

PRESS RELEASE

**Issued:** 12 June 2018

**The Greater Manchester Loan Fund managed by Maven Capital Partners invests £750,000 in leading safety software business**

***Award-winning risk and safety management software provider set to become the market leading digital solution for SMEs creating over 70 jobs in Greater Manchester***

The Greater Manchester Loan Fund (“GMLF”), managed by Maven Capital Partners (“Maven”), has completed a £750,000 investment in Manchester-based Shield Safety Group (“Shield Safety”), one of the UK’s leading providers of Food Safety, Fire Safety and Health & Safety software and services. The investment will allow Shield Safety to strengthen its current offering to existing clients, target new customers by broadening its market reach and create over 70 jobs in the Greater Manchester area.

Founded in 2003 as a consultancy business, Shield Safety now provides SMEs and larger corporates with a comprehensive service to ensure that they are fully compliant with legislation. A cost-effective solution, reducing complexity and risk by ‘making safety simple’, the business has successfully transitioned into an award-winning SaaS business.

As one of the UK’s leading providers of risk and safety management software, Shield Safety has grown to provide businesses with a complete service to ensure that they are compliant through software, services and training. Shield Safety is the largest employer of Environmental Health Practitioners in the UK, providing audit, policy and consultancy services alongside their SaaS service.

The UK health and safety market has grown steadily over recent years, reaching a market value of around £800m in 2017. The market is a cross-disciplinary area concerned with protecting the safety, health and welfare of people engaged in work or employment. Recent major changes to the laws around sentencing guidelines have led to the highest fines for safety breaches in history, meaning businesses are more invested in risk management than ever.

Shield Safety was founded by Environmental Health Practitioner Mark Flanagan, now CEO, who has built a strong operational management team around him alongside a highly experienced advisory board providing governance and strategic guidance. The business is well placed to continue their next phase of ambitious growth and take advantage of their market leading service.

GMLF, managed by Maven, was set up by Greater Manchester Leaders to encourage growth whilst creating and safeguarding jobs. The Fund provides finance between £100,000 and £750,000 to growth-focused businesses in the Greater Manchester region with the potential for follow-on funding to qualifying companies.

**Craig Hopwood, Investment Director at Maven, said:** “We are delighted to support Shield Safety’s growth plans through this investment. This is a really exciting business and we were attracted to it straight away. Mark and his team are driven and passionate about the business and are focused on the compelling future growth opportunities in their markets. They have invested a significant amount of time and resource in creating a sophisticated technology platform alongside high level support for their clients. We look forward to working with Mark and the team, assisting their ambitious growth plans while boosting employment in the region.”

**Mark Flanagan, CEO of Shield Safety, said:** “We are thrilled to have received this investment, especially from a Manchester-based fund. Shield Safety is a born and bred Manchester business and we are committed to putting the city on the map as a tech capital. It is tremendous to have Maven share our vision of continued growth for the business, and to support us on this exciting journey. We spoke to a few different capital partners and quickly found Maven to be the clear choice as a result of their professionalism and approach. The whole team and I look forward to working with them as the partnership goes from strength to strength.

**Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham said:** “Greater Manchester has always led the way in driving innovation and being forward thinking, which is why we pride ourselves on working with new businesses and industries to help them flourish. Our digital sector in particular is thriving and it’s important that we nurture these new developing companies as we work towards becoming the UK’s leading digital city.

“Through the fund and the investment announced today, we are demonstrating Greater Manchester’s ambition and commitment to do things differently, working with local firms to help them grow and create jobs and opportunities for local people.”

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Further information

For media enquiries or any questions about the investment, please contact:

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Notes to Editors

About Maven Capital Partners UK LLP [**www.mavencp.com**](http://www.mavencp.com)@maven\_cp

Maven Capital Partners UK LLP (Maven) is a lower-mid cap private equity house focused on the provision of growth capital and mezzanine finance to SMEs across the UK. It is one of the most active private equity fund managers in the country, managing over £415 million of assets for a variety of client funds, including Venture Capital Trusts, UK regional debt and equity funds, and Maven Investor Partners – a syndicate of institutional, family office and experienced investors.

Headquartered in Glasgow, and with other offices throughout the UK, Maven has nationwide coverage of the market for SME finance and is introduced to around 400 deals per year through 20 regionally based investment executives. With over 60 staff and partners, Maven executes a range of private company transactions, offers hands-on proactive portfolio management to investee companies and provides a fully integrated back-office support function to client and third-party fund managers. Since 2009 Maven has invested over £300 million in SMEs across the UK.

**About Shield Safety Group Limited**

Shield Safety Group is a leading provider of Food, Fire and Health & Safety Software as a Service (SaaS), supported by consultancy services delivered by the UK’s largest team of Environmental Health Practitioners. Established in 2003 by Environmental Health Practitioner, Mark Flanagan with the purpose of ‘We believe in making safety simple’ Shield Safety now supports over 1000 business in navigating the complexities of regulation. As the No.1 choice in the hospitality sector, and now moving into retail and education sectors, their client list features some of the UK’s biggest brands including Tesco, YO! Sushi, Thornton’s, Malmaison, Interstate Hotels, in addition to up and coming SME brands.

Shield Safety headquarters are based in Manchester’s unique Northern Quarter, spanning across four floors with a secondary office in London’s trendy Shoreditch. With 165 staff based at both offices and remotely, the company supports businesses nationwide, with the award-winning risk and safety system Compliance Centre at the heat of everything they deliver. They have experienced rapid growth of 50%+ year-on-year with last year’s turnover reaching a company record of £5.8m.