

MEDIA PACK 2026

ROCHESTER ROCKET

Spring 2026 • Modern-day city stories • FREE



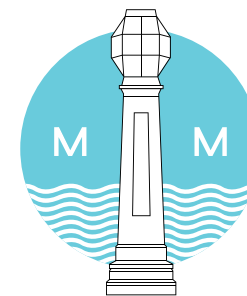


Brightside Publishing produce free, uplifting print magazines which showcase the bright side of towns and cities in Kent.

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.

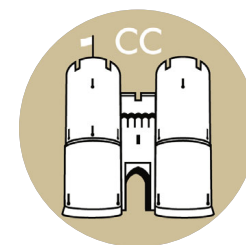
Our magazines are independent and unbiased in their content. We are also regulated by IMPRESS.



Margate Mercury



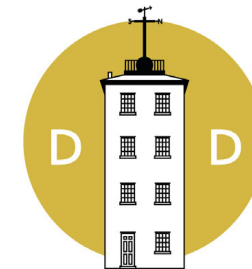
Whitstable Whistler



Canterbury Courier



Ramsgate Recorder



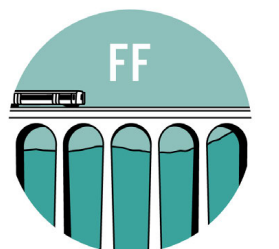
Deal Despatch



Faversham Firework



Broadstairs Beacon



Folkestone Foghorn



Rochester Rocket



The Rochester Rocket is a triannual print magazine designed to champion the community of Rochester. The magazine will launch in spring 2026 and will feature a range of stories covering art and culture, music, food and drink, and much more.



Rachel Woollett
EDITOR

Medway native Rachel has been editing and writing for national and international publications for more than 25 years, in both features and news. She is passionate about shining a spotlight on everything Rochester has to offer – from its fascinating history to its vibrant arts scene and its close-knit sense of community. Rachel also writes and edits fiction and has won prizes for her comedy writing.

rachel@brightsidepublishing.com



Lizzy Tweedale
DESIGN DIRECTOR

Lizzy teamed up with founder Clare Freeman to create the first issue of the *Margate Mercury* in 2016 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.

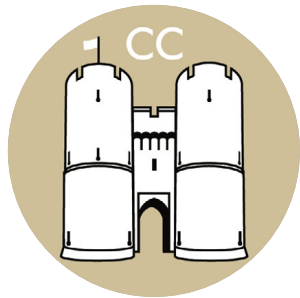
lizzy@brightsidepublishing.com



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



CANTERBURY COURIER
FOOD & DRINK

We love to showcase Canterbury’s buzzing food and drink scene in the magazine, from the people behind community kitchens to the owners of esteemed vineyards. We also have a review of a cafe in each issue and the latest openings.



26FOOD

CANTERBURY COURIER

COMMUNITY KITCHEN:
Dev Biswal
at The Cook's Tale

Writer
Lorraine Williams
Photographer
Sue Kemp

Dev Biswal, trailblazer of the Kent food scene, talks about his motivation, career path and advice for budding cooks

Dev Biswal has had restaurants in East Kent since 2006, winning multiple accolades – most recently, Best Asian Chef outside of London at the Asian and Oriental Chef Awards, held at the House of Lords this summer.

Since 2022 he has chosen to focus on his Canterbury restaurant and rebranded it as The Cook's Tale, using only ingredients sourced within a half-hour radius of the city.

When he was a teenager in India he learned to cook, he says, simply because he loved to eat. "In India, people express their love through food – there are lots of festivals and social events centred around food." His mother was his inspiration: "She was an imaginative cook, always experimenting." He went to catering college and realised that cooking gave him an opportunity to travel and learn. He then worked in five-star hotels learning classic European cuisine, which he began to fuse with his Indian roots to develop his own style.

He moved from India to Dubai, and then to London, which he describes as "the food capital of the world, where all cuisines can be found. It was the perfect place to learn and be exposed to a wide range of influences." After around 10 years he moved to Margate, lured by the call of the sea (having grown up in a coastal area) and high quality Kentish produce – not realising that there wasn't really much else there at that time, and that it might be a challenging spot in which to run a restaurant. As it turned out, his cooking brought more people to the town and won national press coverage, multiple awards and listings in the top food guides. He opened in Canterbury in 2014.

The biggest challenge in his career, he says, has been managing people across

multiple sites. Although he is quick to praise his staff for their loyalty, talent and enthusiasm, it's clear he is happier working the way he can now, moving between the kitchen and front of house at The Cook's Tale.

On recruiting staff, he says: "I look out for open-minded people, as cooking is about constantly expanding, experimenting and learning. Food is ever evolving and we can't be rigid. I like to have chefs who come from different backgrounds, and I love that there are more women chefs now as well as men."

His newest business, The Cook's Adventures, takes small groups on culinary holidays in the UK and abroad. "Croatia and Morocco are places where people take great pride in their food, offering exceptional cuisine with a range of influences and high quality produce, including lots of spices and seafood." His nine-day culinary tour of East Kent takes in various restaurants, a country house hotel, Chartam Vineyard and the local farm where The Cook's Tale sources a lot of its ingredients, from fruits to rapeseed, heritage wheat, durum wheat semolina and lamb. There's also a Canterbury City Food Tour exploring street food and drinks, taking in The Goods Shed for coffee and a visit to the fishmonger there, local brews at The Foundry, wonderful English wines at Cork on Burgate and fine handmade chocolates from Madame Oiseau.

"The countryside here is glorious: there's great food and wine, and I really wanted to show it to more people. Customers for the East Kent tour mainly come from overseas. When people visit the UK, the first places on their list are usually London, then Scotland. But when they come here they love it. So I think there is a lot more scope to promote Kent as a destination."

CANTERBURY COURIER

RECIPE 27

THE COOK'S TALE

DOSAI SERVES 4

Dosai is a South Indian crepe and is rich in carbohydrates and protein. It is gluten free, so great for people with coeliac disease and gluten sensitivity. It is an integral part of the diet of the people in southern India. A variety of fillings are used, such as potatoes, spinach, cheese, eggs and chicken

INGREDIENTS

1 cup white rice
1/3 cup white lentils
1/3 cup yellow lentils
1 tsp sugar
Salt to taste

PROCESS

BATTER

Leave the rice and lentils to soak in water for 2 hours. Blend into a thick batter. Add sugar and 1 tsp salt. Leave to ferment for at least 24 hours in a cool, dry place.

MAKING THE DOSAI

Use a non-stick frying pan and place on a medium heat. Pour one ladle of the dosai batter into the centre of the pan and spread in a circular motion. Once batter is evenly spread, drizzle with vegetable oil. Be careful not to make the dosai too thin as this will cause it to burn.

▲ Cantal dosa. Image courtesy of The Cook's Tale

AUTUMN BROADSTAIRS
FOOD FESTIVAL

Friday 27 – Sunday 29 September 2024
Victoria Gardens, Broadstairs CT10 1QS
f @ broadstairsfoodfestival.org.uk

Free entry

Assistance dogs only please

100 stall holders

Festival Theatre Marquee

Bandstand entertainment

Online draw with fantastic prizes

Festival dinners Friday & Saturday



WHITSTABLE WHISTLER
ARTS & MUSIC

We love to feature a range of local artists, musicians and makers in the magazine. For instance, in our winter issue, we grabbed a swift one with Whitstable’s original foul-mouthed feminists, Profanity Embroidery Group, to hear why swearing makes you smarter (and stronger).



WHITSTABLE WHISTLER

ARTS & CULTURE 13

A COMMON
THREAD

Writer
Cheri Percy
Photographer
Jack Eames

Our editor Cheri Percy sits down with Whitstable’s original foul-mouthed feminists, the Profanity Embroidery Group, to hear why swearing makes you smarter and stronger (and you better bloody believe it!)

Before I arrive at Alison Fitzgerald’s house on Borstal Hill (or PEG Heights, as it’s affectionately known in the group), I spot a woman fully clad in yellow. She’s entering a driveway behind a towering green hedge and I know I’m almost in the right place. Ahead of our shoot today, co-founder Annie Taylor has rallied the troops together in matching yellow garb to bring some much-needed sunshine (and swearing) to the incoming darker months. For a bunch of artists famed for their colourful language though, it’s not the first time that Profanity Embroidery Group has gone bright and bold. Last year saw the foul-mouthed flock take part in the Craftivist Collective’s climate campaign, Canary Craftivists. Teaming up with founder Sarah Corbett, the project championed a cleaner and greener world for all. Crafters across the UK were encouraged to send local MPs small handmade canary gifts with thought-provoking reminders of our world’s welfare and for the government to push its climate commitments. The PEG productions were mostly made from scrap or foraged materials. But naturally they brought a bit of their own signature sauce to the stitching. “I said to Sarah, we’ll do it a little bit our way,” begins Annie, “and she was like, ‘That’s fine.’ Then, of course, she started seeing the photos popping up. One Sunday morning I had this text. Obviously we’ve not been very gentle and I said to her, ‘Well, the thing is, we’ve literally got sh’t in the sea!’”



This kind of direct response is precisely what makes Whitstable’s Profanity Embroidery Group so refreshing, particularly against a current political backdrop of woolly inaction. In fact, comedian Kathy Burke commended the group for their punk approach to the (sometimes antiquated) notion of a female-led committee in 2019’s *All Women* series on Channel 4. Burke found the south-east sew-and-sews on Twitter as an alternative to the producers’ hopes to interview the Women’s Institute. Now 25 members strong, PEG meet every two weeks, coming together to craft their latest work, needing naughty words onto quilts, cushion covers and curated pieces that are sold across the UK. And it’s in this setting that I next meet up with the blasphemous bunch, huddled around the open fireside at the Duke with a steady stream of thubarb gin and tonics. No longer the docile, voiceless pastime you might associate with Regency-style manor houses, the humble art of embroidery has come to symbolise the strength and power of a woman’s private inner sphere. “People say, ‘What a waste of beautiful embroidery to ruin it with swear words.’ As if it should only be flowers,” exclaims PEG member Sarah Jesset. “But swear words are beautiful

on embroidery!” reasons Emily Turner. “That’s kind of the expectation, isn’t it, that women are gonna sit there and embroider things. We’ve sat in here loads of times embroidering stuff and the men are over there and they come over. They’re like, ‘Oh, okay!’” “I love it,” retorts Bridget Carpenter with a wicked laugh. Speaking of subverting women’s roles, the Profanity Embroidery Group’s latest team-up sees them participating in Brighton-based artist and lecturer Vanessa Marr’s Domestic Dusters Open Call. The collaborative project (much like Burke’s series) explores contemporary perspectives on the everyday lives of women, inviting participants to embroider their thoughts, and frustrations as words or images onto a yellow duster. The cleaning cloths will then be strung together like brightly coloured bunting, a familiar festoon if you’ve already spotted some of PEG’s proud works around Whitstable. “Are our knickers coming down then?” asks longstanding member Jan Lewis over the table to Annie. “The knickers are already down,” she answers, swiftly with a grin. For years a string of profanity-embroidered pants welcomed punters at the Twelve Taps Gin Bar. Now the local watering hole will proudly display the dusters as their new look

bunting from 14 February, coinciding with PEG’s own domesticity-themed exhibition down the road at the Fishslab Gallery. Even since they began sharing their work in 2014, Profanity Embroidery Group has been pushing people’s buttons. And not just the vintage ones they’ve scored from Sally at Anchor’s Aweigh for their latest designs. When the group first came to exhibit (quite by accident) back in 2014, it was remarkable how little time it took to rile the crowds, as Annie reflects: “I was on the beach with the dog and I got this phone call about 10.15am going, ‘We’ve had a complaint!’ This was half an hour into the first exhibition!” Very much fans of the make-do and mend approach, their compromise involved hanging huge stretches of bubble wrap up at the window to make the content of the show more discreet but, as Annie reasons, “Some people still wouldn’t come in because they thought it looked too seedy!” For the group’s upcoming exhibition, they’ve decided to quite literally take things into their own hands by stitching together a giant tapestry to dress the window for those who need a bit more cotton wool cocooning their craft. The banner also gives them a chance to get

14 ARTS & CULTURE

back into the swing of things after the last few years. As Annie jokes, “Doing something we can stitch quite badly in the pub, it doesn’t matter if we get beer on it.” But it’s not all outraged cries for censorship in response to their work, as Emily recalls: “One woman came in and said, ‘Oh, I’ve come from Seasalter church’, and I’m like, ‘Okay, you know what this is, right? It’s a swear thing.’ ‘Yeah, that’s why I’ve come!’ she responded. ‘We’ve just done a workshop on how to embrace your inner f*ck because sometimes you just need to say f*ck.’” Dumbfounded Emily admits, “That’ll teach me to judge someone who walks through the door” Regardless of creed or colour, there is something liberating about embracing the right expletive. Indeed, researchers at the University of Rochester in New York quizzed 1,000 people about 400 typical behaviours and discovered a strong link between intelligence and swearing. Rather than being the sign of someone with a limited vocabulary, the

study – published in the *Language Science* journal back in November 2015 – found that swearing proficiency was a sign of rhetorical strength. “And integrity,” believes Sarah. “I don’t trust people who don’t swear. I’m more likely to open up to somebody who can be honest and not filter themselves.” It’s not just a sign of integrity but also a valid coping mechanism according to Dr Raffaello Antonio, a counseling psychologist and the clinical director and founder of Therapy Central. “Swearing can have a truly liberating effect when we’re feeling bottled up with frustration,” he says. “Saying the F-word, or similar can have an immediate calming impact on the difficult emotions we might be experiencing.” The Profanity Embroidery Group appreciates these merits having attended the launch party for Emma Byrne’s book *Swearing Is Good For You*, in which she argues that our most cherished dirty words are in fact both big and clever. Sarah remembers her own first forays into foul language and the freedom she felt in doing so (despite her father’s reaction). “I started swearing when I was 12. I said ‘bloody’ [and] my dad would say, ‘Do you have to say that?’ And I was like, ‘Yeah, I do.’ Because it was the only

word that would express what I wanted to say.” But then there’s always been a bit of a barometer when it comes to women’s rage. Something Emily knows all too well tapping into the levels of our vulgar vocab in her work. “I made a f*ckometer. It was bought by a psychiatrist in Guildford for her waiting room,” she admits dryly. “I did a fanny thing too and that was bought by a gynaecologist! Some people find it really easy [but] I’m much weirder about it than I thought I would be [when it comes to] stitching it down. I’ve never stitched ‘C*ut’” At this point, Sarah leans across the table to quiz Bridget about whether she’s upped the ante on her swearwords. Legend has it, she was good at stitching and not so good at swearing when she first joined. “That’s what they used to say,” she smiles. “But that’s an urban myth. I grew up with three brothers. Do you think I didn’t know about swearing?” Only now, of course, the idea of swearing is no longer reserved for the loud and lairy elder brothers or the catcallers on the street after a night out. By crafting slapper slippers and adding some poodle pizzazz to the idea of being a silly bitch, Profanity Embroidery Group is reclaiming what once were words used against them into the armour for a

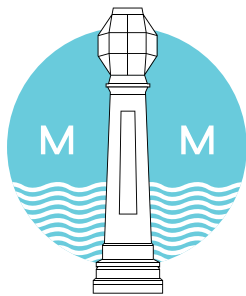
new generation, starting with Bridget’s own growing grandchildren. “I’ve got an eight-year-old granddaughter and she looks at my work around the house. I’ve got one and it says ‘Shit happens’ and she said, ‘I’d like that one for my bedroom.’ Because shit does happen. It’s about learning to understand when it’s appropriate.” And even if it wasn’t, it’s safe to say PEG would call bollocks to that anyway. The Profanity Embroidery Group’s domesticity exhibition launches on 14 February at Fishslab Gallery, 11 Oxford St. Pick up a copy of their bloody brilliant book, *F*ck Off, I’m Sewing! Swearing and Sewing That Will Have You In Stitches* from your local bookshop or via hive.co.uk

TRY YOUR HAND

The deadline for final submissions to Vanessa Marr’s domestic dusters must arrive in the post by 30 January 2023. Contact her at domesticdusters.wordpress.com/contact-us/

“People say, ‘What a waste of beautiful embroidery to ruin it with swear words.’ But swear words are beautiful on embroidery!”





MARGATE MERCURY SPACES

When it comes to sourcing items from a local designer or scouring our range of vintage shops for that one off piece, we love to highlight the Margate residents who know how to make the most of what the town has to offer when designing their spaces.

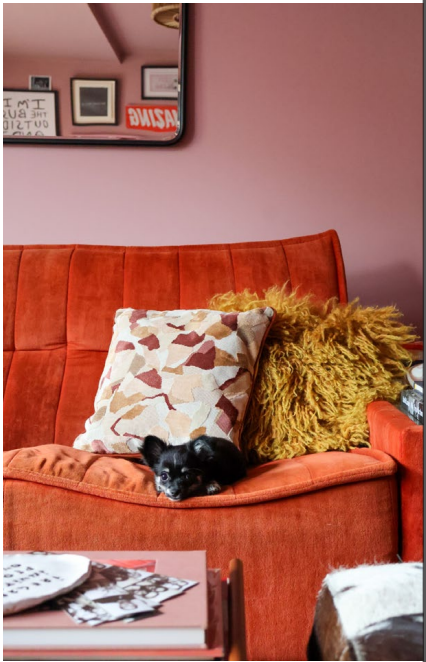


SPACES 79

Photographer
Emma Jane Palin

FALLING FOR AUTUMN

Interior designer and stylist Emma Jane Palin explores seasonal interior updates with Margate's local touch



As the golden light of autumn returns to Margate and the sea air takes on a crisper note – my favourite time of the year – many of us feel the urge to cosy up our homes. Autumn is the perfect time to refresh interiors ahead of the Christmas season, and there's no need to look further than our high streets, our creatives and indeed our own cupboards. Here's how to embrace the season, using the talents and treasures found right here in Margate.

WARM UP WITH TEXTILES

Nothing says autumn like soft, tactile materials, earthy tones and layers of blankets and cushions. For neutral basics in natural materials, head to Scissortail Home on Hawley Street. For something a little more bespoke, local designers such as Sophie of Epoch Studio and Joanna of Rudy's House (both pictured above in my own abode) create one-of-a-kind, handwoven and repurposed pieces that will add character and warmth to your living room or bedroom.

TIME FOR DIY

While repainting your home is not a seasonal necessity, the lower light gives insight into our homes in a darker setting. In fact, it's the perfect condition for DIY, and a simple lick of paint can transform a room. For colour advice tailored to your home and lighting – there's a shameless plug coming – I offer at-home consultations to help you select the right undertones for your space, which is by far the most common mistake when it comes to paint. Margate Decorators' Merchants on Northdown Road is your go-to for all the tools, brushes and gear needed for a satisfying weekend makeover.

ADD MOOD LIGHTING

Darker evenings call for soft, layered lighting, so ditch the harsh overheads and hunt for table lamps, wall lights and floor lamps. Margate is a goldmine for vintage lighting, so no need to head online. Junk Deluxe and Paraphernalia offer an eclectic mix of retro fittings and restored classics, and there are charity shops aplenty for avid thrifters. If you luck out on a retro find, Mike at The Light Keeper in Studio J1H at Westwood Cross can help to repair and restore it. ▶



80 SPACES

SCENT THE SEASON

I'm a sucker for scents. There's something that a well made candle or incense stick does to your home, especially when it's miserable outside. My favourite place in town to head for smells is the quaint gift shop On A Whim, which stocks fragranced papers and hard-to-find brands road-tested by owners Will and Anna. Local business The Golden Altar is also stocked in Harbour & Tide where you'll find small pick-me-ups to bring a restorative environment. Choose warming scents that feed into feelings of nostalgia or comfort, most importantly making your home smell like your home.

For more interior inspiration, follow Emma at @emmajane Palin and check out her DIY and decorating store @ourcuratedabode

MAKE TIME FOR YOU

It's probably cliché to act as if autumn is a month for pumpkin lattes and a reset, but I always feel better having an afternoon off screen and curled up with a good book. *You Are Home* by Africa Daley-Clarke and *Create* by Emily Henson are both publications by local authors who bring personality to their interiors and writing style. Further reading with a hot drink, toasty blanket and a couple of phone-free hours is encouraged.

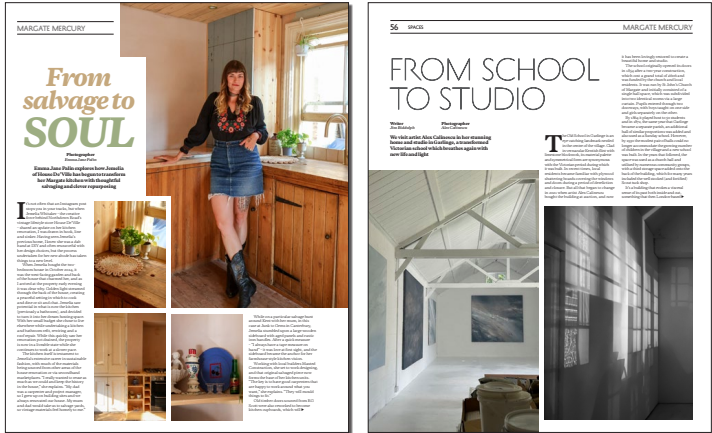


LAYER IN LOCAL ART & CERAMICS

Sometimes you just need a little dopamine hit to make your home feel fresh, and thankfully, Margate has a thriving creative scene to enable that. Whether it's a single vase from a ceramicist found at Margate Ceramics Market (29 to 30 November) or a piece of artwork from local art champions such as The Lido Stores or The Store Collective, choosing local adds authenticity and soul to your space. I often add to my ever-growing plate wall when the need for something new hits, and the seaside-themed collaboration between Harbour & Tide and Dottie & Cloud is surely something that should adorn every Margate home.



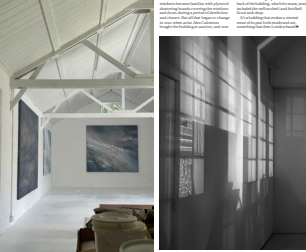
PRODUCTS FEATURED:
Patchwork throw and cushion @epochstudio
Velvet cushion @rudyshouseupholstery
Margate prawn and seaweed plate @harbourandtide
@dottieandcloud
Incense @thegoldenaltar
Snake incense holder @somecreature
Lavender stick @crawlinmargate
Books @thevitaminproject @lifeinstyled



From salvage to SOUL



FROM SCHOOL TO STUDIO



Annual distribution
28,000
a year



7000
copies per issue



Estimated annual
readership
67,200



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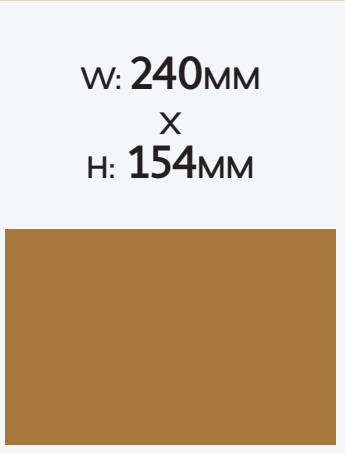
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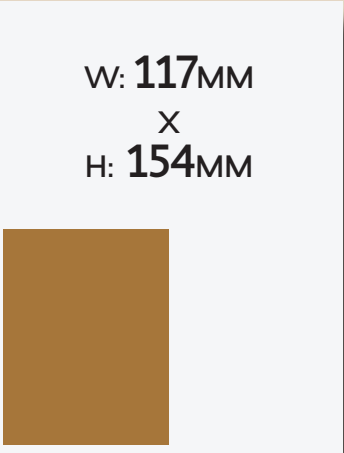
FULL



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1/4



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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	BOOKING DEADLINE	ARTWORK DEADLINE	DISTRIBUTION
Rochester Rocket Summer	14 May	16 April	23 April	7000
Rochester Rocket Autumn	13 August	16 July	23 July	8000
Rochester Rocket Winter	19 November	22 October	29 October	7000

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

“Our first advert in the *Margate Mercury* was in the spring of 2018 and we haven’t looked back. While 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 & MAUGHAN**

Margate Mercury

A big shout out to @folkestonefoghorn. I have just got a commission from a visitor to Folkestone who picked up a magazine in @chaoscards and was inspired by my plaques on The Old High Street Folkestone article, and wants to mirror it in his North London street. Super excited to be doing this. It will form a history trail walk to talk about the towns heritage and business's 100 years ago.

**SIMON WARRREN,
HERE BEFORE US**

Folkestone Foghorn

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[BRIGHTSIDEPUBLISHING.COM](https://brightsidepublishing.com)
