



Press Information

27th May 2010

Flybe's new Scottish route gives Kent opportunity to capital-ise!

<UK's Number One Domestic Airline's new Manston to Edinburgh service takes to the skies>

Flybe, the UK's Number One Domestic airline, today operated its first flight from Manston to Edinburgh that, with a suitably Scottish send-off, also marked the return of daily scheduled passenger services from Kent International Airport.

On hand to welcome the first inbound passengers and see the Kent passengers on board was Flybe's Head of Public Relations, Niall Duffy and the team from Infratil, the airport's owners, led by Tom Wilson, Chief Executive of Infratil Airports Europe. They were joined by Cllr Alan Marsh from Kent County Council; and Cllr Roger Latchford, Deputy Leader of Thanet District Council and his fellow councillors.

The passengers were piped aboard by members of the Pipes & Drums of 5Scots Battalion based in Canterbury before taking off on Flybe's fuel efficient 78-seat Bombardier Q-400 aircraft for their 80-minute flight to the Scottish capital. Before boarding the passengers also enjoyed a celebratory glass of Kent-produced Chapel Down sparkling wine. Two of the first passengers to arrive and depart on the special inaugural flight were presented with food hampers generously given by Visit Kent and Scottish Food and Drink.

Mr Duffy said: "We're delighted to add this new service and be the first carrier to offer Kent travellers a scheduled service from the county. It also reflects our commitment to continued growth from our Edinburgh base and also to our development into new regions."

Added Mr Wilson: "This new service demonstrates Manston's capabilities as a regional airport for the South East and with it the prospect of a further 50,000 passengers using the airport each year. It also reinforces Flybe's reputation for offering an extensive choice of convenient, affordable regional travel.

“Passengers using the airport will very quickly realise how different it is from others they may use, thanks to the ease of getting to and from Manston and the fact that you can board an aircraft literally metres from where you park your car.”

The significance of the new daily service to the tourism industry at both destinations was reflected by the presence of the Visit Scotland bus and a team from Visit Kent, the county’s tourism industry champions while, earlier in the day, a Visit Kent team had greeted passengers at Edinburgh Airport to promote the route and highlight the organisation’s new ‘Kent contemporary’ campaign with special Garden of England invites.

Flybe’s new daily scheduled passenger services between Manston and Edinburgh will continue through to the Winter 2010 schedule so ensuring a daily year-round service on the route.

Tickets are on sale at www.flybe.com from £24.99 one way including taxes and charges for travel through to March 26, 2011.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Sundays and Monday – Friday:

Flight departs Edinburgh 1050 arr Manston 1220

Flight departs Manston 1245 arr Edinburgh 1415

Saturday:

Flight departs Edinburgh 1450 arr Manston 1620

Flight departs Manston 1645 arr Edinburgh 1815

Additional comments

Kent County Council

- Paul Carter, the Leader of Kent County Council said: “We welcome the new services from Manston to Edinburgh. This will mean that there will be a further 50,000 new passengers a year using the airport and Manston has the capacity for many more. This is good news for Thanet and Kent and will create much-needed jobs and regeneration on the isle.

“Manston is an underused asset and we wish to build its capacity as the regional airport of choice within the South East.”

Thanet District Council

- Leader of Thanet District Council, Cllr Bob Bayford, said: “The start of Flybe flights from Manston to Edinburgh is a great boost for the whole area. Flybe is a well known name and we're delighted to welcome them to Manston. Not only does it open up another destination for people in Thanet to fly out to from Manston, but it also gives us the opportunity to market the area to a whole new potential visitor audience in Scotland. We look forward to a successful first season for this route and to possibly welcome further services from Flybe to Manston in the future.”

Visit Kent:

- Sandra Matthews-Marsh, Chief Executive of Visit Kent, the county's award winning destination marketing organisation said: “This is great news for the county's tourism businesses.

“We are working in partnership with Flybe, Manston and our investors with a new marketing campaign to maximise the potential of this route and encourage visitors from Edinburgh and other parts of Scotland to take the 80 minute flight to Kent and sample some of the great things the county has to offer. This new business will provide a great boost for our tourism industry, and the potential for the whole of the coastline and East Kent in particular is exciting. We wish Flybe and Manston every success.”

Locate in Kent

- Paul Wookey, Chief Executive of Locate in Kent, said: “The return of scheduled daily passenger services from Kent International Airport to Edinburgh is good news for Kent as a business location.

“Apart from bringing much-needed direct and indirect employment in and around Thanet, and acting as a catalyst for the East Kent economy, the airport offers the traveller a real alternative to flying from the region’s large congested airports.”

ENDS

For further press information, photography or to arrange an interview:

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Notes to Editors:

- Flybe is one of Europe's largest and most successful regional airlines with 201 routes serving 13 countries, operating from a total of 70 departure points, 38 UK and 32 European airports* (*on sale for Summer/Winter '10*)
- Flybe is the UK's Number One Domestic Airline - carrying more UK domestic passengers than any other airline; carrying more domestic passengers at London Gatwick than any other airline and operating over four times more domestic routes than any other airline (*CAA statistics – April 09-Mar 10*)
- Flybe is the only UK carrier to feature in the prestigious US-published Forbes magazine Top 10 on time arrival list of Global Major Carriers 2009.
- Flybe won both Best Short-Haul Airline and Best Environmental accolades at the 2010 Business Travel Awards. Other recent awards include: Air Transport World's 2009 Regional Airline of the Year; Aviation Week's *Overhaul & Maintenance* (O&M) European Airline MRO of the Year (Flybe's aircraft maintenance division); the 'Most Environmentally and Socially Responsible Budget Airline' Award at The British Travel Awards 2009 for the second year running; and the 2008 Regional Leadership Award at the Global Airline Strategy Awards
- Flybe is the largest scheduled airline, measured by air traffic movements, at Belfast City, Birmingham, Cardiff, Exeter, Inverness, the Isle of Man, Jersey, Manchester, Norwich and Southampton airports (*CAA statistics – Mar 10*)
- Flybe's Training Academy in Exeter, costing £11.9 million to construct, is scheduled to open in 2010.
- Flybe launched the aviation industry's first ever eco labelling scheme in 2007
- Flybe offers the UK's first low cost customer loyalty scheme open to all passengers *Rewards4all*

- Flybe signed a landmark franchise Agreement with Loganair, the Scottish regional airline, in January 2008– the first of its kind ever for a low cost carrier

* Flown under the Flybe brand, of which 26 routes, 10 airports and one country are exclusively served by Flybe's franchise partner, Loganair.