

BUILDING A BRIGHTER BRAND.

REBRAND FOR BARWOOD CAPITAL
2018 ENTRY – FOR PUBLICATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Barwood Capital is a real estate investment firm, based in Northampton and investing funds in regional UK property – commercial, industrial and residential units. Following a period of relatively small steady growth, they felt there was an opportunity to position themselves as a business with a strong return on investment and to raise awareness.

We helped to define their brand strategy, which centred around the core proposition “Clever property, enhancing lives”. Essentially, whether you are an investor, tenant, landowner, house owner, business partner or local council, the property that Barwood Capital invests in enhances your life.

The identity reflects this message, both in the logo, with its emanating glow and the visual language. The imagery makes a feature of light and the headlines use glow words to emphasise messages and give them an ownable style.

In a competitive market place, this distinctive and powerful identity gave Barwood Capital a platform to communicate with its audiences.

The effects have been quite dramatic.

In March 2017 BCL's gross profits were 'redacted confidential data'. In March 2018 they were 'redacted confidential data' an increase of 288%.

The funds they raised from their 2015 fund was 'redacted confidential data'. The funds raised from the 2017 fund was 'redacted confidential data', a 100% increase. Assets under management plus available cash were 'redacted confidential data' at 31 March 2018 (2017: 'redacted confidential data').

Also, the number of new investors in the 2017 fund was 27, a 125% increase on the 2015 fund.

Barwood Capital has definitely taken a huge stride forward. They are now working with nine development managers, they have created a joint-venture with a Care Home developer and have joint ventured on three projects with an institutional pension fund, all new ventures which have come about as a result of a new found status in the market place.

Against these figures, it's worth mentioning that the budget was small. The fee for the brand identity and guidelines was £19,000.

BARWOOD CAPITAL

CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

OUTLINE OF PROJECT BRIEF

The objectives were:

1. Distinguish our brand in a crowded market.
2. Position ourselves as a premium brand.
3. Attract investors, developers, partners (joint venture and agents) and occupiers.

The profile and reputation of the business wasn't living up to its performance achievements. So they could see the opportunity to take themselves to the next level. The way they presented themselves visually was rather dull, inconsistent and didn't really tell their story.

It was essential that we first understood the interplay between the firm's values, what the firm thought of itself, how its clients experienced the brand and how others in the market perceived it.

The target audiences were private and institutional investors, developers, agents and occupiers.

We were tasked with creating a new brand identity and guidelines for them. For the launch, we had to design a website, a brochure, stationery, a folder and building signage.

They didn't have a brand strategy, so this wasn't included in the design brief. Therefore we recommended a strategy stage to inform a new creative brief, which we wrote for them.

We held a workshop to determine their vision, values, core proposition, positioning, offer and personality. What came out of this was a strong message that whoever it is that they deal with on their journey benefits from what they do. And this only happens by being clever about how they find properties to invest in, how they negotiate, how they creatively develop properties and make them appealing to audiences. This led us to the phrase 'clever property, enhancing lives', which became both their core proposition and their strapline.

Our concept came from the core proposition.

BEFORE



AFTER



CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION

Barwood Capital is a real estate investment firm, based in Northampton. Founded in 2009.

They have established four property investment funds, which are invested in by high net worth individuals and institutional investors. Following a period of relatively small steady growth despite successful returns on investment, they felt there was an opportunity to position themselves as a business with a strong return on investment and to raise awareness.

Our solution started with the radiating glow from within the centre of the name, which is enhancing and enlightening. The word mark is strong, clear and confident, both energetic and desirable, all words that formed a part of the brief. The second significant element was the glow applied to a word in titles. This throws out an important word in an appropriate and distinct way. We also gave them guidance on engaging language, to draw people in.

The colour palette and typeface suggest premium quality and provide a modern, clean look.

There isn't really anything out there in their competitor environment that is as clear and consistent in getting their message across.

Their target audiences have responded well to the new identity. Their investor base has increased,

the number of new investors has increased, and the number of joint venture partners has increased. Likewise Twitter and LinkedIn followers have increased.

We have continued to work with them since the rebrand and their continued success since the launch in September 2016 allowed them to move to a larger premises in 2018, which we provided branding signage and graphics for.

Following the brand identity and guidelines for launch, we have created their website, a fund summary brochure, a funding partnerships leaflet, a funding case study sheet, a Power Point template, building signage for their new building, notepads and detailed guidelines for branding their developments.

We collaborated with a brand strategist to deliver the strategy. We invited them to facilitate a brand strategy workshop and help us draw together and present back recommendations for the brand strategy. We also collaborated with Olivia Lane-Nott of Spacecraft who was employed by Barwood Capital as a marketing consultant. She wrote the creative brief for the rebrand and helped to define the collateral required to deliver what the business needed.



CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW OF MARKET AND KEY FACTS

The UK property market has been relatively static for the past few years, resulting in mergers, takeovers and companies diversifying their activities. Even the biggest players in the market such as Land Sec are being bet against by hedge funds. All the more important for you to communicate clearly what you're about.

The industry is dominated by large investment companies who invest heavily in property as well as other things. For example, M&G have a property portfolio worth £3.7bn.

Looking at Barwood Capital's seven most direct competitors, the pattern of growth in the market place over a one year period ranges from a decrease of -58% to an increase of 17%. An average over the seven of -8%.

The property industry has been affected by the 2016 EU referendum due to uncertainty.

KEY FACTS: BARWOOD REBRAND

Launch date: September 2016

Budget: 'Redacted confidential data'

ADDITIONAL BUDGETS:

'Redacted confidential data'

KEY FACTS: BARWOOD'S COMPETITORS

Mayfair Capital

-7% fall in net worth from £2,325,417 (2015) to £2,177,279 (2017).

Palmer Capital

+2% increase in net worth from £20,421,139 (2015) to £20,846,187 (2017)

Clearbell Fund Management

-55% fall in total current assets from £1,620,000 (2017) to 737,000 (2018)

Delancey Asset Management

-58% fall in net worth from £691,713 (2016) to £287,929 (2017).

Salmon Developments

+1% increase in total current assets from £16,788,000 (2016) to £17,024,000 (2017)

Bridges Fund Management

+16% increase in total current assets from £4,670,000 (2017) to 737,000 (2018)

Melford Capital Partners

-17% fall in net worth from £3,040,000 (2016) to £2,539,000 (2017).

SOURCE: COMPANIES HOUSE

RESULTS

HOW THE RESULTS PERFORMED AGAINST ORIGINAL BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

1. DISTINGUISH OUR BRAND IN A CROWDED MARKET.

“After we re-branded in September 2016, we felt we had a strong, bold and confident brand. Two years on, it is still fresh and current and as a business we have grown from strength to strength. Since the re-brand we have definitely become more well known within our sector and our confident logo is definitely remembered.”

Hayley Gordge, Head of marketing, Barwood Capital

2. POSITION OURSELVES AS A PREMIUM BRAND, REFLECTING OUR EXPERTISE AND RESULTS.

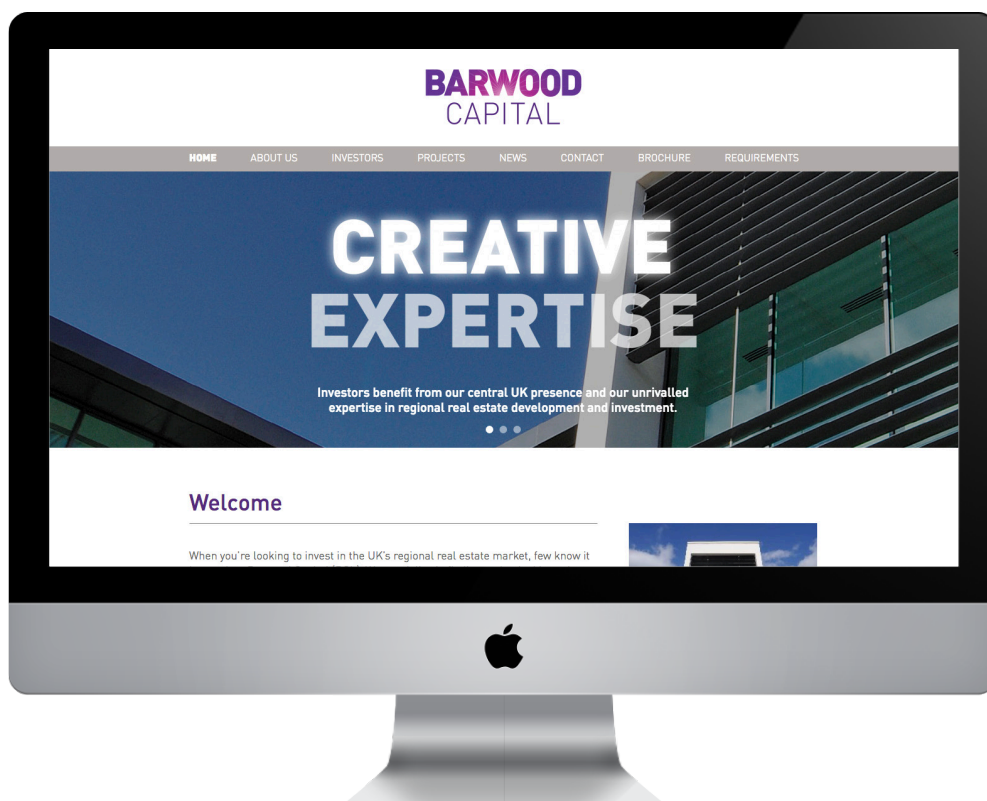
They have repositioned themselves to the extent that they are now organising an Investor Insights event, hosted by property agents JLL in their London offices, something they were not in a position to offer before.

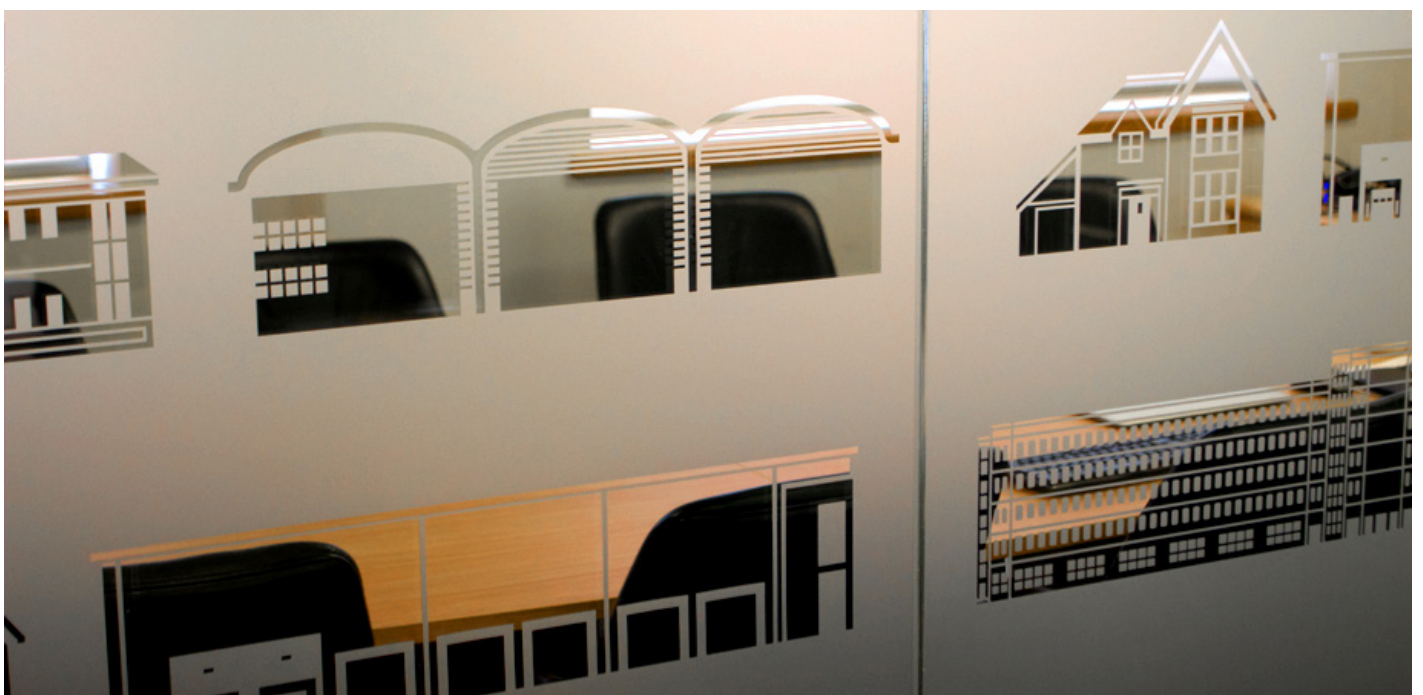
The move to a new office in early 2018 reflected their need for space as a growing company, increasing their numbers from 11 to 17, a 55% increase, with room to continue to expand. The new higher quality office building reflects their raised status as a succeeding business.

3. ATTRACT INVESTORS, DEVELOPERS, PARTNERS (JOINT VENTURE AND AGENTS) AND OCCUPIERS.

They have succeeded in attracting their audiences. They have attracted 27 new investors to their 2017 fund, a 125% increase on their 2015 fund. They are working with nine new development partners (previously this was only 4), a joint venture with a care home developer and created three joint venture initiatives (both joint ventures are a new direction for Barwood Capital). Their LinkedIn followers grew from 60 to 386, an increase of 543%. Google analytics show monthly users rising from 549 in October 2016 to 1,567 in October 2018, an increase of 185%.

All this exposure to new audiences has resulted in a rise in turnover of ‘redacted confidential data’ in March 2017 to ‘redacted confidential data’ in March 2018, an increase of £60%. Gross profit grew from ‘redacted confidential data’ to ‘redacted confidential data’ over the same period, an increase of 288%. Funds raised increased from ‘redacted confidential data’ for their 2015 fund to ‘redacted confidential data’ for their 2017 fund, an increase of 100%.







WHICH CITY BEGINNING WITH 'B' HAS BOTH A STATUE AND A SHOPPING CENTRE NAMED AFTER A BULL?



WHICH TOWN BEGINNING WITH 'W' IS ONE OF THE FIRST LOCATIONS EVER FOR A TOWNHOMES TO HIT THE BRITISH MARKET?



WHICH CITY BEGINNING WITH 'C' HAS HOSTED BY FAR THE MOST PEOPLE OVER THE YEARS?



WHICH TOWN BEGINNING WITH 'L' PROVIDED THE ENGINE OF THE UK'S FIRST AIRPLANE?



WHICH TOWN BEGINNING WITH 'P' IS THE SEPARATION FOR THE SONS OF A FOLKLORE-INSPIRED DRINKING BEAST?



WHICH TOWN BEGINNING WITH 'T' WAS THE LOCATION OF 'THE HAUNTER' FILMED IN 1962.




WHICH TOWN BEGINNING WITH 'W' PRODUCED THE PARLIAMENT THAT THE TREATY OF VERDUN WAS SIGNED ON?



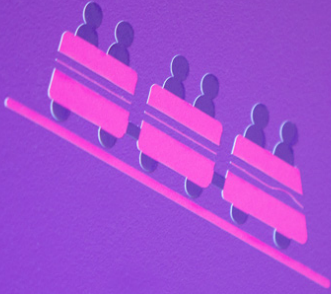
WHICH TOWN BEGINNING WITH 'E' FEATURED IN GEORGE ORWELL'S BOOK '1984'?

BARWOOD CAPITAL





WHICH TOWN BEGINNING WITH 'A' FEATURED IN GEORGE ORWELL'S BOOK '1984'?



WHICH TOWN BEGINNING WITH 'K' IS HOME TO THE UK'S SECOND OLDEST THEME PARK, WICKSTEED PARK?

RESULTS

THE PERFORMANCE OF THE RESULTS: SCALE OF EFFECT AND BREADTH OF IMPACT

+60% rise in turnover from ‘redacted confidential data’ (March 2017) to ‘redacted confidential data’ (March 2018).

+288% increase in Gross profit from ‘redacted confidential data’ (March 2017) to ‘redacted confidential data’ (March 2018)

‘Redacted confidential data’ net operating profit in 2018 from -‘redacted confidential data’ (2017)

+100% Increase in funds raised ‘redacted confidential data’ (March 2017) to ‘redacted confidential data’ (March 2018)

+58% increase in investors from 31 (2015) to 49 in (2017)

+125% Increase in new investors from 12 (2015) to 27 (2017)

+185% Increase in website users from 549 users pcm (2017) to 1,567 users pcm (2018)

+62% Increase in Twitter followers from 400 (2016) to 648 (2018)

+543% Increase in LinkedIn followers from 60 (2016) to 386 (2018)

+43% Increase in assets under management ‘redacted confidential data’ (March 2017) to ‘redacted confidential data’ (March 2018)

3 Joint venture projects have been undertaken with an industrial pension fund (a new direction for Barwood Capital).

2 Joint ventures with a care home developer and an investment manager (a new direction for Barwood Capital).

9 Development managers now work with Barwood (previously 4).

BARWOOD’S COMPETITORS

MAYFAIR CAPITAL

-7% FALL IN NET WORTH FROM £2,325,417 (2015) TO £2,177,279 (2017).

PALMER CAPITAL

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CLEARBELL FUND MANAGEMENT

-55% FALL IN TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS FROM £1,620,000 (2017) TO 737,000 (2018)

DELANCEY ASSET MANAGEMENT

-58% FALL IN NET WORTH FROM £691,713 (2016) TO £287,929 (2017).

SALMON DEVELOPMENTS

+1% INCREASE IN TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS FROM £16,788,000 (2016) TO £17,024,000 (2017)

BRIDGES FUND MANAGEMENT

+16% INCREASE IN TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS FROM £4,670,000 (2017) TO 737,000 (2018)

MELFORD CAPITAL PARTNERS

-17% FALL IN NET WORTH FROM £3,040,000 (2016) TO £2,539,000 (2017).

SOURCE: COMPANIES HOUSE

SOURCE: BARWOOD CAPITAL’S PUBLISHED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AND BARWOOD CAPITAL’S CENTRAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

RESULTS

THE CAUSE AND EFFECT OF THE DESIGN SOLUTION.

The brand identity used by Barwood Capital previously was quite frankly without meaning and unattractive. It looked cheap with the main colour a primary bright green. It really didn't speak for the company's quality. The literature we saw was badly designed, busy and cluttered page layouts, very poor quality photography and very little personality. There was also no consistency of application, which led to a weakened brand.

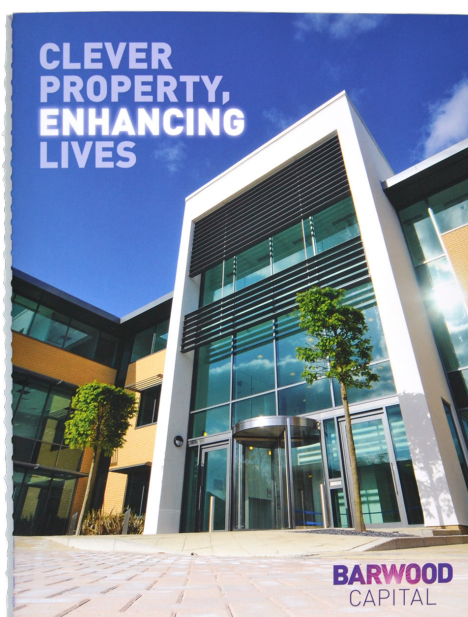
Our design solution brought a clear message about Barwood Capital. The logo itself speaks of enhancing the lives of those it touches. It has a more appropriate premium tone in its typographic and colour presentation. Our literature uses better quality imagery, with a theme of bright light running through it, providing consistency.

It is presented in a more ordered, clear form, giving space to the information. The use of colour is controlled and feels more premium. We introduced a more direct, less jargony tone to the writing, with a more approachable and inclusive writing style.

We also introduced a distinctive style for headlines, using a glow word, which puts emphasis on important messages and draws readers in. This has the effect of making communications work.

By providing a system that is clear, consistent and appropriate, we have built a brand persona which is far more in keeping with the business and makes them far more attractive to the relevant audiences who are prepared to entrust large sums of money. It is testimony to this that more investors have reinvested than before the rebrand (+125% increase in new investors from 12 (2015) to 27 (2017)).

Knowing the way that Barwood Capital works, it is in large part the success of building strong partnerships with agents and developers regionally that has allowed Barwood Capital to find sound investment opportunities. This has been helped by being armed with the materials to communicate the rewards of partnering Barwood Capital and potential partners actually recognising the quality of the product offered, which was always there but not always seen.



RESULTS

THE CAUSE AND EFFECT OF THE DESIGN SOLUTION. (CONTINUED)

The quality of their working environment is important not only in instilling pride and well-being in staff, but presents an appropriate image to clients. So care was taken to ensure the quality of thinking, materials and finishes used in signage and graphics was high.

The guidelines we created to show how to create a consistent style to Barwood Capital branded developments has firstly enabled every development to relate to each other and to Barwood Capital, building brand awareness. Secondly, it has prevented poor quality production of marketing materials created by local regional agencies.

Finally, it has saved Barwood Capital a considerable amount of money, avoiding the need to reinvent the wheel every time a new development needs marketing. On average they are saving £9,480 per development on an initial investment of £8,000 to create the guidelines.

THE PROOF OF EFFECT AND ANY INFLUENCING FACTORS.

The PR activity provided by the incumbent agency didn't change over the period before and after the rebrand, so it is not considered to be a relevant influencing factor in the rise in business and profits. The company itself doesn't yet operate any other marketing activities.

The business used to be a part of a group of businesses, along with Barwood Homes and Barwood Land. They operated as separate financial entities. The activities of the businesses were kept separate and therefore Barwood Capital didn't benefit from external promotion from either of the other businesses. They have recently broken all ties with the two other businesses.

Neither we nor Barwood Capital are aware of a surge in the property market to support the growth of the business, in fact our evidence suggests the opposite, both looking at the direct competitors financial performance and looking at the industry landscape as a whole, in our post Brexit referendum state of cautiousness.

It is fair to say that Barwood Capital have been able to recruit two senior members of the team, who have brought with them a reputation and connections. Having said that, they may not have been interested in the company when presented with the old brand identity.

Barwood Capital has always had the expertise and ability to create decent investment returns to its investors. They have done this all along, but weren't able to scale up their operation to provide significant profits to the business. The raising of their profile in the industry through the rebrand and getting their messaging right has allowed them to do this.