

MEDIA PACK 2026



MARGATE MERCURY

AUTUMN 2025

Modern-day Seaside Stories

FREE



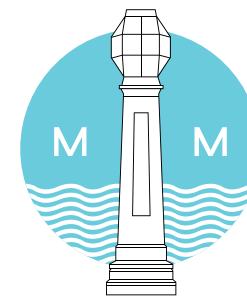


Brightside Publishing produce free, uplifting print magazines which showcase the bright side of towns and cities in Kent.

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 six further titles, for Ramsgate, Broadstairs, Whitstable, Deal, Folkestone and Canterbury. 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.

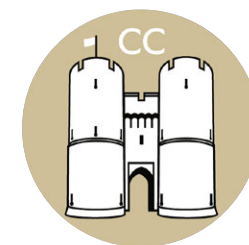
Our magazines are independent and unbiased in their content. We are also regulated by IMPRESS.



Margate Mercury



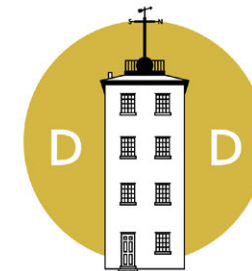
Whitstable Whistler



Canterbury Courier



Ramsgate Recorder



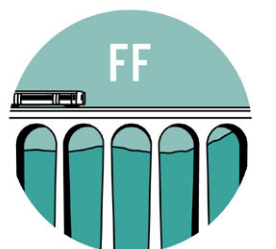
Deal Despatch



Faversham Firework



Broadstairs Beacon



Folkestone Foghorn



Rochester Rocket



About us

The *Margate Mercury* is a quarterly print magazine about the seaside town of Margate in Kent. The magazine was launched in the summer of 2016 and features a range of stories covering art and culture, music, food and drink, community issues, and much more.

Twinkle Troughton

EDITOR OF THE MARGATE MERCURY

Twinkle is an artist who moved to Margate in 2014. After establishing local arts blog Cloud CT9, Twinkle began working for *Margate Mercury* from its inception as the arts writer and editor. Twinkle has exhibited internationally, curates exhibitions and also runs *Margate Mercury*'s social media platforms.

twinkle@margatemercury.com



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



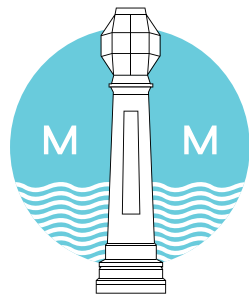
Lizzy Tweedale

DESIGN DIRECTOR

Lizzy teamed up with founder Clare Freeman in 2016 to create the first issue of the *Margate Mercury* and has been an instrumental member of the team ever since. For her work at Brightside she was awarded Kent Designer of the Year at the Kent Press and Broadcast Awards 2022. She lives in Margate with her dog Olive.

lizzy@brightsidepublishing.com





ART & CULTURE

Margate is home to an internationally-recognised artistic community. We have featured all aspects of the art scene in Margate: from articles exploring grassroots initiatives, to interviews with visiting artists and profiles on Margate-based creatives.



Rip it up and start again

Writer
Twinkle Troughton
Images
Courtesy of the artists

For a small town, Margate has an impressive number of collage artists. We meet the people working with ready-made images and objects to make work that is vibrant, current and experimental



In 2019 Kavel Rafferty won one of five commissions for Dreamland's Mural by the Sea competition, in which she got to fill a billboard with a bold and colourful mural inspired by old postcards of Margate.

Born in Brighton, Rafferty lived in Barcelona, Stockholm, Wales and London before making a home for the past five years in Thanet. She works from Resort Studios in Cliftonville. The full-time artist describes herself as "sort of self-trained". After studying for an HND in textiles, Rafferty could no longer afford to continue in education, so got a job designing textiles while fitting in her own illustration and art when she could.

There is a raw and instinctive edge to Rafferty's work. Her playful approach to putting found images together is accentuated with rough-cut edges and experimental mark-making. Fascinated by colour combinations and exploring a wide variety of materials, Rafferty attributes an artist residency in Mexico City in 2020 with finding her collage style, spending six weeks focusing purely on the practice.

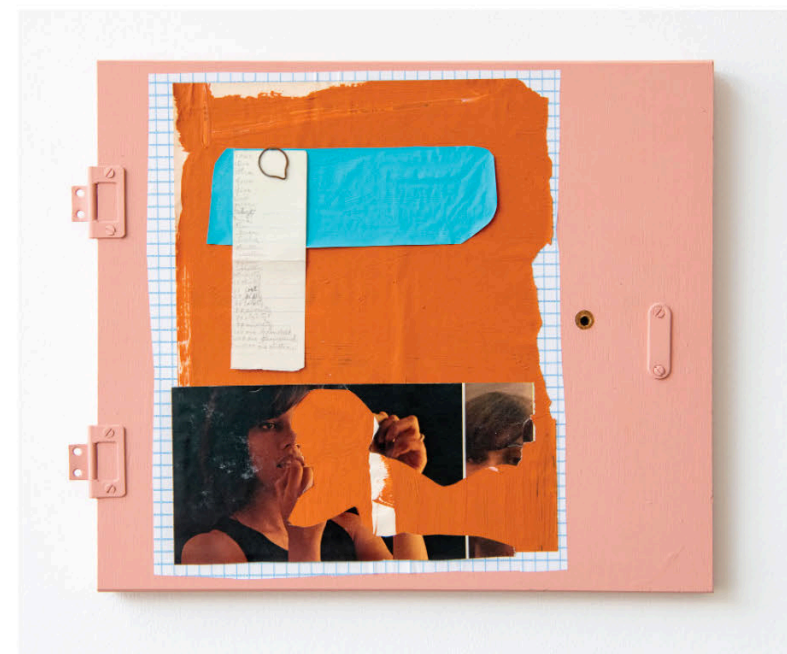
Rafferty makes work from what she describes as "detritus mostly, the things people throw away. I collect stuff, I'm constantly picking up bits of paper, ephemera from the streets." As well as street finds, she relishes trawling car boot sales or rummaging through old boxes at flea markets for inspiration.

Taking care of her mental health has a large part to play in Rafferty's choice of materials, and using as few new material as possible is paramount:

"At times in my life I've suffered from episodes of depression, and when that happens I can't make art because it feels like I am just producing more 'unnecessary' things. I've overcome this, partly with medication and therapy, and partly by using materials that already exist. It feels less frivolous to reinvent something, to use something old to make something new." She adds: "When it suddenly all fits together it's like magic."

Rafferty has plans for an exhibition of new work entitled *Queer Flowers* which will include both collage and painting. The exhibition will be at Resort Studios and will hopefully take place in May, although the date is yet to be confirmed due to the pandemic.

IG: @kavelrafferty, kavelrafferty.art



COLLAGE TIPS

If you would like to try your hand at collage, then check out @margatecollageparty on Instagram who are hoping to hold collage-based events in Margate, lockdown permitting. In the meantime our artists have also given some tips for anyone wanting to give it a go at home.

CECILIA BONILLA

"Define your source material - think about why you are using it. Establish your boundaries and make sure that you use acid-free glue!"

BEN SANDERS

"My tip would be to purchase a cutting mat, some cheap scalpels, a few Pritt Sticks and just source some imagery that catches your eye, and give it a go. Make yourself laugh."

KAVEL RAFFERTY

"Cut up a bunch of old magazines and play! You don't have to stick anything down until you are totally happy. In fact, you don't ever have to stick anything down, if you don't want to."



CECILIA BONILLA

Originally from Uruguay, Cecilia Bonilla spent her childhood as a refugee in Sweden during the 1970s and '80s. Bonilla moved to Margate four years ago from London, where she had been living on a narrowboat. When she fell pregnant with her second child a family home was needed. Looking to leave London, she wanted to live somewhere with a strong artist community and a good art centre, of which Margate has both.

Bonilla began using collage more than 20 years ago: "I made my first collage when I was a graphic design student in the '90s. I think I was most attracted to the immediacy of the medium, how by 'simply' putting together existing imagery, something completely different could be formed."

Initially inspired by American post-war painter and graphic artist Robert Rauschenberg, Bonilla now looks more at artists who work in a subtler way, such as German artist Raphael Danke, who is inspired by fashion and surrealism, and British artist John Stezaker, who is known for his hybrid portraits using famous faces.

The influence of both is evident in

Bonilla's collages, which are skilful in their simplicity.

Predominantly monotone with an occasional delicate use of colour, a lot of the images Bonilla works with originate in old magazines, books and catalogues. "In the making process itself, I often outline a set of rules that aim to achieve the most complex result by minimal intervention. I really enjoy this challenge," says Bonilla, who feels that collage wrongly has a reputation as "easy art".

Often combining just two images, many of her works are comprised of a female figure juxtaposed with images of insects, flora and landscapes. Themes of domesticity, and the ideals of beauty and lifestyle, run through her work. Social constructs are questioned, corrupted and undermined through the act of subtle modification.

With most galleries closed for the foreseeable future, plans are a little uncertain, but Bonilla is hoping to exhibit at Gordon House on Hawley Square in Margate with a new group project at some stage in 2021.

IG: @ceciliabonilla.studio
ceciliabonilla.com



BEN SANDERS

Ben Sanders likes to keep things coastal. Having grown up in Whitstable, Sanders now lives in Ramsgate and works from his space at St Mary's in Cliftonville.

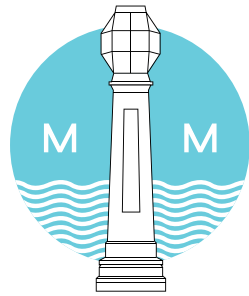
Sanders's interest in collage has been around for as long as he can remember. "I would have made my first one when I was little, not realising it was called a collage," he says. By the time he was 16, collage artists such as Hannah Hoch began to inspire him. "It was both the process and the medium, the bravery and rebelliousness of it all in such a politically charged and vulnerable period in history. It felt punky, authentic, lawless and available for all to have a go, so I did," says Sanders.

His collages can take anywhere between a week and a month to make. In 2019 he completed a large-scale mixed media piece called *Tarty Failures* that took a year to create. He finds great enjoyment in the process of sourcing imagery, describing it as a "materials loot" as he collects a wide range of materials including donations from friends, eBay purchases, trawling through bric-a-brac shops and old book stores.

His works form repetitive patterns, shapes and colours with kaleidoscopic effect. Some of the works are intricate and detailed, and others uncomplicated and minimal. His eye is naturally drawn to imagery which is pre-2000, but he takes great pleasure in combining old with new, often incorporating images from current mainstream media too. In a recent commission, Sanders used imagery sourced from the 1990 football World Cup to create his own version of a Buddhist mandala (circular geometric symbols used to aid meditation), playing with contrasts and connections between football and spirituality. "It's like dismantling one reality and creating another," he says.

Sanders has works that can be seen locally at Kill Me Now Gallery in Margate and McGillan & Woodell in Ramsgate, and he is also currently working in collaboration with studio pal, screenprinter Charlie Cameron, who runs the new Bardo Studio. The pair are hoping to release a limited-edition print which brings together collage and screenprint in Spring 2021.

IG: @lastnightcollagesavedmylife



COMMUNITY

We love to highlight the people making a positive difference to the town: from the campaigners forming a union to protect renters' rights, to the pro-skaters building a world-class skate park for the local community, and the collective of young women championing diversity.

20 COMMUNITY

AND WE ALSO WALKED

Writer
Lucy Edematie

From the 1930 Salt March headed by Gandhi to the 1963 March on Washington led by US civil rights activists, walking has been used successfully as a means of protest for many years. As thousands of Thanet residents march against racism and structural inequality, we examine the origins of Black Lives Matter

Emmett Till was fourteen in August 1955 when he left Chicago to visit relatives in Mississippi. After the white female cashier at a grocery store accused him of behaving inappropriately, her husband and his half-brother abducted and beat Emmett, shot him and dumped his body in the Tallahatchie River. An all-white, all-male jury acquitted them. Emmett's mother fought for her son's remains to be returned to Chicago, insisting on an open-casket funeral. Newspaper and magazine images of Emmett's mutilated body sent shockwaves across America and beyond, and his killing is widely credited as a defining moment in the civil rights movement. In the words of Time magazine: "For almost a century, African Americans were lynched with regularity and impunity. Now, thanks to a mother's determination to expose the barbarousness of the crime, the public could no longer pretend to ignore what they couldn't see."

Fast forward 57 years to the 26 February 2012. Seventeen-year-old African American Trayvon Martin is returning from a local convenience store to the house of his father's fiancée, whom he and his father are visiting. George Zimmerman, a white member of the neighbourhood watch, shoots and kills Trayvon, having reported him to the police as

suspicious. Zimmerman claims to have acted in self-defence, and the jury acquits him. It is this murder and its outcome that prompts founders Patrisse Khan-Cullors, Alicia Garza and Opal Tometi to establish the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement.

Now a global organisation, Black Lives Matter Foundation Inc. states that it is "working for a world where Black lives are no longer systematically targeted for demise" and "imagining and creating a world free of anti-Blackness, where every Black person has the social, economic, and political power to thrive." Sharing their mission and beliefs on the BLM website, the founders also write: "We are unapologetically Black in our positioning... To love and desire freedom and justice for ourselves is a prerequisite for wanting the same for others;" and: "We work vigorously for freedom and justice for Black people and, by extension, all people."

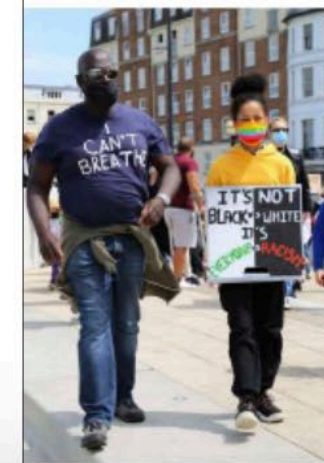
25 May 2020. George Floyd. Tragically, it took the very public murder of another unarmed black man to galvanise support for BLM nationally and in countries as disparate as New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, Japan, South Korea and Brazil. Protests have been staged across Kent, and some 3,000 Thanet residents attended BLM marches in Margate and from Ramsgate to



James Kravits/stock photograph.co.uk



Photo courtesy of Laura Vassallo



Broadstairs, organised in June by the People Dem Collective and Hu Man. Like the BLM foundation, the participants were not seeking justice solely for an individual, but rather calling for an end to systemic racism. Of all ages and from many races, local protesters carried messages including, "Racism is the pandemic", "Why is ending racism a debate?", "If we can teach racism, we can teach equality", and "Justice cannot wait". Among the reasons given for attending the marches in Thanet were, "I've always been interested in human rights issues", "to raise awareness", and "because it is the right thing to do".

Ingrained in the public consciousness over the course of centuries, racist ideology rationalised the transatlantic slave trade, bolstered the propaganda war against abolition, and justified colonial rule. It shapes government policy, dictates what children learn in school, what we

hear and see in newspapers, in art, on the television and in film. It influences how employers view CVs, how we think about and treat each other. Black and brown people in the UK are overrepresented in Covid-19 deaths, in the prison population, in stop and search, unemployment and school exclusion figures. Simultaneously, they are underrepresented in positions of influence and decision-making. Also sobering is the knowledge that race-hate crime is reported to have increased by 193% in Kent from 2015 to 2018. And, according to a House of Commons briefing paper, Kent had the fourth highest level of recorded race-hate crime nationally in 2019.

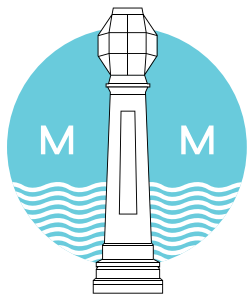
As serving ministers write that "Britain is not a racist country", the list of reports finding evidence of structural discrimination grows longer. It includes the Race Disparity Audit; the Windrush Lessons Learned Review; the Lammy Review

into the criminal justice system; the Angiolini Review into deaths and serious incidents in police custody; the McGregor-Smith Review into workplace discrimination; The Public Health England Review into RAME deaths from Covid-19; The Equality and Human Rights Commission *Healing A Divided Britain* report. More than 500 recommendations have been made, with very few implemented. And yet a new government review into racial inequality was launched in June this year, to be led, reportedly, by ministers who question the existence of structural racism. Wounds are not healed by attempting to conceal them. Racism and its effects will never cease until we cease 'pretending to ignore what we cannot see'.

Counter-protests and criticism of Black Lives Matter - including by a Thanet-based MP - also highlight the strength of feeling and disagreement surrounding the issue of racism. No doubt, the road to a fair and truly equal society is likely to be long and complex. Still, the journey to change has started. Oxford University announced the removal of a much-debated statue of Cecil Rhodes, the Rugby Football Union is set to review the use of "Swing Low Sweet Chariot", and the Bank of England says it will make reparations for slavery. From 360-degree history, to decolonising museums and defunding the police, we are starting to interrogate the stories we've been told and the beliefs that have stemmed from them; asking questions not only about the things we do, but why and how we do them.

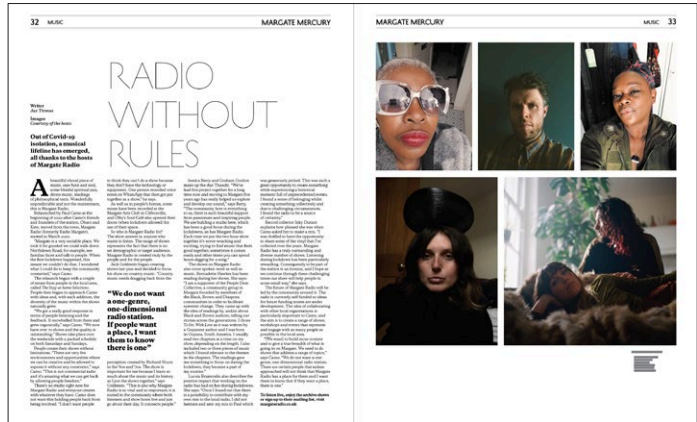
In February of this year, Turner Contemporary opened its groundbreaking exhibition *We Will Walk: Art and Resistance in the American South*. Documenting the civil rights struggles in America in the 1950s and '60s, the show, which features and celebrates the work of black artists, attracted praise and saw large local visitor numbers before lockdown forced its closure. This happened in spite of Thanet's links with far-right groups such as the EDL and UKIP, and despite Margate being chosen as host for the first UK-based White Lives Matter march in 2016. Reflecting on the BLM marches in Thanet, many reported feeling "amazed", "moved" and "proud", both to be part of the anti-racist protests, and also to see so many local residents lending their support, particularly in light of understandable anxiety about the pandemic. The list of black lives "targeted for demise" was started centuries ago and contains millions of names. To cite a placard at a Thanet BLM march, "we must unite to destroy racism", so that six-year-old Gianna Floyd's words "daddy changed the world" can come true.

COMMUNITY 21



MUSIC

Margate is famed for its music scene, hosting huge acts and nurturing a broad spectrum of musical talent. 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.



Called by song and sea

Writer
Adam Tinnion

Photographer
Sheradon Dublin

Guinean musician Falle Nioke shares the story of his journey into music and to Margate

There's an infectious energy about Falle Nioke - everywhere he goes, he brings smiles and positivity. As I was preparing for this interview, I was taken back to the first time I met Falle. I saw his name mentioned by a lot of local Instagram accounts, including BBC Radio presenter Gemma Cairney. He was creating a buzz and I was desperate to work with him. When he turned up to the studio, just as when he turned up for this interview, I was greeted with an enormous smile and a hug. Falle has that rare quality of being extremely charming and likeable, while also being very humble and giving with his time.

What inspired you to make music?

When I was a boy, growing up in Guinea, I had an overwhelming desire to play music. I was born in the city but I travelled to the local villages to live with my uncle and his people. In my village there was no urban music, we only ever heard native, local music. But I was always keen to branch out and learn more about reggae and dancehall music, as well as singing in my mother tongue. I'd see other places, towns and villages that were bigger than mine, they would have more diverse music. My village was a minority in Guinea and so we didn't have as much influence, but I just wanted to play and learn new styles.

Tell us about your instruments.

I play West African musical instruments - native to my home of Guinea. I make most of my own instruments. The gongoma was the first instrument I made. It is a hand-held instrument with the body of a guitar, but rounder and deeper, like a large bowl that is mostly covered. It has metal prongs over a small hole, which resonate inside the chamber when they're hit. The bolong is played sitting down. It's similar to a double bass, but smaller and the strings face towards you when you play. A friend made my bolong - I bought it from him. Where I grew up, it was normal to make your own instruments and to teach others how to use them. I always remember my own teacher - a man called Bangoura. He was a very old man I knew in Guinea and he showed me everything about how to build and to play these instruments.

Tell us about the language you use in your songs.

I actually speak nine languages, including Coniagi, Susu, Fulani, Malinké, Senegalese and French.

I am still working on my English! When I sing, I usually use one of the first four languages I have mentioned, and I sometimes add French and English words into my songs.

What made you move to Margate?

I met my English wife - we were married in Guinea. We moved to the UK together and had our son. Why I came to Margate is a different kind of love story. Where I grew up in Guinea, I was always by the sea. As soon as I saw the Margate seafront, I said to my wife that I'm not going anywhere else, this is where we have to live. I think I made the right decision too. It's not just the sea, but the people have been so nice and made me feel so welcome.

Tell us about your work with Hughie Gavin from Margate Vocal Studio and the Social Singing Choir.

I met Hughie through Steven from Moshi Moshi. He linked us together and we met at Hughie's studio to do some recording. Hughie did the writing and I performed. It was a techno track called "Get a Room" and it was given a release in France. As well as the track we made together, Hughie has been giving me vocal lessons. He's really helped me in my performance and it was great to make the track with him.

You starred in the film *Falle Nioke, New Foundation* directed by Tom Dream. How did this come about?

It was during the World Cup in the summer of 2018 that I met Tom. I was having a coffee and watching the football when he approached me. He said to me, "What are you doing after the football, because



I have some friends who want to jam with you?" So I went and we made a new song that afternoon. From then, Tom and I became friends and we eventually got together to make the final project. It was a film made in Margate as well as in my home town of Conakry in Guinea. To see so much hard work come together on screen was really exciting and I hope to do more things like this in the future.

What is your favourite Margate hangout?

One of my favourite places to be is the harbour arm. I love the bars and cafés up there and it's such a great place to hang out in the evening when you're watching the sun set. I love being there.

If you were given money to invest in Margate, how would you spend it?

Something I think Margate would benefit from is a safe space for people to come and learn. I'd love to create a space for people who have disabilities, or learning difficulties, and also a space where the local young people can come to spend their time

learning for themselves and also helping others. Of course I'd love to make this space have a core of music - teaching music as well as other lessons. I've seen the work at Arts Education Exchange and I think I'd like to see more money put into projects like that.

Tell us about your next project.

Well, I have an EP coming out soon called *Mousimoussi*, which is taking a lot of my focus. I'm releasing it through Stephen Bass from Moshi Moshi and Prah studios. The EP doesn't have a release date yet, but I have a single coming out on 2 March called "Taimedy". Both the single and the EP will be available on Spotify and other streaming sites. Once they're out, I want to focus on a full album. This is something I'd like to record with other people. I'm on the lookout for members to form a full band and I'd like the full album to be recorded with a band and to be released by the end of 2020.

If you are interested in working with Falle, message him on Instagram (@falle_nioke) or e-mail fallenioke1@gmail.com

Falle's playlist

- **MORY KANTE** *Ye Ke Ye Ke*
When I listen to this song, it reminds me of my childhood. Mory Kante was the first Guinean artist to gain global fame.
- **OUMOU SANGARÉ** *Ah Ndiya*
Every time I hear this song, it gives me goosebumps and I absolutely love it. I feel like it gives me confidence and I listen to it before I go to the studio.
- **BAABA MAAL** *Mariama*
I love the tone of Baaba's voice - he really makes me feel inspired. Whenever I go home to Guinea and hear this song, it makes me get up and dance.
- **BLACK UHURU** *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*
This song makes me feel good and gets me motivated in the morning.
- **PETER TOSH** *Johnny B Goode*
This one is a twist on the iconic original song. Peter Tosh is one of my reggae idols and I love what he did with this track.
- **IBAR MAHR** *Mama Rosie*
A lot of the music I listen to brings me energy to keep making my own music. This one is the same - and in fact everything by Ibar gives me energy.
- **SALIF KEITA** *Manja*
Salif Keita is one of the most iconic and successful West African artists and his music reminds me of home.
- **BOB MARLEY** *Redemption Song*
The undisputed King of Reggae - I would listen to him all the time when I was growing up in my home-town of Conakry.
- **ISMAEL LO** *Jammu Africa*
For me, this song is a real nostalgic piece. It always makes me think of the people I know who have passed away and the suffering of my people. It also makes me think about the people who go abroad and never return. It's a song about loss.
- **ALI FARKA TOURÉ & TOUMANI DIABATÉ** *Kana Kassay*
Before I started making traditional Guinean music, this is the kind of thing that inspired me. The guitar and the kora speak to me. I find inspiration to write music when I hear this song and it makes me want to sing.

Listen here:
bit.ly/falleplaylist

Distribution
34,000
a year



  
Over
18,000
followers on
social media



Estimated annual
readership
34,000



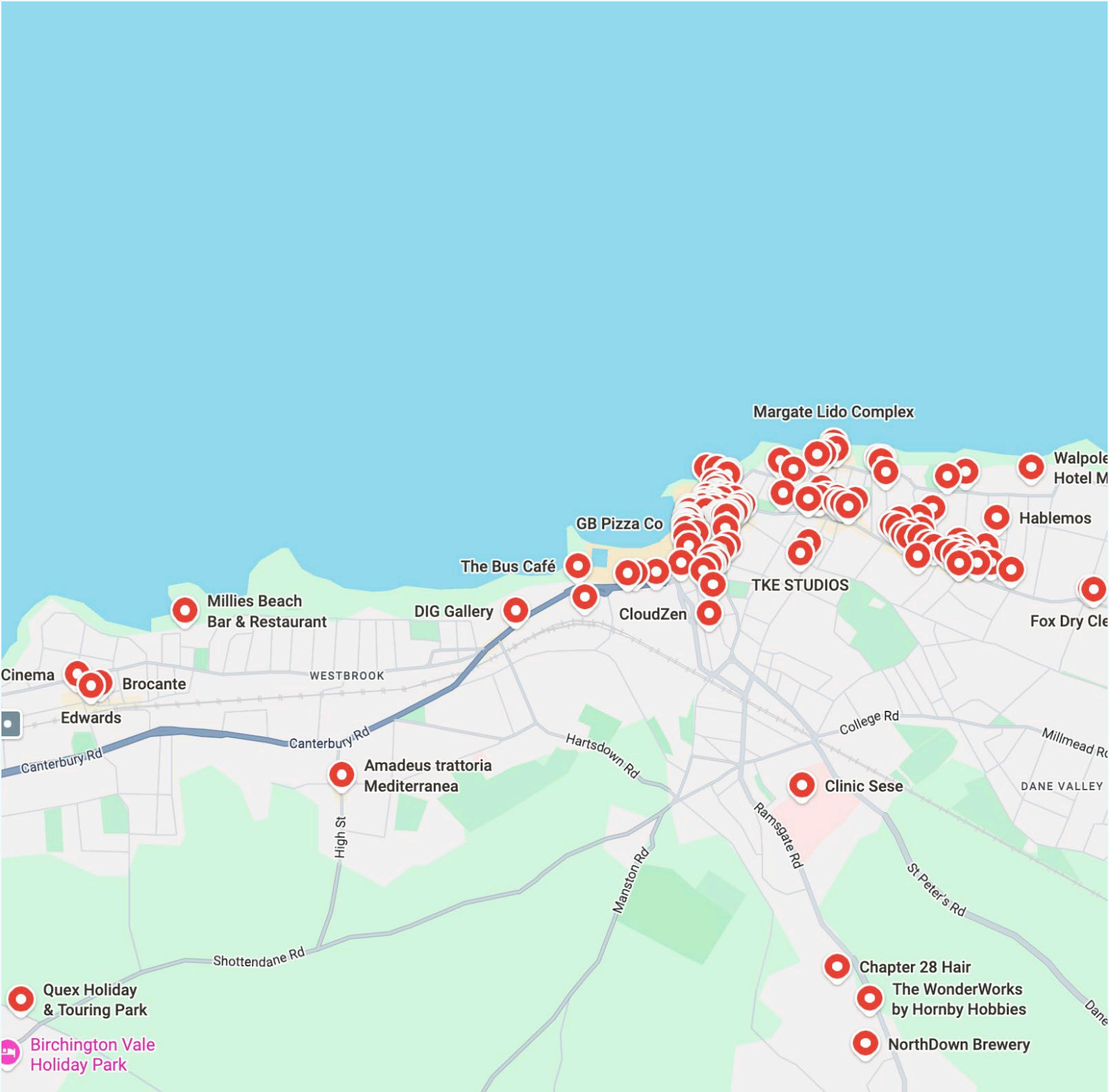
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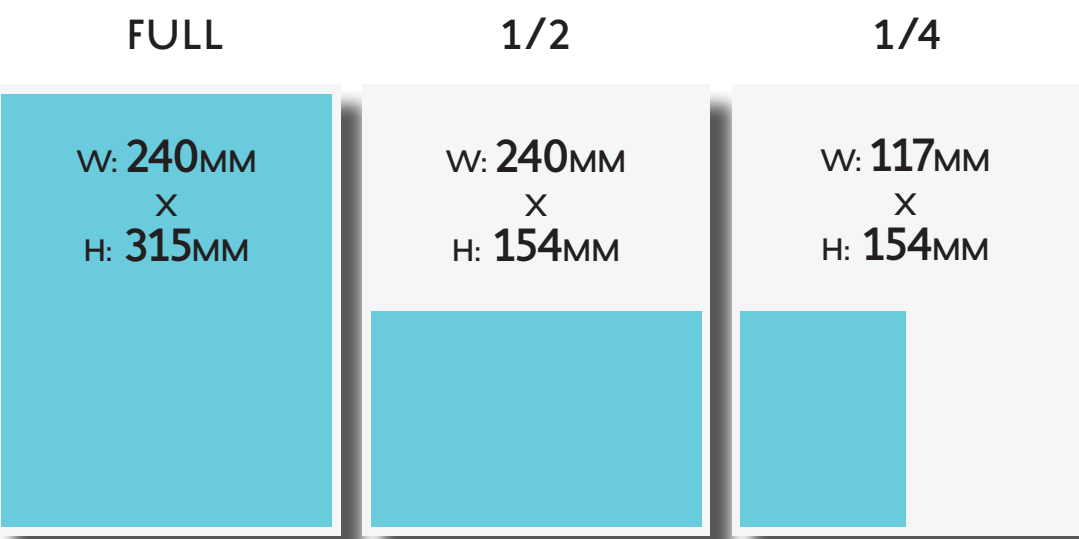


Margate Stockists

VIEW FULL LIST [HERE](#)



Advert sizes



Please provide assets in pdf format, CMYK, 300 DPI, no bleed.
We also offer a design service from £25. Contact us for more details.

Advertising rates +VAT

AD SIZE	1 AD	2-3	4-6	7-10	11-15	16-20	21+
Full page	£490	£465	£420	£390	£350	£315	£300
Half page	£270	£240	£225	£210	£190	£175	£160
Quarter page	£150	£135	£125	£110	£100	£95	£90

* 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
MM Spring	26 February	29 January	5 February	8000
MM Summer	28 May	30 April	3 May	10000
MM Autumn	27 August	30 July	6 August	8000
MM Winter	26 November	29 October	5 November	8000

Testimonials

“Bubble have advertised within all Brightside 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**

Advertiser across all Brightside publications

“I look forward to reading each edition. They make Margate come alive and show what a wonderful vibrant and creative place it is to live.”

CAROL

Margate Mercury reader

“I placed a quarter page in the winter issue of the Margate Mercury for my new business offering swimming lessons. The magazine has been out for just three days and I have already had two enquiries, so that’s such a good start. It’s often difficult to track advertising response, especially with print, but this is absolute proof that the Margate Mercury delivers.”

**RAE SIMS,
RISING TIDE**

Margate Mercury advertiser

“Our first advert in the Margate Mercury was in the spring of 2018 and we haven’t looked back. Whilst so many print publications have sadly fallen by the wayside, the Mercury continues to be a shining example of what’s possible in terms of editorial, photography and purpose. We have had work through our advert but our main reason for advertising is to show our support for the Mercury and the manner in which it draws our local community together.”

**IAN PRISTON,
BOYS AND MAUGHAN**

Margate Mercury advertiser

Contact

Jen Brammer | jen@brightsidepublishing.com | 07900588475
Sophie Batchelor | sophie@brightsidepublishing.com | 07534410401

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