

# MEDIA PACK 2026



# RAMSGATE RECORDER

Autumn 2025

Modern-day Seaside Stories

FREE



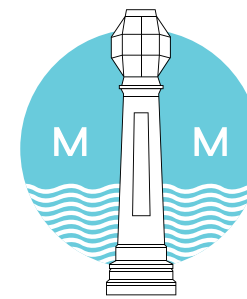


Brightside Publishing produce free, uplifting print magazines which showcase the bright side of towns and cities in Kent.

Our magazines are packed with features covering art and culture, music, business, food and drink, homes and interiors, local people, community issues and much more. They are also award-winning: in 2024 four of Brightside Publishing’s magazines were awarded Kent Magazine of the Year at the Kent Press and Broadcast Awards. Brightside Publishing was also awarded the Kent Voices Award for featuring diverse and inclusive content and giving a voice to a wide variety of people and businesses in East Kent.

Our roots are in Margate where we launched our first magazine, the *Margate Mercury*, in 2016. Since then we have launched eight further titles, for Ramsgate, Broadstairs, Whitstable, Deal, Folkestone, Canterbury, Faversham and Rochester. Each magazine is led by an editor who lives locally and is passionate about their town, commissioning locals to write about what matters to locals. Our core team are all local, designers, distributors and social media managers.

Our magazines are independent and unbiased in their content. We are also regulated by IMPRESS.



**Margate Mercury**



**Ramsgate Recorder**



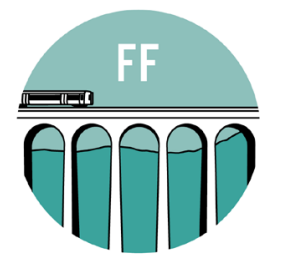
**Broadstairs Beacon**



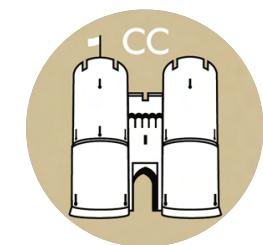
**Whitstable Whistler**



**Deal Despatch**



**Folkestone Foghorn**



**Canterbury Courier**



**Faversham Firework**



**Rochester Radar**



## About us

The *Ramsgate Recorder* is a quarterly print magazine about the seaside town of Ramsgate in Kent. The magazine was launched in the winter of 2018 and features a range of stories covering art and culture, music, food and drink, community issues, and much more.

### Jen Brammer

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Having led advertising teams in national and local publications for 20 years, Jen joined Clare to work on the *Margate Mercury* in November 2017, having moved to Margate earlier that year. The natural next step was to expand the brand across Thanet as a team, and now further along the East Kent coast. When not working on the magazines Jen can be found playing netball with friends or swimming in the tidal pool.

[jen@brightsidepublishing.com](mailto:jen@brightsidepublishing.com)



### Lila Allen

EDITOR OF THE RAMSGATE RECORDER

Lila is a freelance documentary producer and director whose films have been broadcast on the BBC. A journalist by training, she has also worked for radio. The *Ramsgate Recorder* is a return to her first love, which is print.

[lila@ramsgaterecorder.com](mailto:lila@ramsgaterecorder.com)



### Gemma Batson

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER

Gemma has been managing the social media for the Ramsgate Recorder since early 2024. With a background in libraries and digital media, she loves using a digital platform to bring the town to life.





ART & CULTURE

We have featured a range of local makers, artists and creatives in the magazine, including Ramsgate's national treasure Brenda Blethyn, goldsmith Polly Gasston, and artists working in oils, illustration and bronze, not to mention authors and filmmakers. With festivals aplenty there's lots to inspire both mind and soul.



# BRENDA BLETHYN

## FROM SMALL TOWN TO BIG SCREEN

**Writer**  
Lynne Wallis  
**Photographer**  
Storme Sabine

**Golden Globe, BAFTA, Cannes Film Festival award winner and Ramsgate cheerleader Brenda Blethyn talks to the Recorder about film, growing up in Ramsgate and whether her next series should be set in her hometown, as the Ramsgate International Film and TV Festival celebrates its fifth year**

“Every Sunday our parents took us to the Palace Cinema. It’s where Argos was until recently,” recalls Brenda Blethyn excitedly. “There were two films a week and they switched halfway through. Mum would say, ‘Hey Bab, go and check the poster to see if they’ve switched the film yet.’ I remember looking up at the screen and seeing these huge 40-foot high superstars with these magical lives. They were in a world we weren’t part of, on another planet. It never entered my head that I might be up there on the screen like them, not in a million years.”

Decades later, now a doyenne of the small and big screen, Brenda is helping to bring film from around the world to Ramsgate screens as patron of the Ramsgate International Film and TV Festival.

Born in 1946 in a house with no bathroom on the Plains of Waterloo to parents William and Louisa Bottle, Brenda was the youngest of nine children. Widely regarded as a national treasure, she has become most famous in recent years for her portrayal of ITV’s dour DCI Vera Stanhope, and is cherished and championed on her home turf.

Brenda is delighted that the gritty new thriller *Adverse* featuring Mickey Rourke is to have its UK premiere on the opening night of the film festival. “Mickey Rourke! It’s amazing! We are closing with the documentary *Tonton Mann*, about an African saxophonist in his eighties - I can’t wait to see it. Last year we even got Nick Broomfield on the judging panel.”

That an actor of Brenda’s standing chooses to remain in Ramsgate rather than upping sticks to Hampstead, for example, is something Ramsgate’s residents are immensely proud of. She is one of ours, and homegrown to boot. “My head and my heart are in Ramsgate. I absolutely love it here,” she says. “It sounds spooky, but I can still see people who’ve long gone, like my dad standing there at the market place when it was buzzing and so alive, with a policeman in the middle of the road directing the traffic. There were department stores, an M&S, four

cinemas, loads of shoe shops, so many people. It was hopping. I hope we are going to see those days again.”

Brenda moved back “home” to Ramsgate with her husband Michael 15 years ago and spends half the year here and half in the north-east filming *Vera*. Having moved to London aged 17 to work in a bank, she came relatively late to acting, although her love of cinema is wrapped up in childhood memory. “I loved Barbara Stanwyck and Bette Davis,” she recalls, “but Doris Day was my all time favourite. She just drew you in. My favourite film has got to be *Calamity Jane*, but she was great in dramas too and was under-rated as a serious actress.”

**“My head and my heart are in Ramsgate. I absolutely love it here”**

Brenda joined amateur dramatics groups to hone her yet to be discovered talents and in her late twenties enrolled at the Guildford School of Acting, first appearing on stage at the National Theatre in 1976. In 1980 she won an award for her role in Nell Dunn’s celebrated comedy *Steaming*, then a little later met director Mike Leigh and a lifelong relationship began.

“*Secrets and Lies* [1996] is one of the films I’m most proud of, it’s just terrific,” she exclaims. Brenda has worked in theatre and television throughout her career, but her place in British film history was cemented

in 1998 when *Little Voice* was released, co-starring Michael Caine and Jane Horrocks, with Brenda cast against type to play a hard-faced, domineering mother to Jane Horrocks’ cripplingly shy daughter.

Today there is an innocence about this remarkably fresh faced 75-year-old, who has a girlish breathlessness when talking about things she is passionate about, the antithesis of the cynical DCI Vera Stanhope. Brenda becomes very animated when talk turns to the fifth Ramsgate International Film and TV Festival which runs 3 to 6 June. She is full of praise for Sylvie Bolioli, director, actor and Ramsgate resident, who started the whole thing. “We had just a handful of submissions for the first one - now we have 220, from 45 different countries,” she enthuses.

This year sees an increase in submissions from Latin America and Africa, with 58 feature films and 152 shorts submitted. “The festival is for everyone,” Brenda makes clear. “A concerted effort must be made to let people from here know it’s for them too. It’s a perfect opportunity to see a lot of good films.” She is keen to stress that everything can be watched from the comfort of home, something introduced last year as a result of the pandemic. It is a development she welcomes. “This is a perfect opportunity for those who might not go out and buy a ticket and go to the cinema to watch a film... They can sit and watch it in their own front room,” she says. “There are also courses on how to get an agent, script-writing taster sessions, and workshops on how to raise funds to make a film,” she adds.

A short film about the making of the festival’s Anchor Bronze Award will precede the opening-night screening of *Adverse*, with funds going towards the cost of casting and installing the late artist Dominic Grant’s statue of King George IV to mark 200 years since Ramsgate’s Harbour became Royal. “Ah Dominic,” Brenda says wistfully. “You couldn’t meet a nicer fella, and it is a spectacular work of art.” Her support for projects like



this, and her patronage of the film festival, is steeped in her passion for the town that she wants to see do well, a passion that spills out into her desire to see more investment in Ramsgate.

“There is lots of talk about Margate. It gets lots of investment and I don’t begrudge them a penny of it, but... give Ramsgate a little help too. We’ve got a beautiful harbour and we are about to celebrate its 200th year anniversary... and they’re trying to build an arts venture with the arts barge. I love everything that is there for the community. We used to have a skating rink when I was a kid. I wish we had one now, or a skateboarding area for young people, for everyone.”

When Brenda returns to her beloved Ramsgate she enjoys nothing more than walking her five-year-old cockapoo Jack who, with a mischievous glint in her eye she confesses, she acquired without prior discussion with her husband. “Michael loves the dog now. When I arrive home the first thing he does is cuddle Jack.” Then, with that sense of charming girlishness again, she continues, “The walk to Broadstairs via the beach is glorious. You can have adventures and find treasure! I once found an injured eel that had hurt its mouth on a line, and it had become stranded on the beach. I managed to save it and got it back in the water. I love walking the other way to the bird sanctuary at Pegwell. It’s such a special place. We have everything here on our doorstep. We are so lucky.”

We are fortunate indeed to have all that and Brenda Blethyn among us, the icing on our prized slice of Thanet cake, promoting the film festival and the town itself. “We will have to see about getting a series made that is set in Ramsgate won’t we?” she says. But what? Sometimes truth is more compelling than fiction. How about the story of a talented young woman from a humble Thanet background who went on to become one of the UK’s most valued and adored actors, who was awarded an OBE, won a collection of prestigious awards, and worked with the likes of Michael Caine, Sir Ralph Richardson, Robert Redford, Julie Walters and John Hurt? It is hard not to imagine youngsters with hidden talents gazing starstruck at Brenda Blethyn on the screen, unable to imagine that one day it might be them up there, just as she herself did as a girl, gazing up at her movie heroines. If a talented kid from Ramsgate who had no material advantages in life can make it on the big screen, why shouldn’t anyone have a go?

For more information and tickets for the 5th Ramsgate International Film and TV Festival visit: [ramsgatedigitalcinema.co.uk](http://ramsgatedigitalcinema.co.uk)



COMMUNITY

We love to highlight the people making a positive difference to the town, from the chef tackling food poverty in Newington, to the people campaigning to save a historic market or treasured architectural building, and the metal detectorists salvaging not just our history but our lost property too.



Ramsgate Market has been trading for half a century, but could a relocation due to social distancing measures spell the end for this much loved mainstay of life on our High Street? Kate Walters investigates

Photographer Eleanor Marriott

Among many distractions during lockdown, I became seriously interested in the fate of our High Street market. It started when I discovered a small pocket of traders selling their wares at Staffordshire Street Car Park - a temporary move from the High Street by Thanet District Council due to concerns around social distancing on Ramsgate's main shopping streets. It was a surprise to find our subsequent Recorder Facebook post announcing the change of location was shared 68 times reaching upwards of 12,000 followers. People cared. Shortly after, the magazine was approached by Gurpreet Singh who owns a popular mobile phone stall, Phone Care, and has traded on the market for 20 years. "We desperately

need support. Business is at about 2% of what it was pre-Covid," he wrote. Soon after Gurpreet's email, the market dropped its Saturday offer and we later learned the remaining traders were making a financial loss, but still turning up to "keep the market alive". When I started to investigate the matter further, the picture was far from clear. A District Council trying to meet government guidance, and a Town Council struggling to promote the market on a day to day basis. The traders wanted one thing: to trade on the High Street again. But among all the indecision surrounding this, they were seriously falling through the cracks. As I visited the market and heard the cry "two pillows a fiver!" I was reminded of what makes a market

special - the patter of traders, shouting out to passers-by, unabashed and proud, hustling for business. It is a tradition which dates back 800 years to the UK's first markets. As it happens, Richard Lumby, the man behind the yell, is Ramsgate Market's manager and founder. If anyone knows how to keep business churning, he does. His Ramsgate story began almost 60 years ago. Aged 15, Richard ran a successful fruit and veg stall in Sittingbourne, but in 1964 he was threatened with closure when his proprietor, Ernie Lea, decided to set up a new market nearby. Richard's early business instincts shone through and he offered to work for Mr Lea. Over the course of the next decade, Richard established multiple markets across

**"Traders travelled from as far as Manchester, Wolverhampton and Birmingham, and customers came in their coachloads"**

the south of England, as far as Oxfordshire, but Ramsgate was special - in his own words his "baby". He discovered the first Ramsgate Market site on an ill-fated trip to a concert at Dreamland, Margate. The band didn't show, so Richard and a friend tried the greyhound races at Dumpton Park Stadium. "I couldn't really focus on the dogs because all I could think about was the great potential of the site for a new market, from the large car park to the nearby train station, it had everything," he says. As it happens, the owner of the greyhound tracks was John Isles (also the founder of Dreamland.) Richard remembers going to sign the contract at Mr Isles' office in the heart of Margate's famous amusement park.

"We sat there surrounded by cages of lions and tigers," he chuckles. Once the Town Council approved it, Ramsgate Market hit the tracks in 1959. At its height, Richard tells me, he hosted as many as 600 stalls at Dumpton and always had two or three times the number of enquiries per available pitch. Traders travelled from as far as Manchester, Wolverhampton and Birmingham, and customers came in their coachloads. In an interesting twist, when the stadium went into liquidation overnight during the recession of the 1980s, Ramsgate Market was briefly relocated to Staffordshire Street Car Park, where I now found it. According to Richard, "it never worked then" and he secured a new location along Ramsgate High Street.



This brings us up to date where, fifty years later, today just four or five traders remain. It turns out the stallholders today helping to keep the market alive owned some of the most successful businesses at Dumpton Park Stadium. One trader, Davinder Singh, lives in Grays, Essex, and has operated a women's clothing stall at Ramsgate Market for almost fifty years. "I forget how long," he laughs. Davinder, who also goes by the name of Joel, is hard to interview even now, as devoted customers keep interrupting. John Beaneys from Sittingbourne was also one of the first at Dumpton. His father, who started the fruit and veg stall, was an old school friend of Richard's, and today it's staffed by younger members of the family. Alan Reynolds, a driver, who directly reports to the market's owner and licensee Lew Hughes of the company HughMark Continental Ltd, has worked on the site every week for 30 years. He tells me there was an awful moment the morning of our interview, when Davinder hadn't yet turned up and they nearly all went

home. They operate more now as a family unit. Tony Humphreys, who runs a key cutting stall, lost his mother just over a week before, but still turned up to support the market. This family spirit they all speak of is another enduring charm of market life. Leaving for work so early in the morning and returning late at night, has meant that Richard and many of his colleagues missed out on their children's early upbringing. Meanwhile, they have watched punters in Ramsgate grow up from "babies in the pram to seven foot giants". Despite the sacrifice, it is clear that the market-traders love their job, praising the freedom of being your own boss, the open-air, or turning up to work with your best friends. Through tough economic times, the market has prevailed. "The last influx of traders came during the last recession," Richard tells me. "People needed to find a cheap way to put food on the table." One shining success story is Dougie Chapman, who ran a stall on the market 41 years ago and went on to open Ramsgate's highly successful Haberdashery Shop on



MUSIC

Ramsgate is famed for its musical talent and we're proud to feature musicians from almost every genre; jazz to alt-pop, country to rock, new wave to dance.

Our small town continues to make a big noise and we're here to shout about it.



# MEET THE MUSICIAN: SABINA DESIR

Photographer Ed Thompson

Unable to tour, celebrated jazz vocalist Sabina Desir tells the Ramsgate Recorder about how she has found another way to bring her work to a wide audience. Freedom Road began as a live performance at Turner Contemporary telling the story of the civil rights movement through song, and has evolved into a forthcoming documentary film, transforming its creator with it

How did you find your voice?

I've only just arrived at a place where I can hear my voice without cringing. It took a while before I felt I could rightfully claim I was a vocalist. So many elements impact on the voice: confidence, wellbeing, for me my emotional and spiritual state. My voice is and has always been a huge part of who I am and it continues to grow and evolve with me.

You also promote other jazz artists. How did the Jazz Sessions begin?

As a contribution to Ramsgate's music scene, I decided to bring mainly London-based international musicians to play in the intimate setting of Vinyl Head (now Eats'n'Beats). The nights were brilliant, great music across the spectrum of jazz.

The opportunity came up to collaborate with Gulbenkian in Canterbury, which DJ Hooch (promoter, DJ and Ramsgate resident) and I did together. We welcomed some incredible artists: Camilla George, Jazz FM's Instrumentalist of the Year 2019; Grammy award-winning saxophonist Jean Toussaint; Jessica Lauren's Naga Five played our first show which was incredible, there was so much support from Thanet for that.

It has been an especially hard time for musicians. What was your last gig and how have you coped with not performing?

It's been incredibly hard with so many of us losing our income almost immediately. The last live gig I did was Freedom Road at Turner Contemporary as part of the POW! Festival in March 2020. Created with my frequent collaborator Jessica Lauren, we

produced an immersive performance using art from local artist Karen Vost and archive recordings of Angela Davis talks. Taking songs associated with the Black American civil rights movement, the performance looked at the narrative from a historical perspective and weaved the story around the music. We began working on the show before we knew about the We Will Walk exhibition at Turner Contemporary. When it opened (showcasing work by artists from Alabama and the surrounding states who lived through the civil rights struggle) it refocused us and influenced Freedom Road.

Freedom Road was performed just weeks before George Floyd was murdered. People took to the streets around the world and People Dem Collective organised marches against systemic racism in Thanet. Coming so closely together, how did this impact your work?

It's been shocking. We have been living within a system that favours one group above all others. To see this recognised globally and for people to come together to protest against systemic racism is powerful. We happened to be working on Freedom Road, and Jessica and I were already on emotional tenterhooks. We were raw from reading so much, immersing ourselves in the history, and had a heightened sense of awareness of the struggle. As a Black woman, creating a show about people that looked like me, experiencing this trauma through the work, it was difficult, and of course this wasn't just historical: it was and is still going on. Then within a couple of weeks the very thing we were talking about happens again: someone else is murdered, only this particular killing is the one that makes the world sit up



**"The year that highlighted inequalities and social injustice, the year of renewed hope"**



and react. In the wake of all that was happening people kept asking me if I'd experienced racism. Of course I've experienced racism. My parents are part of the Windrush generation that were invited to help rebuild the country, and that generation experienced abhorrent racism. I am a child of the '60s raised within the Black community in London. I had to respond, and the way we did that was to create a film where as artists we could comment using our talents. The film was shown online. My older son Taariq Forder is the narrator, and we had many conversations about how our lives and choices can make a difference. One of the things he said that stuck with me was that perhaps our job is to help create conversations that provoke the impetus to make a change in an individual, perhaps influence a change of mindset instead

of being overwhelmed by changing the world. Everyone has the right to change, to do better once they know better. As Nina Simone said: "It's an artist's duty to reflect the times in which we live."

What has been the response from audiences to Freedom Road and the film?

It has been incredibly positive and supportive in the main. Our intention was to bring an informative, meaningful and perhaps educationally useful short film. With West Coast Kent CIC, based at Olby's, Margate, being so forward-thinking and reconfiguring their space to create a recording and filming studio where it was possible to maintain social distance, we were able to express our Black British experience in response

to what we were seeing. This is not only a US, or UK story. It reflects global experiences.

You've now set up a production company and are working on a new film. Can you tell us about that?

The company is called Freedom Road Project Ltd. I was inspired by my life's experience and recent events to address historical disparities by creating projects and opportunities for artists, creatives and audiences. I successfully applied for Arts Council funding for the first phase of a film project. The saying "be the change you want to see" encapsulates how I feel about presenting projects with depth and heart rooted in stories that need to be shared. Representation is so important. When I was growing up, Black women in leadership positions

were barely visible. There have been improvements, no doubt, but we are not yet near anything resembling parity. Bringing together people of varied cultural backgrounds broadens the scope of work and gives voice to marginalised communities. I'm passionate about that.

The arts documentary explores the Black British experience in contemporary times, looking at the direct influence events in the US had on the UK. It takes the viewer on a journey through discrimination, using music, dance, song, spoken word, and looks at the achievements of a community that have fought for equality for generations. The film features many US visual artists and photographers, including Dr Doris Derby, spanning the 1950s to today, alongside multi-generational UK photographers including Charlie

Phillips, Vanley Burke and Ashley Verse. The music is incredibly important and beautifully arranged by Jessica Lauren. We recorded Nina Simone's 'Mississippi Goddam' for the film, which has a dynamic pace and energy. I'm looking forward to sharing trailers soon.

What does the future look like for you?

I'm focused on establishing the production company and committed to producing projects that engage and entertain. The next six months will be spent wrapping up the film, screening it and hopefully setting it off on its journey.

I'm working with the brilliant team at West Coast Kent CIC, Olby's TV on a monthly chat-show In The Living Room with Sabina where I'll be in conversation with interesting people from Thanet and beyond. That launches at Easter.

The Jazz Sessions will host a very special event at Gulbenkian later this year: a double-bill featuring The Jazz Ambassadors, a Peabody Award-winning music documentary film, followed by an outstanding line-up in the shape of a nine-piece band playing music from the film composed by Ramsgate's Michael J McEvoy.

How will you remember 2020?

It will be the year that highlighted inequalities and social injustice, the year of renewed hope, and for me personally another year of gratitude for my family and friends.

You can keep up to date with Sabina's work by following [facebook.com/sabina.desir](https://facebook.com/sabina.desir)

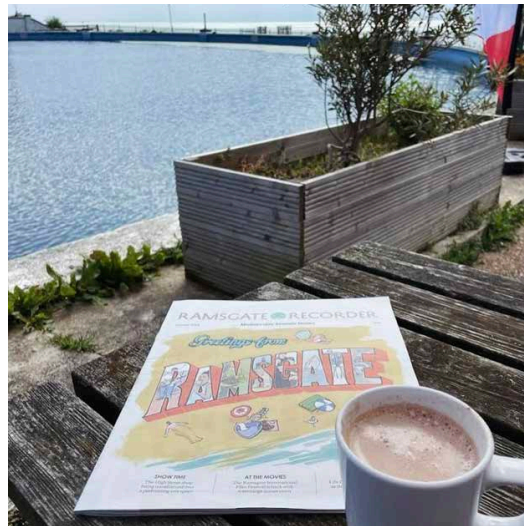
The Jazz Sessions: [facebook.com/info.jazzsessions](https://facebook.com/info.jazzsessions)

In the Living Room with Sabina: [olbys.tv](https://olbys.tv)

Look out for dates of a live show from Sabina and Jessica Lauren at Ramsgate Music Hall

**Distribution**

8,000  
per issue  
32,000  
a year



Over  
8,000  
followers on  
social media



**Estimated annual  
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76,800



Over  
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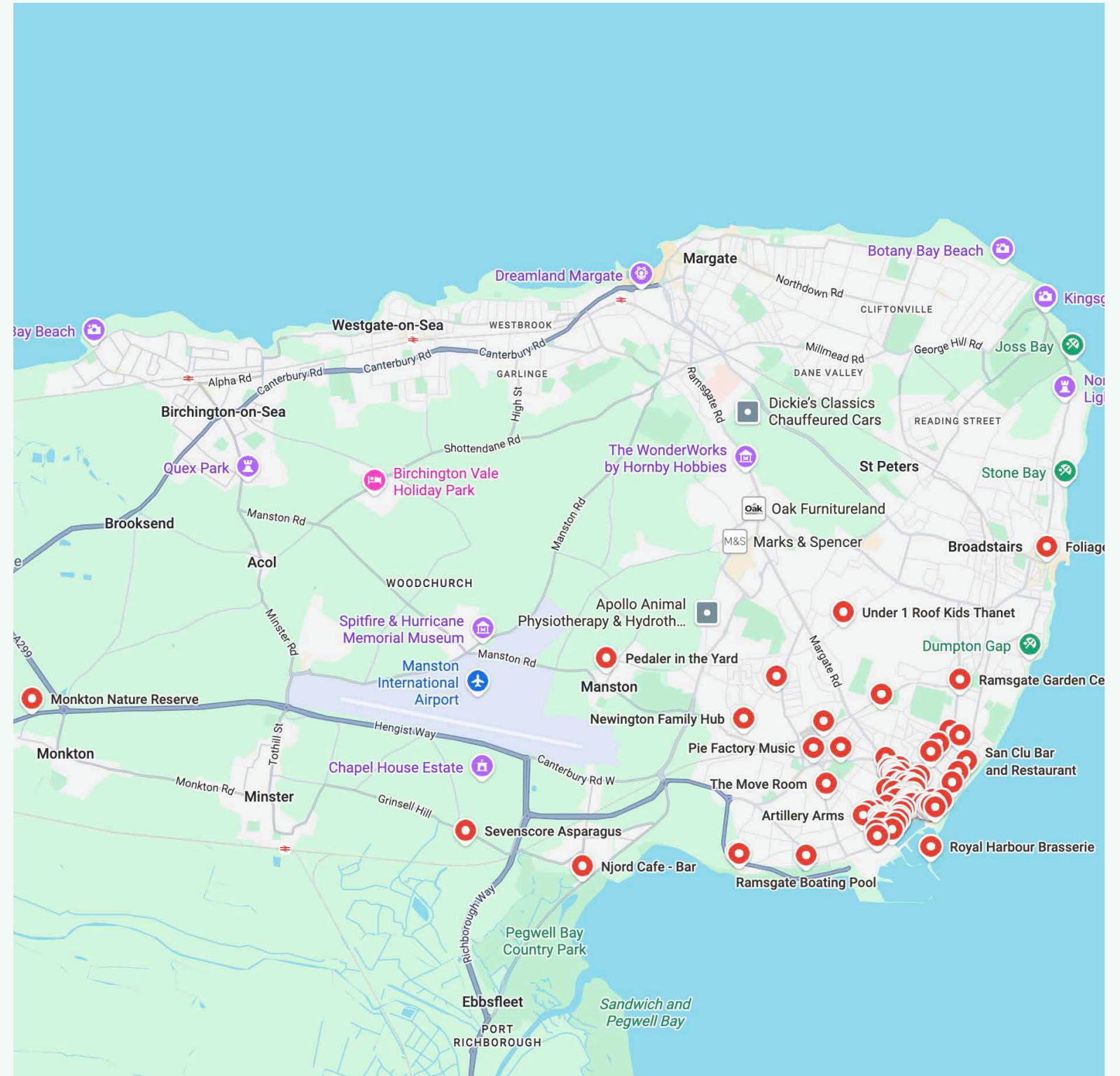
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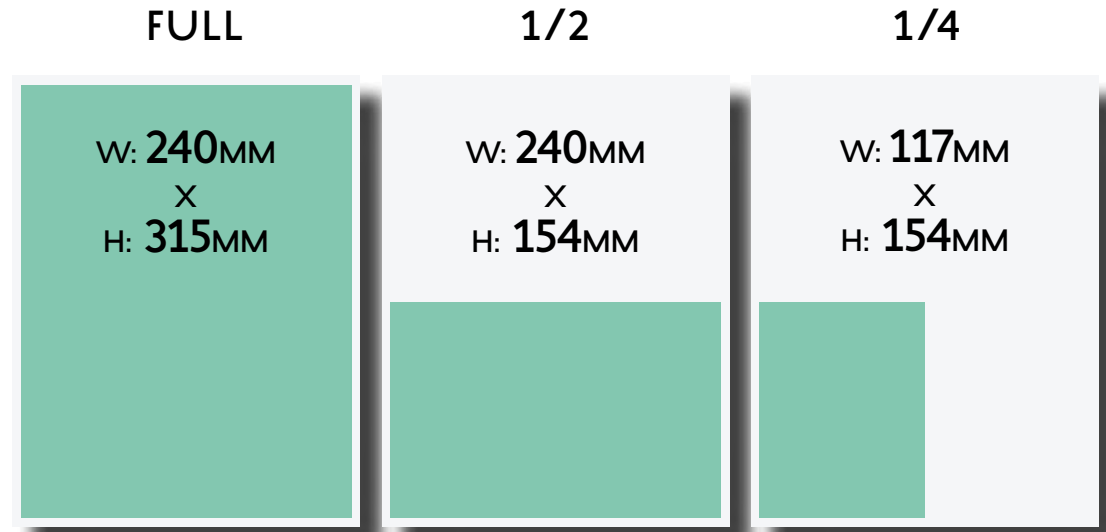
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## Advertising rates +VAT

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Quarter page	£170	£155	£145	£130	£120	£115	£110

\* A £20 premium will be charged for all summer issues due to a higher distribution

## Publishing dates

ISSUES 2026	PUBLICATION DATE	DEADLINE TO BOOK	ARTWORK DEADLINE	DISTRIBUTION
RR Spring	5 February	8 January	15 January	8000
RR Summer	30 April	2 April	9 April	8000
RR Autumn	30 July	2 July	9 July	8000
RR Winter	5 November	8 October	15 October	8000

## Testimonials

“Bubble have advertised within all Brightside Publications magazines for over a year now to predominantly increase brand awareness locally.

The publications offer a key target audience for us and in turn have seen an increase in local enquiries and web searches since we started advertising.”

**BEN ROWE,  
BUBBLE STUDIOS**

*All Brightside publications*

“It can usually be difficult to understand how well advertising works, so when clients say they saw my ad in the *Ramsgate Recorder*, it’s great to know it’s working.”

**HANNAH RZYSKO  
LIFE COACH AND  
YOGA THERAPIST**

*Ramsgate Recorder*

“I just wanted to say what a wonderful job you guys are doing. I moved here a few years ago and so was lucky enough to get the first issue. I also wanted to say how impressed I’ve been with your proactive approach to highlighting the diverse community and what we have to offer. Carry on with the great work!”

**BEA  
*Ramsgate Recorder reader***

“I’m so pleased you came to deliver to us, we lost a customer the other day as we didn’t have any of the latest copies left!”

**KEITH  
EATS AND BEATS CAFÉ**

*Ramsgate Recorder reader*

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