

## Cairngorm Capital supports Sentry Doors' acquisition of E & S W Knowles

**London and Edinburgh, 9 August 2022:** Cairngorm Capital Partners LLP (Cairngorm Capital) is pleased to announce that its portfolio company, Sentry Doors Limited (Sentry) has bought **E. & S. W. Knowles & Company Limited** (Knowles). This acquisition accelerates Sentry's growth and confirms its position as the UK's leader in the timber fire safety and security doorset market.

Established in 1923, E. & S. W. Knowles manufactures specialist timber internal doorsets with fire rated, acoustic and PAS 24 security certification. Operating nationally from a 50,000 square foot facility in Birmingham, Knowles offers bespoke, sector specific solutions that meet the exacting requirements of its commercial, healthcare, education and leisure customers. Its commitment to regulatory compliance and high manufacturing standards has resulted in independent third party accreditations from both IFC and BM Trada<sup>1</sup>. Knowles employs approximately 100 people and in 2021, achieved revenue of £10m.

This acquisition adds new products that complement Sentry Doors' well-established product range, focused on the specialist fire doorset requirements of the social housing, public sector, commercial and residential markets. The combination of these two firms provides both companies with opportunities for further innovation and growth. They share a commitment to manufacturing the highest quality fire safety solutions, are at the forefront of compliance and regulation but have minimal overlap in the industry sectors that they serve and their respective product ranges. Both companies will benefit from the possibilities offered by their new market sectors and an expanded range of products and finishes. The enlarged business continues to be headquartered in Doncaster. Steve Horner, Knowles' Managing Director, will join Sentry's senior management team, working with Ty Aziz, Sentry's Chief Executive, to realise the potential that this partnership brings.

**Stuart Whiteford, who led Cairngorm Capital's team on this investment,** said, *"Knowles is an excellent company that is highly regarded by its customers. The combination of Knowles and Sentry is strategically compelling and delivers additional capabilities and services across the business, to the benefit of all customers. Significant investments are taking place for both businesses and we look forward to supporting Ty Aziz and Steve Horner to deliver their growth plan."*

**Ty Aziz, Sentry's Chief Executive,** said, *"I am delighted to welcome Knowles to Sentry Doors – they have a fantastic manufacturing heritage, an exceptional team and a superb product range so we can learn a lot from one another. This partnership will help us to respond to the surge in demand for our products, as well as providing our customers with a fully comprehensive range of fire safety and security solutions, and a greater choice of features and finishes. It marks a key milestone in the growth strategy for our businesses and advances our collective ambition to be UK leaders in this sector."*

**Martin Wright, Knowles' majority owner,** added, *"Next year Knowles celebrates its centenary and while I am extremely proud of all that we have achieved in the last 99 years, I know that the company has the capability to achieve much more in the future. I believe that this is the natural point for me to pass the company to new, trusted custodians who can deliver on its future potential. Knowles has a perfect partner in Sentry and together, the companies should achieve great things."*

Cairngorm Capital and Sentry were advised on this transaction by Grant Thornton (financial and tax), Drystone Strategy (commercial), Addleshaw Goddard (legal) and Thompson & Richardson (insurance). Knowles' shareholders were advised by MHA MacIntyre Hudson (financial and tax) and Fladgate (legal).

**For further information, please contact Katherine Ritchie on 020 8347 6183 or 07941 040021**

## Notes for editors

1. The Certifire, IFC and BM Trada Q-Mark fire door manufacturer accreditation schemes provide independent third party testing and certification that a fire door's design, manufacturing and performance meets the highest fire test standards, from manufacture to installation. All three schemes are recognised by regulatory authorities worldwide as a mark of fire safety and in the UK, they denote UKAS compliance with BS 476: Part 22 or BS EN 1634-1.

Both companies have also achieved ISO 9001: Quality Management Systems, PAS 24 and 'Secure by Design' accreditations.

Sentry was the first fire door manufacturer to obtain the new United Kingdom Conformity Assessment mark (UKCA), the UK's replacement for the European CE mark for goods that are sold in Great Britain.

**Cairngorm Capital Partners LLP** is a specialist private investment firm providing equity capital and management expertise to leading UK companies. It invests in strongly-performing, private mid-market growth companies with long-term growth potential, operating in manufacturing, distribution and services industries. The firm's goal is to build and realise value through growth and performance improvements. Cairngorm Capital's unique mix of sectoral expertise and investment skill enables it to be actively involved in the strategy and operational focus of portfolio companies, partnering with management teams to grow revenue, enhance margins, improve cash flow or consolidate industry leadership positions.

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**Sentry Doors** is a specialist manufacturer of bespoke, high quality timber fire and security doorsets for the social housing, public sector, commercial and residential markets. Operating nationally from two state-of-the-art facilities in Doncaster, it has established a strong reputation for manufacturing products that meet the most rigorous quality and fire certification standards. Its commitment to regulatory compliance and high manufacturing standards has resulted in independent third-party accreditations from Certifire and BM Trada Q-Mark.

[sentrydoors.co.uk](http://sentrydoors.co.uk)

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[knowlesdoors.co.uk](http://knowlesdoors.co.uk)