



Brentwood Chamber of Commerce Newsletter

October 2007

Dear Member

Welcome to our **new look monthly Newsletter**. We do hope that you approve; and to that end we would appreciate some feedback from you on this colour edition.

Of course it is more expensive to produce than the usual black and white versions but you may consider that's worthwhile – part of the value for money we want Chamber to be for you. Do get in touch to give us feedback; and we'll also take the initiative by telephoning a sample number of our members to ask for your opinions.

The reinstatement of our **networking lunch programme** (see the picture right) is also good news and those who attended seemed pleased that the lunches are back. For those who value

this sort of event, and who are keen to develop new business through such contacts, we are announcing a further development this month – a programme of **monthly 'new business breakfast club' meetings**



with the emphasis on attendees gaining new business. For details, see later in this Newsletter.

Keeping with the theme of value for

money, we are proposing to introduce a new scheme – a **member's discount card**. The idea is quite straightforward. We believe some Chamber members would welcome extra business from fellow members and be prepared to offer them discounts – they decide the level of discount offered. If we can persuade enough acceptors to agree to offer these discounts, we will send every member a discount card with your annual fees' receipt and Certificate early next year. We hope you think this is a good idea and that you will support it. We'll ask your opinion at the coming Open Evening (see below). But don't wait for that if you have a view about it right now – just get in touch.

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Chamber Open Evening

On **Wednesday 14th November**, we will be holding an Open Evening for Members and potential Members. The venue will be the Marygreen Manor Hotel, London Road, Brentwood and the get-together will take place from **6pm to 8pm** with refreshments being provided free of charge.

The open evening is being sponsored by Havering College and we thank them very much for doing so. They are a Chamber member and will give us a brief update on their plans for the Brentwood site; also we will be describing our proposed new initiatives – the Member discount card, the 'new business breakfast club' and others – and we'll

be looking for opinions, views, feedback on these and other things Chamber does or should be doing.

The Open Evening is not just for members. We hope it will attract businesses which are not yet members but might be interested. If you are interested in coming along, and/or bringing a prospective member please enquire via our invitation flyer which is downloadable on our website under our events page – and see the enclosed flier (if you do successfully introduce a new member you will receive a voucher for £10).



This newsletter is sponsored by
Havering College of Further and Higher Education
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www.brentwoodchambers.co.uk

Dear Member

We are very keen to involve members even more than in the past as you are the reason we are here and we want to know more about your concerns and requirements from Chamber. So we will be holding a Chamber Open Evening on Wednesday 14th November from 18:00 till 20:00 at the Marygreen Manor, London Road, Brentwood, to which you are all invited, free of charge. Refreshments will be provided and we'll be describing some of these new initiatives briefly, looking for your feedback and input. Also we hope to

attract potential new members, so if you know any, please bring them along.

So you can see that there is plenty going on and we could do still more if you give us the ideas. Of course none of this is at the cost of our normal activities, our core business, if you like. We continue to lobby hard on your behalf and one of the articles in this edition describes our recent **joint meeting with Council Leaders**. And these meetings will continue, perhaps even more effectively in the future – as the recent re-organisation at the

Town Hall means that the Essex Chief Executive will be attending them in the future. So we can raise the issues which matter to you but which we have often been told: Brentwood Council has no control over that; it's Essex County Council's responsibility. We'll be able to 'kill two birds with one stone' (if you'll forgive this old saying) in future meetings.

I hope the all-important couple of months leading up to Christmas are good for your business.

Mike Hawkins

Chamber Member Discount Card

We are planning on introducing a Member Discount Card in the New Year-2008 for Chamber members. The objective is to bring new business to **Acceptors** (those Chamber members who are prepared to offer discounts to other Chamber members who produce a Member card) and to offer the excellent benefit of enjoying a discount to those who use them at **Acceptors**.

If you are a business, whether a traditional retailer or say professional advisors like Solicitors, which would welcome incremental new business from other Chamber members by offering a discount (the % is your choice) to customers who produce their member card, please let us know that you will agree to be an **Acceptor**. We will let you have an **Acceptor** sign for you to put in your windows or wherever else suitable for you.

Please let us know, if you would like to become an **Acceptor**. And let us know if you think this is generally a good idea. Would you use a member card to obtain discounts? **Please tell us**. The image shows what the Members Card could look like.



The following companies have joined us since May and we welcome them to membership of Chamber:

Pinney Rogers Solicitors	39 – 41 High Street, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4RH
Guardian Integrated Systems Limited	89 Heath Road, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex RM6 6LH
Blinds London PLC	107 High Street, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4RX
Bidwells, Steeple House	Church Lane, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1NH
Edward Jones Ltd	34 Southernhay, Town Centre, Basildon, Essex SS14 1EL
Prospect Business Solutions Ltd	34 Prospect Road, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 3TZ
The Spinal Health Clinic	2 Avenue Road, Brentwood, CM14 5EL
Ashcroft Business Consulting Ltd	Ashcroft House, 300 Nine Ashes Road, Ingatestone, CM4 0LB

New meeting rooms for small businesses

Chamber member (and Executive Committee member) Neil Hornsby, Drinks of France, is occupied with more than his business. For some time now, he has chaired a committee planning an extension to the ancient parish church of St Peter, in South Weald. This has involved lengthy discussions with various planning authorities, including English Heritage. However, he has been able to set aside time from his busy schedule because he believes this is an important community project. The extension will be multi-purpose, including a hall, kitchen and toilets, and will be built to a high standard complementing the existing building. It has been carefully positioned behind the church in order not to detract from the church's fine appearance. As occasion demands, the hall itself can be divided into several smaller rooms by sound-proof screens.

The extension will prove useful to the church, especially in accommodating three children's groups which meet during Sunday service. However, the project's aim is far wider than that. It is to serve the community by providing facilities for which there is a known high demand. What particularly interests Neil is that the church sees this project as also helping to serve the local business community. The church is next door to a beautiful country park, has its own good-sized car park and has the Tower Arms opposite which offers pub meals. Thus it would make an ideal venue for small-scale conferences and training days. Parish churches have always aimed to serve the whole of their community: St Peter's Church sees itself as continuing this tradition into the modern age.

The project will cost some £400,000. Although an appeal has already realised £200,000, largely from the congregation, there is still some way to go. As Neil says, "Drinks of France is pleased to be supporting our community through this project; we hope other companies might like to do likewise." If you are interested in finding out more, please contact **Neil on 01277 221469 or neil@drinksoffrance.co.uk**.

Chamber's Joint Meeting with Council Leaders

Under the new administration arrangements recently announced by the Council, this was Bob McLintock's final six-monthly joint Chamber meeting as Chief Executive. He is retiring from that job and we wish him well, thanking him for his help and support for Chamber over the years. But we will not be saying goodbye to him as he has been appointed as Brentwood's 2012 Olympics supremo, a key role which will become more and more important with each year leading up to 2012.

At the meeting we learned that:

- Joanna Killian, the new joint Chief Executive of Brentwood and Essex County Council, will be a regular attendee at our future meetings, taking the place of Bob. This means we can cover issues which are the responsibility of Essex Council as well as Brentwood. So, when we ask you if you have any questions you want us to raise at our joint meetings, you will have a broader choice to choose from.
- Brentwood intend to appoint a Deputy Chief Executive with day to day responsibility for Brentwood issues and that person will be Chamber's main contact.
- William Hunter Way planning applications are expected to be put forward soon for planning permission. Obviously a key issue during the construction period will be 'where will people park when the work is going on'? The Council is going to make alternative parking arrangements – possibly 'park and ride'. And they would like businesses to encourage employees to use those alternative arrangements, allowing shoppers to use the remaining town centre facilities.
- The Brentwood High Street improvement plans are taking longer than expected because of difficulties Essex Council have experienced in compulsory purchases, but the obstacles seem to be out of the way and work on the new High Street should not be delayed much further.
- In response to concerns expressed by some Chamber members who thought that staff parking costs in Brentwood (longer stay) had risen more sharply than general charges but we were told that short stay costs had increased by 40% in the 2004-2007 period against 23% for long stay.
- If Crossrail goes ahead, even more parking disruptions will occur in Shenfield for an even longer period, so the Council are also actively investigating alternative arrangements.
- The Council intend to pilot a glass recycling collection service for businesses, which will involve a charge. The more businesses that sign up for the service, the less the charges will be.
- The next joint meeting is in March 2008.

Dates for your diaries

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting dates for the remainder of 2007 are: 18th October and 15th November.

Christmas will be upon us before we know it. So please make a note of a couple of events we have lined up and would appreciate your involvement:

Shenfield Christmas Lights lighting-up ceremony, Saturday 1st December at 3pm (just before the Brentwood lighting-up). Venue: outside Kelseys Butchers, Shenfield. Mince pies and a seasonal drink will be provided for those who come along.

Also we will be holding the usual **Best Dressed Christmas Window** competition again this year so please do enter it and add to the gaiety of Shenfield over the Christmas period.

Christmas Networking Lunch



Thursday 13th December 2007
12 noon to 2pm

at Marygreen Manor, London Road, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4NR

Guest Speaker: Mr Bob McLintock, Brentwood Borough Council
"1,678 Days to Go – Will Brentwood be ready for the Olympics?"



Tickets: £20.00 members, £24.00 non-members

To reserve your place(s) please complete the enclosed booking form and send it together with your cheque to:
Brant Design, 61 West Street, Coggeshall, Essex CO6 1NS T: 01376 564955

If you need to contact Elaine Othen at Brant Design, her email is: info@brantdesignstudio.co.uk

A booking form is also available in downloadable PDF format on our website.

Open Evening

Wednesday 14th November 2007

6pm to 8pm

at Marygreen Manor Hotel, London Road, Brentwood, CM14 4NR

This is an event to which all members as well as prospective members are invited.

The evening is free of charge and is being sponsored by Chamber member Havering College.
We would be delighted if you could come along. Please let us know if you can come so that we can assess numbers.

It is being organised by Brant Design
so please contact Elaine Othen at Brant Design, her email is: info@brantdesignstudio.co.uk

Sign Off

We are in for a busy few months as we introduce new services for members. Not all services will appeal to all members but we hope that, in the range of things we do, or organise, something rings a bell for you and makes **your** membership of Chamber worthwhile.

As I always say, if you think there is something we should be doing to give you

greater value for your membership, please let us know. Meanwhile, I hope to see you at one or other of the events we have lined up, particularly at the members open evening on 14th November. I would also love to have your feedback on the various new services we are proposing. Please contact me at the Chamber office.

Mike Hawkins, (Executive Secretary).

