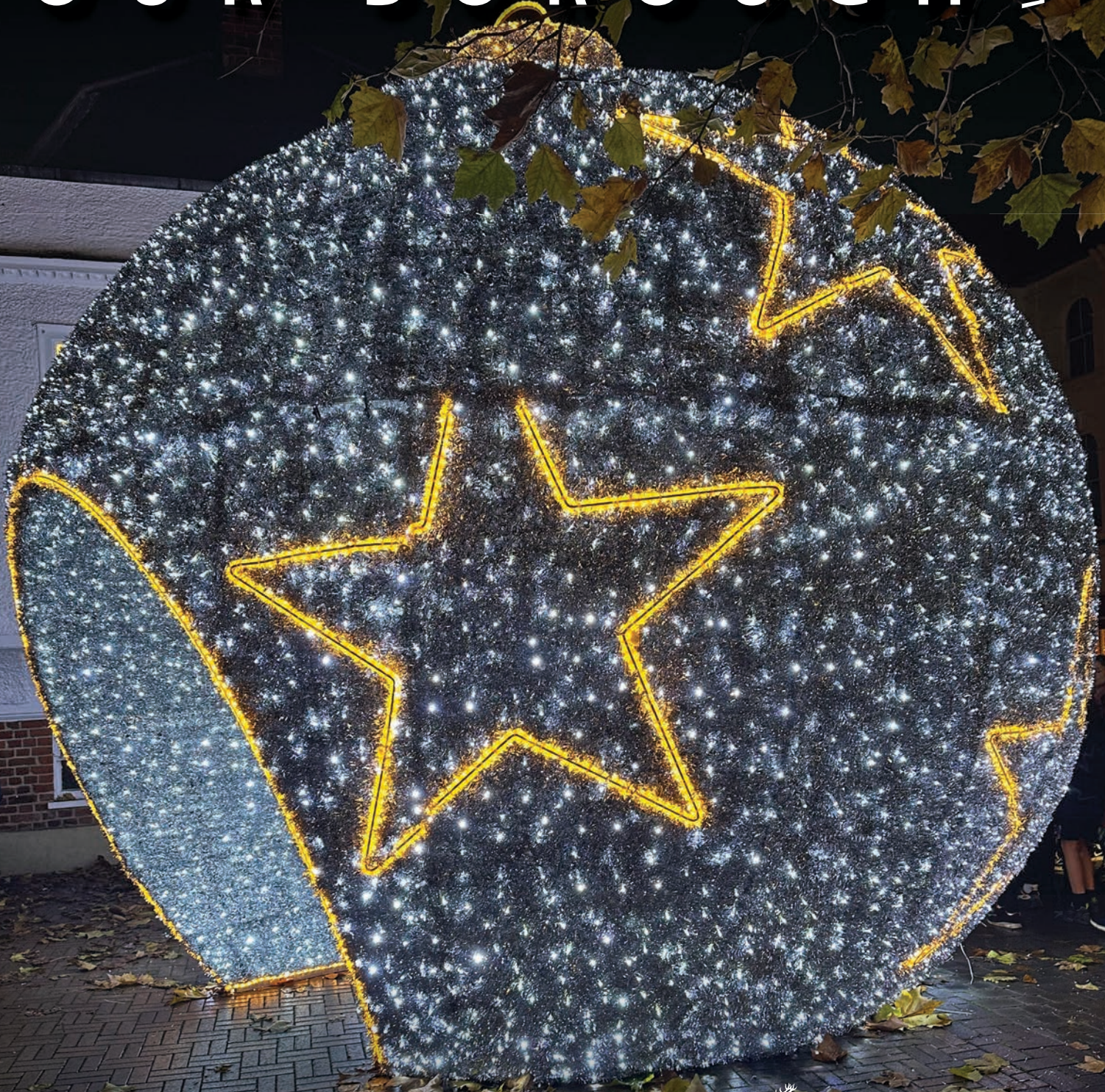


BRENTWOOD

OUR BOROUGH



WINTER 2024



Find out more by visiting www.brentwood.gov.uk

follow us   



BRENTWOOD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Welcome



Time passes so quickly; it feels like I welcomed you to the first edition of our 'Brentwood Our Borough' magazine

just yesterday, as published last Christmas. Yet here we are again.

Having completed eighteen months with the Joint Administration leading the council, I am proud to say that much has already been achieved. We set out to understand how the council was operating and how it could be improved, and importantly, to find the most effective way to deliver our services that provide the best value for you. As expected, we will continue to do this and monitor our progress.

We continually review how we deliver our services and plan to introduce additional resources in the areas you have indicated need improvement. Hopefully, you'll soon see a noticeable difference in the areas that matter to you.

We are working diligently to ensure we meet our carbon neutrality targets by 2030, and we will soon be introducing improved services to keep our High Streets clean and tidy. We remain committed to improving our current council housing stock and future housing delivery.

Our finances are closely monitored, and we investigate all areas where income can be generated, or savings made. These are just a few areas where we believe we are making a difference. Crucial to this are our corporate priorities for the future, which have been developed and agreed upon. You can read more about these in this edition.

We are focused on creating jobs, providing decent council properties, maintaining our parks and open spaces, investing in our leisure facilities, upgrading the Baytree Centre, refurbishing our car parks, and providing regular refuse collection services. Additionally, we are changing our entire council vehicle fleet to carbon-neutral fuel, improving our air quality. These are just some areas we have continued to enhance our services this year.

There is much more to come, and by the time you receive the next edition, we hope to provide you with further updates.

I know your finances, and not necessarily the council's can be on your mind this time of year. In this edition, you can read about energy efficiency grants and schemes available to help with your energy bills, along with details on Pension Credit and the support offered by our revenues & benefits outreach and engagement team. If you are struggling, please get in touch with us to find out what benefits you may be entitled to.

And finally, we hope you enjoy our Christmas events, where we partnered with Brentwood Connected Business Improvement District to bring you improved Christmas lights and events in our major High Streets. I wish you all an enjoyable festive season and a Happy New Year.

Councillor Barry Aspinell
Leader of Brentwood Borough Council

How to contact Brentwood Borough Council

☎ **01277 312500**, our phone lines are open
Monday to Thursday, 8:30am to 5pm and Fridays
8:30am to 4:30pm

✉ **enquiries@brentwood.gov.uk**

🌐 **www.brentwood.gov.uk**

Follow us on social media

📘 **Brentwood Borough Council**
📷 **@Brentwood_BC**
📺 **@BrentwoodBoroughCouncil**
📺 **@BrentwoodBoroughCouncil**

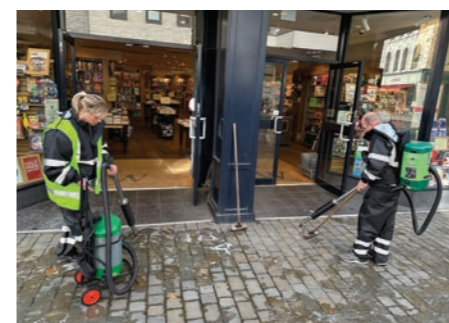
It cost 42p per household to prepare, print and send you this magazine. It is made with recyclable paper, so please put in your blue sack after reading. We have used local printers.

Council News

Tackling a sticky issue on our high streets

The council is taking on the chewing gum blighting our high streets.

A cleaning team has removed discarded chewing gum and deep cleaned the pavements on Brentwood High Street and areas around Brentwood and Shenfield stations, along with installing new signage reminding residents and visitors not to drop their gum.



The chewing gum cleaning team in action on Brentwood High Street

The work was funded by a £27,500 grant awarded to the council by the Chewing Gum Task Force, set up by Keep Britain Tidy and funded by the major chewing gum producers.



The annual cost of cleaning up chewing gum nationwide is around **£7 million**

New signs installed as part of the campaign against discarded chewing gum.

Take me to the water

Swimming is a great exercise for everyone. However, for many people with mobility issues getting in and out of the pool can be a challenge.

That is why the council is installing a Poolpod 3 at the Brentwood Centre swimming pool in the New Year, thanks to successful grant funding obtained by the council, in partnership with Brentwood Access Group.

The easy-to-use submersible platform lift provides a flexible and dignified means of entering and leaving the swimming pool for people with limited mobility.

It is suitable for adults and children living with a disability and older people who would benefit from easier access.

The initiative is supported by the Brentwood Community Fund, the Basildon and Brentwood Health Inequalities Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.



The Poolpod 3 platform lift

Baytree Centre redevelopment to begin early works

New investment has been approved into the Baytree Centre, working in partnership with Essex Highways, to carry out essential improvements to street furniture, signage, and the environment around the centre.

The Assets, Projects, and Strategy Committee agreed upon this as part of a three-phase delivery approach to progress the redevelopment of the Baytree Centre. The council purchased the shopping centre in 2021 and gained planning permission for a redevelopment scheme last year. The updated phasing recognises the challenging economic environment since the proposals were first put forward in 2022, including higher interest rates and build costs, alongside the needed regeneration and repairs to Brentwood High Street.

Alongside the initial phase, work is now underway on developing a high-quality public realm scheme at

the entrance to the Baytree Centre, providing a gateway to the rest of the centre and the wider High Street. This will include engagement with key stakeholders such as Brentwood Connected, Brentwood Access Group and community organisations. The scheme will appropriately incorporate the Chapel Ruins, with their heritage being recognised. It is planned to break ground in the latter period of next year.

Finally, a comprehensive development review of the existing Baytree Centre and the original proposed scheme will be completed. This review will meet the council's ambition to bring forward a diverse tenant mix, including retail and leisure uses, recognising the area's heritage, complementing the High Street and opportunities across the town centre, in any agreed scheme.

Fleet converted to eco-friendly fuel



The Council has switched its fleet of waste, streetcare and grounds maintenance vehicles from fossil fuel derived diesel to an eco-friendly fuel. The move follows the council's declaration of a climate emergency in June 2023 and is part of its drive to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

In 2023, almost 70% (722 tonnes CO2e) of the council's carbon footprint was from the burning of diesel for its waste collection service.

What is HVO?

HVO is derived from vegetable oils and waste fats and provides a **99% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions compared to traditional diesel.**

There is also an improvement in air quality when compared with fossil fuel derived diesel as HVO emits 25% less nitrous oxide.

The fuel is made from 100% 'certified' waste material only, that would otherwise end up in landfill causing more harm to the environment. It means reduced emissions, and its longer-term storage stability will make it a complete replacement for diesel fuel.

Unlike electric vehicles, which can be costly and require substantial infrastructure, HVO can be used as a direct replacement for diesel in existing fleets with minimal modifications.



To find out about the council's environmental initiatives, visit www.brentwood.gov.uk/climate-emergency

The Brentwood fleet of 56 vehicles, including its waste trucks, is now run on Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO), a practical and environmentally friendly alternative to diesel for powering vehicles.

Brentwood is the first and only council in Essex to make the full move to HVO. The Council also has seven electric vans.

From spuds to sprouts let's recycle our food waste this Christmas

Over the festive period, around 30% more waste is produced in the UK. Food makes up a large portion of this – so, let's make sure we recycle it!

Although Christmas leftovers should be eaten and stored where possible, we know that some food waste is unavoidable. This year, don't put it in your general rubbish bin but use a food caddy.

By using a caddy, the food waste can be recycled into green energy and fertiliser to power Essex.

Make recycling food part of your Christmas cheer and order a FREE food caddy today at www.brentwood.gov.uk/food-waste-caddy

For more information on food recycling, visit www.lovesessex.org/ideas/recycle/food-recycling



Are you eligible for Pension Credit?

Should YOU be taking the Credit?

Are you over State Pension age? Have you checked if you're eligible for Pension Credit?

For pensioners who qualify, Pension Credit could mean an average boost to their income of around £3,900 a year.

It takes just a few minutes to check if you qualify.

There's more good news

If you do qualify for Pension Credit, it can unlock additional support, including Winter Fuel Payments, help with Council Tax, NHS dental care and, for those over 75, a free TV licence.

To find out if you're eligible or to claim Pension Credit, go to www.gov.uk/pensioncredit or you can call the Pension Credit claim line on **0800 99 1234**.

Worried about the application process?

The council's Revenues & Benefits outreach and engagement team can help you apply. They are also able to help find which other benefits you may be entitled to. They are available every Wednesday 9am-5pm in Brentwood Town Hall, or visit www.brentwood.gov.uk/where-to-find-help-the-revenue-and-benefits-outreach-engagement-team

Heat your home for less

Everyone is worried about their energy bills these days. But did you know there are schemes and grants available that can improve the energy efficiency of your home and help cut your bills?

See the current schemes and grants available on our website at www.brentwood.gov.uk/energy-efficiency-for-your-home-grants-and-schemes

Better Housing Better Health



Better Housing Better Health (BHBH) have a preventative approach to health and wellbeing. The BHBH service provides residents with a single point of contact to get impartial expert advice to help improve the energy efficiency of their home, save money and improve comfort.

BHBH operates a free call helpline. All advisors are City and Guilds trained energy experts offering bespoke advice on reducing energy bills, improving the energy efficiency of homes and financial help such as:

- **Emergency Fuel vouchers**
- **Free Home energy visits**
- **Grant funding towards energy bills/debt and other interventions and referrals.**



For more information visit www.bhbh.org.uk or call **0800 107 0044**

ECO4 scheme

The ECO4 scheme offers support to low-income households in improving energy efficiency, by providing retrofit support, funded by your energy suppliers. It covers home improvements, including wall insulation, heat pumps, solar energy panels and boiler upgrades.

To qualify your household must receive at least one of a number of Government assisted benefits and the EPC rating for your home must be D, E, F, or G.

Boiler Upgrade Scheme

The Boiler Upgrade Scheme offers a £7,500 grant for a new heat pump. Recent changes mean more people qualify, and heat pump installations are currently VAT exempt, adding even more savings.

Planning for Our Future



Brentwood Council has just published Our Plan Our Future 2024-2028.

This document is important because it lays out how we are working to improve the health, wellbeing and opportunities for the people who live and work in Brentwood.

Our Plan Our Future was developed following consultation with residents, local businesses and stakeholders.

You told us about your priorities and what you wanted to see happen to improve our borough.

Our ambition is to create a sustainable, vibrant community where everyone thrives and belongs, and in doing so ensure a cleaner, safe borough with a flourishing local economy.

To deliver on this vision for Brentwood we have set out three key strategic themes:

- A Place to Call Home
- Cleaner, Greener & Safer
- A Thriving & Growing Economy

These themes will underpin our future planning, activities and how we use our resources.

We know that here in Brentwood we have fantastic communities, high streets, villages, and parishes. We also know that each area of Brentwood has its own unique challenges.

Our Plan Our Future will guide and focus the allocation of resources to ensure continued prosperity right across the borough.

This core document will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to residents' needs and the borough's future direction.

We look forward to working with you to deliver these ambitious plans together.

Councillor Barry Aspinell, Leader, Brentwood Borough Council
Councillor Dr Tim Barrett, Deputy Leader of Brentwood Borough Council
Councillor Vicky Davies, Deputy Leader of Brentwood Borough Council

This is what we mean when we say: >>

A Place to Call Home

- Develop a long-term strategy for the delivery of affordable, high-quality homes that meet our current and future housing needs
- Engage with all our communities in shaping the future delivery of services, and in developing policy and decision making
- Help ensure residents can access the care and support they need to achieve their best physical and mental health
- Introduce the Brentwood Locality Grant Scheme to expand support for local groups and organisations with small community projects to improve mental and physical wellbeing of residents
- Embed health considerations into the wider policy development across the whole council.



Cleaner, Greener & Safer

- We will lead on initiatives to improve the environment and enhance the natural beauty of our borough for everyone to enjoy
- Achieve a net zero council status by 2030, encourage sustainability across the council and deliver on programmes that help create a cleaner, safer and greener borough
- Work with venues, community partners and residents to create a women's safety charter to help ensure everyone who works or visits Brentwood can be safe and feel safe
- Examine the reintroduction of a Green Award Scheme to celebrate local businesses leading the way on positive climate action
- Initiatives to encourage residents to get out and enjoy the health benefits of active exercise and sustainable transport, including a Local walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan.



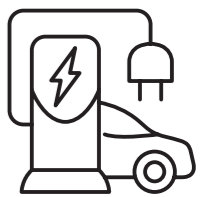
A Thriving & Growing Economy

- We want to secure inward investment as well as nurture local businesses and support vibrant town centres
- Supporting responsible growth that ensures well designed neighbourhoods
- Working in partnership with the Brentwood Connect BID to improve our high streets
- Develop a new strategy for the renewal and enhancement of community infrastructure and street furniture
- Work with local businesses and stakeholder partners to improve the shops, stores and food and entertainment venues on our high streets, shopping parades and key retail areas of the borough.



Ways we are already building Our Plan Our Future:

- Building new council homes that are carbon neutral in Brookfield Close, Hutton Road, Harwood Road and Pilgrims Hatch
- Converting the council vehicle fleet to run on HVO (Bio Diesel), ensuring a 90 per cent reduction in carbon emissions
- Setting up unique Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to develop closer relationships with local businesses, helping to building safe, vibrant and welcoming places to shop, relax and work
- Ongoing roll out programme of new Electric Vehicle charging points across the borough
- Introducing a Scrutiny, Performance and Standards Committee as part of our commitment to good governance.



Read Our Plan, Our Future 2024 – 2028 by visiting www.brentwood.gov.uk

Brentwood Community Fund projects



Every year, the council provides funding for local charities and community groups with projects that support and improve the lives of residents. The money comes from our Community Fund, in partnership with Axis and Seven Arches Investments Ltd.

This year, a total of 11 local organisations shared the Community Fund pot of £80,000, after successfully bidding for money to fund an array of projects that support many of our most vulnerable residents, help foster community friendship and encourage local people to adopt healthier lifestyles.

Here are a few of the projects the fund supported in 2024.

Helping SNAP to support families



Money from the Community Fund is being used to support much needed weekly pre-school sessions for children with a range of disabilities, run by SNAP.

Pre-school sessions give parents a chance to meet each other and get support from SNAP Family Support Advisers while their children enjoy the activities. Children have access to a wide variety of toys as well as the centre's specialist facilities, including a Multi-Sensory Room, soft play, and interactive floor.

The charity is based in Brentwood but works right across Essex helping thousands of families with children and young people who have any additional need or disability.



SNAP offers a helping hand to thousands of families who need support

Find out more about SNAP and its services at www.snapcharity.org

Healthy eating on the menu

Since 2018, the Daily Bread Café in Hutton has run a food hub where it provides meals and other essentials to people who find themselves in crisis.

The cafe, at St Peter's Church, is supported by volunteers and donations. It is not a food bank but does provide nutritious meals to anyone who needs the support.

Many people on low incomes find it difficult to ensure they are eating healthily, and the Daily Bread team successfully bid for a grant from the Community Fund to support free workshops on budgeting skills and healthy eating for families.

The café, which is open six days a week, also plays host to activities for children, families and the local community.

 For more information on the Daily Bread Café: www.huttonparish.com/dailybread



Diary of a Princess

The fascinating but little-known story of an Indian Princess buried at All Saints' church near Brentwood is being told, with help from a grant from the Community Fund.

Many visitors to the graveyard of All Saints will have seen the headstone of Helen Randhir Singh Ahluwalia of Kapurthala and wondered about her story.

Princess Helen was the youngest daughter of Randhir Singh, ruling Maharajah in the state of Kapurthala. His third wife was the daughter of Robert Hodges, a British civil servant. After his death, Randhir Singh's widow and their three daughters, including Helen, settled in London.

Helen mixed with the elite of London society, but her life was tragically cut short by tuberculosis aged 23, in October 1887.

The Community Fund grant to the Essex Cultural Diversity Project supported an amazing event at Doddinghurst Village Hall earlier this year, bringing together people from the local parish and visiting Sikh communities.

The Global Village event, in honour of Princess Helen, included Indian acrobatics by Circus Raj, African storytelling, Indian food and Henna hand painting.

There was also a pop-up exhibition and a talk about the princess and her amazing life.

Find out more about Princess Helen at www.helenahluwalia.com



Global village in Doddinghurst in the summer

Keep an eye on www.brentwood.gov.uk/funding for future funding opportunities

Cycling for life

Trailnet is a community interest company (CIC) dedicated to transforming people of all ages and abilities into cyclists.

The company successfully bid to the Community Fund for a grant to fund a heavily discounted bike scheme for families and people in receipt of benefits and with long-term health conditions.



To be eligible, families and individuals must live in the borough of Brentwood and meet ONE of the following criteria: Be in receipt of Housing Benefit, or in receipt of Universal Credit, or have children in receipt of free school meals, or have a long-term health condition that would benefit from increased physical activity.

Trailnet hopes to provide 30 bikes for local people by Spring next year. Applicants also receive a helmet, lock and lights.

Trailnet organises regular group rides, cycling lessons, bike hiring, community events and bike recycling programmes as well as other two-wheel related activities, helping people lead healthier lives, make new friends and discover nature.

As part of the scheme, participants have the opportunity to take part in three group rides and/or training sessions. To find out more about Trailnet visit: www.trailnet.org.uk

Message from the Mayor of Brentwood



that marked the 80th anniversary of D-Day and one of the most important events in our Civic calendar – the Remembrance Day Parade and Service.

There have been many more events I've attended – and without exception, I have been warmly welcomed by so many lovely people throughout the borough that I am so proud to represent.

Fundraising is a big part of the role of Mayor, and I've chosen two charities to support this year, the Trussell Trust Food Bank in Brentwood and SNAP (Special Needs And Parents).



The Mayor of Brentwood, alongside members of the Royal British Legion (Brentwood Branch) and the Sea Cadets, launching the Poppy Appeal

Since becoming Brentwood's Mayor in May, it has been a privilege to join the local community at events and occasions. From the Strawberry Sports Festival, to the opening of Hutton FC and hosting groups from Mountbazon in France and Roth in Germany under our Town Twinning Programme. I've celebrated achievements at the Jack Petchey Awards, St. Martin's School Sports Awards, and The Brentwood School Concert and Awards Ceremony. I was honoured to attend ceremonies

Brentwood Trussell Trust Food Bank has been providing vital support for the past 13 years. Their selfless dedication is truly inspiring and supporting them was an easy decision. SNAP, founded 30 years ago by eight Brentwood mums, has been a beacon of support for families with children who have specific needs and disabilities.

Thank you to everyone who has supported our Mayoral Charity Events so far, to help us raise as much money for these charities as we can.

I'm looking forward to meeting so many more of you over the coming months. If you are a community group or charity and would like to invite me to your event, just email **mayors.secretary@brentwood.gov.uk** and if I am able to attend I will.

Mayor of Brentwood
Councillor Mark Haigh

Get your nominations in for the Brentwood Civic Awards

Do you know someone who goes out of their way to make a difference in our community?

The annual Civic Awards are back, and we are calling on you to nominate those individuals and organisations who go above and beyond to make Brentwood a better place.



The award categories are:

- **The Service to the Community**
- **The Lifetime Achievement**

Anyone who lives or works in Brentwood can be nominated.

Visit our website to get your nominations in or you can email **mayors.secretary@brentwood.gov.uk** to request a hard copy of the nomination form or call **01277 312500**.

Recycle your real Christmas tree for charity



For the seventh year running, Saint Francis Hospice is offering its brilliant recycling service for your real Christmas tree, post the festivities.

Saint Francis's team of friendly volunteers will come to your home and take away and recycle your tree - in return for a donation to support the hospice's amazing work.

The team will be recycling trees in Brentwood from Thursday 9 - Sunday 12 January 2025.

To register for this service simply visit: **www.sfh.org.uk/recycle-your-christmas-tree**

Take the worry out of what to do with your real tree after Christmas. Register for the service before 8am on Monday 6 January 2025 and the elves from Saint Francis will do all the hard work.



Receive council updates straight to your inbox

SIGN UP to our e-newsletters to receive the latest information on council news, events and job vacancies.

You can subscribe to our resident and business e-newsletters at **www.brentwood.gov.uk/stayconnected**

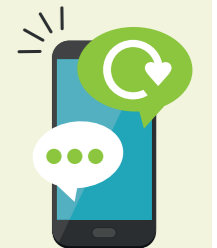


SCAN ME



Is it bin day?

Ahead of the festive season - sign up to receive free text alerts from us to remind you when to put out your waste and recycling.



How does it work?

An automated message is sent to your mobile phone the day before your collection to remind you to put out your waste and recycling. We may also use the service to alert you of any changes to the refuse service.

To find out more or to register for our SMS text reminder service, visit **www.brentwood.gov.uk/textservice**



MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM BRENTWOOD CONNECTED!



Brentwood Connected is a unique Business Improvement District (BID) funded by town centre businesses to improve the experience of residents, visitors, employees and businesses in Brentwood, Shenfield and Ingatestone. Recent Brentwood Connected



events include the **Brentwood Art Trail**, **Halloween** trails across all three High Streets and **Lighting Up Brentwood**. We have more exciting plans for 2025!



SAY HELLO TO OUR TOWN RANGERS

The **Brentwood Connected Town Rangers** joined us in July and have had a hugely positive impact on the area.

Our Town Rangers work closely with Essex Police, Brentwood Borough Council, the Community Safety Partnership and Essex Youth Service to engage with businesses and address issues around business crime and anti-social behaviour.



VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR LOCAL EVENTS, NEWS & DIRECTORIES



The Brentwood Connected website includes local **events** listings and extensive directories so you can plan where to **shop, eat & drink**, and make appointments to visit **services** in the borough. You can also read Brentwood Connected **news** and find **special offers**.

FIND OUT MORE

Go to brentwoodconnected.co.uk to visit our website, or scan the QR code

Follow us on social media:

[BrentwoodConnected](#) [Brentwood Connected](#) [Brentwood Connected](#) [BwdConnected](#)

Email us on brentwoodconnected@brentwood.gov.uk

