



More than 1,000 sign up to Shop Local First

More than 1,000 incentive cards have been handed out across Thanet during the launch of the Shop Local First campaign.

Held in the five pilot areas of Birchington, Broadstairs, Northdown Road in Cliftonville, Margate and Ramsgate on Saturday 14 November, local shops came together to offer even more reasons to shop locally, with a range of special events and offers.

The Shop Local First scheme has been developed by the council, in association with local traders, as a way of supporting local shops through the current economic problems. The Shop Local First Incentive Card, which gives a range of discounts and offers at more than 100 businesses, was available for local people to pick up during the launch day activities.

Amongst those taking part in the launch were Lovetts Property Services in Broadstairs, who baked homemade cakes for the day. In Margate Old Town, the Cup Cake Cafe and Qing were offering mini cup cakes and free glass of wine, while Helter Skelter held a retro photo exhibition, which included some interesting photos of people enjoying Margate over the last few decades. Rooks the butchers were offering sausages to customers, giving people the chance to win £100.

Lucy Tuson, Communications Officer, said: "It was wonderful to see so many people turning out to support their local businesses and showing that they want to Shop Local First, especially in such terrible weather. The traders that I spoke to on the day all said that they were surprised and delighted to see so many people braving the elements to shop locally. Businesses said that they had had a number of people coming in especially to use their incentive cards, which is a great start to the scheme. We know the cards are already disappearing quickly, so it's already proving popular with local people. The traders provided lots of really unusual reasons to come into the various towns and villages."

The Shop Local First Incentive Card is now available from the 100 plus businesses taking part and can also be picked up from libraries and Thanet's Gateway Plus in Margate.

The scheme will initially run for a year, but if it proves to be successful, it could be extended for longer and into other parts of Thanet. Businesses taking part in Shop Local First will all display a Shop Local First sticker in their window. To find out more about the scheme, visit the [Shop Local First page](#) or call 01843 577000. For a full list of businesses taking part in the scheme, visit [what shops are involved in Shop Local First?](#) If you are a business and want to join the Shop Local scheme, call 01843 577169.

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