

## MIDLAND CARE PROVIDER SET FOR EXPANSION AFTER REFINANCING DEAL

A West Midlands company that provides care and accommodation for adults with learning disabilities is to expand after it agreed a refinancing deal with Handelsbanken.

Stourbridge-based Inshore Support Ltd is seeking to purchase a further seven homes in the Dudley borough to complement its existing 24 properties across the region so it can meet the rising demand for its services.

We advised the care provider on the refinancing package, which will enable the company to buy the new properties.

Inshore Support Ltd was established in 1999 and provides support for adults with complex needs in order that they live independently either in a care home setting or in private accommodation with support.

Family homes are furnished and staffed by Inshore Support Ltd to allow individuals to attain as much independent living as possible. It also develops tailored services to meet each of its client's needs.

Inshore Support Ltd currently looks after about 40 adults, all of whom are aged between 18 and 65 and are either housed and cared for in residential homes or in supported living accommodation.

Adam Webb, MD of Inshore Support Ltd, said demand for its high quality residential care home services and supported living packages was increasing to such an extent that a carefully targeted expansion plan was required so it could help more people with learning difficulties to live an independent life.



*Left to right are Colin Rodrigues, Hawkins Hatton, Stephen Ellis, Handelsbanken, Adam Webb, Inshore Support and David Price, Price Pearson Accountants.*

### In This Issue

- Midland care provider set for expansion after refinancing deal
- Jobs created as purchase of BRM Packaging is completed
- Badge manufacturer pins hopes on major expansion
- Full circle as shop fitting entrepreneur grows new venture

# JOBS CREATED AS PURCHASE OF BRM PACKAGING IS COMPLETED

Midlands investment company J Mindal Ltd is pressing ahead with expansion plans at contract packaging firm BRM Packaging, after it completed its acquisition of the manufacturer.

Ian Taft, Director of Halesowen-based J Mindal, said BRM had already won new contracts, which had resulted in five new posts.

A further six jobs have been created with the signing of a deal between BRM's transport division and premier international freight delivery network PALL-EX, which will enable BRM to ship customers' products – from a single pallet or van load up to a full articulated lorry load – anywhere in the UK and Europe.

Mr Taft, who was advised by our firm in the purchase of specialist packing firm, said: "I am delighted with the purchase because the company has a lot of untapped potential, an excellent management team, and skilled work force.

"We have a number of things we are currently doing internally in order to capitalise on new business opportunities so that we are ready to increase sales and expand further."

BRM Packaging designs, produces tools and manufactures bespoke packaging, including printing, to a wide range of customers. It is one of the country's leading makers of plastic thermoformed packaging and point-of-sale blister packs.

Mr Taft said the purchase of BRM, which is based in Lower Walsall Street, Wolverhampton, had plenty of scope for development because major companies are being forced not only to rethink their product importing policies, but also remove packaging because of rising shipping costs.



*Ruth Murday, Hawkins Hatton, Ian Taft, J Mindal*

"These changes mean that more goods will be packed in the UK once more, resulting in greater flexibility and reduced stock holding requirements," he explained. "This is very good news for BRM Packaging, which is a specialist in its field."

Colin Rodrigues, our corporate partner, said: "The potential for expansion at BRM Packaging was the driver for J Mindal Ltd to pursue the deal and we were very pleased to assist our client in the legal completion of the purchase."

The purchase was as a result of the retirement of Managing Director and major shareholder Neil McLaughlin. He will stay on in a non-executive, part-time, advisory role and the existing management team is also being retained.

Alan Jones from Hamiltons Accountants who also advised BRM Packaging said: "It is good to see existing clients continue to expand."

The commercial arm of RBS Bank supported J Mindal Ltd's purchase, with working capital facilities to cater for the business requirements and any future expansion.

# BADGE MANUFACTURER PINS HOPES ON MAJOR EXPANSION

Bromsgrove based badge manufacturer B Sanders is pinning its hopes on a bright future after acquiring one of its major competitors, London Emblem plc.

B Sanders, manufactures up to a million badges a week for the trade from its site in Sherwood Road, Bromsgrove, but the acquisition of London Emblem is now set to boost annual turnover by around £600,000, adding up to 250 new customers.

We advised Sue Moth, managing director of B Sanders on all legal aspects of the deal with Halesowen based accountancy firm Nicklins LLP providing lead financial advice through Harvey Owen.

Established over 200 years ago, B Sanders (www.sandbadge.co.uk) has a worldwide customer base supplying a huge range of badges for greetings cards and promotional and advertising purposes. Among the company's high profile customers are Walker's Crisps and Harrods.

As well as button badges, B Sanders supplies badge machinery and components along with a range of fridge magnets, key rings, bottle openers, vanity mirrors and collection boxes.

Following the acquisition, London Emblem's operations based in Portsmouth will be transferred to Bromsgrove and the expanded company has plans to take on more

staff to supplement the 40 strong existing work-force.

Colin Rodrigues, our corporate partner, said that the acquisition of London Emblem was a perfect fit for B Sanders.

"London Emblem is a well established business which has been supplying a complementary range of machines, components and badges for over 35 years so I'm sure that under the leadership of directors Sue Moth and Annabel Apperley, the newly expanded company has a tremendous opportunity to develop further," he added.



*Left to right: Annabel Apperley, B. Sanders, Colin Rodrigues, Hawkins Hatton, Sue Moth, B. Sanders*

# FULL CIRCLE AS SHOP FITTING ENTREPRENEUR GROWS NEW VENTURE

When Clive Dowling sold his shop fitting business to a major group six years ago, little did he realise that he would later have the opportunity to “resurrect” his own entrepreneurial interests with a new start-up venture.

After a career which began with spells in the marketing and promotions departments of Leyland Cars and Millets, the outdoor retailer, Clive went onto build his knowledge of the shopping sector by working for a major buying group and two shop-equipment and fitting businesses.

With a healthy contacts book and a track record in merchandising and sales, Clive then decided to go it alone by forming Creative Design and Manufacturing Ltd (CDM) which quickly expanded and diversified to provide shop design, build, merchandising and fit-out solutions to major retailers such as Next and Bonmarche.

The company’s success was built on the ability to provide bespoke solutions to its retail customers who were benefitting from not only great design, but CDM’s ability to manufacture and supply the fit out at a reasonable price.

“At the time lots of competitors in the marketplace were effectively selling the retailers what they had, but when I formed CDM we took the approach of listening to what they wanted and then designing a fit out solution in such a way that it could be manufactured and supplied within a realistic budget,” said Clive.

From its design and build base, CDM diversified to provide an acrylic and point of sale manufacturing capability and a full on-site installation service which was run in conjunction with a partner based in Cwmbran.

With 30 staff on board, all three companies within the expanded group were operating profitably and on the back of a growing industry reputation Clive was approached by the Estrella Group to sell the business.

“With the support of Hawkins Hatton I was able to negotiate and agree a sale price and as part of the



*Clive Dowling, Construction Development Management and Colin Rodrigues, Hawkins Hatton*

deal retained a 20% interest in the shop fitting company which I stayed on to run,” explained Clive.

As Clive entered a new stage in his career, life took an unexpected turn when the Estrella Group fell into administration after failing to tackle its debt and agree new funding terms with the banks.

Whilst many in his position may have decided to call it a day, Clive saw an opportunity to resurrect CDM and again, with the support of our corporate team, negotiated to purchase some of the assets of the shop fitting business from the administrator.

The new company – Construction Development Management – was quickly up and running and in its

first year Clive expects to hit £2 million in sales on the back of some major orders from customers including, Pringle, Next, Hawes & Curtis and Bon Marche.

“One of the big challenges has been cashflow and credit lines as we have had to earn our stripes again and restore customer confidence after the collapse of Estrella,” said Clive.

Looking to the future, Clive has ambitious plans to develop the shop fitting company to its full potential working closely alongside a “lean” team which currently includes a full time Quantity Surveyor, Contract Manager, Accounts Manager and Business Development Manager. He is also developing Project Associates – an electrical and data business, he and his wife Pauline own with a Partner. The two companies sit well together and develop naturally off each other.

Throughout the various stages of Clive’s business journey, we have been on hand to offer advice on the sale and acquisition activity as well as property leases, commercial contracts and employment law.

“Most solicitors are very traditional but what I like about working with Hawkins Hatton is the fact that they are not stuffy and Colin Rodrigues and his team are always very commercial and flexible when providing prompt legal advice and a proper explanation of the commercial risks,” added Clive.