?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanet Tourism can provide assistance with itinerary planning when visiting. • Publications and literature on the destination and visitor attractions. • Free images for tour planners' brochures, website and promotional material are available on request. • Thanet Tourism can assist with hosting journalists and tour/coach operators when visiting our destination.
<p>PROFILE Thanet District Council is the local authority responsible for the promotion of the seaside resorts of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate and the surrounding area.</p> <p>Margate, a traditional English seaside town with its famous long golden sandy beach. The family seaside experience is complimented by Turner Contemporary art gallery, its cultural offering within the Old Town area, where there are numerous art galleries, studios and the second oldest theatre in the UK. The town is home to the reopened Dreamland Pleasure Park</p> <p>Broadstairs a charming and unspoiled seaside resort with its quaint fishermen's cottages, cliff tops promenade and seven beautiful beaches. The Dickens House Museum commemorates the famous author's association with the town and celebrated in June with a festival. August sees the town's international folk festival and Autumn a food festival.</p> <p>Ramsgate is the home to the only Royal harbour in the country, a picturesque marina and waterfront, and award winning sandy beach. Architecturally feast for the eyes with handsome Georgian terraces, splendid Regency squares and the site of the country's first modern house, The Grange, built by Augustus Pugin. Discover life underground during WWII at the Ramsgate Tunnels and continue the war time theme at the nearby free Spitfire and Hurricane Museum</p> <p>One of our coastal villages of Birchington is the home to Quex Park Country estate and stately home, including a museum with collections from explorer Major Powell-Cotton. Traditional country skills are still practiced on the estate today.</p>	<p>WHAT'S NEW?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turner Contemporary - A rolling programme of exhibitions showcases work by leading British and international artists, as well as works by the great artist JMW Turner from whom the gallery takes its name. Turner Contemporary is one of the largest galleries in the South East, outside London. 2016 marks the gallery's 5th birthday • Dreamland Pleasure Park – Reopened June 2015, the 'UK's Original Pleasure Park: Re-imagined'. Take a ride through the decades with rides including the Grade II* Scenic Railway alongside arcades, side shows, events and roller disco. • Hornby Visitor Centre - Relocating to premises next to Ramsgate Harbour and due to open around Spring 2016 • Yarrow House Training Hotel - Multi-million pound investment transforming East Kent College's historic Yarrow Building in Broadstairs into a Four Star Training Hotel which is scheduled to open in early 2016. • St Augustine's Visitor Centre - A 'Pugin and St Augustine Education, Research and Visitor Centre' is being developed at St Augustine's Church in Ramsgate, next to the home designed, built and lived in by Augustus Pugin. Work on the project commences 2015 with a view of completion by early 2017

Turner Contemporary

NAME: Bryony Bishop	COMPANY: Turner Contemporary
CONTACT DETAILS: Turner Contemporary Rendezvous Margate Kent CT9 1HG Tel: +44 (0)1843 233000 Email: bbishop@turnercontemporary.org Website: www.turnercontemporary.org	WHAT'S SUPPORT / SERVICES ARE ON OFFER? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Admission to the gallery is free of charge.• Guided tours• Press and familiarisation visits• Images and promotional material• Professional advice and support
PROFILE <p>Turner Contemporary is one of the UK's leading art galleries, presenting contemporary and historical art in a stunning seaside setting. Inspired by Britain's best-loved painter JMW Turner, the gallery offers a space for everyone to discover different ways of seeing, thinking and learning.</p> <p>On a visit you will be treated to some extraordinary exhibitions of works by leading contemporary and historic artists, alongside a dynamic programme of talks, tours, performances and events.</p> <p>The gallery is situated on Margate seafront, on the same site where Turner stayed when visiting the town, with stunning views out to sea.</p>	WHAT'S NEW? <p>A changing programme of interesting exhibitions and events run throughout the year and for 2016 and beyond includes:</p> <p>In 2016 the gallery presents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joachim Koester: The Other Side of the Sky 4 February – 8 May 2016• Seeing Round Corners 21 May – 25 September 2016• Turner on Colour 7 October 2016 – 8 January 2017• Yinka Shonibare April – October 2016



ENGLISH HERITAGE

NAME: Nik Barrie	COMPANY: English Heritage (including Dover Castle, Walmer Castle, Deal Castle, Down House, Lullingstone Roman Villa, Richborough Roman Fort, Bayham Abbey and St Augustines Abbey)
CONTACT DETAILS: Marketing: Nik Barrie Travel Trade: Mercedes Picard and Siobhan Harrison PR: Isobel Uden Tel: 020 7973 3529 E-mail: traveltrade@english-heritage.org.uk	WHAT'S SUPPORT / SERVICES ARE ON OFFER? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group discounts• Free admission for tour leader & coach driver• Pre-booked guided tours for groups• Promotional print, images and itinerary support.• Free familiarization visits for tour operators and journalists• Seasonal and event offers
PROFILE <p>The best tours in history start here! <i>English Heritage's</i> fabulous collection of over 400 historic attractions ranges from prehistoric sites to Art Deco palaces – from majestic medieval castle's and abbeys to delightful gardens and grand stately homes. Wherever you are – you're never far from an English Heritage attraction. Hidden gems nestling in the Kentish countryside as well as major Kentish tourist attractions in the care of English Heritage include;</p> <p>The mighty fortress of Dover Castle – gateway to the realm for over nine centuries – high up on the famous White Cliffs displays at its heart a dazzling evocation of a medieval royal palace. While deep down beneath the White Cliffs a labyrinth of secret wartime tunnels were the nerve centre for Operation Dynamo – the evacuation of British and Allied troops from the Dunkirk beaches during World War II.</p> <p>At the Home of Charles Darwin, Down House, rooms and gardens echo with the footsteps of the man who wrote the world-changing theory of evolution, <i>On the Origin of Species</i>. See where the Romans landed at Richborough Roman Fort, or make a pilgrimage to the atmospheric remains of St Augustine's Abbey, built following his arrival in Canterbury in AD597. Enjoy the undercover attraction of Lullingstone Roman Villa, one of the most outstanding surviving in Britain. On the Kent borders, take time out at the 14th century ruins of Bayham Abbey.</p> <p>The atmosphere at Walmer Castle and Gardens is thick with the memories of its eminent former residents – newly reimagined in 2015, feel the hush in the room where the Duke of Wellington died and understand how Prime Minister, William Pitt the Younger, met his ministers at Walmer Castle and orchestrated the defences against invasion by Napoleon Bonaparte. Only a short journey along the seafront, see the contrast of Deal Castle, a Tudor coastal fortress.</p>	WHAT'S NEW? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dover Castle <p>New for 2016, the Fire Command Post was completed in 2015 with HLF funding, and during summer 2016 there will be the chance to see gun drills with the newly restored anti-aircraft gun on selected days.</p>

<p>NAME: Laura Meads or Amy Law</p>	<p>COMPANY: Shepherd Neame Visitor Centre</p>
<p>CONTACT DETAILS: Shepherd Neame Brewery and Visitor Centre, 17 Court Street Faversham Kent, ME13 7AX Tel: +44 (0) 1795 542016 Email: tours@shepherdneame.co.uk Website: www.shepherdneame.co.uk</p>	<p>WHAT'S SUPPORT / SERVICES ARE ON OFFER?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Tour and Tutored tastings • Full day itineraries and images • Group catering facilities • Exclusive Tours • Press and familiarisation visits • Free coach parking in Faversham • Group organiser goes free
<p>PROFILE</p> <p>Beer, the 'Drink of England', has been produced in Faversham for over 850 years and the Shepherd Neame Brewery, set in the heart of this historic market town, has been part of this tradition for well over 300 of those years. Brewery tours give an insight into the history, tradition and industry that has made ales, especially Kentish ales, such an important part of our national culture.</p> <p>The award-winning guided tours start in the Visitor Centre, a beautifully restored medieval hall house. From here our expert guides will take you through the busy working brewery revealing the mix of traditional and modern technology used to produce our range of Kentish Ales and speciality lagers.</p> <p>Discover the secrets of brewing as you are guided through the brewhouse with its traditional mash tuns. Here, you can taste malted barley, sample natural mineral water from our own well and smell locally-grown Kentish hops. You will find out about every stage of the brewing process as well as packaging and distribution during your fascinating tour which also features Shepherd Neame's history and heritage. Of course, no visit would be complete without a chance to sample the results of our labours and your expert guide will lead you through a tutored tasting of several ales and lagers - audience participation encouraged! Finally, leave time to browse in the Brewery Shop and pick a souvenir, gift or even some beer!</p>	<p>WHAT'S NEW?</p> <p>In 2016, toast The Year of The Garden and combine a morning tour of Shepherd Neame, complete with lunch, and a relaxing afternoon at Mount Ephraim Gardens. Explore ten acres of landscaped gardens surrounding a splendid Victorian mansion. Soak up the tranquil atmosphere and drink in the views of the Swale and Thames estuary, admire the unusual topiary and wander through the rock garden with its delightful Japanese stone bridge.</p>



HEVER CASTLE & GARDENS

CHILDHOOD HOME OF ANNE BOLEYN

NAME:

Sarah Cole

COMPANY:

Hever Castle & Gardens
(The Childhood home of Anne Boleyn)

CONTACT DETAILS:

Hever Castle & Gardens
Hever, Edenbridge
Kent TN8 7NG, UK
Tel: +44 (0) 1732 861710
Fax: +44(0) 1732 866796
Email: scole@hevercastle.co.uk
Website: www.hevercastle.co.uk

WHAT'S SUPPORT / SERVICES ARE ON OFFER?

- Professional support and advice
- Press and familiarisation visits
- Special tours for groups – Private Guided Castle Tour, Private Guided Garden Tour
- Images

PROFILE

Hever Castle is best known as the childhood home of Anne Boleyn, second wife of Henry VIII.

There is something for everyone at the romantic double-moated 13th century castle, with its splendid panelled rooms containing fine furniture, tapestries and an important collection of Tudor portraits and paintings.

The castle is surrounded by magnificent award-winning gardens - Rose, Italian and Tudor Gardens, each with its own style and character. Other attractions include a yew maze and water maze, boating lake, an adventure playground and impressive display of miniature model houses.

Hever Castle hosts an extensive programme of events throughout the year, including Jousting Tournaments, Edwardian Life, Hever's Home Front, Paws at the Castle dog show, Hever in Bloom, Tudor Living and the Handmade & Homegrown Festival.

WHAT'S NEW?

- Hever Castle bed and breakfast is proud to announce that 9 beautiful new bedrooms in the Anne Boleyn Wing are now available to book with a 6 month lead time, bringing the total number of rooms in this luxurious five star collection to 28.
- HRH Princess Alexandra officially opened the Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Museum in September 2015. Entry to the new Military Museum is included with the normal admission price to Hever Castle & Gardens. Attractions in the museum include reconstructions of a World War I trench, with sound effects, and the interior of a World War II Cromwell tank turret. Four touchscreens tell fascinating life stories of people who served in the regiment through the ages, with video clips and quizzes. Exhibits include original artefacts such as photographs, diaries, uniforms and equipment dating back to 1797, as well as guidons (flags), and medals. Visitors can also research ancestors who may have served in the regiments.
- New multi-media guides introduced in February 2015 have replaced the old audio guides, giving visitors access to both audio and visual information about the Castle and its contents.

**NAME:**

Holly Buggins

COMPANY:

McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Ashford

CONTACT DETAILS:

McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Ashford
Management Suite
Kimberley Way
Ashford TN24 0SD, UK
Tel. +44 (0) 1233 895903 Email: holly.buggins@mcarthurglen.com
Web: www.ashforddesigneroutlet.com

WHAT'S SUPPORT / SERVICES ARE ON OFFER?

- Welcome pack*
- Group discount*
- Meal voucher for coach leader & driver*
- Multilingual tourism leaflets
- Free familiarisation visits for tour operators & journalists
- Seasonal and event offers
- Images available on request

Please visit our groups page for more details: www.mcarthurglen.com/uk/ashford-designer-outlet/en/plan-your-visit/group-visits/ or to make a booking or enquire email coaches@ashforddesigneroutlet.com

*Bookings must be made at least 24 hours prior to arrival. Two meal vouchers per coach only.

PROFILE

Ashford Designer Outlet is situated in the heart of the Garden of England, Kent. Designed by architect Lord Richard Rogers, this is one of Europe's most spectacular shopping destinations. It's conveniently located near Ashford town centre, adjacent to the International Eurostar station and a few minutes' drive from Junction 10 of the M20 Motorway. The centre is also an ideal destination for people heading to or from the cross channel ferry port at Dover.

Shoppers will find all the labels they love – from fashion, shoes, jewellery and homewares reduced by up to 60% at 80 top name stores including Polo Ralph Lauren, Ted Baker, Tommy Hilfiger, Lacoste, Jaeger, Guess, Kurt Geiger, Fred Perry, Calvin Klein Jeans, Superdry, The Body Shop and Nike. We also have a range of cafes and eateries where you can sit back and relax during your shopping trip including Caffè Nero, wagamama and Pizza Express.

WHAT'S NEW?

There is always something new at Ashford Designer Outlet as they build and expand the portfolio of brands offered at the centre. Recently opened stores include Calvin Klein Jeans and Hugo Boss Menswear with more planned in the next few months. The centre has also recently had planning permission approved to expand the centre by 1000 sq. ft., to nearly twice the current size. The development will add 38 new shops and a further six new restaurants and cafes, as well as new children's play area and car park providing an extra 725 spaces. Construction is expected to start in 2016 and completion is planned for 2018.

<p>NAME: Lucy Bryant</p>	<p>COMPANY: Southeastern</p>
<p>CONTACT DETAILS: Southeastern Friars Bridge Court 41-45 Blackfriars Road London SE1 8PG</p> <p>Email: lucy.bryant@southeasternrailway.co.uk Mobile: 07720 079452 Web: www.southeasternrailway.co.uk</p>	<p>WHAT'S SUPPORT / SERVICES ARE ON OFFER?</p> <p>We are proud of the areas we serve and the wealth of opportunities that exist for people to travel to, from and around South East London, Kent and East Sussex. There are a number of ways you can work with us in partnership to promote your attraction, destination or event.</p> <p>Please contact Lucy Bryant at lucy.bryant@southeasternrailway.co.uk for more details.</p>
<p>PROFILE</p> <p>Southeastern has been running the train service between London and Kent and parts of East Sussex since 2006. We operate one of the busiest networks in the country and also run the UK's first domestic high speed service with Javelin trains.</p> <p>Our 4,000 employees ensure that 640,000 passengers travel to their destination safely every weekday.</p> <p>We run 1,922 passenger trains on weekdays, 1,690 on Saturdays and 968 on Sundays.</p> <p>We manage 166 stations and we serve 176 stations.</p> <p>We have been awarded the franchise to continue to run these services until June 2018 which will enable us to build on our record of improving train services, investing record amounts in the route network, raising customer service standards and delivering strong passenger growth.</p>	<p>WHAT'S NEW?</p> <p>For more news on what's new please visit www.southeasternrailway.co.uk/news/latest-news/</p>



NAME: Alanna Kite	COMPANY: Bluewater (c/o Visit Kent)
CONTACT DETAILS: Bluewater Greenhithe, Kent, DA9 9ST Tel:01322 475475 All groups and travel trade enquiries to be directed to Alanna Kite at Visit Kent	WHAT'S SUPPORT / SERVICES ARE ON OFFER? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Driver Incentives Pack that includes: £10 Bluewater gift card, dining guide, mall guide, a selection of the latest offers from our stores and restaurants and a VIP card that gives you exclusive discounts in a range of stores• Guest VIP Pack for group members that includes: dining guide, mall guide, a selection of the latest offers from our stores and restaurants and a VIP card to give you exclusive discounts in a range of stores• Dedicated coach pick-up and drop-off bays• Meet and greet service on arrival
PROFILE <p>With over 300 stores, 60 restaurants, plus entertainment, cinemas and leisure activities, Bluewater offers travel wholesalers, tour operators and group organisers Europe's largest retail and leisure destination.</p> <p>With our ideal location (as a day trip or meal stop off), personal service and luxury product offering, we make it easy to include Bluewater on your travel itineraries.</p> <p>We have developed a bespoke offer that includes welcome packages for groups, joint package options, advice on creating exclusive programmes for clients, transport services, advice to the centre and much much more.</p>	WHAT'S NEW? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brand new store openings for 2016• Re-development of the Glow events venue space• Upcoming events



NAME:

Zoe Rowlands

COMPANY:

Howletts Wild Animal Park and Port Lymgne Reserve

CONTACT DETAILS:

Email: info@aspinallfoundation.org

Web

www.aspinallfoundation.org

WHAT'S SUPPORT / SERVICES ARE ON OFFER?

- **FREE** admission for coach driver
 - **FREE** coach parking & easy access
 - **FREE** familiarisation visits for tour operators
 - **FREE** Safari at Port Lymgne
 - Special **group rates** for 15 or more people
 - Advice on itinerary planning and tailor made packages
 - Group animal adoption rates
 - Mansion and Garden tours*
 - Special guided tours for groups*
 - Education talks*
 - Lunches*
 - Team building workshops*
 - Members of your group can upgrade to a Passport on the day of your visit so they can come back all year round for free
- *subject to an additional charge

PROFILE

Howletts Wild Animal Park and **Port Lymgne Reserve** work with the world leading conservation charity, **The Aspinall Foundation**. The parks are designed to be breeding sanctuaries for some of the most endangered animals on the planet, offering the opportunity to witness real conservation in action.

Howletts near Canterbury, offers fun filled day out for groups of all ages and sizes. Howletts is home to the UK's largest herd of **African elephants** and the world's largest group of **western lowland gorillas** along with many other species. Visitors can **walk amongst lemurs**, come face to face with **lions, tigers** and **giant anteaters** in their glass fronted enclosures and mimic the agile primates by trying their skills on the exciting **Treetop Challenge** – an obstacle course with rope bridges and zip wires. For the younger adventurer the **Animal Adventure Challenge**, with bird nest swings, wobbly walk ways and climbing wall is bound to thrill!

Port Lymgne Reserve, near Ashford in Kent is one of the largest wild animal parks in the UK. Set over 600 acres, the reserve is home to Kent's authentic safari experience. Visitors can jump on board a safari truck and journey to the African Experience, 100 acres of Kent savannah – alive with African animals, with spectacular views over the Kent countryside and coast.

WHAT'S NEW?

- **Brand new calendar of events** at both parks
- **Summer Open Air Cinema** (check our website for more information).
- **Accommodation at Port Lymgne Reserve – 6 Ways to Stay!** Home to the multi award winning **Livingstone Lodge**, our luxury tented overnight safari and dining experience. **Elephant Lodge**, our unique 'glamping' holiday experience. **Livingstone Cottage**, the perfect VIP experience – sleeps groups of up to 8 people. The grade II listed mansion has been luxuriously transformed in to our boutique 4 star Port Lymgne Hotel offering 6 sumptuous bedrooms, each sleeping 2 persons. New additions to the accommodation portfolio include the cosy Pinewood Camping Pods, sleeping up to 4 people per pods and within roaring distance of the lions and tigers, and the Treehouse Hotel, offering the height of luxury nestled within the tree canopy.
- **New Arrivals** – Keep an eye out for the cute new arrivals at the parks.
- Winner of the '**Best Leisure and Tourism Experience**' at the 2015 KIEBA awards
- Both parks are **VAQAS** accredited



<p>NAME: Olivia Horner</p>	<p>COMPANY: The Historic Dockyard Chatham</p>
<p>CONTACT DETAILS: Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, The Sail and Colour Loft, The Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4TZ. UK</p> <p>Tel +44 (0) 1634 823815 Fax +44 (0) 0634 823801 Email: groupsales@chdt.org.uk Web: www.thedockyard.co.uk</p>	<p>WHAT'S SUPPORT / SERVICES ARE ON OFFER?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dedicated Group Sales department • Advice on itinerary planning and tailor made packages • Free press and familiarisation visits • Free entry for group driver's and organiser's • Images for promotional materials and websites • Group Trade newsletters (printed and electronic) • A range of exclusive themed guided tours for groups (on coach and walking) • Group catering offers
<p>PROFILE</p> <p>As the world's most complete dockyard of the Age of Sail, The Historic Dockyard Chatham is unique and one of Britain's leading maritime heritage destinations, knowledgeable guides bring 400 years of history to life throughout the 80 acre site.</p> <p>With a fantastic range of attractions, iconic buildings groups have the opportunity to make rope on the Victorian Ropery Tour; go aboard the Three Historic Warships; Discover how ships such as HMS Victory were built here at Chatham in our Hearts of Oak Gallery. Be inspired by the innovation and bravery of those who worked here in Steam, Steel and Submarines and see the world class maritime treasures from two national museums and a changing programme of temporary exhibitions in No.1 Smithery. There are also four other attractions to explore.</p> <p>Popular annual events at The Historic Dockyard Chatham include: The Medway Festival of Steam & Transport at Easter (27 & 28 March 2016) Salute to the '40s (17 & 18 September 2016)</p>	<p>WHAT'S NEW?</p> <p>Tours in 2016: Our very popular 'Call the Midwife' and 'Film Locations' locations tours will be returning this year accompanied by Afternoon Tea and catering packages in the Commissioner's House and 'Fish and Ships' on board HMS CAVALIER.</p> <p>New for 2016: Command of the Oceans Four new multi million pound galleries open at The Historic Dockyard in May 2016, revealing the Dockyard's powerful, previously untold, story from the 'Age of Sail', when the people of the Dockyard built ships for the Royal Navy, helping Britain's <i>Command of the Oceans</i>.</p> <p>New visitor facilities include new (free) coach parking & group drop-off point, new visitor entrance with fast track admissions for groups, new café, new shop, private room hire and a free to enter discovery centre.</p> <p>Temporary Exhibitions in 2016 Art in the Dockyard (Summer) The creative talent of South East's artists will be showcased in the final of our open art competition with one being crowned as 'Artist of the Dockyard'. Pole of Cold (Autumn)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discover the mystical world of the Arctic and the people who live there. From shamanism to ice-cream – an insight into the coldest place on earth.

KENT ATTRACTIONS (LISTED ALPHABETICALLY)

Association of Tourist Attractions in Kent
(ATAK)
www.kentattractions.co.uk

Ashford Designer Outlet
www.ashforddesigneroutlet.com

Biddenden Vineyards
www.biddendenvineyards.com

Bedgebury National Pinetum and Forest
www.forestry.gov.uk/bedgebury

Bluewater
www.bluewater.co.uk

Brogdale
www.brogdale.org

Buckmore Park Karting
www.buckmore.co.uk

Canterbury Cathedral
www.canterbury-cathedral.org

Canterbury Historic River Tours
www.canterburyrivertours.co.uk

The Canterbury Tales
www.canterburytales.org.uk

The Churches Conservation Trust
www.visitchurches.org.uk

Deal Castle
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Dover Castle & Secret Wartime Tunnels
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Down House, The Home of Charles Darwin
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Godinton House & Gardens
www.godintonhouse.co.uk/

Go Ape
www.goape.co.uk

Goodnestone Park Gardens
www.goodnestoneparkgardens.co.uk

Hever Castle & Gardens
www.hever-castle.co.uk

The Historic Dockyard Chatham
www.thedockyard.co.uk

Howletts Wild Animal Park
www.aspinallfoundation.org/howletts

Kent Life
www.kentlife.org.uk

Kent Wildlife Trust
www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk

Leeds Castle
www.leeds-castle.com

Lullingstone Roman Villa
www.english-heritage.org.uk

National Trust (various)
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Penshurst Place & Gardens
www.penshurstplace.com

Port Lympne Reserve
www.aspinallfoundation.org/portlympne

Quex Museum, House & Gardens
www.quexmuseum.org

The Rare Breeds Centre
www.rarebreeds.org.uk

Riverhill Himalayan Gardens
www.riverhillgardens.co.uk

Rochester Cathedral
www.rochestercathedral.org

Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway
www.rhdr.org.uk

Shepherd Neame Brewery Tour
www.shepherdneame.co.uk

St Augustine's Abbey
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Tenterden Vineyard (Chapel Down)
www.chapeldownwines.co.uk

Turner Contemporary
www.turnercontemporary.org

Walmer Castle
www.english-heritage.org.uk

White Cliffs of Dover
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

KENT ACCOMMODATION (BY AREA)

ASHFORD

Ashford International Hotel
www.ghotels.co.uk

Eastwell Manor, Ashford
www.eastwell.co.uk

Holiday Inn Ashford Central
www.ichotelsgroup.com

Holiday Inn Ashford North
www.hiashford.com

London Beach Hotel, Spa and Country Club
www.londonbeach.com

BEXLEY/DARTFORD

Bromley Court Hotel
www.bromleycourthotel.co.uk/

Hilton Dartford Bridge
www.hilton.co.uk/dartfordbridge

Rowhill Grange
www.rowhillgrange.co.uk

CANTERBURY

ABode Canterbury
www.abodecanterbury.co.uk/

Canterbury Cathedral Lodge
www.canterburycathedrallodge.org

Christchurch University Accommodation
www.canterbury.ac.uk

Holiday Inn Express Canterbury
www.hiexpress.com

University of Kent Accommodation
www.kent.ac.uk

DOVER

The Bell Hotel, Sandwich
www.bellhotelsandwich.co.uk

Best Western Dover Marina Hotel
www.dovermarinahotel.co.uk

Marquis at Alkham
www.themarquisatalkham.co.uk

Ramada Dover
www.ramadadover.co.uk

Wallet's Court
www.walletscourthotel.com

HYTHE

Hythe Imperial
<http://www.hytheimperial.co.uk>

MAIDSTONE

Chilston Park Hotel
www.handpicked.co.uk

Hilton Maidstone
www.hilton.co.uk/maidstone

Holiday Inn Maidstone
www.ichotelsgroup.com

Tudor Park, Marriot Hotel and Country Club
www.marriotttudorpark.co.uk

Mercure Maidstone
www.mercuremaidstone.co.uk

The Village Hotel
www.village-hotels.co.uk/hotels/maidstone/

ROCHESTER

Bridgewood Manor, Chatham
www.ghotels.co.uk/our-locations/bridgewood-manor-chatham-kent/

Holiday Inn Rochester
www.ichotelsgroup.com

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Hotel du Vin, Tunbridge Wells
www.hotelduvin.com

The Spa Hotel, Tunbridge Wells
www.spahotel.co.uk

Mercure Tunbridge Wells
www.mercuretunbridgewells.co.uk

Also see:

Kent and Sussex Holiday Cottages (self-catering)
www.kentandsussexcottages.co.uk

Mulberry Cottages (self-catering)
www.mulberrycottages.com

Shepherd Neame (pub accommodation)
www.shepherdneame.co.uk

KENT CROSS CHANNEL PROVIDERS (LISTED ALPHABETICALLY):

Eurotunnel Le Shuttle

www.eurotunnel.com

P&O Ferries

www.poferries.com

LOCAL TRANSPORT PROVIDERS

Arriva

www.arrivabus.co.uk

Southeastern

www.southeasternrailway.co.uk

Stagecoach

www.stagecoachbus.com