

The Worshipful Company of Management Consultants

Wine Club Trip to Kent – 6th September



Our trip followed a successful formula previously used to visit the Surrey Hills – identify a suitable railway station for the start and finish, arrange and fill a minibus, negotiate visits and tastings at a couple of interesting vineyards, one of which will provide lunch....



The oast houses remain at Mereworth, but are now more likely to be filled with wine presses. The vines at Mereworth are next to the oast. Our tour and tasting at Mereworth was led by Scott Gebbie, the head winemaker. They grow Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinor Meunier, on a small estate of 40 hectares on the south facing slopes of the Greensand ridge. They make - and we enjoyed – two sparkling wines, a Blanc de Blancs and a Blanc de Noir. Diversification is key to building a winery in Kent – they also produce a lovely aperitif “Maroude” and a botanical gin.

Our next stop involved crossing mediaeval bridges over the Medway, south to Balfour’s Hush Heath winery near Staplehurst. This is in the big league of wineries in Kent, alongside Chapel Down and Gusborne, and they produce an extensive range of award-winning sparkling and still whites. Again diversification is important, they also make ciders.

Our host Barry entertained us with a tutored tasting over lunch, in their very well-appointed restaurant / visitor centre, overlooking the vines in a stunningly beautiful corner of the Weald.

The weather was kind to us too – as witnessed by Val Blackburn and Cathy Cant transporting themselves to the Mediterranean - Climate change has certainly moved the la belle vie to Kent, and the wines get better and better with each year as the local winemakers build their skills and experience."

