



Making connections and creating opportunities for business has been the mantra of Birchwood Forum since it was established in 1996.

Birchwood Forum was created to enhance and maintain Birchwood as a strong economic community with businesses working in partnership and investing in the future together.

Celebrating its 21st Anniversary in 2017 Birchwood Forum has now taken a further step to reaffirm its role in creating business opportunities by establishing itself as an independent not for profit company limited by guarantee to manage its growing list of specialist networks and activities.

2017 sees the launch of a further specialist network Forum for Digital in Business to complement the North West Nuclear Forum and Facilities Management Network Forum.

A feasibility study is currently being undertaken to establish the opportunity to create a Business Improvement District for Birchwood and Woolston Granges.

To mark this anniversary, a programme of special events is taking place throughout the year and includes the first major exhibition showcase for nuclear in April, summer celebrations with business and community in the Park and a major business roundtable in the early Autumn.

Birchwood Forum aims to:

- sustain Birchwood as a premier business location in England's North West
- offer a vibrant network for businesses in Birchwood and Warrington areas
- create dynamic business engagement activities and generate ideas for further business development opportunities amongst members and in related supply chains
- respond to members' concerns and provide appropriate support
- deliver a programme of member meetings and events to provide fresh ideas, business connections, and information
- ensure appropriate interface is maintained between private and public sectors and support projects which are results driven and provide beneficial outcomes
- promote solutions for local issues
- work with and support employers in the local area, offering an information resource and assistance
- offer advice to organisations wishing to locate in Birchwood.

Birchwood Forum Resources

Businesses joining Birchwood Forum benefit from a range of support services and activities heavily subsidised through the generous sponsorship of partner organisations seeking to ensure Birchwood remains the location of choice in which to work, live or visit.

Resources include:

Continuity: Established in 1996, the Forum maintains continuity to present Birchwood as the location of choice for business.

Social Media Links: Offers the opportunity for businesses to connect together with local businesses, public and community interests

Networks: brings together the business community to develop opportunities and work together in major supply chains for mutual benefit.

Opportunity: Seeks to develop inter-trading and supply chain opportunities through a programme of monthly meetings

Regional Connections: Acts as link to public and private sector networks across the region providing members with a wide range of contacts, advice and information on issues which directly affect their businesses and opportunities for consultation on a number of important topics.

Represents: Birchwood Forum represents the interests of all those who live and work in the Birchwood area and is highly active in seeking solutions to problems affecting businesses and residents which include:

- enhancing services for businesses
- safety and security
- travel and transport
- environmental management
- business and community interface
- profiling

The Forum's actions and outcomes on these subjects are the main attraction for members.

Its interface with public sector organisations in consultation processes provides the Forum with a greatly enhanced profile in the Cheshire and Warrington area and strong links in the North West Region.

Member Opportunities and Benefits

Membership of Birchwood Forum is open to Warrington based businesses and organisations keen to:

- make business connections for mutual benefit
- engage in supply chain development
- learn and contribute to enhancing their own business

Members represent a cross-section of business, industry, retail, education, public and community sectors, all of whom are keen to network with each other for mutual benefit.

The benefits of membership include:

- regular business networking events to exchange ideas, information and business opportunities
- learning and hearing fresh information on a range of topics important for business development
- involvement in specialist business sector activities
- engaging in policy development which directly affects business through connections at local, regional and national level
- supporting community activities

Member Profiling

Website

The website www.birchwoodforum.com offers an opportunity for Members of the Forum to raise awareness of their businesses to a wider audience through the business links which are available to Birchwood Forum at local, regional and national level including:

- enhanced business profiling
- web links
- news profiling
- access to information not normally available to the public

Email news

Forum members receive regular information, news items, consultation invitations and presentations.

Birchwood Forum on Social Media

Linked In

Join Birchwood Forum on Linked In and its special groups for Facilities Management and the North West Nuclear Industry Supply Chain.

Twitter

Members can benefit from the “retweets” of their own news via the Birchwood Forum Twitter feeds.

Birchwood Forum Achievements

Since its establishment in 1996 Birchwood Forum has been instrumental in a number of high profile achievements for Birchwood and Warrington which include:

- Maintaining the link between business, community and the public sector for 20 years
- Representing the interests of over 400 employers with 24,000 employees and links to 12,000 residents through The Birchwood Stakeholder Group
- Putting Birchwood “on the map” by negotiating the changes to motorway signage
- Instrumental in lobbying for enhanced rail services to Birchwood and campaigning with Warrington Disability Partnership to achieve an accessible Station
- Devising the M62 Junction 11 Gateway Sculpture Project “Encounter”, raising £250,000 and selecting Sculpture Stephen Broadbent through a national competition. Encounter was launched in 2004 by the then North West Development Agency Chief Executive Steven Broomhead [now Warrington Borough Council Chief Executive]
- Developing The Birchwood Partnership with Birchwood Town Council in 2005, to foster community spirit and work together towards improving the quality of life for Birchwood residents and continued prosperity
- Launching the Area Travel Plan in 2008 and continually reviewing and promoting smarter choices for travel to work

- Supporting continued enhancement of services to businesses through surveys, consultation and engagement activities, including:
 - ✓ travel surveys and awareness campaigns for commuter planning
 - ✓ green initiatives awareness in partnership with Environment Agency and Groundwork
 - ✓ business watch scheme in partnership with Cheshire Constabulary
 - ✓ Birchwood in Bloom together with Birchwood Town Council
- Supporting Birchwood High School in its bid to secure Business & Enterprise College status including the introduction of sixth form college provision
- Lobbying for improved pedestrian routes through Birchwood to make them safer and encourage greater use for walking and cycling to work
- Introducing enhanced bus services and improved routing to connect residential areas within Birchwood to the centres of employment as well as connecting the deprived wards of Warrington to Birchwood (to open up job opportunities to those without personal transport).
- Supporting campaign for highway development to ease congestion in Birchwood and surrounding roads
- Working with Warrington Borough Council to develop appropriate support services for SME businesses
- Creating the North West Nuclear Forum to support business development in the nuclear industry supply chain for businesses located in Birchwood, Warrington and the North West Region
- Creating the Facilities Management Network to provide a resource for businesses, promoting best practice and for sharing information and ideas.

- Launching websites for Birchwood Forum and the North West Nuclear Forum to enhance the profile of businesses and increase business opportunities both for SMEs and specialist sector supply chains.
- Launching Social Media services and Linked In groups for Birchwood Forum, the Facilities Management Network and North West Nuclear Forum
- Participating in Skills development working groups organised by the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership.
- Working with the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership to develop awareness of the business opportunities which exist across the Cheshire Science Corridor and taking part in strategy development activities. Profiling the newly established Enterprise Zones at Birchwood.
- Engaging with the Northern Powerhouse to enhance Birchwood's position as the nuclear hub and its globally significant profile.
- Launching the Digital for Business Network Forum.

Birchwood Forum – Steps to Membership

Birchwood Forum membership is based on employee numbers. The membership year runs from 1 April to 31 March. Application forms can be downloaded from the website www.birchwoodforum.com or by sending an email to info@birchwoodforum.com Membership payment may be made by credit or debit card online, BACS or cheque.

Services to Members

- **Monthly Meetings**
Topical subjects and speakers, study visits and joint meetings with other like-minded organisations across the region.
- **Website Profiling**
Company logo together with business description, contact details, RSS feed links, social media links
- **Specialist Networks**
Facilities Management Network provides an option to join the Linked In Group. North West Nuclear Forum is a separate Network with its own membership fee structure
- **Invitations**
Members benefit from a range of invitations to join in activities across the region which would not normally be available to the public
- **Contribute**
Birchwood Forum invites its members to contribute either through hosting a meeting, providing a presentation, or joining the specialist working groups to support its future development.

We look forward to welcoming your organisation into membership.

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