

The Policy of the Thanet Greeters

Welcome!

Thank you for volunteering to be a Thanet Greeter.

The Thanet Greeter programme enables people who are friendly and enthusiastic about their local area to meet visitors and pass on some of their knowledge thus enriching the newcomers experience and enjoyment of the resorts of Margate, Broadstairs, Ramsgate and surrounding villages.

Volunteers will support the programme by being friendly, courteous and helpful and by showing a genuine devotion to and pride for the Isle of Thanet. In addition, a Greeter shall be thoroughly familiar with any areas of Thanet that they show to a visitor.

WE WELCOME EVERYONE

Thanet Greeters welcome all people and do not discriminate based on race, colour, creed, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability.

ACCEPT REGULAR VISITS

A major criteria for remaining a volunteer with Thanet Greeters is frequent participation. We expect Greeters to be available for a visit at least once a month and to attend yearly briefing sessions. If there are extenuating circumstances, please discuss them with the Director of Volunteers.

ONLY ACCEPT VISITS TO AREAS THAT YOU KNOW

The visitor will get more out of the visit if you are thoroughly familiar with the area you are showing. Sometimes on the day of the visit, visitors will ask you to go to an area that you did not anticipate. Under no circumstances should you take them to any area/s that you do not know well.

CONTACT VISITORS PRIOR TO THE VISIT

When you accept a visit, ask the person assigning the visit when the visitor will arrive. Visits usually run smoothly when you make contact with the visitor prior to the day of the visit.

You are responsible for an initial call to the visitor. It is important to do this because some visitors never receive our communication providing your name and number, no matter how hard we try.

BE RELIABLE IN KEEPING APPOINTMENTS

If an emergency arises and you are unable to keep your appointment, notify the visitor/s as soon as possible. If you are cancelling in advance, call the Greeters Office and we will contact the visitor on your behalf.

MEET VISITORS IN PUBLIC PLACES

Be available to meet visitors where they are staying. If they are not staying in Thanet, you should meet at a mutually agreeable place. Always meet in a public place and not at your home or in the visitor's hotel room.

BE PROMPT WHEN MEETING VISITORS

A good beginning to a visit can set the right tone. Be punctual and reliable. If you are unavoidably delayed, please contact your visitor.

LIMIT THE NUMBER IN YOUR PARTY

Your visit should include no more than one family or one small group of 6 friends travelling together. If additional people arrive, you must refuse to take any more than 6. Explain that it is our policy not to take out large groups of people because we are volunteer "friends", and not trained tour guides.

Please note: Friends and spouses may not accompany greeters whilst conducting a visit.

WEAR THE THANET GREETERS BADGE THROUGHOUT THE VISIT

Because recognition of our organisation is important, we ask you to wear the Thanet Greeter badge throughout the visit. Conversely, no one may use the Greeter badge or name unless on a prearranged greeter visit or other activity organised or cleared by this office.

TRANSPORTATION

Our organisation and you in turn, encourage the use of public transportation and familiarisation of visitors with our bus and train system. Do not take visitors in your own car and do not travel in theirs. This is important because our insurance will not cover you or the visitor(s) in the event of an accident.

BE AVAILABLE FOR 4 HOURS

Accept visits when you have at least 4 hours to volunteer. Because we explain to visitors that visits last from 2 to 4 hours, they are entitled to all 4 hours. When mutually agreeable, visits may go beyond the 4 hours.

BE WILLING TO TAKE OUT VISITORS IN ALL TYPES OF WEATHER

The visit will usually go ahead come rain or shine. In case of inclement weather, flexibility on both your parts is helpful. You may suggest a visit that features indoor activities, or reschedule the visit, if this is mutually convenient.

PAY YOUR OWN EXPENSES

You and the visitor will each pay your own way.

DO NOT INVITE VISITORS INTO YOUR HOME

Our experience shows that visitors are fun and interesting. However, as a safety precaution and insurance imperative, our policy forbids bringing people to your home or you visiting their hotel room.

ANSWERING QUESTIONS

We want to convey your life experience of and feelings for Thanet, but when it comes to answering questions about specific facts, give accurate information. If you don't know the answer to a question, say that you do not know, do not fictionalise! Perhaps you can look it up after the visit and get back to the visitor or suggest ways that the visitor can find the answer.

If you should express an opinion to your visitor (s) make sure that they know it is solely yours and not that of the organisation.

Sometimes what one says and how one is understood are two different things. Some misunderstanding of this nature can cause ill will. Please make sure that your statement is understood and received by the visitor in the manner that you have expressed.

DO NOT ACCEPT TIPS

Under no circumstances should you accept any money from your visitor. Should a visitor wish to express appreciation for your visit, please remind him/her that tipping is inappropriate.

They may send a donation to the office, but please do not solicit it. A donation can also be made online by going to our website once the system is in place: www.thanet-greeters.org.uk

QUESTIONNAIRES

We welcome suggestions and comments from volunteers and visitors. It is required that all Greeters return their questionnaires to the office. It is also very important that the visitors return the visitor questionnaires so that we know what has taken place and what changes are needed for the future.

REPRESENTING THANET GREETERS

Keep your activities within the limitations outlined in this document. Volunteers are indemnified by Thanet Greeters against personal liability for any acts conducted within the scope of their duties. Thanet Greeters is not responsible for any activities that fall outside the policies outlined in this document. If you exceed the limitations outlined here, you may be held personally responsible for any injury to yourself or the visitor.

Volunteers represent us as Greeters and in many other capacities. No one may contact any corporation, foundation, press, or outside retailer without the approval of the Thanet Greeters office.

REMOVAL AS A THANET GREETER

Thanet Greeters reserve the right to reject a prospective volunteer or to refuse current volunteers continued visits for any reason whenever, in its opinion, such action is warranted. Cause for rejection or dismissal includes, but is not limited to, actions illustrated in the following examples:

- Declining or accepting a visit and then engaging in discrimination or harassment, based upon race, colour, creed, gender, age sexual orientation, marital status, or disability, regardless of whether it is verbal (e.g. epithets, derogatory statements, slurs, sexual innuendo or unwanted sexual advances), physical (e.g. assault or inappropriate physical contact) or visual (e.g. posters, cartoons or drawings), may result in termination from the Greeter programme.
- Engaging in any conduct, which may bring disrepute to the Thanet Greeters.
- Failing to be available to take one greet per month.
- Travelling in your car or a visitor's car.
- Accompanying the visitor to your home or his/ her room.
- Accepting money form a visitor.
- Failure to attend required briefing sessions.
- Taking children under the age of 18, unless they are accompanied by a responsible adult companion.

- Taking visitors outside of the district of Thanet.
- Failing to show up for an assigned visit without appropriate notification to the Thanet Greeters and the visitor.
- Using the visit as an opportunity to solicit any personal cause or business.
- Drinking alcoholic beverages, being intoxicated or under the influence of drugs while pursuing any activities associated with the Thanet Greeters.
- Prior conviction of a crime of violence against another person, or a crime involving the ability to trust the Volunteer.
- Violating Thanet Greeters policy.