



# BRENTWOOD Chamber of Commerce

*Bringing you the latest business news from Brentwood*

## The drinks are on us at the Brentwood Business Showcase

The Brentwood Business Showcase is now firmly fixed in the Borough's business calendar - and so too are the networking drinks at the end of the day's events, which will be once again hosted by the Chamber this year.

The November 1 event, back for its third year at Brentwood School in 2018, runs from 9am-4pm, after which all Showcase attendees are warmly invited to come and join the Chamber for complimentary drinks and some relaxed networking to round off the day.

Beer will be provided by Brentwood Brewery and wine supplied by Shenfield Wine Co, both of whom are supporting the Chamber in putting on the reception. There are lots of good reasons for coming to see the Chamber stand during the day too in any gaps in your itinerary wishlist of inspirational business talks, workshops, and visits around all of the Showcase exhibitors at the venue.

Many of the Chamber's executive committee will be on hand throughout the day to meet and chat to Chamber members and non-members alike. And we would especially encourage non-members to drop by and see us, and gain a better understanding of Chamber's place in the Brentwood business community, and all of the multiple benefits of becoming a Chamber member.

In fact we are offering free membership until the end of 2018 to anyone who joins the Chamber (for January 2019 onwards) on the day. We had lots of new members sign up at the Showcase in 2017, and we're expecting to welcome many more this year too.

We'd also like as many Chamber members to come and talk to us as possible too, both just to catch up and also to raise any business issues they might currently have. In our experience we can often help resolve issues more easily by referring them to the relevant authority ourselves, rather than a business organisation or individual company doing so themselves.

We're also keen to hear the thoughts of members on our strategic direction for 2019, which chairman Colin Barber outlined in last month's Newsletter. Your views are important to us!

We will also again be running a prize draw, with a free ticket up for grabs to the Chamber Christmas Lunch at Mount Avenue Banqueting Suite on Wednesday December 19. All you have to do is leave us your business card at the Chamber stand.



*Terry Upham of WPA Healthcare, sponsors of the October business breakfast*

## Breakfast sponsorships filling up fast

If you are interested in sponsoring one of Chamber's ever-popular Business Breakfasts at Marygreen Manor then you need to move fast to secure a spot for 2019.

We already have a sponsor roster for the first three months of the new year that includes Brentwood Cricket Club, Mullis & Peak LLP and Aching Arms, with Mellow Moments in place for May.

April's slot is currently vacant, so please contact us if you are interested in sponsoring then or another month during 2019.

Attendees at October's event heard from sponsor WPA Healthcare, and November's Breakfast on Friday 16 is sponsored by Legal Mediation; with the Friday December 14 event sponsored by Kinetic Podiatry Clinic.

For tickets to future Breakfasts please see [brentwoodchambers.co.uk/events](http://brentwoodchambers.co.uk/events)



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## Don't overlook the threat - take cybersecurity seriously

**Nick Bown of Chamber member IXCG Limited outlines some of the cybersecurity issues that businesses in Brentwood need to be aware of.**

It's been a busy summer for IXCG. We've tracked cybercriminals to the other side of the world, recovered tens of thousands of pounds of stolen money for clients and, sadly, been called in too late to save some companies - who weren't our clients, and who had thought that "it wouldn't happen" to them.

Small and medium businesses often tell customers that they're the "local experts" and better placed to meet their needs than the national chains.

However, small and medium businesses are a more tempting target for cyber criminals, due to their smaller budgets, lack of dedicated security systems and understanding of the legal requirements.

This places clients' data at risk of loss, and the business at risk of closure, due to failure to meet these legal requirements.

So why do so many small and medium businesses get it wrong? According to research carried out by the government this year:

- 43% of businesses suffered security breaches or attacks over the last 12 months, but this figure may be higher as most businesses take over 300 days to identify a breach, rather than the legally mandated 72 hours

- 75% received fraudulent email and, of the staff who did identify email as fraudulent, 30% opened or acted on the contents "just to check"
- Only 20% of companies provide staff with training, even though this is one of the most effective ways of preventing data loss
- 40% of businesses who were affected wrongly thought that they were safe

All these items are very easy to address if you follow these guidelines:

- Take cybersecurity seriously - it's a matter of "when" rather than "if" your business will be a victim
- Take responsibility - the law states that the business owner or directors are responsible. This responsibility cannot be delegated!
- Get professional help - cybersecurity professionals are in global demand, meaning that your IT department or support company are unlikely to employ any, even though most businesses believe that they do. Check - don't assume

Whether you think you're fine or not, please check. We'd rather be helping you fend off attacks than watching a single breach close another Brentwood business.

*For more information see [www.ixcg.com](http://www.ixcg.com)*



## Chamber branches out across social media

If you're a LinkedIn user that values the social media channel as a place to promote your business activity and make valuable connections, you'll be pleased to find a new presence for the Chamber on the network.

Chamber has recently launched a new Page at [linkedin.com/company/brentwood-essex-chamber-of-commerce](https://www.linkedin.com/company/brentwood-essex-chamber-of-commerce) - where we will be posting regular updates on Chamber affairs and other news of interest from the Brentwood business community.

We'd like to see as many Chamber members and non-members as possible log on and Follow the page, and start to share relevant updates.

As we detailed in the last Newsletter, it's a Chamber objective to increase activity on social media. And in addition to regular posts on LinkedIn, we've been publishing more regularly on Twitter and Facebook - and aiming to raise the interaction with Chamber members across all the channels.

It being social media, it needs to be two-way engagement, and we're keen for you all to reach out to us via your own social accounts - helping us to spread the word about your organisations to our own growing band of followers.

Come and find us and engage with us at @BwdChamber on Twitter, @BrentwoodChambers on Facebook, and YouTube at [youtube.com/channel/UC39BxChrewL2v9P1KYEE8Jw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC39BxChrewL2v9P1KYEE8Jw)

## Quartet of new members this month

We're pleased to welcome four more new members that have joined the Chamber in October, and from very different business sectors.

**Torte Cake Art** is run by identical twin brothers, Arsen and Artak Poghosyan from Brentwood, making high-quality and exclusive cakes for celebrations, birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, business events and festivals.

**Tutor Doctor** is a home tuition agency that provides a one-to-one tutoring service to local families, helping students fulfil their potential with the firm belief that everyone can learn and achieve with the right support. Katrin Dennehy is the owner of the local Tutor Doctor office which serves Brentwood, Upminster, Dagenham and surrounding communities.

**Purple Hat Property** is a boutique property sales, letting and management company, offering a personal service to landlords and property owners who want to sell or rent their property in Brentwood and the surrounding areas.

**Janette Collins** is an author based in Great Warley whose first book, thriller *Truth in Death*, is currently available on Amazon both in paperback and Kindle format.



## Christmas fun in Brentwood & Shenfield

Get into the Christmas spirit with three events planned in Brentwood and Shenfield in the upcoming weeks!

First up will be the Baytree Centre's Christmas celebrations taking place on Saturday November 17, with support from the Brentwood Business Partnership. Look out for free festive activities for children of all ages, including arts and crafts, entertainment, face painting and a selfie booth!

The following week will see the return of the ever-popular Lighting Up Brentwood on Saturday November 24 in the town centre. The High Street will be filled with an Italian market, street entertainers, children's rides, and Santa's Grotto. After the official light switch on at 5pm, the main stage will feature a Bee Gees tribute act sure to give everyone 'Saturday night fever'.

On Sunday December 9, the Shenfield Christmas Fayre will feature plenty of free activities for the whole family, including real reindeer, craft and gift stalls, choirs and bands, and winter wonderland inflatables. Supported by Shenfield traders and the Brentwood Business Partnership, the Fayre has become very popular with the local community.

The Council's Community Events team is looking for volunteers to help at Lighting Up Brentwood and the Shenfield Christmas Fayre. If your staff would like to get involved, please contact [events@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:events@brentwood.gov.uk).

To raise the profile of your organisation within the Borough, there are a number of event sponsorship opportunities available for 2019, starting from as little as £300. Get in touch with Laurie Edmonds on [laurie.edmonds@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:laurie.edmonds@brentwood.gov.uk) for more information.

## Business Awards all set for a spectacular finale

When the Brentwood Business Awards gala dinner comes to a close late on November 9, with the presentation of the Brentwood Business of the Year award by Overall Awards Partner Pinney Talfourd, it will see the culmination of over a year of planning and delivery by the Chamber.

From an embryonic idea, through endless planning sessions to flesh out the concept, signing up a fine roster of sponsors, launching and promoting the Awards to gather a bumper entry across the eight categories, running the judging process, and then staging the biggest showpiece night in the Chamber's history - it's no surprise that those responsible are extremely pleased with how well the Awards' first year has all come together.

"We're delighted to launch the inaugural 2018 Business Awards to recognise the very best of local businesses in the Borough," said Chamber executive committee member Paul Gulley, who along with fellow members Steve Ackroyd and Laurie Edmonds have put in the bulk of the work required to make it all happen.

"This is the culmination of 18 months of hard work to develop the Awards programme," added Paul, fully aware that the support of the Awards sponsors has been vitally important. "Local businesses have been hugely supportive of the Business Awards with nine local businesses, plus Phoenix FM as Official Media Partner, all becoming involved as sponsors.



"They have shown their belief and support of the concept and we intend this to become a regular event on the local business calendar.

"We have been delighted by the response of local businesses, given the huge level of applications we have received, both from members of the Chamber of Commerce and from non-members, who have all taken up the challenge to be judged and assessed in one or more of the eight main categories - having received almost 100 entries across the various categories!

"Now we are very much looking forward to the culmination of the 2018 Awards process, which will see the gala dinner on Friday November 9 at Mount Avenue Banqueting Suite, at which 170 people will celebrate the very best of Brentwood business, and when the overall winners will be formally announced!"

The sell-out event will be compered by Mike Jones from Phoenix FM, and those unable to secure a ticket in time will be able to follow it all via the Chamber's (and our sponsors') social media feeds, featuring lots of pictures, and maybe the odd video too!

And we will also have full coverage in our December edition, with pictures of all the Awards winners - at what we proudly expect to become a regular autumn fixture in Brentwood.

## Chamber Events Calendar 2018/2019

### November

#### Friday 9 - Brentwood Business Awards Dinner

Mount Avenue Banqueting Suite

#### Friday 16 - Business Breakfast

Sponsored by Legal Mediation

#### Saturday 24 - Christmas Lighting up in Brentwood

12.30pm-6pm, Brentwood High Street

[brentwood.gov.uk/index.php?cid=417](http://brentwood.gov.uk/index.php?cid=417)

### December

#### Friday 14 - Business Breakfast

Sponsored by Kinetic Podiatry Clinic

#### Wednesday 19 - Chamber Christmas Lunch

Mount Avenue Banqueting Suite

Tickets and Tables booking on Chamber website now

### January

#### Friday 11 - Business Breakfast

Sponsored by Brentwood Cricket Club

### February

#### Friday 8 - Business Breakfast

Sponsored by Mullis & Peake

### March

#### Tuesday 5 - Meet The Neighbours

Hosted by Stansted Airport Chamber

#### Friday 8 - Business Breakfast

Sponsored by Aching Arms

See [brentwoodchambers.co.uk/events](http://brentwoodchambers.co.uk/events) for latest updates and online ticketing.

## Networking groups in the Brentwood area

We hope you attend and enjoy many of our regular Chamber events for your business networking. But the Chamber is also pleased to bring you details of other networking groups in the Brentwood area.

Details of your group or any updates can be sent to [Neil.Hornsby@BrentwoodChambers.co.uk](mailto:Neil.Hornsby@BrentwoodChambers.co.uk)

**Biz'ee Women:** next meeting Monday Nov 12, 9:45am-12pm; De Rougemont Manor, Great Warley Street; contact Liz Smith, 07780 682428; [www.bizeewomen.co.uk/brentwood](http://www.bizeewomen.co.uk/brentwood)

**Brentwood Business Network:** fortnightly Thursday, 8am-9.30am, next on Nov 8; The Lot Bar & Restaurant, 71-75 Hutton Road, Shenfield; £15 includes choice of breakfast; [www.brentwoodbusiness.network](http://www.brentwoodbusiness.network)

**Brentwood Professionals Networking Group (BPNG):** last Friday of the month, 1pm-3pm; O'Neill's, Brentwood High Street; contact Paul Gulley, Handelsbanken, 01245 347906

**The Circle:** 3rd Thursday of the month, 4pm-6pm; The Sugar Hut, Brentwood High Street; contact Dan Sayers, M.J Bushell, 01277 245300, [info@circle-net.co.uk](mailto:info@circle-net.co.uk)

## Resolving disputes – avoiding the cost of litigation

**Perdeep Grewal, solicitor at Birkett Long, considers the cost of litigation and what some law firms are offering to help businesses enter into a dispute but stay cost effective.**

Many businesses are reluctant to pursue smaller disputes because they are worried what the total costs could be down the line.

When you have a smaller dispute to deal with, you would normally have to take into consideration the overall value of the claim and the potential costs of bringing the claim.

Although some disputes hinge on the principle (rather than the value), if the costs outweigh the amount in dispute, you might think twice before instructing a solicitor. However, it doesn't have to be that way.

We're starting to see forward-thinking law firms offering to fix their fees from the outset, in particular for smaller claims of between £10,000 and £25,000 ('small' in the eyes of the court at least!).

This means you can enter into the dispute process knowing what it's likely to cost you, what the result could be, and how long it might take.

A good firm will also warn you about any additional costs that might crop up (like court fees for example).

An even better firm will try to avoid you getting as far as issuing court proceedings altogether. Resolving even a small dispute can take considerable time, effort and money that you could better use to operate, manage, or grow your business.

A lawyer should want to help you resolve a disagreement as cost-effectively and with as little damage to relationships as possible. If a lawyer can help you do that amicably, they should.

*For more information see [www.birkettlong.co.uk](http://www.birkettlong.co.uk)*

**ebn Brentwood:** every other Thursday, 8am-10am; George & Dragon, Mountnessing; contact Hayley Taylor, Taylor Made Promotions, 01621 856504; membership and meeting charges apply

**ebn Shenfield:** every other Tuesday, 8am-10am; George & Dragon, Mountnessing; contact Mandy Baker, Insight Coaching, 07946 377970; membership and meeting charges apply

**The Phoenix Family:** events held at Shenfield Cricket Club, 22a Chelmsford Road, Shenfield CM15 8RQ; contact Steve Roach, Phoenix FM, [sr@phoenixfm.com](mailto:sr@phoenixfm.com); [twitter.com/thephoenixfam](https://twitter.com/thephoenixfam)

**Round Robin Networking:** Brentwood and Stock; The Robin, Ongar Road, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10.30am-12pm; Harvard Inn, Stock, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 10.30am-12pm. Contact Paul Alexander 07557 797319; [www.roundrobinnetworking.co.uk](http://www.roundrobinnetworking.co.uk)

**Word of Mouth, Brentwood:** free networking on 3rd Wednesday of the month, 10.30am; Slug & Lettuce, Brentwood High Street; 07533 988177; [twitter.com/WordOfMouthBwd](https://twitter.com/WordOfMouthBwd)

The Chamber cannot be held responsible for the validity of the information - please confirm with the group contact before attending.

Brentwood Chamber of Commerce

Pepperell House

44 High Street

Brentwood, Essex

CM14 4AJ

[info@brentwoodchambers.co.uk](mailto:info@brentwoodchambers.co.uk)

[www.brentwoodchambers.co.uk](http://www.brentwoodchambers.co.uk)

01277 214814

Twitter: @BwdChamber

Facebook: @BrentwoodChambers

Newsletter Design:

JD Designs

[www.jddesigns.co.uk](http://www.jddesigns.co.uk)

Newsletter Editor:

Julian Goode