



Brentwood Chamber of Commerce Newsletter

November 2009

www.brentwoodchambers.co.uk

Dear Member

With Brentwood high street open again to traffic, at last businesses in that area of the town will be able to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

There is no question that the makeover will be a tremendous asset to the town and should help attract more visitors, hopefully bringing more business. But it has been a trying experience for many traders caught in the centre of the disruptions which were no doubt inevitable but seemed to go on for a very long time. The end of this month should see the departure of the workmen and the cones, and a return to normal.

It is time to consider a more positive future, and I am pleased to say that Chamber held a very successful **Open Evening** this month at the Marygreen Manor Hotel, a sequel to the one held in 2008. Both events were sponsored by

Haivering College to whom we offer our grateful thanks.

We were able to give attendees an upbeat report on the work of Chamber over the past year, particularly the ever more popular and successful events programme organised under the banner of Chamber's Business Club.

The Open Evening followed hard on the heels of a major recruitment mailing which we conducted in late October to attract new members. Though this was unfortunately affected by the postal dispute, a number did come and we hope they will swell the ranks of our membership.

The next event we are holding is more strictly social as we **celebrate Christmas with a dinner at the Holiday Inn**, Brentwood on Thursday 10th December. It should be a really good evening – the details are given on the back page of this Newsletter and in the booking form enclosed.

Please send in your booking application. It promises to be an excellent evening and will give you plenty of opportunity to relax, network and even perhaps use the occasion for a staff party, if you have not already planned your own.

We intend to hit the ground running in the New Year as we help members take advantage of what everyone hopes will be the start of the economic upturn. One of our first actions will be to re-launch our **Member Discount Card**

scheme by sending out new ones to all members, with an **Acceptors Directory**. This should help stimulate business.

We have a new discount card sponsor for 2010, **Studio Indirect**, who are also sponsoring this edition of the Newsletter.

Meanwhile, Christmas is almost upon us and this is the last Newsletter of the year; so I would like to wish you all a very good trading season, a Happy Christmas and peaceful (and prosperous) New Year.

Mike Hawkins
Executive Secretary

STUDIO INDIRECT – INDIRECT TAXATION ADVISERS and BUSINESS INSURANCE BROKERS

Providers of VAT consultancy services and Taxation and Litigation insurances

Studio Indirect is authorised and regulated by The Financial Services Authority

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Studio Indirect has been a member of Brentwood Chamber of Commerce for a number of years along with its principal Clive Othen who is the Chamber's current Vice Chairman.

Studio Indirect provide two main services:

INDIRECT TAXATION SERVICES

A full range of Indirect Taxation services:

VAT ADVISORY
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VAT TRANSACTION PLANNING SERVICES

VAT TRAINING

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DESIGNING

VAT AUDIT
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Studio Indirect is a member of the Institute of Indirect Taxation and VAT Practitioners Group.

Studio Indirect's principal has been involved in international indirect taxation, mainly VAT, since 1971 and the firm has completed major assignments in the UK, Canada, Japan, Singapore, France, Italy, Greece, Luxembourg, Belgium, Ireland, Spain and Indonesia.

Studio Indirect is qualified to directly instruct barristers and Queens Counsel where VAT disputes have to be taken to law at Tribunal or Court level.

Studio Indirect has also undertaken project work for the UK Government and the European Commission.

Clive Othen is an editorial board member of The Tax Journal, a publication issued by LexisNexis.

BUSINESS INSURANCE SERVICES

Studio Indirect is the original designer of Taxation Insurance. This insurance is underwritten by Lloyds Syndicates out of a principal underwriting facility of a New York insurance house. This indemnity insurance can cover the amount of tax in a dispute with H M Revenue and Customs in the UK.

Alongside its Taxation Insurance Studio Indirect have joint ventured with The FirstCity Partnership to bring to the market an indemnity insurance that covers costs of an insured losing a litigation case and who is then faced with a costs award against them in respect of the winning litigants legal and other permitted expenses which can be of significant value.

Studio indirect are also happy to assist Chamber members in reviewing their business insurances to ensure that the underlying policies are fit for the business purpose and that the premium is reasonable given the terms of the insurance and price efficient in today's market.

Studio Indirect only undertake non-investment insurance arrangements and reviews and is authorised and regulated by The Financial Services Authority for this purpose.

CONTACT DETAILS

For any of **Studio Indirect's** services please contact them at:

56 Oliver Road, Shenfield, Essex CM15 8PX: Tel 01277-262909 Mobile 0789-472-7924

Email: studioindirect@btinternet.com

MEMBER NEWS

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

Peter Hart, 67 Rose Valley, Brentwood, CM14 4HJ ~ Financial Services

Premier Inn, 169 Kings Road, Brentwood, CM14 4EF ~ Hotel

Community Times, 1 Camborn Way, Romford, RM3 8RA ~ Free local magazine & website

The Leopards Basketball Club, The Brentwood Centre, Doddinghurst Road, Brentwood, CM15 9NN

Acceptors Directory

As I mentioned on page 1, we are re-launching our Chamber Member Discount Card in the New Year and will be sending out new cards to all members.

They are accepted by members who have signed up to be Acceptors. We issue an Acceptors Directory from time to time (there are now over 50 Acceptors signed up). When we send out the new cards we will also be sending out a reprinted version of the Acceptors Directory, bringing it up-to date with those who have signed up over the past 6 months or so.

If you would like to become an Acceptor (that is – take Chamber Member Discount Cards when offered and give a cash discount – the amount of the discount is up to you), let us know in the office as soon as possible as we will be going to print in a month or so's time.

Lobbying

As part of our remit to lobby on behalf of our members and keep your interests at the forefront of opinion formers'/authorities minds, we accept the occasional invitation from **Essex Chambers of Commerce** to meet with MPs of all parties in Westminster and let them know the current concerns of businesses in the Borough.

Earlier this month, one such occasion was hosted by John Baron MP and Eric Pickles MP, potential members of any future Conservative Government. They reminded us that the Essex economy is greater than many European Countries including Belgium. Essex will be at the forefront of the economic recovery when it comes. We learned that a future Tory Government would cut corporation tax for small businesses from 22% to 20% as well as reducing the rate of National Insurance. To my question of what they will do to reduce the huge overheads caused by unnecessary red tape, they replied that an urgent commission would be set up to examine and recommend what can be cut out.

Naturally Chamber has no political affiliations but we are determined to stand up for business and try to make it clear to whatever Government gets in next year that an early priority for them should be the recovery of the business sector – the bedrock of our economy.

TOWN LINK RADIO

Brentwood Chamber of Commerce manages the **Town Link Radio** scheme in conjunction with Brentwood Borough Council, Brentwood Police and Brentwood Communications. This links retailers to the CCTV operators and Brentwood Police so they can exchange information and prevent crime. In the lead up to Christmas we are inviting more high street shops to consider becoming members of the scheme. If you would like more information please contact

Paula Clark at the Chamber office 01277 214814 or email info@brentwoodchambers.co.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Executive Committee Final Meeting for 2009: 19th 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

BUSINESS CLUB EVENTS

The next **Breakfast Club** is **Wednesday 18th November, 7.15am to 9.00am**

at new venue: Nags Head, 44 Brook Street, Brentwood, CM14 5ND

Future planned date: 16th December

The **Christmas Dinner** is **Thursday 10th December, 6.30pm – midnight, 3 course meal and entertainment**

Venue: The Holiday Inn, Brook Street, Brentwood, CM14 5NF

The price of £25 per person (£30 non-members) includes all food, wine and entertainment

To book your place and pay online:

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

Shenfield Christmas Lights

We have arranged for the Mayor of Brentwood to switch on the Shenfield lights at 3.30pm on Saturday 28th November 2009. The ceremony will take place outside Kelsey's butchers and Franklin's Jewellers. **Seasonal refreshments will be provided so please join us.**

Also, we will be holding our usual **Seasonally Best Decorated Windows Competition** being judged on Thursday 10th December.

Do please take part and you could win a bottle of **Champagne**

Sign Off

This is the final Newsletter of 2009. It has been a difficult year for many businesses as well as for many people as the recession has struck hard. Locally the high street renovation works have also had some adverse affects on businesses in that vicinity.

We all hope for a revival of fortunes in the New Year. Surely the economy will experience an upturn in 2010? A shiny new high street should attract extra visitors. Let us be optimistic. Do join in that spirit by coming along to our Christmas dinner (see above) and enjoy the company of fellow members. Meanwhile, may I wish you a happy Christmas and also peace and prosperity in the New Year.



Mike Hawkins

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