

► Locate in Kent continued...

All grants are awarded on a discretionary basis and the level of potential assistance depends upon company size, location, eligible project expenditure, number of skilled jobs created or safeguarded and project quality. Grants of up to 15% of project costs are available for small-sized companies and up to 7.5% for medium companies rising to 35% and 25% respectively in the 23 wards of Thanet and three wards in Dover (Eastry, Sandwich and Whitfield) where large corporates are also eligible to apply for up to 15% of eligible costs.

Figures from the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) show that 29 companies in Kent and Medway have been awarded over £4.9m in financial aid since April 2004 under the Enterprise Grants and Selective Finance for Investment in England (SFIE) schemes.

Of the companies awarded grants between April 2004 and January 2008, 26* were advised by the South East Grant Advisory Service (Se-gas), which offers free grant advice and assistance to companies looking to relocate to, or expand in, Kent and Medway. Se-gas funding is managed by Locate in Kent.

* Figures supplied by SEEDA

Locational advantages of Kent and Medway:

- Although Kent is only a 60-minute drive from the capital, commercial property and labour costs are nearly 60% less.
- Kent is home to many world-class companies such as Pfizer, Kimberly-Clark, BAE Systems, Saga, Lloyd's of London, AXA PPP and Fidelity International, with others moving in all the time.
- The area around Ebbsfleet International station which is being developed by Land Securities, will contain up to 10,000 new homes as well as offices, shops and community facilities.
- Kent has more land available for development than any other area in the South East of England.
- Kent has a population of 1.6 million people, the largest of any county in the UK, and a workforce of over 780,000.
- Kent has over 1000 miles² of glorious countryside, 360 miles of unspoilt coastline to explore, and more historic homes and castles than any other county.



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Picture courtesy of Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce