

Brentwood Business Awards



We are very pleased to announce that the Brentwood Business Awards will be back again for 2025.

This event recognises and celebrates the best of local business. It includes 12 categories with an additional overall "Brentwood Business of the Year" award. Each category is proudly judged and sponsored by local businesses and the winners are announced at the prestigious Brentwood Business Awards ceremony.

The Brentwood Business Awards are open to individuals, companies and organisations of all sizes and sectors as long as they are based in – or doing business in – the Borough of Brentwood. Applicants are invited to enter a maximum of two categories and the winners are decided by each of the independent category sponsors.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

2025 Brentwood Business Awards Launch

Thursday 24th April

Come along to our FREE launch event at the Brentwood Theatre from 6pm - 8pm to hear about how this year's Brentwood Business Awards can benefit your organisation.

[BOOK HERE](#)

Artificial Intelligence - How best to use it

AI or Artificial intelligence are the current business buzz words but how comfortable are we with using AI? Some Chamber members use AI daily and some are still yet to use it comfortably. Relying on computer systems to perform historically human tasks can be daunting but also requires adjustments and learning.

The Chamber is committed to supporting members adjust to this new era. If you have any specific AI questions or use AI regularly and wouldn't mind sharing your experiences/expertise in this area, please get in contact with us as we would like to hold a workshop to help us navigate AI together.

[CONTACT: OFFICE@BRENTWOODCHAMBER.CO.UK](mailto:OFFICE@BRENTWOODCHAMBER.CO.UK)



New Chamber members welcome

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. If you would like to join the Chamber email us at: Office@BrentwoodChamber.co.uk.

LinkedIn Workshop: Unlock the Value of LinkedIn

Thursday April 3rd

Are you a business owner looking to unlock the value of LinkedIn to win more and better work? Join our upcoming LinkedIn Workshop to discover how.

Hear from Richard Willis ([Attract & Engage](#)) on how to unlock LinkedIn marketing communications to gain more followers, increase visibility and credibility, and build brand reputation with potential customers.

What can you expect?

- Which LinkedIn content will work, and which won't
- 3 essential steps for raising your profile
- How to make sure you're seen by prospective clients that matter (to you)

BOOK HERE

Neurodiversity Workshop: Essential Knowledge & Strategies

Thursday May 1st

Join Lisa Christie, Coaching Psychologist and founder of [genpotential](#), as she helps us understand more about ADHD and Autism, and gives us strategies to support neurodivergent individuals.

This is relevant for businesses of all sizes given that employers are legally required to provide reasonable adjustments, and especially as 1 in 5 people are estimated to be neurodivergent.

Lisa also welcomes anyone who is interested in raising their personal understanding of neurodiversity, as all the insights she shares are relevant to home life as well as to work.

BOOK HERE

Workshop: Maximising Your Brand

[Blue Serif](#) conducted the second workshop in our series about how to Maximise Your Brand.

Director, Matt Barry, talked about brand strategy; the vision, values, positioning and purpose that go into a brand behind the scenes, through to brand identity and its accompanying logo, visual identity and tone of voice that need to be incorporated and be analysed when creating a brand. This gives you the best possible spring board to drive your message to your target audience.

Thank you to everyone that came along to hear Matt speak. Please take Blue Serif up on the offer of a free brand audit.



Matt Barry, Director of Blue Serif conducting a workshop on maximising your brand.

Member Spotlight

Jane Bennett - Bennetts Funeral Directors



Jane Bennett, Managing Director at Bennetts Funeral Directors Ltd

During the COVID lockdown we introduced a popular series on YouTube called 'Member Spotlight'. These videos are still available to view on our [YouTube channel](#). Following on from this series we have decided to introduce a 'Member Spotlight' feature in our newsletter, which will give you the opportunity to find out more about other Chamber members. This month our spotlight is on Jane Bennett from [Bennetts Funeral Directors](#).

Tell us briefly about your business and how long you have worked there?

Our business is Bennetts Funeral Directors and we have evidence of being undertakers since 1881, then based at Brook Street. We moved to the current site on Brentwood High Street in 1932 and I have been working there since 1988.

What is your role in this business?

I am the Managing Director, overseeing the day to day.

What changes have you seen since you started?

The funeral business changes massively in some ways yet not at all in others. We have so many options regarding music, print, colour and media yet we're still traditionally dressed in black and the conductor with the hat and cane will walk in front of the hearse as respectfully as we always have done. The current advertising for direct cremations is changing the industry and gives families little chance to grieve.

What was your first job?

After I left college in Chelmsford I moved to Suffolk and worked at the Government offices, DoE, in Cambridge.

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

More than likely something to do with animals.

Who do you admire in the business world?

Yvon Chouinard who founded the outdoor brand Patagonia and 1% for the Planet.

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

Various business advisors from Business Link as it was and other family funeral directors.

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

To ensure you have sufficient funds for back up and to look to provide the best customer service.

How do you handle setbacks or frustrations?

In business you take chances, if they go wrong, you learn from them. Keep learning.

What are your hobbies and interests outside of work?

Family, dogs, travel and gardening.

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

Sir David Attenborough – who wouldn't! He has given such awareness to how we're failing our planet, it needs saving.

The South Essex Business Expo



Donna (our Admin Manager) with Kimberley (our Social Media Manager) on the Chamber's stand at the Brentwood Business Expo.

Thank you to all of those who came over to our exhibitor's stand at this year's South Essex Business Expo. We were delighted to catch up with both members and welcome many more new members to the Chamber. With 1100 visitors, this was the biggest South Essex Business Expo to date. If you weren't there, this is definitely one to put in your diary for next year.

Welcome to Our New Members

The Hermit CIC



The Hermit CIC is a non-for-profit organisation what supports young people through music. They run the UK's only dedicated music venue for teenagers.

1705 Consultancy Ltd



1705 Consultancy Ltd is a specialist risk management and event safety consultancy based in Essex, providing expert support to businesses, venues, and event organisers across the UK. We offer a comprehensive range of services including risk assessments, event safety planning, and expert guidance on Martyn's Law compliance.

Octo Recruitment



Octo Recruitment is a dynamic recruitment agency based in Essex, specialising in connecting top talent with businesses across Essex and surrounding counties. With a deep understanding of diverse industries, they partner with business owners and managers to provide tailored recruitment solutions that drive success. Their mission is to simplify the hiring process, ensuring that the right people are placed in the right roles, fostering growth, and building lasting professional relationships. At Octo Recruitment, we believe in the power of people – let us help you find your perfect people.

Cactus Renewables



Cactus renewables is a Solar PV, Battery Storage, EV Charger, Airsource heat pump installation company that specialises in Domestic and Commercial installations and maintenance. They are fully accredited with MCS, RECC and are also Octopus Approved installers. They also have an arm of the business that specialises in all aspects of heating, plumbing and electrical works also. These also hold NAPIT, Gas safe and other accreditations.

Malina Patisseries



We are Family run coffeeshop ,offering healthy brunch and home made French desserts. Also providing private dining's and Afternoon tea events. Winners of Brentwood Business Awards 2024.

Holiday Inn, Marillac, PhoenixFM and Brentwood Brewery Connect Successfully Through Chamber

Three of our members have been successfully networking with each other. Having been introduced to Liesbeth Newman from [Marillac](#) by Steve Roach ([Phoenix FM](#)) last year, Kevin Coombes, the General Manager at the [Holiday Inn Brentwood](#) was delighted to partner with Marillac as the hotels nominated charity in 2025.

The hotel hosted an evening of great wine and food in Marco's New York Italian Restaurant. Kevin Coombes said, "We were delighted to have so many people join in on the fun who raised a staggering £8500 all in aid of Marillac".

Amongst all the generous guests were the team from [Brentwood Brewery](#) who as a result of this event, are also partnered with the Holiday Inn Brentwood and are now selling their local beers at the hotel.

We love to hear these stories of how the Chamber has impacted local businesses. Please let us know your stories office@brentwoodchamber.co.uk

Member's News

SNAP Fundraiser

Saturday 10th May

Enjoy an evening of spice and blackjack at Marco's New York Italian in aid of SNAP. A Vegas-style casino experience with a charitable twist. The fun money will flow as attendees try their luck at the tables, with a chance to win exciting prizes and, most importantly, help make a difference in the lives of those supported by SNAP.

Each guest will receive a welcome drink, curry, glass of wine and their first 10 casino chips. The event will also feature an extraordinary auction and raffle, with exclusive items and experiences up for bid and music from SNAP's own Music Therapist, Emily Grimes!

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

Brentwood Connected

Easter Bunny Trail : Monday 7 - Monday 21 April



There will be an Easter Bunny trail taking place from Monday 7 to Monday 21 April (school holidays). Explore Brentwood High Street, Hutton Road in Shenfield and Ingatestone High Street to find the 10 Easter Bunnies on display in business windows - all decorated and named by local primary schools. There are also various prizes to be won!

The Easter Bunny Trail is free to enjoy along with three free Easter event days where you can meet the Easter Bunny character and take part in Easter crafts.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

Brentwood Council : Devolution

Following the government's announcement that Essex County Council and Thurrock and Southend are part of the Devolution Priority Programme, a consultation on devolution proposals for Essex has begun.

The election of a Mayor and a Combined Authority will impact businesses in securing funding for local projects, making strategic decisions, and helping attract investment and improving infrastructure. The Council will argue for the best possible outcome for Brentwood's residents.

The government has requested public input into their plans for devolution, including devolving certain powers and responsibilities to a Mayor. The consultation results will inform any decision on the duties of a Mayor of Essex. A strong public response to the consultation will be a significant factor in any government decision, including how business will be treated.

Please let us know if there is anything you would like us to feedback to Brentwood Council at Office@BrentwoodChamber.co.uk

Attract & Engage Podcast & Blog

[Attract & Engage](#) are always on the lookout for new people to feature in future podcast episodes with interesting stories & successes, Chamber members are invited to email recommendations to info@attractandengage.co.uk



In this month's podcast, Jill Willis speaks to Graham Broughton, A.K.A Mr King's Award. Graham shares his expert advice on how to navigate the award application process, the benefits of winning prestigious accolades, and how these awards can elevate a business's credibility and growth. Learn from his experience working with top businesses and uncover the key strategies to securing industry recognition.

[LISTEN HERE](#)

In [Attract & Engage's](#) latest blog, they break down the 8 essential steps for businesses to effectively approach new customers, from identifying key stakeholders to creating a solid marketing plan.

[READ HERE](#)

Brentwood Rotary Club Annual Charity Golf Day

Monday 12th May

The Rotary Club of Brentwood are pleased to invite you to join them on their Sponsored Annual Charity Golf Day on Monday 12th May with the opportunity to entertain your friends, family, and clients at Thorndon Park Golf Club.

Thorndon Park Golf Club is an excellent parkland golf course designed by the legendary golf architect, Harry Colt, and is rated as No 1 in Essex.

The entry fee for a 4-Ball team is £400 which includes green fees, a coffee and bacon sandwich on arrival, halfway house juices, and a rolling buffet lunch on completion of play.

Monies raised will be distributed to local charities including Saint Francis Hospice, Little Havens Hospice and SNAP. They are also looking for sponsorship of individual holes of £95 per hole.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

Upcoming Chamber Events

3 April Thursday	Workshop: LinkedIn Holiday Inn Brentwood	BOOK HERE
9 April Wednesday	Business Breakfast at Marygreen Manor Hotel Sponsorship Available	BOOK HERE
24 April Thursday	Business Awards Launch Brentwood Theatre	BOOK HERE
1 May Thursday	Workshop: Neurodiversity Holiday Inn Brentwood	BOOK HERE
14 May Wednesday	Business Breakfast at Marygreen Manor Hotel Sponsorship Available	BOOK HERE

Upcoming Member's Events

10 May Saturday	Fundraiser SNAP Holiday Inn Brentwood	MORE INFO
12 May Monday	Annual Charity Golf Day Brentwood Rotary Club Thornton Park Golf Club	BOOK HERE

Let's Connect:

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