



**BUSINESS
PEOPLE**

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MEARS GROUP

Mears Group PLC is a leading social housing repairs and maintenance provider, with its head office based in Gloucester. Working with local authorities and social landlords, Mears provides rapid response and planned maintenance services to a portfolio of nearly one million properties. On top of this Mears is also the fastest growing domiciliary care services provider, delivering eight million hours of care a year to the elderly and other vulnerable people living in the UK.

From their beginnings as a small, private building contractor in 1988, Mears Group now has a turnover of £900 million and employs nearly 16,000 people around the country. They are a forward thinking, innovative company, who constantly strive to achieve the highest levels of customer satisfaction and efficiency in each of the sectors they work in. To help them reach this goal they need a legal firm that shares and understands their vision and values.

BPE has been working with Mears since 1996 when, as an SME, the company was turning over £6million. Soon after, BPE supported chairman, Bob Holt with the flotation of the company on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM) of the London Stock Exchange, creating Mears Group. The relationship continued with a flurry of key acquisitions including Haydon & Co which added more than 500 employees to the existing 83 staff and by 2005, BPE had helped Mears reach a turnover of £203.5 million with a £1 billion order book.

In 2007 BPE assisted Mears with their acquisition of domiciliary care provider, Careforce, and the company grew to more than 5000 employees. The following years saw BPE's three lead lawyers, John Workman, Tim Ward and Anthony Rudge, working closely with Mears' Chief Executive Officer David Miles and Chairman, Bob Holt to move Mears to the main market at the London Stock Exchange and in 2009 Mears Group won PLC award for New Company of the Year on the LSE Main Market.

Since then BPE has supported Mears with major acquisitions including leading providers of social care in Scotland and the North East, taking over the Home Improvement Service from Anchor and acquiring Morrison Facilities Services Limited from Morrison plc.

Whilst the relationship between Mears and BPE is built on mutual trust and respect for each other's professionalism, both companies also have a mutual respect for CSR. In 2013, 12 members of BPE's staff, from secretaries to Partners, went to South Africa to work on building a children's school as part of Mears' Chairman, Bob Holt's Charity, The Footprints Foundation.

This Summer a team of four from BPE, John Workman, Jon Close, Tim Williams and Adrian Peake are planning a 900 mile cycle ride from Luxemburg to Budapest to raise money for the Foundation.

BOB HOLT CHAIRMAN MEARS GROUP

"BPE has acted for Mears for more than a decade. We have relied upon their no-nonsense advice, 'can do' commercial support for all our corporate transactions. Their partnered approach, headed by Senior Partner John Workman, means we are treated like a valued client at all times and we have trusted them to deliver on numerous complex acquisitions"

MEARS

Making People *Smile*



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Working alongside Mears' Chairman, Bob Holt, Finance Director Andrew Smith and Executive Director, Alan Long, the team at BPE has also assisted Mears with:

- The takeover of domiciliary care provider Supporta Plc for £27 million.
- Securing £80 million banking facilities, providing the Group with banking support for a five year period, including a working capital and acquisition facility.
- Purchase of part of the business and assets of social housing providers Connaught and Rok Plc after they had been placed in administration. The Rok deal was against a tight timescale and BPE completed the acquisition within 48 minutes.
- The £5 million purchase of social housing maintenance contractor Jackson Lloyd Ltd, including the repayment of existing debt.
- Strategic partnership agreement with British Gas to jointly address challenges of energy efficiency within the social housing sector.
- Choices Care, which provides supported housing, care and community services to adults in Scotland and North East England and was acquired by Mears in an £7.40 million deal.

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