

St Helens Construction Consultancy Completes Partial MBO with HSBC UK Funding Package

A Northwest construction and building safety solutions provider, Safer Sphere is setting foundations for its next stage of growth after completing a partial management buyout (MBO) with support from HSBC UK.

Safer Sphere, headquartered in St Helens, has utilised a seven-figure funding package from HSBC UK to facilitate an ownership succession plan, under which founder Mike Forsyth and Angelique Forsyth reduced their combined ownership interest from 51% to 26%, with a 25% stake in the business transferring to the senior leadership team.

The Employee Benefit Trust (EBT), which has held a 49% interest in the business since 2020, will continue to retain its shareholding following the transaction.

Following the completion of the MBO, the business will continue to be led by Mike Forsyth in his role as Chairman, supported by a senior leadership team comprising Lewis Duff (Managing Director), Graham King (Operations Director), Emma Gradwell (People & Performance Director) and Zoe Chiocci (Finance Director).

The transaction was supported by a wider advisory team, including Jeremy Cole Cole Associates Corporate Finance, Tom Larkin, Tax Director at JS (Accountants and Business Advisors), Akeel Latif, Partner at Myerson Solicitors and Sonio Singh, Partner at Davis Blank Furniss.

Overseeing more than 80 employees nationwide, the leadership team will spearhead the growth of the business and diversify its services, including the launch of a building safety in-occupation services offering.

This expanded Building Safety Occupation service supports Accountable Persons (APs) and Principal Accountable Persons (PAPs) in meeting their duties under Part 4 of the Building Safety Act, offering practical, evidence-led support for occupied higher-risk residential buildings. It builds on Safer Sphere's established services, enabling the business to support clients across the full building lifecycle, from design and construction through to occupation. Alongside this, the business is also developing a Fire Engineering Consultancy service, further strengthening its offer across design safety.



L-R: Graham King, Emma Gradwell, Mike Forsyth, Jeremy Cole, Zoe Chiocci, Lewis Duff, Andy Holgate

Safer Sphere specialises in Construction Design and Management under the CDM 2015 Regulations, alongside Building Safety consultancy aligned with the Building Safety Act 2022, the Building Regulations etc. Amendment England Regulations 2023 and associated secondary legislation. Services include Principal Designer and Advisor roles and Client Advisor support, alongside Building Regulations consultancy and a broader range of additional services across both construction and building safety.

Mike Forsyth, Chairman of Safer Sphere, said: "This is an exciting new chapter for the business, but our ethos and values remain the same. We are excited to enter this new era of leadership, which will allow our team to build on previous success with structured employee ownership. The steps we are taking will strengthen our ability to continue to deliver high quality services and bring new innovations to market."

Andrew Holgate, Relationship Manager at HSBC UK, added: "It's fantastic to support Safer Sphere transition through this MBO. It is clear that although there are changes to ownership, the structures and people that the business has in place look set to deliver continued growth into the future."

Founded in 2012, Safer Sphere delivers construction and building safety solutions nationwide. The business boasts a diverse client base across multiple sectors, from small refurbishments to multi-billion-pound developments.