



For Immediate Release
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KENT COUNTY SHOW SUPPORTS LOCAL SMALL BUSINESSES

The Kent County Show organisers have supported ten Kent based new businesses with a free stand space within the inaugural Enterprise Zone at this year's Show on 6, 7, 8 July.

The Kent County Show is a celebration of the best of Kent and this year, following an interview, ten local small businesses have been successful in securing a tradestand space in the new Enterprise Zone area of the Show. All ten start-ups have been trading for less than a year and offer new and exciting products and services.

Autism Threads Ltd, based in Tunbridge Wells, is one of the businesses attending the Enterprise Zone. Founder Trish O'Dwyer's 7-year-old son has non-verbal autism and, in a bid to raise awareness in support of her son and The National Autistic Society, Autism Threads Ltd was created. Trish produces a clothing and accessories range with discreet messaging that tells the observer how best to interact with the wearer. Through their clothing, Autism Threads Ltd aims to help people understand autism a little more so that they can be more comfortable around autistic children and adults.

Designed By Esther, a company based in Rainham has been set up by Esther Johnson. It provides a bespoke design service which focuses on the unique qualities of historic buildings and places in Kent. Esther approached the Historic Dockyard Chatham on the off-chance of design work; having their challenge of designing art inspired by the Dockyard, her work can now be bought in their giftshop. Since this Esther has secured work with the Royal Engineers Museum working on a project called 'Time Capsule – Exploring the Heritage of Medway.'

Emma Stokes Photography was established after Emma, a mum and every-day commuter to London, found herself at a cross-roads in her career. Turning a hobby into a business Emma now sells prints of beautiful Kent landscapes, from the marshes to the rivers as well as the woodlands and fields. Her photographs and prints show just why Kent is the Garden of England. Based in Tonbridge, Emma Stokes Photography will have some of the beautiful prints and cards from Kent and further afield, for sale at the Show.

Jules and Feather from Margate are a bespoke entertainment service and is run by Juliet and Jon Sawyers. From intimate gatherings to large corporate events, Jules and Feather offer a variety of entertainment, specialising in music, dance, and circus. Having been part of the industry in London, they were keen to develop the offering in Kent and provide a good working relationship with acts and organisers alike.

Lushcards and Papercrafts was started by Sam Wareham who designs and creates cards and table sets. Working from her front room in Tonbridge, she makes commissioned pieces and made to order craft items and cards. Sam is keen to use recycled tiles where possible to create the beautiful hand made table sets and coasters and uses her own unique system to seal and protect the tiles.

Rockabowbaby from Maidstone is run by Liz Wheeler who sells headbands, clips and gifts for young children. The company started with an idea following an observation about a bow worn by her own daughter. The collections include 'Pretty Little Clips, 'Bibs & Bows' and 'Mummy and Me' which include matching hairbands for mother and daughter.

Shiv Textiles by Siobhan Martin uses high quality natural fibres to weave and print her own materials to make blankets, cushions, scarves and purses. Having worked in London and Paris, Shiv takes her inspiration from the Kent countryside and many of the process including weaving, washing and finishing are completed by hand. Siobhan aims to keep waste to a minimum by using all the fabric she weaves to make beautifully unique items.

Simply The Bees Knees was started by Sarah Evans in Ashford. Sarah uses beeswax to produce a range of products that offer a sustainable alternative to single use plastics and other polluting materials including candles, wood butters, leather balms and beeswrap; a reusable alternative to clingfilm. Sarah started Simply The Bees Knees using the honey and beeswax from her father's beehive. Since then, the company has expanded to include a number of Kent beekeepers who provide the honey and beeswax for Sarah's environmentally friendly products.

Based in Orpington, Stems & Son is a family run business producing silk flowers for all occasions. Run by Grant Weston, the silk flowers are ideal for weddings and special occasions and offer a life like and longer lasting alternative to the real thing with little maintenance. They are so realistic that it is said that even the bees can't tell the difference.

The Milky Tee Company from Maidstone specialises in unique t-shirts that allow new mothers to breastfeed discreetly whilst feeling comfortable and stylish. Lauren Hampshire founded The Milky Tee Company after her own experiences as a mother-of-two. Having struggled to find practical, comfortable

and stylish clothes to breastfeed in, Lauren designed Milky Tees, a t-shirt with a hidden zip, that allows for easy, comfortable and discreet breastfeeding. With the help of her mum and mother-in-law, who is a midwife, Lauren worked on the t-shirt design with an aim of helping other breastfeeding mums just like her.

Tradestand Coordinator, Rosie Gouldsworthy, said 'We are delighted to be inviting these ten local start-ups to exhibit at this year's Kent County Show. Each one offers something unique and different and we're excited to be a part of highlighting the best in new Kent business.'

The main ring attraction for the 89th Kent County Show will be the stunning Household Cavalry Musical Ride who will perform twice a day, every day in the Astor Ring. Joining them will be the 'Every One Remembered' sculpture. Designed by award-winning artist Mark Humphrey, it features the 'Centenary Soldier' standing on a plinth of limestone sourced from the Somme, finished in bombshell brass and joined by thousands of poppies dedicated by the public which flutter around the soldier. The traditional livestock judging, show jumping, food halls, flower show, vintage vehicles and antiques area will all be featured, alongside the exciting UK Pole Climbing Championships.

-ENDS-

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Notes to the Editors:

The Kent County Show is organised by the Kent County Agricultural Society. The Show is the region's showcase event for farming, countryside and rural life. The three day show brings together the best food, animals, and excitement that Kent has to offer and reveals the true spirit of "The Garden of England."

This year, the Kent County Show will be on the 6, 7, 8 July 2018 and will feature livestock and equine competitions, trade stands, food halls, the Heritage Vintage Vehicle Section, the Garden Life Marquee, and new for 2018 the Household Cavalry Musical Ride.

Visitors can save 10% on ticket prices by purchasing them in advance. Adults are £20.70 in advance, £23.00 on the gate, children (5-15 years) £6.30 pre-show, £7.00 on the gate, family ticket (2 adults, 2 children) £45.00 in advance, £50.00 on the gate.

About the Kent County Agricultural Society:

The Society has been supporting education and improvement in agriculture, horticulture, forestry and related industries since its foundation in 1923. It provides grants to Kent Young Farmers Clubs and offers university scholarships to students wishing to study in related fields. The Society also provides free education on farming to young children through the 'Farming in the Classroom' initiative and the Living Land event.