

# Q&A

## Paul Trickett

We caught up with new Non-Executive Chairman, Paul Trickett, asking him why he decided to join Shawston and how he plans to take the business to the next level in its sustainable growth.



### Paul Trickett

Former M&A Partner at Deloitte with a career spanning 30 years working within the building product space. Passionate about creating shareholder value for the benefit of all.

### After a long career at Deloitte, what specifically attracted you to join the Shawston board?

I have spent three decades as an M&A Partner, working with the owners and boards of businesses of all sizes on their M&A strategies and creating shareholder value. Distributors, contractors, materials suppliers - businesses from all aspects of the market. Over the years that has amounted to over 1,000 companies, mostly within the building product space, so it's fair to say I have built up a huge level of knowledge and experience in the sector.

My relationship with Shawston has been building for some time. At first it developed through my friendship with Rob; we talked about the business and its plans from time to time, little snippets here and there, but approximately 2 years ago, I began helping Shawston, through my role at Deloitte, with its strategic growth plans (including M&A). It's fair to say that my knowledge of the company and its future plans increased dramatically over this period of time.

When Rob approached me to join the Non-Executive Board as Chairman, I was still in full time employment at Deloitte, but within 24 hours I had made the decision to join the Shawston team, taking early retirement from my position at Deloitte. The role is a perfect fit, the alignment, the common values, and a shared style - the synergy was right. I knew that I could add value because it's what I have been advising on for all my career, the journey that the shareholders are on is exactly what I have been doing for 30 years. It was perfect, basically a no brainer for me.

### What impact do you think you will have on the business?

I think it's important to make sure the business continues to retain the essence of its founder owners - Rob, Chris, and Graham. They have created

a fantastic business with amazing principles, which are the very foundations of the business and its success. So, I see it as my job to ensure the business continues to run with these principles remaining at the heart of every decision we make, for the future of Shawston and all its shareholders. Its values, culture and decision-making principles are all cornerstones of Shawston's success.

I also plan to help with the professionalisation of the business. To be clear, the business is in great shape and way ahead of many businesses of its size. However, we have plans to continue growing, both organically and by M&A. In addition, the founders have a desire to step back, and the number of employee owners continues to grow. This creates a need for constantly improving governance and communication without losing the personal touch which has been so evident to date. This journey will almost certainly feature raising strategic capital and M&A. I bring the benefit of an independent lens, looking to challenge, if necessary, current thinking and ideas whilst sharing the benefit of my many years of experience within the sector.

### Focusing on future priorities, where are we likely to see the most development?

Opportunities abound for the business - I can say that with all confidence. We already have a track record in diversification, which has been apparent with our growth in the mechanical service sector. The business has exciting development plans, and I will be working closely with Tom in his new role to build on these. Organic opportunities are significant and exciting, as M&A continues to feature - watch this space!

Creating shareholder value (for all shareholders) underpins everything we are trying to do. Yes, financial prosperity will play its part, but it will go much deeper than that. The aim is to create a safe Shawston for all. Attracting and maintaining high calibre people creates a safe and sustainable business. Fact. The People First strategy currently in play within the business is the very foundation of this, and that will not be compromised.

I guess the ultimate aim is to empower colleagues to make decisions. Shawston has seen incredible growth and with that comes lots of moving parts. If I can help to improve governance, strategic thinking and to agitate the Senior Management team in their decision making then great strides will be made.

**“Creating shareholder value, for all shareholders, underpins everything we are trying to do.”**