



Dear member,

## A message from your Chairman

I'd like to begin by thanking Philippa Barr from SunSign Communications Limited for the excellent job she has done in editing this and the previous two editions of our monthly newsletter. Equally, our thanks go to James Dawson of JD Designs for giving a fresh new look to the design.

We want to give you, the members, the chance to share your news with other members, so if you have any items you would like to be included, please email Neil Hornsby at [Neil.Hornsby@BrentwoodChambers.co.uk](mailto:Neil.Hornsby@BrentwoodChambers.co.uk)

At our most recent Executive Committee meeting we discussed whether to continue posting out copies of the newsletter to our members, in addition to emailing a PDF version. It was decided to continue doing this, as it does increase the number of people who get to see the newsletter – and it means we're also able to continue offering members the opportunity to send out literature with the newsletter, free of charge.

As the summer draws to a close, our Netwalking season has finished until next May. We were blessed with good weather and the walks continued to be popular, attracting several people who would not normally attend networking events.

interest being expressed by potential exhibitors. During the Showcase, the Chamber will be making an exciting announcement about a major new event planned for 2018.

In closing, I would like to thank you all for your continued support of the Chamber and look forward to seeing you at future events.

Newsletter design: JD Designs  
[www.jddesigns.co.uk](http://www.jddesigns.co.uk)

Newsletter editor: Philippa Barr  
[www.sunsigncommunications.co.uk](http://www.sunsigncommunications.co.uk)



Chairman, Colin Barber

September sees our Late Summer Social being hosted by Chamber member, Kelvedon Hatch Secret Nuclear Bunker. We're keen to continue to offer more events hosted by members, as this is an excellent way to showcase your business. If you have a venue which you feel could host a Chamber event, do let us know.

Preparations continue for the second Brentwood Business Showcase on 1 November, with some keen



branding



web design



print design



creative artwork



photography



jd designs  
a creative new vision

Based in the heart of Brentwood  
We'll help engage your clients, improve your relationships and boost sales

[www.jddesigns.co.uk](http://www.jddesigns.co.uk)  
[info@jddesigns.co.uk](mailto:info@jddesigns.co.uk)  
0208 1444 171

---

## Chairman Colin interviewed on Phoenix FM

Our Chairman Colin Barber was able to boost the profile of the Chamber when he was interviewed on our local radio station, Phoenix FM. Follow the link below to the Phoenix website where you will see another link to click on to hear the full interview: <http://www.phoenixfm.com/2017/08/25/coastal-walks-golf-solution-junc-28/>



*Chairman, Colin Barber with Mike Jones from Phoenix FM*

---

## Brentwood office space under pressure



**Chris Stewart, Director at Chamber member Mass & Co, talks about the factors affecting the available office space in the Borough:**

“In 2013 continued pressure to meet Government targets for housing units throughout the South East led to the temporary extension of permitted development rights enabling office buildings to be converted to residential. This has now been extended indefinitely and has resulted in around 100,000 square feet of office space in Brentwood being lost from commercial use over the past year or so, with further such proposals in the pipeline.

“This puts upward pressure on rents for the remaining office space with a knock-on effect to occupiers, and with the lack of available space in the town a number of established companies have been looking to Chelmsford or Basildon where vacant office supply is greater. Conversely, for property owners, remaining office investments are becoming far more attractive. Ironically, this reduction in

office accommodation comes as we anticipate the opening of Crossrail in 2019, and at the same time as there is a noticeable hardening of the residential market and an increased demand for office space.

“The loss of office workers will have a significant effect on the dynamic of the town centre, putting further pressure on the many High Street shops which are feeling the effects of online shopping and of the proximity of Westfield Stratford City. To some extent this is accelerating the trend towards leisure use (more restaurants – such as Pivaz – opening) and although some big retail fashion names have expressed interest in the town, bringing deals to fruition can take a long time.”

*Mass & Co have a broad experience in all aspects of Commercial Property (sales, lettings and acquisitions of shops, offices, industrial and land), valuation for tax, accounts and Courts, lease renewal, rent reviews and strategic advice throughout Essex and the inner Home Counties. We also offer residential and commercial surveys, appointments under the Party Wall etc Act 1996, and advise on lease extensions for flats and leasehold enfranchisement. We are Regulated by RICS, have three experienced RICS Registered Valuers available and are members of the Independent Surveyors and Valuers' Association.*

**Mass & Co, 25 High Street, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4RG  
Tel: 01277 201300; Fax: 01277 232033  
[www.massandco.com](http://www.massandco.com) Twitter @massandco**



---

## Meet the Members

This month's subject is Philippa Barr, Owner, Director and sole employee of SunSign Communications Limited and – coincidentally – the editor/writer of this newsletter!

**Q:** May we have a potted history of your business/working life?

**A:** Back in the days of hot metal – yes, I am that old – I was a cub reporter for a regional newspaper group (during which time I trod on the Duke of Edinburgh and was subsequently trodden on by the Queen Mother). I was then in public relations for a national cancer charity before moving into the business communications sector, both in-house and agency-side. Following redundancy nine years ago, I set up SunSign Communications. I offer a range of affordable internal/external communications services for online and print media, including editing, copy-writing, proof-reading, blogging and speech-writing.

**Q:** What about your hobbies/interests outside of work?

**A:** They can be summarised thus: beaming up, caterwauling and quizzing! I'm a Trekkie and a



*Philippa Barr, SunSign Communications*

Whovian – a fan of both Star Trek and Doctor Who. I nearly fainted with excitement when William ‘Captain Kirk’ Shatner arrived on stage at a Trek convention and got within touching distance of Peter ‘Doctor Who’ Capaldi at a ‘Who’ event. I can also be heard karaoke-ing at various local hostelrys and am a keen quizzer (‘my’ team came 3rd out of 73 in an Eggheads quiz at Brentwood Centre). In contrast, I also do volunteer health care work for a national charity for people with physical disabilities.

**Q:** Can you tell us something interesting about yourself that not many people know?

**A:** I'm from a family whose members variously inflamed and shortened the Second World War. My mother's uncle was a national newspaper reporter who had been sent to meet Hitler, who then gave him one of his paintings to take back as a ‘gift’ to Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. However, the painting – and my Great Uncle Jack – failed to make it back to England as he (Jack, who wrote under the name Wilson Broadbent) decided he preferred to fly to Paris to rendezvous with his mistress...I hope the other side of my family went some way towards making up for this: as part of his work as a code-breaker at Bletchley Park, my late father helped shorten the war in North Africa by around two years, thus saving many lives.

---

## Pastor speaks to Business Breakfast

Despite the holiday season, August's Chamber Business Breakfast attracted a healthy attendance of 38. Five were non-members, four of whom showed interest in joining. The speaker, Sawyers Church Senior Pastor Peter Jordan, spoke of the work of the national charity Christians Against Poverty (CAP), announcing that churches working together in Brentwood would launch a local CAP Centre in the New Year, based at Sawyers Church ([www.sawyerschurch.org](http://www.sawyerschurch.org)). The September Business Breakfast speaker will be Howe Chartered Surveyors, Shenfield.



## Dates for your diary

### 14 September – 6.30-7pm arrival: Late Summer Social at the Secret Nuclear Bunker, Kelvedon Hatch

Includes welcome drink, tour, buffet, presentation of Brentwood in Bloom Business Category Award. £25.

### 12 October – RNLI Fish Supper at Onaplate, Shenfield

Fish & chips, branded RNLI cupcake, half a bottle of wine. £22 (includes £1 donation to RNLI).

### 13 October – 7.30am: Business Breakfast, Marygreen Manor

Sponsored by Brentwood Borough Council

### 1 November – Brentwood Business Showcase, Brentwood School

As last year, Chamber to hold drinks reception at end of event.

### 15 December – Chamber Christmas Lunch, Mount Avenue Banqueting Suite

To encourage members to book one or more tables in order that organisations (especially smaller ones) can celebrate and socialise at this special time of year, we've reintroduced a group booking option: a 10% discount on tables of 8-10 (normal price £25 per head). To book a table for a group of work colleagues (or friends or business associates) contact the Chamber office by phoning 01277 214814 or emailing [info@brentwoodchambers.co.uk](mailto:info@brentwoodchambers.co.uk)

## Calling all members – get involved with the newsletter!

This is *your* newsletter and we want to ensure it is as interesting and as relevant as possible to as many of you as possible, so we'd welcome your ideas/contributions for potential inclusion in future issues.

You are invited to:

- Tell us your business news (expansions, new staff, accreditations or qualifications gained by your company or your colleagues)
- Respond to/comment on something you've read in this issue
- Let us know about anything interesting that you or your staff are doing outside of work (a charity event, a TV appearance, for example)
- Comment on a local or national issue affecting SMEs
- Simply give us ideas about the sort of content you'd like to read.

We're also planning to launch an 'Ask the expert' feature, which would allow you to share your expertise while publicising your company. For example, if you're an accountant, you could share some top tips for – legally! – minimising tax obligations. If you're an IT guru, tell us how to keep clients' data safe.

Email: [Neil.Hornsby@BrentwoodChambers.co.uk](mailto:Neil.Hornsby@BrentwoodChambers.co.uk)



[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](tel:01277214814)

[Twitter: @BwdChamber](#)

[Facebook: @BrentwoodChambers](#)