



Maidstone Town Mail

Best Steak in Maidstone



01622 669333

...another initiative from Town Centre Management



Town Centre to Welcome our Troops

There will be a welcome home parade for the Maidstone based 36 Regiment Royal Engineers in the town centre on Friday 28 March commencing at 10.50am from County Hall.



The troops will shortly return from a gruelling tour of Afghanistan and it is hoped local people will show their support for "our" soldiers by attending the Parade in their thousands. Traders and businesses throughout the town are also asked to show their support by displaying flags, publicising the event to their customers and contacts and by spectating on the day.

Proceedings start when the Regiment will march from Invicta Park barracks to County Hall. At 10.50am they will set off from County Hall along Week Street and into the High Street where the salute will be taken from the Parade at the Town Hall at 11.00am. From here the Parade marches along Mill Street to All Saints Church for a service of thanksgiving and remembrance.

The service will be taken by the Reverend Canon of All Saints Church Christopher Morgan-Jones, and attended by the Bishop of Maidstone the Rt Reverend Graham Cray, the Regiment's Padre Murray McBride and the Gurkha Pandit.

Members of the public are invited to attend the service however seating priority will be given to the families of service personnel.

Town Centre Plan

In the February edition of Town Mail we featured the Town Plan, which for the first time outlined the aspirations of Town Centre Management on how the town centre should change over the next five years.



We have subsequently received a number of favourable responses to the plan and some extremely constructive comments on additional items that should be considered for inclusion in the plan.

A sub-group of TCM will meet shortly to discuss the feedback, and where necessary make amendments to the original document. The completed document will then be presented to the TCM board of directors at a specially convened meeting on 27 March, where it is anticipated it will be formally adopted for submission to the Maidstone local development framework.

TCM believes this is the first time such a paper has been produced for the town, and is keen to stress the close working relationship between themselves and the Borough Council in its preparation.

KMFM

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THE NEWS YOU NEED



For Maidstone 105.6



Operation Argos

A very important and active sub-group of Town Centre Management is the Night Time Economy Forum which meets every month to discuss issues surrounding the town centre's buoyant night-economy.

The forum greatly assisted the town in gaining the very first Safer Socialising Award in the country, which recognised our robust management of the town's night-life.

Working with Kent police, the forum is organising a FREE event to help and advise anybody with an interest in the security of their staff, customers and premises, and explains how to react if the town was to become a target for terrorists.

Known as Operation Argos the event is a table-top exercise where participants will be given scenarios relating to extremist acts, and asked how they would respond. Experts are on hand to guide delegates through the exercise and offer expert help and advice.

The Operation Argos seminar, scheduled to last 4 hours, is being held at Strawberry Moons nightclub in Gabriel's Hill on 11 March at 10am.

To book FREE places call Barbara Murray 07980 770428.



Big Issue... Big Success... Big Story

For some months Town Centre Management has been working closely with the regional management of the Big Issue to resolve a situation that saw up to twelve Big Issue vendors on the streets of the town centre.

This saturation caused our regular vendors to lose copy sales and the much needed commission they earn from the magazine publishers, as well as cause a number of people to contact the Town Centre Management office complaining of aggressive sales techniques being employed by the rogue sellers.

Town Centre Management, the police and the Big Issue management agreed three "official" sites within the town centre, and TCM supplied three heavy-duty branded all weather coats that provided additional warmth and comfort for the vendors.

In view of the success of this TCM led initiative a recent issue of the magazine carried a double page spread on the story, and featured a picture of the Maidstone vendors and representatives from the police and TCM. BBC Radio Kent also featured the story and conducted a live interview with TCM and Big Issue managers.

The Big Issue is now trying to get other towns and cities across the country to follow the Maidstone Model (as it is now known) and hopes these towns will show the foresight and care we have shown in our town centre.

Town Centre Management is proud to have been instrumental in this successful initiative.



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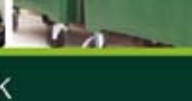
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Around Town...

...with Bill Moss

Pudding Lane ●●● A planning application has been received for a change of use to allow a dental practice to operate from 24-26 Pudding Lane.

Street Pastors ●●● Are being recruited and trained to assist with the vibrant night economy. Their task will be to provide a friendly ear and to offer advice to anybody who feels they need it either during or after a night-out in the town centre. This follows the successes of Club Chaplain Diana Greenfield who has become a regular part of the Maidstone club scene.

Barracuda Group ●●● Have announced their new venue in town will be known as Cape. Conversion of the former Chiesemans building in Lower High Street is expected soon. Further information on Cape from www.barracudagroup.co.uk

Maidstone Market ●●● We have been asked to remind everybody about the free shuttle bus that operates between the Mall Chequers Centre and Maidstone Market every Tuesday. Please pass this information on to elderly or less mobile friends or relations.

Last Chance ●●● You only have until 23 March to view the stunning exhibition of over 50 paintings by local artist Albert Goodwin currently on show at Maidstone Museum in St Faith's Street. Goodwin was a prolific Maidstone artist who exhibited nearly 800 works at the Royal Watercolour Society.

Maidstone Bag ●●● Designs have been agreed, a manufacturer has been sourced and an order has been placed for the initial delivery of the Maidstone Bag. A high profile launch is planned for early May when we will announce the date Maidstone becomes a plastic bag free town.

Musical Maidstone ●●● We wonder if MBC knew about the Radio 1 Big Weekend before the announcement of the Musical Maidstone project. By getting off to such a flyer the project is bound to succeed!

Fraser Hart Robbery

For the third time in a few short months Fraser Hart Jewellers in Fremlin Walk have been robbed. The latest robbery on 13 February resulted in three people being arrested and charged by Maidstone Police.

Within seconds of the first hammer blow being struck against the window of the shop, a MaidSafe (the town centre crime reduction partnership) member informed the CCTV control room via his MaidSafe radio. The cameras were immediately trained on the building and the police called, and throughout the subsequent 4 minutes of hectic activity that led to the arrests MaidSafe members were active in keeping the police fully updated on the movements of the offenders.

MaidSafe is proud to have played such a pivotal role in the arrests, and congratulates the individuals concerned.

For further information on MaidSafe contact the TCM intelligence manager John Drogo on 01622 758938.

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Maidstone's Egg-travagnza

Easter is a time for chocolate, rabbits and fun for all. This year Maidstone has it all!

A large white rabbit will be visiting us, and for those of you who are old enough it is real! Please don't call him Harvey!

For the first time Town Centre Management, Fremlin Walk, The Mall Chequers Centre, and Royal Star Arcade are joining together to celebrate Easter. We hatched a plan with The Hop Farm who very happily joined in with our HOPPING idea! On March 15th Hopper the Rabbit from The Hop Farm will be visiting The Mall Chequers Centre, Fremlin Walk and the Royal Star Arcade with an exciting competition.

Fill in the entry form with the correct answers and you could win a family pass to see Peppa Pig who will be visiting The Hop Farm this Easter Weekend, 21st – 24th March. For more information on Peppa Pig's visit to The Hop Farm see the website www.thehopfarm.co.uk

All you need to do is look very carefully in shop windows in The Mall Chequers Centre, Fremlin Walk or the Royal Star Arcade where you will find six posters of Hopper. Write the positions down on your entry form where you have seen him and hand it in to the shopping centre. Each shopping centre will have gifts for you!!

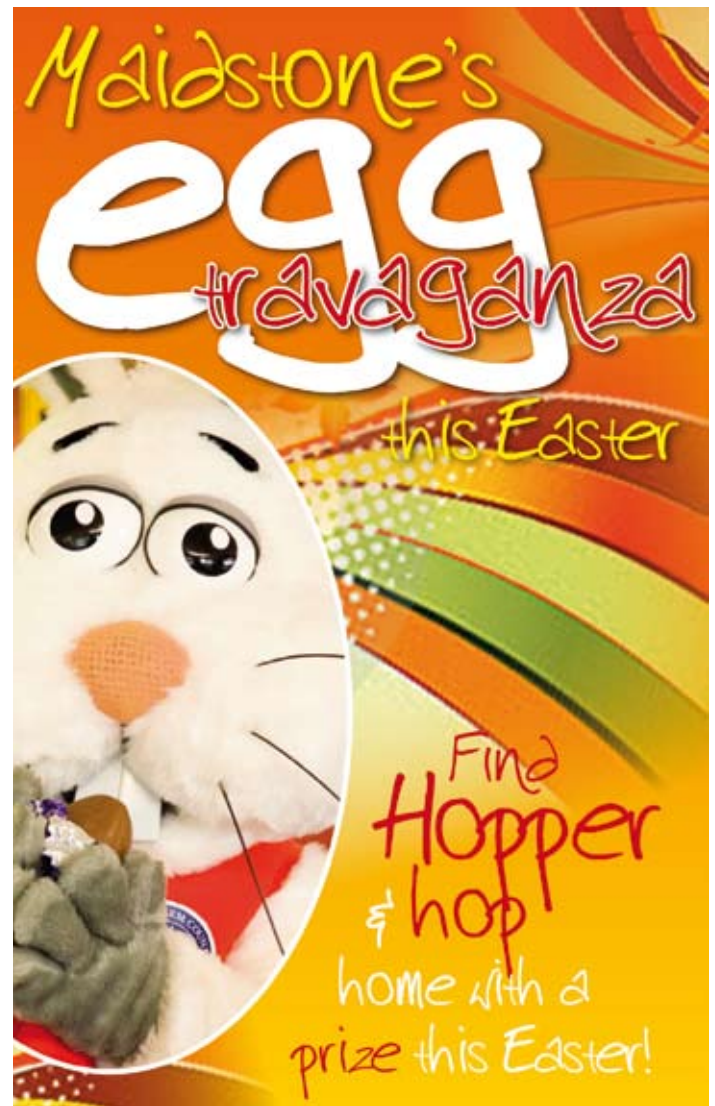
When Hopper returns he will draw a winner who will win tickets to see Peppa Pig at The Hop Farm. The draw for the family passes will be on Wednesday 19th March, at all three locations: The Mall Chequers Centre at 11.00am, Royal Star Arcade at 12.00 midday and Fremlin walk at 1.00pm.

The competition will continue until Tuesday 25th March where at 2.00pm at the Town Hall the Mayor will make another draw for the grand prize of a family Annual Season Ticket to The Hop Farm, entitling you to unlimited access* to this major Kent attraction.

Thank you to Pillory Barn for designing us such an egg-traordinary entry form!

From all of us to all of you, Happy Easter!

*See website for term's and conditions of the membership.



Easter Egg Appeal at The Mall

The cracking Easter Egg Appeal is back this year at The Mall Chequers so you have the chance to make this Easter an egg-s-tra special time for a local children.

Over the next couple of weeks, shoppers are being encouraged to donate chocolate eggs in The Mall's giant Easter egg pod by The Ask Me Point. All the Easter eggs will be carefully delivered to local children's charities including Maidstone's Social Services just in time for Easter.

Easter Farm Fun at Fremlin Walk

There's a quack, a baa and a bleat in the air at Fremlin Walk this Easter. From Friday 14 - Sunday 16 March the centre will be welcoming some very special guests to the "Walk" when it hosts the Fremlin Easter Farm. Shoppers will be able to meet and stroke real sheep, goats, geese, ducks, rabbits and guinea pigs at the Fremlin petting farm each day between 10am – 4pm. Fremlin Walk's own farmyard mascots Bobtail Bunny and Reggie the Rooster will also be playing games and welcoming guests to their farmyard 'barn' located at the entrance to the centre. Children can join in the fun and claim free large foil-wrapped Easter eggs. The farmyard fun continues with free face painting for younger visitors, plus lots of country objects to spot including old fashioned milk churns, straw seating and even a giant cow. The animals will add a real touch of spring to the Walk and our stores will be joining in the fun too with Easter displays, special promotions and of course some very tempting gifts and treats for everyone!

Contact Us

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Booking a scooter	01622 691130 (Mall Chequers) 01622 356588 (Fremlin Walk)

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Town Centre Management is a non profit making, private limited company, and relies on sponsorship from local businesses to continue making our town an even better place.

Our grateful thanks therefore to the following businesses for their generous support.

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