



Local businesses Speed Networking in rows one to one.

## Speed Networking

40 local business decision makers gathered at The Old Brentwoods Club on 24 January 2024 to try out Speed Networking. Many had never experienced Speed Networking before so were a bit apprehensive but afterwards said it was a very productive and enjoyable event. Connections were formed and fun was had, in a very relaxed yet structured environment.



Local businesses Speed Networking in groups

There was a wide range of businesses represented which offered something for everyone. The structure took away any potential awkwardness and offered an opportunity to speak with every person in the room. Once connections were initially formed through very quick conversations, there was time to grab some lunch and continue in-depth discussions with select individuals. The buffet style lunch was delicious and appropriate for on-the-go networking. Thanks to The Old Brentwoods Club for being a great venue.

Another successful event jointly hosted by both Brentwood Borough Council and the Chamber. Well done to Colin Barber from the Management Mechanic for keeping everything and everyone moving.

## New Chamber Members Welcomed

If you are a local business and have not yet been to a Chamber of Commerce event, you are very welcome to come along to take advantage of the Chamber's programme. To find out more visit the website at [brentwoodchamber.co.uk](http://brentwoodchamber.co.uk). If you would like to join the Chamber and have not yet joined email us at: [office@BrentwoodChamber.co.uk](mailto:office@BrentwoodChamber.co.uk)

---

## Car Parking Forum

As you may be aware, the Chamber alongside the Council hosted a parking forum back in October 2023. We were delighted to see the results of this forum incorporated into the new car parking charges.



The Council has announced the following changes taking effect from April 2024:

- Introducing all day FREE Sunday Car Parking in the William Hunter Way, Chatham Way, Multi-Storey Car Park and Town Hall Car Parks and a free 3-hour parking limit at the Shenfield Car Parks
- Freezing the price of car park season tickets
- Freezing the cost of parking in the Multi-Storey Car Park in Coptfold Road
- All car parks will continue to offer 30 minutes free car parking
- Removing the 24-hour parking charge and replacing it with a reduced fee for parking 6 hours or more of £7.00
- All other parking fees are set to increase and have been rounded to the nearest pound or 50p (excluding the Multi-Storey Car Park in Coptfold Road)

---

## Sponsorship Opportunity

We have sponsorship opportunities available for our Business Breakfasts. These events are held at Marygreen Manor Hotel on the second Friday of each month, with informal networking from 7:30am - 8am followed by breakfast and structured networking from 8am - 9am.

- Our Sponsorship Package costs £175 and includes:
- Short introduction at the previous month's Breakfast
- 5 free places
- Ten-minute introduction and presentation slot
- Opportunity to display publicity
- Publicity in the previous month's Chamber of Commerce newsletter
- Publicity on the Chamber of Commerce website

For more information or to reserve your month, contact the Chamber office – [office@BrentwoodChamber.co.uk](mailto:office@BrentwoodChamber.co.uk)

---

## A Message From Alex Burghart

Very many thanks to all at the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce for inviting me to your Christmas lunch – it was a great way of getting into the festive mood at the end of a busy Parliamentary term.

Much of my work in Westminster in the last year has been as Parliamentary Secretary in the Cabinet Office guiding the Procurement Act through Parliament.

This Act is a major piece of post-Brexit legislation that takes advantage of our new powers to reform public procurement and will make it easier for small- and medium-sized British businesses to get government contracts.



The start of Parliamentary business in 2024 has been dominated by the decision to bring forward primary legislation to quash all convictions of Post Office Sub- postmasters arising from the Horizon scandal in what has become one of the most significant miscarriages of justice in our nation's recent history. Whilst the Cabinet Office does not oversee the Post Office's contracts it is involved in the commercial arrangements of many government departments and so has been involved in major discussions in government about the implications of the scandal. The independent inquiry is currently establishing all the facts, once this is done, we will take an appropriate course of action. This week I was pleased to be able to tell the Commons that Fujitsu has taken the responsible decision of voluntarily ruling itself out from bidding for UK public contracts bids until the inquiry concludes.

Here in the constituency I am aware of the increasing concerns of those involved in the hospitality industry about the impact of rising costs of food, fuel and rents on the ability of pubs and restaurants to stay open. I have some ideas which I am taking to the Treasury in advance of the Budget to try to alleviate some of the pressure these businesses are under, and will report back on the progress I make in those discussions.

I hope Brentwood's businesses prosper in the coming months – I have great hopes for the Brentwood Business Improvement District and will continue to ensure we boost our high streets with investment from the Government's Levelling Up Fund. As ever, if you have anything that you would like to raise with me, please do get in touch.

[www.alexburghart.org.uk](http://www.alexburghart.org.uk)

# Member's News

## Promote your event for Free

Did you know that Chamber Membership offers you free event advertising? We will advertise your event on our website and in our newsletter. You can add your event to our website [here](#).

While posting your event on social media, please remember to tag the Chamber and we will repost your event.

## Attract and Engage Strictly heads to Brentwood

Local business owner and Chamber member, Richard Willis from [Attract & Engage](#) will be competing for the glitter ball at The Brentwood Centre on Saturday 9th March 2024 to raise funds for the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance in front of celebrity judges Nadiya Bychkova & Kai Widdrington from the hit BBC show.

Strictly Air Ambulance takes the same format as the show we all love, along with his professional dancer Jody De'Ath, it's an opportunity to watch Rich shuffle around the dance floor attempting the Quickstep & Cha Cha Cha.



However, he understands the real pull for big Strictly fans will be to see Kai & Nadiya perform some exclusive dances live, all hosted by Lisa Snowdon & David Whiteley.

Richard said "As a biker, the charity was always close to my late-father's heart, and so after some coaxing, realised it was a great opportunity to raise vital funds for such a worthy charity. Winning would be great, but my main goal is to embarrass my 12-year-old daughter as much as possible!"

Training began in December and single donations to his page of over £100 will be entered into a raffle for VIP seats at the event itself. Available in the front row as well on VIP tables with bubbles & beers.

[BUY YOUR TICKETS HERE](#)

[SPONSOR HERE](#)

## PhoenixFM 40% Discount for Members

PhoenixFM would like to offer members of the Chamber of Commerce a 40% discount on their regular advertising campaign in 2024.

As we start the New Year its important that you look to advertise your brand/business so that you can achieve its full potential in 2024. Phoenix FM provides brands with a way to speak to a potential audience of 180,000 across Essex via a medium they trust with the power to enhance brand perceptions at a subconscious level.

To find out how Phoenix FM can help to build your business and raise awareness for your brand, contact at [sr@phoenixfm.com](mailto:sr@phoenixfm.com)

## Welcome To Our New Members



We are a private General Practice in Brentwood, Essex, and we greatly value the 'traditional' family GP-patient relationship, and being part of the community.

We provide general medical services (for minor and chronic illnesses), Well Man, Well Woman and Corporate health screening, blood tests, minor surgery, contraception, sexual health, and menopause care, as well as skin care and aesthetic treatments.

[CONTACT](#)



With an extensive career in both the public and private sector, Chris Hossack set up his own consultancy business (Lexton Consulting Ltd) in 2020 specialising in people (recruitment and training) and processes (CRM systems, finance and marketing) to drive growth, maintain loyalty and improve customer service standards. Chris is always willing to talk with new clients about ways to take their business forward.

[CONTACT](#)



Sourcing Made Simple - We take the headache away and act as an extension of your brand, giving you high-quality, sustainable merchandise products tailored to your budget.

Supplying clients locally and across the world with merchandise products to promote their brands... from printed golf balls to branded bicycles and everything in between.

[CONTACT](#)



I am Sarah and I am an online weight loss coach. I help busy people to lose weight for the very last time. If you are fed up with losing weight only to put it back on again or can't face dieting because you don't want to feel restricted or deprived then this is the weight loss programme for you.

I will teach you how to change the way you think about food and eating so that you can lose weight and keep it off forever.

[CONTACT](#)



Paul Mason-Hughes, Chamber Executive Committee member

## Meet the Committee

We thought that you would like to find out a bit more about the members of the Chamber Executive Committee, so each month we will be interviewing a different person. This month, we have chosen to introduce you to Paul Mason-Hughes.

### What is your role on the Chamber Committee?

I help with all things skills and education related.

### Tell us about your current job.

I work with New City College Group, based at the NCC Havering College Campus, looking after partnerships and community engagement. Our offer to Brentwood businesses includes: skills training for new entrants, upskilling of existing staff and apprenticeships.

### What do you like about Brentwood?

There's been a lot of work done over the past couple of years to improve the town for the future and make it an exciting place to do business or visit. Brentwood Connected and Brentwood Open are great examples of how a community can be proactive, Brentwood Council also have some talented people.

### What was your first job?

When I was at college, I helped out at the Next Press Office in Kensington - a great job!

### What job did you think you would like to do when you were a child?

Be an architect or commercial artist – I did get qualified as an illustrator and worked in advertising / publishing for a long while.

### Who do you admire in the business world?

Anyone who works hard and provides a great service and not necessarily 'the people at the top' – businesses are only successful if they have good people at all levels. My current favourite company is Community Clothing, set up by Patrick Grant of Great British Sewing Bee fame.

### Have you had any mentors and if so, what did you learn from them?

Not mentors as such but I've learned a lot from observing people and taking their best ideas!

### What advice would you give to someone just starting up in business?

Make sure the plan stacks up and put in the leg work.

### How do you handle setbacks or frustrations?

Just get on with it – there's always a way.

### What are your hobbies and interests outside of work?

West Ham United, Idle guitars and Brentwood Artistic Swim Team (a long story but I have to give them a plug).

### Who would you like to spend one day with and why?

World Leaders – I reckon I could put them straight in about 24 hours.

## Upcoming Chamber Events

9 FEB

Friday

Business Breakfast at Marygreen Manor Hotel

Sponsored by SNAP

[BOOK HERE](#)

8 MAR

Friday

Business Breakfast at Marygreen Manor Hotel

Sponsored by 24 Fingers

[BOOK HERE](#)

## Upcoming Member Events

### Pinney Talfourd - Wills & Lasting Power of Attorney Seminars

Pinney Talfourd are hosting a free seminar in their Brentwood High Street office discussing Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney.

10 February 2024

09:45 - 11:30am

30 High Street, Brentwood, Essex CM14 2AJ

[More information](#)

### Brentwood Council - South Essex Business Expo

14 March 2024

10:00 - 15:00

The Brentwood Centre

[More information](#)

### Alpha Vesta - Community Advocate Reception

14 March 2024

14:00 - 16:30

[More information](#)

### Let's Connect:

Brentwood Chamber of Commerce  
Town Hall  
Ingrave Road  
Brentwood  
Essex  
CM15 8AY

Phone/WhatsApp: +44 7849704037

office@brentwoodchamber.co.uk

www.brentwoodchamber.co.uk



@BwdChamber



@BrentwoodChambers



@brentwoodessexchamber



/company/brentwood-essex-chamber-of-commerce



@brentwoodchamberofcommerce

### Newsletter Design:

JD Designs

www.jddesigns.co.uk