



Brentwood Chamber of Commerce *Newsletter*

July 2008

www.brentwoodchambers.co.uk

Dear Member

Our Midsummer barbeque on 2nd July (a joint event run with BTCP - Brentwood Town Centre Partnership and FSB - Federation of Small Businesses) was a great success, with just under 100 attendees.

Held at BT's fine offices on London Road, early rain drove the formal reception and panel discussion indoors but the sun came out in time for everyone to enjoy their food (meat sponsored by Roger Kelsey Butchers) on BT's patio – with its splendid views over Weald Park.



The panel comprised host Nick Abbott, a BT General Manager and Chairman of BTCP; Council Leader Cllr Brandon Lewis; Roger Kelsey, Chairman of Chamber; David Burch, FSB East of England Policy Manager and Barry Shaw, Essex Council's Head of Built Environment.

A consistent message came through about the positive prospects for the Borough, in spite of the severe economic downturn. Even the alarming and ever-increasing price of petrol can have a positive aspect as shoppers abandon expensive trips to out-of-town retail parks and rediscover the benefits of shopping locally.

The Planners are hard at work seeking to transform the town; not just the highway aspect (High Street redevelopments which should be happening soon) but also the 'look' of the town. The objective is to avoid the fate of 'clone' towns – complete takeover by national retailers so that all towns look alike. Whilst of course we need Marks & Spencer, Boots and other major retailer attractions, there must be plenty of room for individual traders.

Also a 'Vision for Brentwood' is being formulated which will focus on improving the look of the town – encourage attractive shop front signage, building on the town's fine heritage. The feedback which planners are receiving is that the Borough of Brentwood is one of the most successful, charming and wholesome in which to live and do business - certainly in our region; but its general appearance needs revitalising. We look forward to the ideas which will emerge.

After the formal part of the evening, members enjoyed the food and also the wine (by Drinks of France) and had the opportunity to network widely.

If you didn't have the chance to catch our summer event this year, why not join us for future networking events, meet your fellow members, guest VIPs, and promote your business.

Mike Hawkins

This month's Newsletter has been kindly sponsored by:



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Call Deborah Farrow: **t:** 01245 248688 **m:** 07919 414982

MEMBERS NEWS

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

City of London Software Ltd, 25 Princes Way, Hutton, CM13 2JW
Aspire 2 Consultancy Ltd, 100 Chelmsford Road, Shenfield, CM15 8RL



Why use asset finance ?

Nearly all successful businesses have to borrow to expand – by obtaining the right financial help this can make a huge difference.

Finding the right finance package can help you to balance the growth of your business to your all important cashflow.

Some of the finance options available are:

- **Hire Purchase**
Straight forward repayment facility, whereby you ultimately own the asset.
Repayments can be structured in a flexible way using initial payments and/or a 'balloon' (final lump sum).
Fixed or variable rate options available.
- **Contract Hire/**
Fixed monthly payment, variable terms and mileage available,
Vehicle maintenance option can be included in your rental to spread the cost of servicing.
Eliminate the risk of vehicle depreciation at the end of the term you simply hand back the vehicle, return and mileage conditions apply.
- **Finance Lease**
Minimal up front costs, VAT is payable on the rentals, while payments can normally be offset against taxable profit (special rules apply to cars)

Your business will determine the best option.

For further details please contact Deborah Farrow on 01245 248 688 or deborah@prospectbusinesssolutions.co.uk

Shenfield High School
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Would you like to try a new keep fit regime or improve your computer skills?'

Then the following courses may be of interest to you:-

Pilates
Yoga

Wednesdays 4.15 – 5.15pm
Thursdays 7.00 – 8.15pm

Coming soon

Ebay – buying and selling on the internet
Introduction to the internet
Website design
Intermediate Word

All of these courses are run at the school in our new high tech facilities with first rate tutors and subsidised rates.

Please ring Mary Walsh-Pammen or Christine Watson for further details on 01277 219131 extension 296



Brentwood Chamber's Business Breakfast Club has been going 6 months now and is proving to be a popular way of doing business. If you haven't yet tried it, give it a go (see page 4 for information on how to book)



Congratulations to Chamber member **Sawyers Hall College** for being selected as a pioneer in the launch of the Government's new Diploma qualification for 14 – 19 years olds. These diplomas are part of a national programme to widen the choice of courses for young people, encouraging them to continue learning for longer and gain the qualifications they need for success at work, college or university. To a large extent these diplomas have been introduced as a response to the demands of the business community.

The first diploma which Sawyers Hall College is introducing in the new academic year is in Construction and Built Environment. This course, along with others which are being rolled out over the next few years, will be open to students from all participating Brentwood schools – a cross fertilization of talent and learning. We wish Sawyers Hall College every success.

Sponsoring this Newsletter

You will have noticed that this edition of the Newsletter is being sponsored by Chamber member **Prospect Business Solutions**. You too can sponsor an edition of the monthly Newsletter (or more than one, of course) – the monthly colour edition is available for sponsorship at the low cost of £100 (to cover printing).

I am delighted to report that Chamber member **Beresfords** are sponsoring the September edition and **Best of Brentwood** has agreed to sponsor *four editions!* October, November this year and January, February next year. We are very grateful to them for that and look forward to their sponsorship.

So we will be open to offers for the editions from March 2009. Please contact us if you would like to become a sponsor.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Executive Committee Meeting Dates for 2008 are:

17th July, 18th September – Joint with Council, 16th October and 20th November

If you have any issues you want to be raised at an Executive Committee meeting, please contact the Chamber office a week or so before the relevant meeting and we will put it on the agenda

Email: info@brentwoodchambers.co.uk

Breakfast Club

The next event will be held on Tuesday 29th July, 7.00 for 7.15am at The Crown Street Café, 25 Crown Street, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4BA

Future planned dates are: 26th August, 30th Sept, 28th Oct and 25th Nov 2008

For your convenience you can now book your place and pay online at:

<http://www.brantdesignstudio.co.uk/brentwoodchamber.html> or telephone Elaine Othen 01376 564955

Networking Lunches

Our 2008 Networking Lunch programme will be held at the **Marygreen Manor, London Road, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4NR, 12 noon to 2.00pm**

The next lunch will be 11th September, guest speaker Karen Waltham HR Consultant talking about the people management side of business

Christmas Lunch 11th December 2008 – Guest Speaker Cllr Dudley Payne Mayor of Brentwood

For your convenience you can now book your place and pay online at:

<http://www.brantdesignstudio.co.uk/brentwoodchamber.html> or telephone Elaine Othen 01376 564955

Sign Off

No one can or should underestimate the depths of the economic problems which face us all as we enter this recession, perhaps the severest trading period we have experienced for many years, as the Chief Executive of British Chambers of Commerce has warned recently.

However, there are positive indicators for Brentwood (speakers at the recent Council summer business conference and our own summer barbeque event - *see front page* – offered visions of a brighter future). We just have to 'get through' the rocky period immediately ahead. Certainly for Brentwood the building blocks for that more optimistic future are either being put in place or are being planned.

Your Chamber will try and play its part in helping our members promote your businesses and we will speak up for the local business community.

We are taking a brief break for the August holidays. There will be no Newsletter in August though of course the office will be functioning as usual. Back with batteries fully charged in September, we look forward to working even harder for you, our members, as the current rather rainy summer days fade into the gold of autumn and beyond. See you then.

Mike Hawkins

Brentwood Chamber of Commerce, Pepperell House, 44 High Street, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4AJ
E: info@brentwoodchambers.co.uk | W: www.brentwoodchambers.co.uk | P/F: 01277 214814