

## Phoenix FM News Items Broadcast Date: Tuesday 12 April 2011

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<b>Events:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Essex FSB's Brentwood Network Group meets every other Thursday at Ashwells Country Club. Next meeting 14 April 2011</li><li>2. Essex FSB's Billericay Network Group meets on first Thursday of each month at Deli37 in Billericay High Street. Next meeting is 05 May 2011.</li><li>3. Nexus Network Group meets at Great Warley every Thursday from 6.45am.</li><li>4. The Christian Business Network Group is meeting in Billericay on Thursday 05 May 2011 from 6.00pm until 8.30pm</li><li>5. Social Networking for Business is meeting in Billericay on Thursday 12 May 2011 from 6.00pm until 8.30pm</li><li>6. The Essex Business Network's Brentwood Group meets alternate Thursdays at Marygreen Manor. Next meeting 14 April 2011 from 7.00am until 9.00am.</li><li>7. The Essex Business Forum meets every Thursday at Warley Park Golf Club from 6.45am.</li><li>8. The Select Network Group meets at Maylands Park Golf Club each Friday from 6.45am until 9.00am.</li><li>9. More details of all events can be found at <a href="http://www.fsb.org.uk/essex/events">www.fsb.org.uk/essex/events</a></li></ol>
<b>Brentwood News:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Christmas chaos could be on the cards for Brentwood Town Centre this year unless Brentwood Council gets its act together to replace parking spaces lost in William Hunter Way when development gets underway. SHOPPERS and homeowners could face months of disruption with confirmation that development of the William Hunter Way site is set to start this autumn. The scheme was finally anchored after M&amp;S formally agreed to fill the 26,000 sq ft store, which will feature alongside it a six-screen cinema, ten-storey car park and 14 town centre homes. Waitrose, which had been in the running since plans were first mooted, has now effectively ruled itself out altogether from Brentwood. That decision leaves M&amp;S and the landlord Topland having to look for another retailer to fill the high street premises when it is eventually vacated in 2013. Duncan Tindale, development director at William Hunter developers <a href="#">Stockland</a>, said: "We're looking to build further momentum with more leases to be signed in the coming months and ahead of construction of the multi-million pound scheme starting this autumn." Despite the impending work, which could coincide with the Town Hall refurbishment, <a href="#">Brentwood Borough Council</a> is yet to draw up plans for working hours and practices and, importantly, identify an alternative to more than 400 parking spaces temporarily lost while building is carried out. A Brentwood Borough Council spokesperson said: "The council will ensure that parking facilities in Brentwood during the work on the William Hunter Way development to provide the best option for shoppers, local traders and drivers and parkers."</li><li>2. Scores on the doors of food establishments are meant to give consumers information about food hygiene standards at that particular location but</li></ol>

there is some controversy over the fairness of the scheme with some business claiming the scores awarded by Brentwood Council's environmental health officers do not reflect the true picture.

THE controversial star ratings are part of a scheme to "bring about an overall improvement in food hygiene standards", insist council experts.

[Brentwood council](#)'s Environmental Health services have defended the joint venture with the [Food Standards Agency](#) this week.

A council spokesman said: "It is a natural consequence of being given a low score that food business operators will want to improve on this as it is the first time their standards are visible within the public domain.

"For this reason food businesses will increasingly question the scores given as they naturally link this with the success, or otherwise, of their business.

"Environmental Health officers should always be prepared to explain the score given in every circumstance so that businesses can understand the significance of the contraventions found and how this may impact upon their score."

The [Bell pub](#), in Ingatestone High Street, was among more than 30 establishments given a rating of just one star – major improvement necessary – under the "scores on the doors" system launched by [Brentwood Borough Council](#) in partnership with the [Food Standards Agency](#) in February.

It gives restaurants, pubs, takeaways, cafes and other establishments that sell and prepare food a star rating of between zero and five, but many have demanded a revisit following a backlash of criticism over the scores, published to the public online.

The staff at The Bell slammed their low score, generated from an "out-of-date" inspection around a year ago, and were given four stars out of five after a revisit on March 15.

Landlady Linda Brace said the latest inspector had even apologised for the poor report given to them previously but, while they have been given a new, improved score, it has still not been altered online.

Mrs Brace said: "I have gone from more than 40 covers on a Sunday to six. It has devastated us.

A PIZZA takeaway is among the other establishments anticipating a much-improved hygiene score and plenty of stars to come their way.

Pizza Go Go, in Ongar Road, Brentwood, has been given the thumbs up for improvements made at the premises since it was issued with a zero-rating in the "scores on the doors" system.

Staff are now expecting to fly up the ratings when they are revisited in the near future as part of the joint [Brentwood Borough Council](#) and [Food Standards Agency](#) scheme.

Owner Ali Ashnaei said: "We have made all the changes which were requested in order to raise the score.

"The council have seen the premises and are pleased that their requests were fulfilled and have sent a letter to confirm this.

"All of the issues were of a technical nature and none were related to the food being served or hygiene within the establishment."

The takeaway is expecting a revisit in the very near future and then will be issued with a new score.

What Essex FSB would like to see is after any premises is inspected a standardised feedback sheet is discussed and then left with the food outlet owner showing what was good and what needs improving.

3. Taxi drivers are concerned that the charges being levied by Brentwood

	<p>Council for their licences are among the highest in the region. The figures listed in the table relate to the fees for renewal of a one-year hackney carriage licence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Brentwood £470</li> <li>2. Braintree £395</li> <li>3. Chiltern £395</li> <li>4. Chelmsford £385.50</li> <li>5. Surrey Heath £379</li> <li>6. Ipswich £378.50</li> </ol> <p>Hackney carriages are allowed to be flagged down in the street and are also available to pre-book. This fee is a total of a driver and vehicle licence, which attract different fees. A different set of vehicle licence fees are available for private hire booking only. This data was collected by Treble 20 Taxis by visiting council websites and contacting council offices, and shows the top ten most expensive council authorities from 67 in the South East and Eastern England regions, made up of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, <a href="#">Buckinghamshire</a>, Berkshire, <a href="#">East Sussex</a>, <a href="#">Hampshire</a>, <a href="#">Isle of Wight</a>, <a href="#">Kent</a>, Oxfordshire, <a href="#">Surrey</a>, <a href="#">West Sussex</a> and Greater <a href="#">London</a>.</p> <p>4. A MUSIC festival catering for up to 30,000 people will be staged in Brentwood this summer which gives local businesses a massive opportunity to attract new customers and promote the Borough. The outdoor event, entitled the Brentwood Festival, will take place in the grounds of the <a href="#">Brentwood Centre</a>, in Doddinghurst Lane, over three days in July. The charity festival will be headlined by three acts: The Rats, an offshoot of the Irish punk outfit The Boomtown Rats; <a href="#">Dublin</a> soul outfit The Stars From The Commitments; and From The Jam, a rock band led by <a href="#">Bruce Foxton</a>, the former bass player in mod favourites The Jam. Twenty-four other bands from across the county, including The Heaters, Double Trouble, Undercover and Lobster, will also perform over the course of the event. It starts on Friday, July 8, and finishes on Sunday, July 10. The event is the brainchild of friends Martin Dansey, an electrical engineer, and publican <a href="#">Jason Jopson</a>, the owner of The White Horse, in Coxtie Green Road, Brentwood. For the past six years, the pair have organised the annual White Horse beer and music festival in the grounds of the pub. However, each time the event has been staged it has grown in size and let's hope the 2011 event is a big success.</p>
<p><b>Billericay News:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A SHOP took centre stage when it was featured in a new television programme. Pitter Patter Products, based at Barleylands, Billericay, comes to the rescue in a new series of 60 Minute Makeover on <a href="#">ITV</a>, helping out with personalised decorations to complete the DIY team's work. Members of staff at the store supplied the crew with bespoke clocks and wall ornaments to help decorate a girl's bedroom. Pitter Patter Products' director David Liney said: "We were thrilled to bits that ITV contacted us and to see all our hard work on television was very exciting. "After the show aired the website sales increased and many people</li> </ol>

- visiting our shop at Barleylands mentioned how they had seen us on TV."
2. The Old King's Head, [Stock](#) is the scene for a new way of attracting customers as great food and high farce are on the menu when one of [Britain's](#) favourite sitcoms is affectionately revisited for a new production. A Slice of Fawlty Towers is a brilliant idea that combines references to all the best bits of the classic comedy as you tuck in to some tasty pub food. And although you can expect Basil, [Sybil](#) and [Manuel](#) to be at loggerheads as usual, they won't stop you enjoying your food at this popular eatery.
 

The production is the idea of Steve Arber, 30, of Billericay who produces and directs the show. It came about after he took voluntary redundancy from his job in [London](#) last year and decided he wanted to make some money out of putting on theatrical productions.

Steve had the idea of staging a Fawlty Towers show, but rather than just do a reread of a couple of episodes in a theatre, he wrote a script which referenced the best bits and based the action in a working restaurant. He approached his local pub, the Old King's Head, because he knew the people there and knew it had the right layout for what he wanted to do. They jumped at the chance to play host

Proceedings begin at the bar of the pub where diners have a drink before Basil, Sybil and Manuel join in the action, ushering them to their seats for dinner.

A lot of people may shudder at the thought of having a meal whilst Basil and co are in attendance, but Steve is quick to point out that they don't mess around with people's food and that you have a proper meal served by the pub's waiting staff.

A Slice of Fawlty Towers is at the Old King's Head, Stock on the last Friday of every month. For more details, contact [info@thecuttheatrecompany.com](mailto:info@thecuttheatrecompany.com) and for bookings, call the pub on 01277 829933.
  3. **BUSINESSES** from Billericay and beyond have stumped up more than £36,000 for charity, in advance of a well-known annual fundraising walk. Around a dozen companies and sole traders have contributed the record sum to the 'bonus pot' for this year's Fun Walk at Barleylands Farm. Following the event, which will take place on Sunday, May 22, the pot will then be divided between the 60 or so charities who typically take part each year.
 

The Fun Walk is the idea of Billericay's MP [John Baron](#), and has been staged annually since 2002.

Mr Baron, who organises the event each year with the assistance of a committee, told the Gazette he was very pleased with the size of the bonus pot so far.

Last year, the Fun Walk raised more than £50,000 for 60 charities and it is hoped that this year's event will collect even more money.

Since its inception nearly a decade ago, the event, which is suitable for people of all ages and abilities, has raised more than £264,000. Those who participate can walk either a three-mile course or a shorter one.

There will also be a barbecue, live music and charity stalls at Barleylands on the day.

Organisations wishing to take part in the walk should write to The [Fun Walk Committee](#) at 13 Bentalls Business Park, Bentalls, Basildon, SS14 3BN or call 07544 324218 by May 1, 2011 to register.

**Area Topics:**

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<p><b>County Topics:</b></p>	<p>1. Essex FSB has been part of a working group led by Essex County Council's procurement team which has been looking at the way small businesses can access county council contracts and we have been very impressed by the positive reception suggestions have received on how to cut through the red tape.</p> <p>We also congratulate Essex County Council for meeting with more than 1,000 small businesses at meetings across the county which has also led to it changing the way it works with suppliers, specifically making it easier for local companies to tender for contracts.</p> <p>As part of this drive for continual improvement, Essex County Council has made changes to existing ECC procurement practices to make it easier for local businesses to provide services to the council and we welcome these moves.</p> <p>The main changes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cutting the size of the pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ) by half, making it easier and more efficient to complete and making it more relevant to small businesses including Sole Traders</li> <li>• for certain spend thresholds moving towards making it compulsory for one out of three quotes to be from a local business</li> <li>• increase the number of suppliers paid within 10 days</li> <li>• abolished high turnover thresholds for contract awards, enabling more business to tender for work.</li> <li>• a standardised corporate supplier feedback process to help supplier improve future bids.</li> </ul> <p>Last year Essex County Council signed the Essex FSB <u>Small Business Engagement Accord</u> and this change in the procurement process is another example of that Accord being put in to action and reflects the county council's continuing commitment to working with and supporting the 68,000 small businesses based in the county which are so vital to the economic well being of our area.</p> <p>2. Lovers of fine food and drink will be spoilt for choice when Essex's biggest culinary festival comes to Crossing Temple Barns on the weekend of July 9-10.</p> <p>The first Essex Food and Drink Festival will be a celebration of food and drink from across the county with chefs, producers and restaurateurs all showing what makes Essex such an exciting place for food lovers.</p> <p>In particular, the festival is a big opportunity for the county to showcase what local producers have to offer and Brentwood Brewing Company is already booked in as an exhibitor but we are sure there are more local firms who can benefit from exhibiting their products.</p> <p>The best Essex ale, jams, teas, cupcakes, and ice cream, will be some of the products available to try and buy at the event.</p> <p>Advanced tickets are £5 per person per day, on the day they are £6, and children under 12 go free, to book call 0845 6037624 or go to <a href="http://www.thisistalessex.co.uk/foodfestival">www.thisistalessex.co.uk/foodfestival</a></p>
<p><b>Campaigns:</b></p>	<p>1. Major Highways Contractor Balfour Beatty is working with Essex FSB (Federation of Small Businesses) to run three Business Breakfast Briefings across the county with the aim of encouraging more small businesses to join its supply chain.</p> <p>Essex FSB Chairman, <u>Iain Wicks</u>, said: "It is fantastic news that one of the biggest contractors in the country is encouraging more small businesses to join its supply chain and Essex FSB is pleased to be working with Balfour Beatty to deliver these three events.</p> <p>"At each event key people from Balfour Beatty will be present to explain</p>

	<p>the types of supplier they are looking for which ranges from direct roads surfacing, building materials and hire of plant to the supply of office consumables.</p> <p>"The events are free to attend and are open to relevant businesses in the county who wish to come along and we are hoping there will be a good attendance at each one. All are breakfast meetings from 7.30am until 9.00am so people can then go on to work without losing much of their day.</p> <p>Managing Director of Balfour Beatty, Terry Woodhouse said: "Balfour Beatty has been providing highways maintenance services for Essex County Council in Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchester, Maldon and Tendring since 2006 employing 380 people and working with a number of sub contractors. We are also working with Essex County Council on the £63m Saddlers Farm development project.</p> <p>"We are now bidding for a new larger contract with ECC and are looking to expand the number of Essex based businesses working with us in our supply chain.</p> <p>"These breakfast briefings will give any local business the opportunity to come along and meet senior staff from Balfour Beatty, hear what our requirements are and how to register interest in joining our supply chain as well as ask any relevant questions.</p> <p>"We are pleased to be working in partnership with Essex FSB as it represents exactly the type of business we wish to be working with in the county, we look forward to meeting a lot of potential suppliers at each of these events."</p> <p>The events are being held at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Colchester on Tuesday 19 April 2011</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Basildon on Wednesday 20 April 2011</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Harlow on Thursday 21 April 2011</a></li> </ul> <p>Bookings at <a href="http://www.fsb.org.uk/essex/events">www.fsb.org.uk/essex/events</a></p>
<p><b>Information Needed:</b></p>	
<p><b>National Topic:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If you're aged 16-30 and need funding to get your new business idea or project off the ground, the Shell LiveWIRE Grand Ideas Awards offers up to 6 x £1,000 prizes every month to the most innovative ideas submitted by new businesses (in their first 12 months of trading). Winners of the monthly Shell LiveWIRE Grand Ideas Awards will also be offered a range of <u>'value-added prizes'</u> throughout the year. <i>You've got until the last day of the month to enter the awards so apply now by logging in at the bottom of this page!</i> New for 2011 Each month, the three Grand Ideas Award winners with the highest judges' scores will automatically be put through to our 'Hot 40' shortlist for the £10,000 Shell LiveWIRE Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award, with the remaining winners added to a pool of 'sift entries'.</li> <li>2. New Counter Terrorism Vulnerability Assessment Tool For Businesses The current terrorism threat assessment for the UK is classed as 'severe'. Businesses in 'crowded places' such as high streets, shopping centres, near stadiums or theatres, are being encouraged to go through a straightforward <u>risk assessment</u> to assess and address, potential vulnerabilities to their business.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Business Awards:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The European Business Awards sponsored by HSBC close on Thursday 14 April 2011. More details from <a href="http://www.businessawardseurope.com">www.businessawardseurope.com</a></li> <li>2. Take One Small Step Competition</li> </ol>

	<p>Open to any start up business and top prize is £50,000 plus nine regional prizes available.  Application Deadline: Wednesday 27 April 2011  More details on all awards from <a href="mailto:keith.brown@fsb.org.uk">keith.brown@fsb.org.uk</a></p>
<b>General:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using social media can bring you new customers, raise your profile and Boost your profits.</li> </ol>
<b>Other services:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly email newsletter giving details of events, contract opportunities and business awards plus special offers by emailing <a href="mailto:essexvoiceofbusiness@fsb.org.uk">essexvoiceofbusiness@fsb.org.uk</a></li> <li>Follow on Twitter at FSBEssex for up to date news and event details</li> </ol>