



New improved radio scheme Brentwood Connect launching soon with free trial

The Borough's former radio system, Town Link Radio, will shortly be replaced with a new scheme 'Brentwood Connect' - a digital system brought to you by Brentwood Chamber of Commerce in partnership with ShopSafe.

The replacement scheme is a digital service which will now cover the whole of the Brentwood Borough, therefore offering much improved coverage compared to the previous system, which only covered Brentwood High Street and the immediate surrounding area.

The scheme is already operating successfully in other Essex boroughs and will better allow businesses to communicate together, helping to share important safety information - such as a renowned shoplifter being in the area, to enable staff to help protect stock.

The display on the digital radios will be programmed to show the name of the business communicating to further improve networking, and key groups will be set up to allow for area-focused communication, i.e. Shenfield High Street, Brentwood High Street Night Time Economy etc.

On top of improved coverage, the Brentwood Connect scheme also links businesses with the Council's upgraded CCTV control room, helping to capture recorded evidence where possible.

In addition, our local policing team will be in possession of a radio; although this does not replace the guidance to call 999 or 101 where police support is required.

The aim of Brentwood Connect is to:

- Help reduce shop theft from our high streets
- Provide an early-warning system against known offenders
- Create an instant link between businesses and the CCTV control room to offer support where possible
- Boost networking, communication and collaboration between local businesses and/or tenants with centre security
- Engage with local Police and PCSO's more effectively when they're in town

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Five lessons learned from going it alone

One year ago John Lawrence started Guida Accountancy. Having worked with start-ups and small businesses for 25 years he says he thought he knew everything about running a business. Wrong!

"So, what better time than my first anniversary to share my five biggest lessons so far," he adds.

- "Get help! My biggest mistake was not getting help on board earlier, I thought I knew it all and could do it all myself. Taking on a business mentor has helped me and my business immensely.
- "Know your ideal client. I was willing to take on any work, just to get some money in. This is a bad strategy. Getting to know my ideal client, who they are, where they are, what age group etc. changed my whole approach.
- "Use social media. I have always been a bit anti social media. One training course hosted by Chamber member Emma Goode of 24 fingers changed my outlook. Social media is huge, and every business must have a plan on how to use it.
- "Learn to say 'no'. I paid for services that gave my business no benefit whatsoever. I didn't do my research. I should have said no. It would have saved me plenty of money. Now I get to know people first; they must fit with my way of working.
- "Education. I know my numbers but needed to learn a lot more. Training courses and workshops have taught me so much and I can now do things I never thought I would. I can also decide there are things I still don't want to do myself, but I know what is involved so I don't get bamboozled by sales talk."

If you need help with your business please contact john@guidaaccountancy.co.uk or visit guidaaccountancy.co.uk

Networking outdoors

Chamber has arranged its first 'at-venue' networking events since March: Afternoon Tea With Networking, on Monday August 17 (3.30pm) at Marygreen Manor, socially distanced, with a set number of places (brentwoodchamber.co.uk/events); following the recent Open Air Networking at The Teriss Bar.



Staff at Spire Hartswood Hospital were keen to take part in the activity challenge to help the fundraising effort for SNAP

Spire Hartswood Hospital proud to help SNAP

The team at Chamber member Spire Hartswood Hospital has gone the whole nine yards – and a lot further! – to raise funds for an inspirational local charity.

In fact, members of the hospital team – staff, consultants and their friends and family – each completed a 10km challenge in June to support another Chamber member, SNAP, and raised £1,100 for the charity, surpassing their target.

The challenge included running, walking, cycling, rowing and even skateboarding! Many members of the hospital took part in the challenge – which involved a donation – as part of their daily dose of fitness (e.g. walking their dog, going on their daily run), and some even took part at home (to socially distance).

Jo Dean, Hospital Director at Spire Hartswood Hospital, commented: "The team at Hartswood have come together for such a fantastic cause and an incredible charity. Over the past two years, we have built such a great partnership with SNAP and we are all delighted to have fundraised for them again this year.

"I'm so proud that so many members of our staff got involved in the challenge, during a time when we are focused on supporting the NHS during the COVID pandemic and that we smashed our target, raising a fantastic £1,100 thanks to everyone's efforts."

Karen Boath, SNAP's Director for Family Services, was delighted to hear about the enthusiastic efforts of the Spire team, saying: "Thank you so much, we really do appreciate every one of you for taking the time to dream up and take on a task during this special week.

"This is the second year you have supported SNAP and we really do cherish the help and kind words of appreciation for us, especially given the challenging times you have all been facing."

Be clean, green and safe with special offer

This pandemic has meant we have all had to relook at our cleaning regime, whether that's within our households or as we get back to business in our place of work. However, is buying more disinfectant and using it regularly the answer?

Traditional chemicals are bad for our health and the environment, and the more we use the chemicals the more the harmful bacteria mutates and resists - this is called antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Tom Prior, director of Chamber member ST Extreme Cleaning, explains: "It's a natural reaction to want to disinfect the premises regularly, but traditional chemical cleaners can have negative effects.

"They only kill 99.9 per cent of the viruses, and although that sounds great, that 0.1 per cent remains on surfaces and quickly multiplies. The probiotic products we use work in a similar fashion to that of probiotic yogurts and drinks. They contain 'good' bacteria which remain on surfaces and kill bad bacteria for up to three days - ensuring an office or store can be safer for longer.

"This also cuts down on cleaning costs. Being greener can also generate a better relationship with your customers and so is ultimately better for your business."

ST Extreme Cleaning are passionate about keeping your environment clean and safe throughout this pandemic and beyond. The probiotics safely and effectively restore healthy microbial balance to whatever they touch, and are completely safe for adults, children, animals, fish and the environment. See ingenious-probiotics.com/knowledge.

Customers will need convincing that your premises are cleaner than ever, which is hard on business budgets given the lockdown. So we're offering Brentwood Chamber members a 10 per cent discount in August, to get Brentwood up and running again - but in a cleaner greener fashion.

Call Tom Prior on 07851859677 or see stextremecleaning.com.



Sam Collins and Tom Prior, directors of ST Extreme Cleaning

Ami busier than ever

Chamber member Dinner Parties By Ami Mehta believes that lockdown, though a trying time personally, has provided an opportunity to grow the business.

"My dinner party business began with my appearances on the cookery shows Come Dine with Me and Humble Pie, both of which I was lucky enough to win," says Ami. "Appearing on these shows gave me the exposure and self-belief required to embark upon my next journey - starting my dinner party business.

"Coming from India with barely any English language skills, I could never have dreamed that one day I would be able to cater for large dinner parties, publish cookery videos to a large following and even host Indian cooking lessons.

"Unfortunately, with the threat of COVID-19 hanging over the world, I was about to face months being unable to continue any of my dinner parties. However, I then decided to adapt to the times and begin doing deliveries.

"The business took off incredibly quickly, with many yearning for the restaurant-style experience of food from the comfort of their own homes. Now that I have been able to build a firm client base, I am ecstatic to say that I am continuing to get orders for both deliveries and dinner parties.

"I feel this goes to show the importance of having versatility within yourself and in your company in order to adapt to a situation - and also perhaps find a new niche which you never knew you had!"

See facebook.com/Dinner-Parties-by-Ami-Mehta-843468102361638.

Four newbies join up

We were pleased to approve four new members at the July executive committee meeting, including **Red Castle Consultancy**, a training consultancy; and **House of Colour Upminster and Brentwood**, an image consultant and personal stylist.

Also joining were **Docherty Consulting Services**, a Chartered Quantity Surveyor; and **Let's Make Time**, a NLP Practitioner. See brentwoodchamber.co.uk/join/ to join Chamber.

Chamber Events Calendar 2020

August

Mondays – Coffee & Chat with members

Virtual networking via Zoom

Tuesdays - Wellbeing Event

Guest presentation plus networking via Zoom

Wednesdays – Chamber Lunchtime Networking Get Together

Being run via Zoom, with guest speaker

Thursdays - Member Spotlight webinars (alternate weeks)

Free to attend via Zoom

Friday 7 – Chamber Training Workshop run by 24 fingers: How to Run a Customer Engaging Instagram Profile

Being run online

Wednesday 12 - Netwalking, socially distanced

Starting from The Green Man, Herongate

Friday 14 – Chamber Training Workshop run by 24 fingers: How to Use Instagram Stories in Your Business

Being run online

Monday 17 - Afternoon Tea With Networking

Marygreen Manor Hotel

September

Friday 18 - Chamber Training Workshop run by 24 fingers: How to run an engaging Instagram Profile

All offline September events have been cancelled, including the Open Meeting and AGM on Thursday 10 (now in November).

October

Tuesday 6 - Meet & Eat lunchtime networking event

Friday 9 - Business Breakfast

Sponsored by Aching Arms

Friday 16 - Chamber Training Workshop run by 24 fingers: How to Use Instagram Stories

Tuesday 20 - Meet The Members networking event

Kinetic Podiatry Clinic

Monday 26 - Meet The Members networking event

Kids Inspire, Chelmsford

November

Tuesday 3 - Meet & Eat lunchtime networking event

Friday 6 - Chamber Training Workshop run by 24

Fingers: Give yourself the Gift of New Customers this Christmas - How to Run a Highly Effective Marketing Campaign

Thursday 12 – Meet the Chamber networking & AGM

Friday 13 - Business Breakfast

Sponsored by Brentwood Development Partnership

Tuesday 24 - Meet The Members networking event

Wylie Veterinary Centre

TBC - Meet The Members networking event

Brentwood Brewery

December

Friday 11 - Business Breakfast

Sponsored by 24 fingers

Thursday 17 - Chamber Christmas Lunch

Events will be reviewed and cancellations updated at brentwoodchamber.co.uk/events - where all online events can be booked in advance.

Any members wishing to increase publicity for their own events can add them to the Chamber website - see brentwoodchamber.co.uk/add-member-event. Once they have been approved and published by Chamber we will, where possible, also try to post them on our social media channels.

New ShopSafe radio scheme to allow Brentwood to better connect

Continued from the front page

Another added benefit offered by ShopSafe at no additional cost is 'alert!' - a secure information-sharing application which has been designed to be used on any device so that incidents can be logged quickly and reports generated over time.

Upgrading the system comes at no cost to the Council or residents of the Brentwood Borough as it is offered to our local businesses from less than £1 a day via a ShopSafe contract (depending on Rateable Value of commercial property), which is a saving on the previous scheme.

To help launch Brentwood Connect we are offering those under the previous TLR scheme, and any new businesses interested, a free 90-day trial from September 1 to November 30. After this period any new businesses will be offered a 30-day trial before signing up to the scheme.

During these times of change we hope this scheme really does enable Brentwood to connect, and that people and businesses alike benefit from a sense of added safety in and around our Borough.

For more information please contact the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce office directly via chamber.office@brentwoodchamber.co.uk or ShopSafe quoting 'Brentwood Connect' on 08702 405538 or sales@shopsafe.uk.



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