



Building
Better
Business for
Brentwood

Brentwood Chamber of Commerce

Newsletter

Bringing you the latest business
news from Brentwood.

July
2018

Brentwood Business Awards nominations extended to 15 July

We hope you've all been working hard to get your submissions together for the first ever Brentwood Business Awards?

Due to popular request, we have extended the deadline for submissions to 15 July to give organisations a few more weeks in which to put together their applications. Nominations have been received for every category and now there is more time for you to enter if you haven't done so already!

We want the Brentwood Business Awards to recognise and celebrate the best of the Borough's sole traders, companies

and charities. All nominations are free and you do NOT need to be a Chamber member to participate. Please consider submitting yourself (or encouraging your professional peers to enter) for any of the categories listed below.

The awards will be presented at the Brentwood Business Awards dinner – a black tie event – on 9 November at Mount Avenue Banqueting Suite, Mount Avenue, Shenfield.

Finalists will be given one free ticket to attend the dinner, with additional tickets costing £40 per guest.

Applications will be open until 15 July for the following categories:

EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

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BRENTWOOD BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

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NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATION OF THE YEAR

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EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

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APPRENTICE/TRAINEE OF THE YEAR

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SALES AND MARKETING AWARD

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GROWING BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

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BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

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SMALL TO MEDIUM BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

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Bitcoin – what's the current buzz?

The cryptocurrency Bitcoin has rarely been out of the news recently, with pundits often all too keen to either trumpet it as the key to a millionaire lifestyle or as the gateway to a seedy underbelly of risky financial transactions.

The truth, of course, lies somewhere in between, so here's a round-up of current opinion – some of it comforting, some of it providing some rather sour-tasting food for thought.

Bitcoin is one of a number of 'currencies' that functions on a technology called 'blockchain' – a new way of storing information using a 'distributed ledger' system. On the plus side, this is reckoned to be very safe, giving more protection against payment fraud and identity theft than is offered by a credit card transaction.

On the other side of the 'coin', it's slightly worrying that with a Bitcoin transaction, the buyer needs only their 'coin wallet ID'. Although this makes the transactions reassuringly anonymous, there is a view that this very anonymity could be a gateway to a sort of 'underworld' where dodgy dealings take place.

However, there has been a recent glowing endorsement of Bitcoin from Steve Wozniak, the co-founder of Apple. As reported on The Independent's website, Mr Wozniak has said he hopes that Bitcoin will serve as a global single currency one day. He echoed even more positive previous comments by Jack Dorsey, CEO of Twitter, who said he thought Bitcoin would become the world's single currency within a decade.

Mr Wozniak mused: "Bitcoin is mathematically defined. There is a certain quality of Bitcoin, there's a way it's distributed...and it's pure and there's no human running, there's no company running and it's just...growing and growing."

Make of that what you will. Investing in Bitcoin certainly has its champions – who feel that fortunes are to be made – and its doom-mongers, who cite its volatility. But on the investment front, did you know that you can add cryptocurrencies to your portfolio without owning them outright? In the case of Bitcoin, you could try the Bitcoin Investment Trust.

But before you do anything, carry out your own, in-depth research and take into account your appetite (or not) for risk.



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A message from your Chairman



Photo by Carmel Jane

Our Business Breakfasts continue to be popular with members, and attendance figures in 2018 have been significantly higher than in 2017. The Breakfasts also continue to attract sponsors and all Breakfasts in 2018 are now sponsored. Now is the time to think about sponsoring a Breakfast in 2019 to help promote your organisation to members.

Following on from the success of our cricket corporate hospitality package in May, we are offering another similar event on Friday 31st August, when Essex host Hampshire at Chelmsford. We have our own exclusive box for Chamber members and their guests. If your company has thought about corporate hospitality in the past, but did not have the budget for a complete box, then this is the ideal opportunity to share a box – which, of course, provides further opportunities for networking.

We continue to review the newsletter and its value to members, with positive feedback being received. Remember that we offer a free mailshot service to members – if you have an event or product which you want to promote, we can include your promotional flyer in the posted copy of the newsletter (approximately 200 copies are distributed).

We are also introducing advertising in the newsletter to help offset the production costs. Full size and half size options are available to members from September onwards.

As summer approaches the Business Awards enter the next phase, with judging due to take place over the next couple of months. We are looking forward to assessing the entries, which I am sure will help to support the Chamber's mission of 'Building Better Business for Brentwood'. Remember to make a note of the date for the Gala Awards Dinner – Friday 9th November.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a relaxing and enjoyable summer, wherever and however you may be spending it!

Colin Barber, Chairman

Your next newsletter is in September

Like many of you – we hope! – the Chamber of Commerce newsletter will be having a little summer holiday, so there'll be no August issue. But look out for the next issue in September, when we'll all be 'back in the saddle' for autumn, making preparations for the Brentwood Business Showcase on 1 November and looking forward to the Brentwood Business Awards dinner on 9 November. Please send your submissions to Neil.Hornsby@BrentwoodChambers.co.uk by 31 July.



Chamber Events Calendar 2018

July

Friday 13th - Business Breakfast

Sponsored by Howe Chartered Surveyors

Monday 23rd - Netwalking

August

Friday 10th - Business Breakfast

Sponsored by Medical Skin Clinic

Thursday 23rd - Netwalking

Friday 31st - Essex host Hampshire at Chelmsford

Corporate boxes available

September

Friday 14th - Business Breakfast

Sponsored by Ashwells Timber

October

Friday 12th - Business Breakfast

November

Thursday 1st - Brentwood Business Showcase

Friday 9th - Business Awards Ceremony;

Mount Avenue Banqueting Suite

www.brentwoodchambers.co.uk/business-awards

Friday 16th - Business Breakfast

Saturday 24th - Christmas Lighting up in Brentwood;

See website <http://www.brentwood.gov.uk/index.php?cid=417>

December

Friday 14th - Business Breakfast

Wednesday 19th - Christmas Lunch

Mount Avenue Banqueting Suite

Bowl your clients over

The Brentwood Cricket Festival takes place this month and there's the chance to snap up an exciting hospitality package for the day.

The occasion will see Brentwood Cricket Club members play the PCA (Professional Cricketers' Association) England Masters. The festival takes place on Friday 20 July at The Old County Ground, Brentwood. Gates open at 11.30am and play begins at 3.30pm.



The Brentwood and England players (Brentwood in maroon) after last year's game

Networking groups in the Brentwood area

The Chamber is pleased to bring details of other networking groups to your attention:

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: third 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

ebn Brentwood: every other Thursday (next meeting 26th July); 8am – 10am; George & Dragon, Mountnessing; contact Hayley Taylor, Taylor Made Promotions, 01621 856504; membership and meeting charges apply

ebn Shenfield: every other Tuesday (next meeting 17th July); 8am – 10am; George & Dragon, Mountnessing; contact Mandy Baker, Insight Coaching, 07946 377970; membership and meeting charges apply

Word of Mouth, Brentwood: free networking event on the fourth Tuesday of the month; Slug & Lettuce, Brentwood High Street; entirelyaloe@gmail.com

Round Robin Networking: Brentwood and Stock; The Robin pub, Ongar Road, Brentwood, second Wednesday of the month, 10.30am; Harvard Inn, Stock, third Wednesday of the month, 10.30am; 07557 797319

The Phoenix Family: second Thursday of each month; 12 – 2pm; Shenfield Cricket Club, 22a Chelmsford Road, Shenfield CM15 8RQ; £15 per person, will include chilli & rice or curry & rice, or a vegan curry, plus hot drinks; payment in advance for catering purposes; Steve Roach, Phoenix FM. sr@phoenixfm.com

The Chamber of Commerce cannot be held responsible for the validity of the above information. Please confirm before attending. Details of other groups or any updates can be sent to Neil.Hornsby@BrentwoodChambers.co.uk

Cricket fans will be thrilled to know that the PCA squad will include Mark Ramprakash, Simon Jones, Rob Key and Graham Thorpe.

There is free public entry, food and other refreshments and family entertainment.

As part of this exciting event, there is the opportunity to take out a hospitality package. Tables of 10 cost from £750 and individual tickets are £75. The package includes:

- Champagne reception
- Three-course meal
- Beer and wine during luncheon
- Pre and Post-Match entertainment
- Meet the England Masters
- Raffle and auction

To secure your table, email events@brentwoodcricketclub.co.uk

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