

Top Track 250

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Britain can win with a bolder plan

Our leading mid-market private companies are boosting profits and employment. Now they need Westminster's support, finds Richard Tyler

Today we're discussing the three Bs: Britain, Brexit – and Birmingham, where, at two o'clock this afternoon, the prime minister is due to open the Conservative Party conference, outlining her vision for the country's global future. Britain's business leaders will be hoping to give her speech three A's.

Directors of some of this year's Sunday Times Grant Thornton Top Track 250 companies say that, in the wake of the EU referendum, there is an urgent need for leadership and a clear plan, to answer two questions: what does Britain stand for and what does it want to achieve?

Canvassed as research for the 12th annual league table, ranking Britain's leading private mid-market growth companies, these directors called for more investment in education and infrastructure to support the economy's long-term health and to ensure the social and geographic divisions highlighted by the vote are addressed. As Matthew Streets, acting managing partner of architects Foster + Partners (No 75), said: "None of us can live the lives we want unless we have a decent, cohesive society." The views expressed by the group are explored further by David Dunkley and David Ascott from Grant Thornton on page 3.

FAST TRACK

Top Track 250, which ranks Britain's private mid-market growth companies by sales, is produced by Fast Track, the Oxford firm that researches Britain's top-performing private companies and organises invitation-only dinners where their owners and directors can network and meet our sponsors.

For full ranking criteria, see page 2

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This year's league table companies are investing and creating jobs across the UK, having added 36,000 people to their workforces in the past year, taking their total to 354,000. Restaurant chain Nando's (No 5), for example, employs over 12,000 people, while Travelodge (No 10) has turned its fortunes around under chief executive Peter Gowers and now employs 9,000 across its 525 hotels. It also doubled profits to £63m, and is one of the 216 firms to have increased profits year-on-year, despite difficult trading conditions. The league table's combined profits increased by an impressive 26% to £4.9bn, from sales of £58.1bn, up 14%. Those trading overruns – more than half – saw sales increase even faster, with total overseas sales up 24%.

Seven of the 10 companies with the biggest profits are based outside London and the southeast of England, as are six of the 10 companies with the fastest-growing sales, such as postal firm The Delivery Group (No 229), located in Warrington, London's home to 62 businesses, with the north of England boasting 55.

The league table has seen an increase in manufacturers – 40 in total, compared with 25 last year. Retail has seen the largest decline, with a fall from 101 to 68, in part due to our new requirement for companies to have operating profit margins of at least 2%. Service providers are the best represented sector, at 9%, and include this year's No 1 company, Virgin Active, and the likes of crop protection specialist ProCam Europe (No 99).

Private equity firms own 79 businesses, with recent deals including General Atlantic's £950m acquisition of energy information firm Argus Media (No 227). Entrepreneurs still own 84, families are in control of 65, management own 16 and six are employee-owned. Six of last year's league table have since joined stock markets, including household Countrywide, valued at £1.1bn, and IT reseller Softcat, worth £650m. Pure Gym (No 225), announced plans to raise £190m in a listing later this month. Such renewed confidence suggests many of Britain's leading mid-market growth companies believe their prospects are good. With the help of a supportive government, they could be even better.



Under chief executive Paul Woolf, above, Virgin Active is upgrading its 60 British sites before investing heavily in southeast Asia. Operating profits rose to £68.1m last year

1 VIRGIN ACTIVE

Sales £630.5m ▲11% Profit £68.1m ▲29%

Whether Team GB's record medal haul at this summer's Rio Olympics will inspire more of us to head to the gym remains to be seen, but it certainly won't harm an industry already worth more than £60bn globally. One business benefiting from a growing awareness of the advantages of a healthy lifestyle is London-based Virgin Active, which saw membership at its 276 international

health clubs reach 1.5m this year. The company, led by group chief executive Paul Woolf, 51, now has clubs in 10 countries, offering classes from yoga and boxing to Iron Yogi, a combination of weightlifting and circuit training.

The UK is Virgin Active's second-largest market after South Africa, despite selling -off 35 clubs – almost a third of its UK estate – to Nuffield Health for an undisclosed sum in June. The sale will allow the business to upgrade more of its remaining 60 sites to its luxury "Collection" group,

including a new £6.5m club in London's Mansion House opening later this year, creating 80 jobs.

The UK overhaul follows the sale of the company last year to Brait, the South African investment group that also owns a majority stake in New Look and Iceland and is backed by retail billionaire Christo Wiese. The purchase from previous owners CVC Capital Partners valued the business at £1.3bn, with Brait now owning 80% and Virgin Group's Sir Richard Branson 20%.

Amid public debate about how to

tackle Britain's increasing obesity epidemic, the new owners will continue to promote initiatives such as its Active Inspiration campaign, which aims to encourage 500,000 children across the UK to become more active.

Latest results showed operating profits up by 29% to £68.1m in 2015, despite a marginal drop in sales to £630.5m. The group now plans to significantly increase its presence in South East Asia, investing £150m in up to 40 new clubs in Thailand and Singapore.

2 PERTEMPS NETWORK

Sales £914.5m ▲11% Profit £18m ▲18%

This Warwickshire recruitment group was formed in 2012 when PerTEMps merged with Network Group, an AIM-listed company, in a £20m management buyout backed by private equity firm LDC.

PerTEMps has expertise in the industrial, engineering and commercial markets, while Network operates in sectors including legal, medical, educational, IT, financial and construction. The business was set up more than 50 years ago by Constance Watts, whose son Tim, 68, is now life president.

3 MORRISON UTILITY

Sales £814.0m ▲5% Profit £18.2m ▲14%

Led by chief executive Charles Morrison, 64, Stenevage-based Morrison Utility Services repairs, replaces and maintains the infrastructure that utility companies rely on to deliver essential services to

their customers. It claims to be the leading utility services provider in the UK, with clients such as Thames Water, National Grid, Yorkshire Water and Ef. In July, Motion Equity and Bregal Capital agreed to sell the group to US private equity firm First Reserve for an undisclosed sum.

4 ALEXANDER DENNIS

Sales £901.9m ▲20% Profit £28.2m ▲39%

In Hong Kong, 4m passengers travel on 4,200 Alexander Dennis vehicles every day. The Falkirk firm's fuel-efficient, environmentally friendly buses are used across Australasia, Asia and North America. Almost

half its turnover is international sales, which increased 47% to £588m in 2015, helped by large orders of its Enviro500 double-decker. Chief executive Colin Robertson, 51, is overseeing a contract with Toronto's transport authority worth £290m over the next five years.

5 NANDO'S

Sales £587.3m ▲10% Profit £89.4m ▼3%

Launched in South Africa in 1992, Nando's now has 1,200 restaurants in 24 countries. Ultimately owned by Dick Enthoven, a South African tycoon, the London company runs more than 400 outlets in Britain and

Ireland. It is led by chief executive Andrew Lynch, 59, who is expanding the chain to America. The group acquired Gourmet Burger Kitchen for £30m from Clapham House in 2010, and last month agreed a deal to sell the restaurant chain to South African fast food group Famous Brands for £109m.

Have faith in business to deliver a vibrant post-Brexit economy



Hand-made cosmetics company Lush (No 43) combines ethics with expansion. Two-thirds of its £328.5m sales in 2015 were overseas



While we face many challenges as a country, business has a crucial role to play in improving the lives of all Britons, writes Grant Thornton's Sacha Romanovitch

IN THE wake of the EU referendum it's more important than ever that the whole of the UK – businesses, the public and the voluntary and charity sectors – pulls together to help keep the economy growing. The challenges are numerous but not insurmountable. They include: public services struggling to meet growing demand; household incomes falling; a general distrust of business and the City; a need for more business innovation, investment and longer-term thinking; and a requirement that we substantially increase our trade with the rest of the world.

The prize, if we can crack these challenges, is a significant

one. Work by the Centre for Economics and Business Research for Grant Thornton found that if Britain increased its exports by 17% to match Germany's 45% of GDP, we would secure economy expansion by £84bn. More broadly, if we can unlock the economic potential of every region of the UK to match the output-per-worker achieved across the G7 group of economies, the UK would be boosted by a staggering £479bn by 2025.

It's vital that business makes its voice heard in the debate about how to achieve this. We interviewed 14 Top Track 250 company leaders about their priorities, a discussion featured

on page 3. They have a legitimate right to influence our thinking this year's Top Track 250 companies support over a third of a million jobs and generate combined sales of £588bn, the equivalent of 3.1% of GDP. They should be congratulated on their success – sales were up an average of 14% and employment by 11%, year-on-year. More than half of the companies trade overseas and a similar proportion have their head office outside London and the southeast of England, creating jobs throughout the UK.

There is much we can learn from them. Bradford's Redfern Travel (No 69), for example, is helping the public sector

become more efficient. It has saved taxpayers £15m since 2011 by reducing the civil service's travel costs. In London, Global Radio (No 64), home to Heart FM and LBC, is one of a number of Top Track 250 companies collaborating with universities to provide the next generation of graduates with relevant skills. From its head office in Poole, hand-made cosmetics firm Lush (No 43) illustrates how to combine integrity and ethics with innovation, international expansion and long-term success. It refreshes up to 30% of its natural soaps and fragrances each year, tailoring them to its different markets. Two-thirds of its £326.5m sales in 2015 were overseas. Its ethical stance on issues such as animal testing helps it engage with employees and customers alike, and it is not shy about reflecting their views, providing a powerful platform for popular campaigns such as opposing fracking.

What these companies have in common is that they are not simply thinking about profit

and loss but planning for the long term. One vital part of this planning, for any company, is to prioritise innovation. This helps a business respond to longer-term demographic and societal trends – the need for healthier eating in the West, for example, or the expansion of the world's middle class, particularly in China, India and Africa. Or tackling environmental issues, such as water shortages and air pollution.

Such problem-solving can attract and inspire the next generation of star employees. Look down the list and everyone will find a different company that inspires them. It might be the Falkirk-based firm Alexander Dennis (No 4), which has 900 environmentally friendly, fuel-efficient buses on the roads in Hong Kong. For my youngest son, it's McLaren (No 19): yes, boys and fast cars, but the company is not limiting its ambitions and know-how to the narrow niche of road cars and the Formula 1 track. It has a number of partnerships with companies

in other industries, such as Glaxo Smith Kline, using its technology to help them become more efficient.

This collaborative, systemic approach is vital. Grant Thornton believes that, for Britain to continue to be successful in the global economy, we need to create a society and economy that benefits us all. We are playing our part in making this happen. In November we will host Live Labs in Manchester and Reading, where leaders from the private, public, charity and voluntary sectors will address the challenges facing their communities, as well as the specific opportunities to become world-class centres for health and communications technologies. As Brexit negotiations begin, the trade-offs involved will become clearer. Business must make its voice heard now to ensure an independent Britain works for all of us, shaping a vibrant economy where no-one is left behind.

Sacha Romanovitch is chief executive of Grant Thornton UK

BRITAIN'S 250 PRIVATE MID-MARKET GROWTH COMPANIES

Rank 2016	Rank 2015	Company	Activity	HQ location	Year end	Sales £m	Operating profit £m	Staff	Rank 2016	Rank 2015	Company	Activity	HQ location	Year end	Sales £m	Operating profit £m	Staff
1		Virgin Active	Health club operator	Central London	Dec 15	'6305	'681	13,629	126		Pentagon Investments	Van dealer	Dec 15	129.26	4.4	316	
2	11	Perionix Network	Recruitment consultancy	Warrickshire	Dec 15	'6145	'180	1,438	127	192	Yearley	Frozen food supplier	Dec 15	188.5	5.0	1,264	
3		Morrison Utility Services	Utility services provider	Stevage	Mar 16	6140	19.2	3,882	128	182	Mearsley	Construction contractor	Dec 15	187.8	13.8	605	
4		Alexander Dennis	Bus and coach manufacturer	Larbert, nr. Falkirk	Dec 15	6019	26.2	2,914	129		Reward Gateway	Employee engagement services	Central London	Jun 15	187.5	6.6	211
5	14	Nandor's	Restaurant operator	Southwest London	Feb 15	5975	12.9	1,298	130		Shaw Pharmacy	Pharmaceutical wholesaler	Feb 15	187.1	15	47	
6	19	Opus Energy	Energy supplier	Oxford	Mar 16	5727	35.6	833	131		ID Medical	Recruitment consultancy	Central London	Dec 15	'108.9	'9.4	493
7	38	IMY Group	Car distributor	West Midlands	Dec 15	5710	115.5	397	132	138	Central Risks	Risk management consultancy	Central London	Mar 16	186.5	10.9	2,544
8	15	Midwinter	Dental care provider	Kearsley, Bolton	Mar 16	5659	30.0	7,145	133	168	Randall Parker Food	Meat distributor	Northamptonshire	Sep 15	186.1	4.3	495
9	12	The Edinburgh Woollen Mill	Clothing retailer	Dumfriesshire	Feb 15	5626	83.1	10,205	134		DCS Group (UK)	Textiles products distributor	Stratford-upon-Avon	Dec 15	185.6	5.1	301
10	25	Travelodge	Budget hotel operator	Northamptonshire	Dec 15	5536	62.9	9,080	135	225	Charles Yhrkwith	Clothing retailer	Central London	Aug 15	184.5	17.3	802
11	31	Harwoods	Home accessories retailer	West Sussex	Dec 15	5532	45.5	887	136	208	The White Company	Home accessories retailer	Central London	Mar 16	184.3	17.3	431
12		Associated British Ports	Port operator	Central London	Dec 15	5367	28.2	2,184	137	171	Fly Maxwell	Building products supplier	Bristol	Mar 15	183.5	10.6	164
13	2	Miller Homes	Housebuilder	Edinburgh	Dec 15	'526.8	'75.5	722	138	117	TP McCann	City engineering contractor	Belfast	Dec 15	118.27	11.4	1,027
14	34	Helston Garages	Car dealer	Corwall	Dec 15	5178	17.3	945	139	220	Symphony	Furniture supplier	Barnsley	Dec 15	182.7	12.5	1,423
15	21	Calia	Housebuilder	Edinburgh	Jun 15	5116	73.0	655	140	231	Yeomans	Car dealer	Worthing	Dec 15	182.1	6.1	368
16		City Electrical Factors	Electrical parts wholesaler	Warwickshire	Apr 15	5042	32.8	3,015	141	172	JJ Food Services	Food distributor	Enfield, Middlesex	Mar 15	181.7	11.0	779
17	49	Southall Travel	Travel agency and tour operator	West London	Mar 16	'490.9	'21.3	43	142	205	Go Dobbies	Outdoor equipment retailer	Sheffiled	Jan 15	181.4	4.7	1,298
18	36	Car Giant	Car dealer	West London	Dec 14	485.9	38.8	644	143	143	Brett	Building materials supplier	Canterbury	Dec 15	180.8	9.7	882
19	30	McLaren Automotive	Sports car maker	Woking	Dec 15	450.8	23.5	1,492	144		Element	Testing & certification services provider	Central London	Dec 15	'180.3	'30.0	1,778
20	39	Park's Motor Group	Car dealer	Lincolnshire	Mar 15	448.0	17.1	1,267	145	221	Fairview	Hotel & supply chain services	North London	Dec 15	178.2	6.8	210
21	84	Robertson	Construction services	Stirling	Mar 16	'437.9	'19.0	1,637	146	181	Suttons	Kitchen & supply chain services	Cheshire	Apr 15	176.2	8.3	1,131
22	53	Peter Varly	Car dealer	Glasgow	Dec 15	437.3	10.2	777	147	147	Lakeand	Home accessories retailer	Cheshire	Dec 14	175.6	5.6	1,886
23	49	Penfold Retail	Value retailer	West Yorkshire	Mar 15	422.3	14.6	5,980	148	197	Wiley	Business training provider	Central London	May 16	174.6	'28.0	1,381
24	62	Glyn Hopkin	Car dealer	Barnford	Dec 15	419.8	8.9	702	149	187	Dun London	Footwear retailer	Central London	Jan 15	174.0	7.4	2,233
25	49	Kaspersky Lab	Internet security software	London/Moscow	Dec 15	414.0	58.4	3,259	150	222	Search Consultancy	Recruitment consultancy	Glasgow	Jan 16	173.6	6.1	825
26	55	Turner & Townsend	Construction consultancy	Leeds	Apr 16	'406.8	'38.7	4,278	151		Churchill Retirement Living	Retirement housebuilder	Hampshire	May 16	'173.3	'156.8	484
27	27	Aurum	Jewellery retailer	Leicester	May 15	406.7	18.7	1,589	152	200	The Car People	Car dealer	Walesfield	Dec 15	173.2	6.8	450
28	58	Dick Lovett Companies	Car dealer	Swindon	Dec 15	401.6	9.7	619	153		BMI Group	Engineering consultancy	Middlesex	Sep 15	171.4	3.7	1,547
29	249	Parkdean Resorts	Holiday parks operator	Newcastle upon Tyne	Dec 15	400.7	306.8	6,049	154		Arora Holdings	Hotel operator	West London	Mar 15	170.5	10.4	1,304
30	50	Telent	Software services provider	London	Mar 16	397.3	21.8	2,849	155	197	Millars	Window coverings retailer	London	Oct 15	170.3	14.2	1,527
31		Almac	Pharmaceuticals maker	Craigavon, Co Armagh	Sep 15	393.6	29.1	3,554	156	234	Calcraft Information	Consumer data analyst	Leeds	Dec 15	170.1	27.6	1,123
32		Chime Communications	PR and advertising	Central London	Dec 14	390.4	18.3	2,012	157	238	PD Hook	Poultry producer	Oxfordshire	Dec 15	168.3	25.0	925
33	54	Zenith	Vehicle lessor	Leeds	Mar 16	383.0	30.2	487	158		Howarth Timber	Timber products maker	Leeds	Mar 16	'163.9	'9.5	913
34	68	Lloyd Motors	Car dealer	Carlisle	Dec 15	380.4	8.6	786	159		Megger	Electrical products manufacturer	Dover	Nov 15	168.1	16.4	1,235
35	47	Meadow Foods	Dairy product producer	Chester	Mar 15	376.5	13.8	275	160	203	Barbour	Clothing manufacturer	South Shires	Dec 14	167.4	28.3	899
36	33	Tennants Consolidated	Commercial services provider	Reading	Dec 15	373.8	23.1	1,081	161	217	Eric Wright	Food distributor	Hampshire	Dec 15	167.4	28.3	899
37		Arsenal Holdings	Football club operator	North London	May 15	344.5	7.8	605	162		Travel Counsellors	Travel services provider	Manchester	Oct 15	168.4	10.7	272
38	77	Robinsons Motor Group	Car dealer	Norwich	Dec 15	341.5	7.4	634	163		Together	Specialist lender	Cheshire	Dec 15	165.5	12.2	373
39		Westbridge Foods	Food service and logistics	Malvern	Dec 15	340.0	7.1	159	164		Shanly	Housebuilder	Beaconsfield	Dec 14	164.4	50.9	152
40	110	The Hut Group	Online retailer	Northwich	Dec 15	333.5	18.1	1,291	165	228	Danzel	Butchers' supplier	Lincolnshire	Oct 15	163.0	14.2	542
41	71	Lotus Group	Travel organiser	South London	Oct 15	331.2	20.5	470	166	208	Kingsland	Alcoholic drinks distributor	Manchester	Jun 15	162.8	3.8	271
42	76	Principal Hotels	Hotel operator	West London	Dec 15	328.1	16.7	5,510	167		Construction Contractor	Construction contractor	Manchester	Dec 15	162.7	14.1	542
43		Lush	Cosmetics manufacturer and retailer	Poole	Jun 15	326.5	12.4	5,762	168		John Cotton	Bed-fittings manufacturer	West Yorkshire	Mar 15	160.5	9.9	1,068
44		ED & F Man	Commodities and logistics manager	Central London	Sep 15	321.3	73.5	4,038	169		Country Style Foods	Meat and toile hire	Leeds	Apr 15	159.7	7.2	1,546
45	85	Air Charter Service	Aircraft charter broker	Kingston upon Thames	Jan 16	315.8	7.1	345	170		Gap Group	Plant and toile hire	Glasgow	Mar 16	157.7	18.3	1,454
46	83	Weyale Garden Centres	Garden centre operator	West London	Dec 15	311.1	31.4	6,008	171		Constantine Group	Complaner	Surrey	Dec 15	156.4	5.5	541
47	94	Stady Group	Education services provider	Central London	Dec 15	'307.5	'22.7	3,154	172		Kreggy Distribution	Distribution services	Exeter	Oct 15	156.3	7.2	1,176
48	109	Huntswood	Customer services provider	Central London	Dec 15	306.8	49.3	2,948	173	240	Morecambe Distributor	Motor vehicle distributor	Sheve-on-Trent	Dec 15	155.7	5.5	478
49	105	Ways Travel	Travel agency	Sunderland	Oct 15	306.0	6.3	977	174		Keltruck	Truck dealer	West Bromwich	Dec 15	155.7	5.5	478
50	90	Day Lewis	Pharmaceuticals retailer	Croydon	Mar 16	'305.2	'22.4	2,146	175		Masterson Holdings	Building contractor	Borehamwood	Aug 15	155.2	11.6	314
51	98	Hill	Housebuilder	Waltham Abbey, Essex	Dec 15	303.8	30.8	335	176		Hammer	IT storage distributor	Basingstoke	Jan 16	154.8	6.3	164
52	157	Hyperson Insurance	Insurance broker and underwriter	Central London	Sep 15	298.0	33.6	2,994	177		Wain	Housebuilder	Warrington	Jun 15	153.2	38.8	370
53	88	Caffe Nero	Coffee house operator	Central London	May 16	'298.0	'27.1	4,500	178		Uvarel Travel	Tour operator	Oxfordshire	Dec 15	151.7	18.0	211
54	80	Adelle Foods	Food and drink wholesaler	Central London	Mar 16	294.7	10.8	2,949	179	250	Wark	West Midlands	Dec 15	151.7	18.0	211	
55		Kurt Geiger	Shoe retailer	Central London	Dec 15	'292.3	'20.4	2,071	180	218	Daves Turner	Logistics, freight operator	Warwickshire	Mar 16	'151.2	'6.4	840
56	204	Jacriavel	Travel services provider	West London	Oct 15	'288.9	'15.7	517	181		James Walker	Timber merchant	West Lothian	Mar 16	'151.2	'11.0	600
57	90	Yeo Valley	Yoghurt and dairy maker	Bristol	May 15	284.2	7.3	1,821	182		Axis Europe Holdings	Property maintenance contractor	Central London	Mar 16	149.4	7.0	893
58	100	AvailableCar	Car dealer	Cheshire	Dec 15	281.2	8.5	548	183		Accom Staffrills	Staffrill manufacturer	West Yorkshire	Sep 15	149.2	17.1	1,182
59	109	Westover	Car dealer	Bournemouth	Dec 15	278.8	6.3	728	184		Lexon	Pharmaceuticals supplier	Redditch	Apr 15	149.0	8.2	584
60	33	William Jackson Food	Food producer	West Yorkshire	Mar 15	276.0	18.0	2,067	185	237	WP Group	Chemical exporter	Cheshire	Dec 15	148.7	29.1	723
61	19	Oxis Dental Care	Dental care provider	Bristol	Mar 16	275.1	12.9	3,521	186		Cityprint	Logistics provider	Surrey	Dec 15	146.0	29	728
62	138	Keltray	City engineering contractor	Southwest London	Oct 15	272.3	11.6	1,078	187		Edinburgh Airport	Airport operator	Edinburgh	Dec 15	145.5	45.0	552
63	193	Morris	Housebuilder	Cheshire	Mar 16	'268.3	'42.2	229	188		Reiss	Brand fashion retailer	Central London	Jan 16	145.2	19.8	1,401
64	64	Global Radio	Radio broadcaster	Central London	Mar 15	265.2	35.1	1,210	189		White Stuff	Fashion retailer	South London	Apr 16	144.6	12.6	1,865
65	65	Voicelave	Dried foods importer	North London	Dec 15	261.4	8.6	82	190		Steven Eggell	Car dealer	Milton Keynes	Dec 15	144.0	3.8	286
66	28	Nisbets	Catering equipment supplier	Bristol	Dec 15	255.4	28.3	1,086	191		WP Group	Fuel and lubricant distributor	Northampton	Dec 15	142.1	3.1	507
67	115	Car dea	Car dealer	Central London	Jul 16	255.0	8.1	2,858	192	238	Car dea	Automotive component distributor	Northampton	Jun 15	138.2	14.9	885
68		Stewart Milne	Housebuilder & timber systems maker	Aberdeen	Jun 15	252.7	11.8	793	193		Mountain Warehouse	Outdoor clothing retailer	Central London	Feb 16	141.4	12.6	1,846
69		Redfern Travel	Business travel agent	Bradford	Mar 15	252.2	4.2	112	194		Aglilisys	IT services provider	Central London	Mar 16	'140.0	'11.0	1,856
70	139	MKM Building Supplies	Builders' merchant	Hull	Sep 15	251.9	15.9	938	195		Cameron Mackintosh	Theatrical producer	Central London	Mar 15	138.9	27.2	659
71	155	JRL	Construction contractor	Hertfordshire	Dec 15	251.7	5.										

6 OPUS ENERGY

Sales £572.7m ▲ 9% Profit £35.6m ▼ 7%
Opus Energy supplies electricity and gas to more than 275,000 British businesses, including White Stuff and Dulux. Decorative Centre, its broker pricing portal enables online management of the entire brokering process and, as a result, 85% of its quotes are completed online – up from 6% before the portal's launch in 2014. Headquartered in Oxford, the company is led by chief executive and co-founder Charles Crossley Cooke, 49.

7 IM GROUP

Sales £571.0m ▲ 22% Profit £115.5m ▲ 67%
Car sales, car financing and property make up the three parts of this Warwickshire firm. Set up in 1976 by chairman Lord Edmond, 69, IM Group owns franchises for Subaru, Isuzu and China's Great Wall. In April, managing director Andrew Edmond, 47, led the sale of an industrial portfolio to Malaysia's state pension scheme for £200m. Its profits of £115.5m are among the largest on the league table.

8 MYDENIST

Sales £565.8m ▲ 0% Profit £23.0m ▼ 2%
Mydentist says it is Europe's largest dental care provider and the biggest provider of NHS dentistry in the UK. It has continued its strategy of opening dental practices, bringing its total to 672. Chief executive Terry Scicluna, 59, also led the acquisition of dental material supplier Dolby Medical and facial aesthetics product distributor Med-ix, for undisclosed sums.

9 EDINBURGH WOOLLEN MILL

Sales £562.8m ▲ 2% Profit £32.1m ▲ 1%
Edinburgh Woollen Mill opened its first shop in Scotland in 1970, selling woollen garments and textiles. In recent years, the group has acquired distressed brands, including Peacocks, Proscup and Jane Norman, and in May it brought the menswear brand Austin Reed and ladieswear brand Country Casuals from administrators. New store openings in 2015 took the Dumfrieshire group's estate to more than 1,000 shops. Chief executive Philip Day, 50, has announced plans for 100 new stores over the next two years, creating 800 jobs.

10 TRAVELLOGE

Sales £558.8m ▲ 13% Profit £82.9m ▲ 108%
Travelodge was founded in 1985 and says it is Britain's largest independent hotel chain, operating more than 525 hotels and 39,000 rooms across the UK, Ireland and Spain. Under chief executive Peter Gurney, 44, the Oxfordshire company welcomed a record 18m customers in 2015 and plans to open 19 new hotels this year. The group is reportedly up for sale.

11 HARWOODS

Sales £552.2m ▲ 17% Profit £15.1m ▲ 15%
Before taking the reins of this West Sussex car dealership with his father, chairman Guy Harwood, 77, was a renowned jockey and horse trainer. His horse Dancing Brave won the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe in 1986. Harwoods now has 18 sites in southern England selling luxury marques such as Aston Martin, Bentley, Jaguar and Land Rover.

12 ASSOCIATED BRITISH PORTS

Sales £538.7m ▲ 3% Profit £21.2m ▲ 3%
Handling 92m tonnes of cargo last year, ABP is a leading port operator with a network of 21 ports across Britain – these include Inningham, the nation's busiest port, and Southampton, the second largest and most popular for cruises. Under chief executive James Cooper, 55, it is partway through a £1bn investment programme. Its profits of £21.2m are the largest on the league table and represent a 5.2% operating margin.

13 MILLER HOMES

Sales £535.8m ▼ 14% Profit £75.5m ▲ 200%
This housebuilder and commercial property company has set itself a target of building 3,500 homes a year, up from nearly 2,000 in 2014, when it sold its construction division to Galliford Try for £17m. Led by chairman Philip Bowman, 63, the Edinburgh firm grew strongly on the back of the economic recovery and its homes division helped 2015 profits triple to £76.7m. The group is reportedly up for sale with a £700m price tag.

14 HELSTON GARAGES

Sales £531.8m ▲ 10% Profit £12.3m ▲ 14%
Cornwall-based Helston Garages has 37 car dealerships throughout the West



Prince Harry helped build homes for former service personnel last year

Country, selling marques from Ferrari and Porsche to Peugeot and Volkswagen. The business is owned by the Carr family, having grown from a filling station and workshop, founded in 1960. It is run by managing director Andy Barrett, 52.

15 CALA

Sales £531.6m ▲ 79% Profit £73.0m ▲ 93%
Edinburgh-based Cala is a premium builder that mainly operates at the high end of the market. Driven by a strengthening housing market and its acquisition of Banner Homes for a reported £200m in 2014, the group announced profits had nearly doubled to a record £73m, on sales of £531.6m, up 79% in 2015. In 2013, Legal & General and Patron Capital Partners acquired a majority stake, valuing the group at £244m. Chief executive Alan Brown, 56, is targeting sales of £1bn within five years.

16 CITY ELECTRICAL FACTORS

Sales £530.4m ▲ 3% Profit £22.2m ▲ 38%
Warwickshire-based City Electrical Factors supplies the trade with 30,000 branded and in-house electrical products. The wholesaler has a UK network of 390 branches, and operations in America, Canada, Ireland, Spain and Australia, supported by a dedicated national accounts team. Its website provides customers with stock visibility and next-day delivery of more than 200 brands. The group is led by managing director Thomas Mackie, 28, grandson of the founder.

17 SOUTHALL TRAVEL

Sales £490.9m ▲ 17% Profit £21.3m ▲ 18%
This West London travel agency started life in 1984 as a niche firm selling flights to British Asians travelling to India. It now arranges flights and package holidays to destinations worldwide, with growth in markets including the Middle East, Far East and America. The company is led by chief executive Kuldinder Bahla, 43, who took over in 1997 at the age of 24.

18 CAR GIANT

Sales £485.3m ▲ 18% Profit £38.8m ▲ 20%
Car Giant's 47-acre Oak Common base in west London stocks up to 8,000 cars, but chairman Geoffrey Warren, 61, will move operations if plans go ahead to develop the site. Last year, Boris Johnson in his role as mayor of London, set up a development corporation to oversee the transformation of the area, which is the only place where H2E meets Crossrail.

19 MCLAREN AUTOMOTIVE

Sales £450.6m ▼ 9% Profit £23.5m ▲ 13%
Under chief executive Mike Flewitt, 54, this sports car manufacturer launched five new models last year, including its track-only McLaren P1 GTR – only 35

were made, though each cost nearly £2m. The group has more than 70 showrooms around the world and last year delivered 1,654 cars to customers in 30 countries.

20 PARK'S MOTOR GROUP

Sales £448.0m ▲ 12% Profit £12.1m ▲ 12%
Following its acquisition of long-established Scottish motor group Macrae & Dick, in January this year, Park's has 37 franchise outlets across Scotland, selling cars from 24 marques. The coach operator and car dealership was founded in 1971 as a three-coach operation by Douglas Park, 66, who remains chairman and chief executive. The Lanarkshire firm also owns Park's Hamilton, a 120-vehicle coach firm.

21 ROBERTSON

Sales £437.9m ▲ 52% Profit £18m ▲ 65%
This Strirling-based infrastructure, construction and asset management group builds affordable homes, schools, supermarkets, distilleries, hospitals and office blocks, and is involved in commercial property development, civil engineering and public sector investments. It also has a facilities maintenance division, with clients that include a school owned by Everton Football Club and the Scottish Prison Service. Led by founder and executive chairman Bill Robertson, 71, sales rose by 52% to £437.9m this year.

22 PETER VARDY

Sales £437.3m ▲ 11% Profit £10.2m ▲ 67%
Chief executive Peter Vardy, 38, and his father, chairman Sir Peter Vardy, 69, founded this Glasgow car dealership in 2006 after selling family firm Reg Vardy to Pendragon for £506m. It now has 12 franchise dealerships across Scotland, including Jaguar Land Rover, BMW and Mini, and will launch its second CarStore supermarket this year, in Dundee.

23 POUNDWORLD RETAIL

Sales £422.3m ▲ 22% Profit £14.6m ▲ 130%
Poundworld's profits rose 130% to £14.6m last year, following a record year of trading. In the same year, it opened 35 new stores, began construction on a new 500,000 sq ft warehouse, and founder Chris Edwards, 66, sold a majority stake to private equity firm TPG for £150m. In Edwards stepped down as chief executive in March and is succeeded by Gerry Gray, 53, whose previous role was chief operating officer of Tesco.

24 GLYN HOPKIN

Sales £418.4m ▲ 20% Profit £8.8m ▲ 28%
Chairman Glyn Hopkin, 55, set up this car dealership in 1992 and it now has more than 35 branches in London and southeast England. The Romford firm sells a variety of marques and offers

finance, aftercare and servicing. The company aims to add further branches to the group, to take turnover to £500m in the short term.

25 KASPERSKY LAB

Sales £418.2m ▼ 1% Profit £56.4m ▲ 82%
This internet security group says more than 400m customers in 200 countries use its software to protect computers and mobiles from the latest cyber-security threats. Cryptologist Eugene Kasperky, 51, founded the cybersecurity firm 19 years ago in Moscow, and in 2001 the holding company was moved to London as part of a corporate restructuring. Its firm's highest-profile client contract is supporting BT's nationwide broadband upgrade. Last December, chief executive Mark Plato, 56, bought a communications business from America, increasing its presence in the public safety market.

26 TURNER & TOWNSEND

Sales £408.5m ▲ 9% Profit £38.7m ▲ 5%
Turner & Townsend is a construction consultancy currently advising on New Warner's flagship headquarters in Time York, as well as on a city-wide public transport plan for Leeds. Chief executive Vincent Clancy, 52, has driven the global expansion of the business, opening eight new offices internationally, including in Auckland and Nairobi. Over half the firm's sales are now generated abroad.

27 AURUM

Sales £408.1m ▲ 23% Profit £18.7m ▲ 23%
This Leicester jewellery retail group says it is one of the world's largest distributors of luxury watches. It was formed in 2006 by the merger of Goldsmiths, Watches of Switzerland and Mappin & Webb, and was subsequently acquired by Apollo in 2013 for £180m. Chief executive Brian Duffy, 62, joined in 2014 and promptly opened a £5m Watches of Switzerland store on Regent Street as well as buying online retailer Watch Shop, for an undisclosed sum. Further acquisitions in the last year include online retailer The Watch Hut and repairs specialist The Watch Lab.

28 DICK LOVETT

Sales £401.6m ▲ 2% Profit £9.7m ▲ 21%
A passion for motorsports led the chairman of this sports car dealership, Peter Lovett, 66, to compete at Le Mans five times. The company was established in Portsmouth, talking to the likes of Edwards stepped down as chief executive in March and is succeeded by Gerry Gray, 53, whose previous role was chief operating officer of Tesco.

29 PARKDEAN RESORTS

Sales £400.7m ▲ 9% Profit £10.6m ▲ 18%
Parkdean Holidays and Park Resorts merged last year to create Parkdean Resorts, which operates 73 holiday parks throughout Britain. It hosts 2m

holidaymakers every year, who rent camping pitches, self-catering caravans and lodges. The newly combined group operates from two offices in Newcastle and Hemel Hempstead, and is led by chief executive John Waterworth, 52, and non-executive chairman Alan Parker, 69.

30 TELENT

Sales £387.3m ▲ 20% Profit £12.8m ▲ 9%
Telent provides a range of network and communications services across a variety of industries from telecoms and transport to utilities and the emergency services. Key clients include Virgin Media, Network Rail and National Express. The Warwick firm's highest-profile contract is supporting BT's nationwide broadband upgrade. Last December, chief executive Mark Plato, 56, bought a communications business from America, increasing its presence in the public safety market.

31 ALMAC

Sales £383.8m ▲ 15% Profit £28.1m ▲ 40%
The late Sir Allen McCly set up this pharmaceuticals developer in 2001. Almac provides research, development and commercialisation services to more than 600 international biopharma companies. Based in Craigavon, Northern Ireland, it has offices in America, Singapore and Japan, and employs more than 4,300 people. Alan Armstrong, 57, is chairman and chief executive.

32 CHIME COMMUNICATIONS

Sales £380.4m ▲ 30% Profit £18.3m ▲ 30%
This West Yorkshire firm is one of the UK's largest independent vehicle leasing businesses, with more than 80,000 vehicles under management and offices in Leeds, Crowther and Solihull. It was formed at the beginning of 2014, when Zenith was merged with Leaseadvice, a vehicle hire and fleet manager, by private equity firm HighCapital. The group is reportedly up for sale with a price tag of more than £600m. The company's chief executive is Tim Buchan, 52.

33 ZENITH

Sales £383.6m ▲ 18% Profit £30.2m ▲ 51%
This West Yorkshire firm is one of the UK's largest independent vehicle leasing businesses, with more than 80,000 vehicles under management and offices in Leeds, Crowther and Solihull. It was formed at the beginning of 2014, when Zenith was merged with Leaseadvice, a vehicle hire and fleet manager, by private equity firm HighCapital. The group is reportedly up for sale with a price tag of more than £600m. The company's chief executive is Tim Buchan, 52.

34 LLOYD MOTORS

Sales £380.4m ▲ 18% Profit £8.8m ▲ 28%
This car dealership is based in Carlisle and has 23 sites across Scotland and

Telent: the tech pioneer building for the future

The daily efforts of communications engineering firm Telent (No 30) are making a difference to the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

Telent delivers and maintains modern communications services for businesses and public sector organisations, from Virgin Media to the police and Transport for London, where it led the project to provide real-time passenger information across the London bus network.

In the West Midlands it manages a £27m scheme to improve the traffic flow across the region. Its technology enables the police, the Highways Agency and public transport operators to share information, so they can respond quickly to incidents.

Through its joint venture with Carillon, it is installing BT superfast broadband for 33 local authorities, with a particular focus on rural areas. Last year this part of Telent's business supported the efforts of princes William and Harry to improve the lives of armed services veterans. The "homes for veterans" project in Manchester was fronted by the BBC's *DIV S03* programme.

Telent's work in the Midlands, on fast broadband connections to the 62 homes. Chief executive Mark Plato said: "The importance of reintegrating veterans into communities is very close to our hearts and we are proud of our many employees who come from the armed forces."

northern England, selling brands such as BMW, Jaguar and Land Rover. The company also has a special interest in car centres and offers servicing, parts and bodyshop. Founded 40 years ago by Ralph Lloyd, it is now led by his sons, Bryan, 59, and Barry, 63.

35 MEADOW FOODS

Sales £376.5m ▼ 11% Profit £13.8m ▲ 24%
This dairy producer operates three UK factories as well as manufacturing in sectors such as prepared foods, confectionery and ice cream. The Chester company is led by chairman and former dairy farmer James Pickering, 58, and chief executive Mark Plato, 56. UK private equity house Paik & Partners acquired a minority stake in the business for an undisclosed sum, providing an exit for owners the Pickering family.

36 TENNANTS CONSOLIDATED

Sales £373.8m ▼ 7% Profit £28.8m ▲ 40%
In the late 18th century, Charles Tennant revolutionated the linen trade by creating bleaching powder. Today, Tennant's is owned by the Alexander family and makes and distributes more than 3,000 chemicals across Europe and Canada, from adhesives to animal feed. The Belgavia-based company also manufactures chemicals in Europe, North and South America, and China. Paul Alexander, 62, is group chairman.

37 ARSENAL HOLDINGS

Sales £370.2m ▲ 2% Profit £23.2m ▲ 23%
Arsenal became the most successful club in FA Cup history last year, lifting their 12th title. Under chief executive Ivan Gazidis, 52, merchandising – including a collaboration with Coca-Cola – and returns on property investment helped sales increase 14% to £344.5m in 2015. The club is redeveloping and expanding its training facility in Hertfordshire.

38 ROBINSONS MOTOR GROUP

Sales £341.5m ▲ 12% Profit £7.4m ▲ 8%
Richard Robinson founded this car dealer in 1927 and chief executive Michael Robinson by the Robinson family. It has Audi, Seat, Volkswagen, Mercedes-Benz and Smart outlets, with 22 dealerships across East Angles, including the group's flagship, Martin Wallace, 48, is chief executive.

39 WESTBRIDGE FOODS

Sales £340.0m ▼ 7% Profit £7.1m ▲ 18%
From supplying a wide range of meats and poultry products, this business supplies fresh and frozen products to retailers across Europe. The company is based in Kent and chief executive Peter McNeil, 62, oversees growing operations in Europe, Brazil, China and Thailand.

Tea GB's success can inspire a golden vision of Britain



Neil Clifford of Kurt Geiger (No 55): education will make Britain fit

Top Track 250 leaders say education, infrastructure and long-term thinking are post-Brexit priorities. By Grant Thornton's David Dunkley and David Ascott

WHEN we brought together leaders from 14 of this year's Top Track 250 last month to discuss how Britain can thrive in a post-Brexit world, some clear messages emerged for government and the wider business community to digest. "There is an absence of a real plan, a vision for Britain," said David Hosking, chief executive of car benefit specialist Tuskler. "As business leaders we all do planning exercises and things never go exactly to plan, but it definitely helps drive growth."

Under chief executive Mike Flewitt, 54, this sports car manufacturer launched five new models last year, including its track-only McLaren P1 GTR – only 35

don't, 20 years from now we will be an even less influential country that is vulnerable to being buffeted by events."

This call for a long-term vision was accompanied by broad agreement on how to unlock economic growth. The priorities were: investment in education, training and infrastructure; and for Britain to remain an open society, as it seeks to reduce immigration.

Simon Downing, chairman of Civica, a software firm, made the case for spending on education. "If you were putting a pound note into anywhere, I would stick it into education – the talent and opportunity that young people can bring to businesses and the country is immense," he said. Neil Clifford, chief executive of

poorest communities. He challenged businesses to train more young people in "skills that are relevant for the future economy".

Others suggested Whitehall finance director at stationary chain Paperchase, added that Britain had to improve its productivity, and encouraging business investment as well as training was vital.

The second priority was infrastructure. "It's a no-brainer," said Nolan Waterhouse, chairman Phil Nolan, "particularly broadband". New chancellor Philip Hammond may tackle Britain's structural deficiencies in his Autumn statement on 23 November. Matthew Streets, acting managing partner of architects Foster + Partners, urged him to think big. "Infrastructure is key," he said, and had to include decisions on airport capacity, high-speed rail, ports and roads.

Others suggested Whitehall should look at Team GB's success in the last two Olympics. John Gallemore, co-founder and chief financial officer of e-commerce retailer The Hut Group, said: "We had a real vision in Sir Dave Brailsford,

in cycling, who inherited some infrastructure: a velodrome in Manchester built for the Commonwealth Games. He had a great idea for disposal and he got good at it. That success attracted public and lottery funding, which was invested in elite athletes, who got even better and the support was extended to others... for our businesses to compete globally that's what we have to do: focus on what we're really good at."

The importance of manufacturing was emphasised by Paul Alexander, group chairman of chemicals and logistics group Tennants Consolidated. He said there was a "great opportunity" post-Brexit to renew the sector's contribution. "The will of the employees and the people that I meet in our industry has never been better," he said.

Britain must remain open and outward-looking. Emma Lancaster – chief financial officer of The Study Group, which teaches 77,000 students a year from 145 countries – said Britain bene-

fited significantly from foreign students. "Their presence helps spark creativity and job innovation," she said. "It also promotes our trade and power globally."

Success means many of our students go on to be the great and good in their own countries." Peter Roberts, founder of Pure Gym, said he would like to continue to recruit migrants from Europe and further afield as his business grows. Matthew Streets of Foster + Partners agreed: "45% of our London workforce are non-British European."

Finally, for those businesses trading overseas, it was crucial the government tackle uncertainty over Britain's trading relationships. Jo Hartley, chief financial officer at international gym group Virgin Active, said: "We must create an environment that gives business the confidence to invest."

We hope more strong voices will emerge in the months ahead and let's follow up to hearing from our top Track 250 company directors at this year's awards dinner in November. David Dunkley and David Ascott are advisory partners at Grant Thornton UK

40 THE HUT GROUP

Sales £633.5m ▲34% Profit £18.1m ▲21% This London travel retailer sells sports nutrition and online products, vitamins and weight-management items via 72 group websites backed by its proprietary technology. Last year, it shipped 9m orders to 192 countries, lifting revenue 34% to £633.5m. Having agreed a £10m loan deal in 2015, the group invested in a new manufacturing and distribution centre in Warrington; acquired Canadian beauty brand Grow Gorgeous in February; and last month bought US wine management and US multi-million retailer Idle Shape for an undisclosed sum. Founders Matt Moulding, 44, and John Gallimore, 47, also plan to invest £10m in an American production facility for its Myprotein brand.

41 LOTUS GROUP

Sales £31.2m ▲5% Profit £2.5m ▲32% This London travel group includes DialAFlight, which provides travel services to more than 400,000 holidaymakers a year, and Supertravel, which specialises in golf holidays. It also has a corporate travel business, offering chauffeur travel and private air charters. Founder and majority shareholder Peter Stephens, 66, leads the group.

42 PRINCIPAL HOTELS

Sales £328.3m ▲7% Profit £68.8m ▲5% Harrogate-based Principal Hotels was bought by private equity firm Starwood Capital in 2013 for a reported £300m. The following year, Starwood also acquired the De Vere Venues and Four Pillars businesses, increasing its investment in the British hospitality market to a reported £700m. Under chief executive Tony Trov, 54, the group has restructured to consolidate all three businesses.

43 LUSH

Sales £328.5m ▲18% Profit £12.4m ▼13% Lush is a common sight – and smell – on Britain's high streets, thanks to the locally made bath and body products sold in its shops. The Poole business has 933 outlets in 49 countries and has been growing fast in America and Saudi Arabia. Last year it opened a flagship store on Oxford Street, as well as opening new production facilities in Brazil. The company is led by co-founder and managing director Mark Constantine, 64.

44 ED & F MAN

Sales £321.3m ▲8% Profit £73.5m ▲11% Founded by James Man in 1783 as a sugar broker and barrel maker, this company now trades the Royal Navy for nearly 200 years. As well as sugar, the company now trades coffee and other commodities, and also runs a brokerage business. In 2012, German sugar producer Südzucker acquired 47% stake in the business, valuing it at £1bn. Group chief executive, Phil Howell, 58, oversaw a recovery in performance last year after difficult trading conditions in 2014.

45 AIR CHARTER SERVICE

Sales £315.8m ▲10% Profit £71m ▲6% Air Charter Service specialises in private jet, commercial airliner and charter aircraft charters, arranging more than 10,000 contracts every year. Led by founder and chairman Chris Leah, 67, it opened offices in Geneva, Miami and New York in 2015, and now has 20 offices across five continents. Increasing cargo charter helped boost profits 67% to £7.1m.

46 WYVEALE GARDEN CENTRES

Sales £311.1m ▲7% Profit £31.4m ▲24% Twenty-three garden centres have been added to Wyveale's network since private equity Terra Firma bought it in 2012. In 2012, expanding to 151 sites in England and Wales. The business is led by chief executive Roger McLaughlin, 53, who joined from Toys R Us in March, and Terra Firma vice-president David Patel, 55, who took over as chairman in August.

47 STUDY GROUP

Sales £307.5m ▲12% Profit £22.7m ▲10% More than 77,000 students from 145 countries enrolled in a Study Group programme this year. The company partners with universities as well as operating its own study centres across Europe, North America and Australasia. It prepares students for university, runs English language courses, teaches high school education and provides vocational training. Last year, chief executive David Leigh, 45, led the acquisition of Endeavour Learning Group in Australia for an undisclosed sum.

48 HUNTSWOOD

Sales £306.8m ▲23% Profit £49.5m ▲12% This Reading-based business provides specialist resourcing and consultancy services to handle customer complaints and regulatory issues for banks, pension firms and insurance companies. Against a backdrop of increased regulation and industry sales, sales rose by almost a quarter to £306.8m in 2015. The group is led by chief executive Mark Humphries, 46, and majority-owned by founder David Brownlow, 52.

49 HAYS TRAVEL

Sales £306.0m ▲2% Profit £9.3m ▲108% John Hays, 67, opened his first travel agency in Durham in 1980 and now has more than 120 branches and two call centres. Increased sales of package holidays and foreign currency boosted profits by 21% to £306m in 2015, with profits margin doubling to 6.3m. The firm has a charitable foundation that supports young people in local communities.

50 DAY LEWIS

Sales £305.2m ▲15% Profit £22.4m ▲20% A pharmacy concession in Harrods, the luxury department store, is among 260 outlets across the south of England run by the family-owned company. It supplies medicines and medical equipment to oil rigs and the shipping industry, and has a wholesale and distribution business. The group was founded in 1975 by Peter Day, who died in July – and his brother Jayanti, 70, who is now chief executive.

51 HILL

Sales £303.8m ▲18% Profit £30.8m ▲69% This Essex-based residential property developer operates in London and the



Happy cows: Yeo Valley encourages customers to visit its farm in the Mendips Hills

southeast of England, building homes for sale and for housing associations and local authority partners. Led by founder and chief executive Andy Hill, 57, it also carries out estate regeneration and large refurbishment projects. Last year, the group built more than 1,500 new homes, and helped by growth in its sector profits rose by more than two-thirds to £30.8m.

52 HYPERION INSURANCE

Sales £298.0m ▲53% Profit £33.8m ▼1% This insurance broker and underwriting group was formed in 1994 when chief executive David Howden, 52, led a buyout from Lloyd's broker SBJ. The London group, which is majority-owned by its management and employees, has since expanded to 123 offices in 38 countries. Last year's merger with rival RK Harrison, alongside acquisitions in Europe, South America and Asia, helped sales rise 53% to £298m in 2015.

53 CAFFE NERO

Sales £278.0m ▲8% Profit £27.1m ▲12% Gerry Ford, 58, founded Caffe Nero in 1997 to recreate the European coffee bars he discovered while studying abroad. It now has more than 730 outlets across Britain, Ireland, Poland, Turkey, Cyprus, the UAE and America, selling coffee, sandwiches and pastries. In June, the group acquired coffee chain Harris & Hoole from Tesco for an undisclosed sum.

54 ADELIE FOODS

Sales £294.7m ▲15% Profit £10.3m ▼38% Sandwiches, chilled snacks and salads are made by Adelle Foods for supermarkets, high street retailers and coffee shops, across the country. Acquired by HGG Capital in March 2015, the Heathrow-based group includes the brands Urban Eat and Cranks. In February, Martin Johnson, 43, moved from chief operating officer to become new chief executive.



More than 77,000 students enrolled in a Study Group (No 47) programme this year

55 KURT GEIGER

Sales £292.3m ▲4% Profit £20.4m ▲13% This London footwear and accessories retailer was established in 1963 and has since expanded its portfolio of brands to include Kurt Geiger London, KG and Carvela. The group has more than 80 stores around the world and 240 concessions in department stores. In February, chief executive Neil Clifford, 49, led a £24.6m buyout, backed by private equity firm Cliven.

56 JACTRAVEL

Sales £288.8m ▲4% Profit £15.7m ▲11% Founded in 1975, this London travel wholesaler supplies tour operators and travel companies with rooms at more than 100,000 hotels in 10,000 destinations. Last year, under group chief executive Terry Williamson, 60, the group acquired complementary business TotalStay for an undisclosed sum. This increase in scale, combined with new offices in Orlando and Dublin, helped boost sales 74% to £288.9m in 2015.

57 YEO VALLEY

Sales £284.2m ▲3% Profit £7.3m ▼78% Yeo Valley was founded in the 1970s when Roger and Mary Mead began selling clover cream from their Somerset farm. Today it is the largest organic dairy in the UK – it sells almost 10% of the yoghurts bought in this

country. Tim Mead, 53, son of the founder, is now chairman, and the business is run by joint managing directors Karl Tucker, 48, and Adrian Carne, 50. Effective cost management helped lift profits 78% to £7.3m in 2015.

58 AVAILABLECAR

Sales £281.2m ▲10% Profit £8.5m ▲21% This Cheshire-based car supermarket says it sells 600 cars every week and promises to refund the difference if you find the same car cheaper elsewhere within seven days. It is owned by husband-and-wife founders Graham and Alison Bell, 57 and 56 respectively, and has four sites in Cannock, Castle Donington, Leeds and Sutton-in-Ashfield.

59 WESTOVER

Sales £278.8m ▲12% Profit £8.3m ▼4% Founder William Jackson started this Westover Group began life more than 90 years ago as a Morris Motors dealership and now has 28 sites in Dorset and Wiltshire. In 1984, chairman Peter Wood, 66, led a buyout, and subsequently expanded the car dealership business through a series of acquisitions – 16 manufacturers are now represented across its 24 showrooms.

60 WILLIAM JACKSON FOOD

Sales £278.0m ▲5% Profit £10.4m ▲12% Founder William Jackson started this East Yorkshire group as a grocer and tea dealer in 1851, and it is now chaired by Nicholas Oughtred, 55, his great-grandson. The group operates businesses including fresh produce supplier MyFresh and Jackson's Bakery, and has brands that include Aunt Bessie's, Abel & Cole and Jackson's Yorkshire Champion bread. In April, it acquired healthy snack-food manufacturer The Food Doctor for an undisclosed sum.

67 PEOPLES
Sales £255.0m ▲8% Profit £6.5m ▲18% This motor retailer has showrooms across Scotland and the north of England. It sells private and commercial vehicles, predominantly for Ford, and offers a full after-sales service. Falkirk-based Peoples has revamped its sites in Liverpool and Edinburgh to create top-end 'FordStores', where it also sells the American car giant's luxury Vignale brand. Chairman Brian Gilka, 66, founded the company in 1982.

68 STEWART MILNE

Sales £252.7m ▲20% Profit £11.8m ▼18% Aberdeen Football Club chairman Stewart Milne, 66, started out by converting kitchens and bathrooms. Today his housebuilding company has expanded beyond Scotland, with offices in Manchester and Oxford, as well as in Edinburgh. After 10 years ago, it has started work on its E1bn Councilswells development in Aberdeen, aiming to build 3,000 homes over 15 years, having secured an £86m loan guarantee from the Infrastructure and Projects Authority part of the Treasury.

69 REDFERN TRAVEL

Sales £252.2m ▲8% Profit £4.2m ▼17% Redfern focuses on the corporate travel market and has developed an automated online booking system that reduces costs by suggesting time and money-saving tips. Chief executive Mark Bowers, 53, led a management buyout in 2014. Last year the Bradford company won government travel contracts worth more than £700m over three years.

70 MKM BUILDING SUPPLIES

Sales £251.9m ▲18% Profit £15.9m ▲27% Celebrating its 21st anniversary this year, Hill's MKM is one of Britain's largest independent builders' merchants, with 42 branches across England and Scotland. It is led by founder and chairman David Kilburn, 71, and chief executive Philip Johns, 53, and has benefited from stronger construction activity, with sales up 18% to £251.9m in 2015.

71 JRL GROUP

Sales £251.7m ▲2% Profit £5.8m ▲33% Since it was founded in 1996, this Hertfordshire firm has grown from a company specialising in groundworks to a construction and environmental services servicing the construction industry. It supplies 150-metre-high cranes and machines that bore 70 metres below ground for projects such as the £200m regeneration of Brighton Marina. Founder John Reddington, 44, is chairman.

72 FM CONWAY

Sales £247.8m ▲6% Profit £14.4m ▲17% Frank Michael Conway started this Kent highways contractor in 1961 with one

64 GLOBAL RADIO

Sales £226.2m ▲13% Profit £35.1m ▲2% Global is the company behind the UK's three biggest commercial radio brands – Heart, Capital and Smooth – as well as the country's leading commercial talk station, LBC. Global's brands reach 30m people across the UK every week and it also houses an entertainment division with expertise in talent management, publishing, touring and festivals. Artists signed to Global include Louisa Johnson, who won The X Factor in 2015.

65 VOICEVALE

Sales £221.4m ▲24% Profit £8.8m ▲35% Bolivian Brazil nuts and Georgian hazelnuts are two of the products supplied by this dried fruit, nuts and seeds trader. Run by managing director Roy Danon, 60, the London company has offices in Europe, Istanbul and Beijing, and part-owns a number of processors around the world. It plans to expand in America with the backing of the Toyota Tsusho Group, which bought a 20% stake in the business in 2011.

66 NISBETS

Sales £225.4m ▲13% Profit £28.3m ▼9% Founded by the UK's largest independent supplier of catering equipment, this Bristol company has a branch in Ireland and subsidiaries in Britain, France, Spain, Holland, China and Australia. In April, the company acquired a controlling stake in Gloucester-based Space Catering. Nisbets is led by founder and chairman Andrew Nisbet, 56.

67 PEOPLES

Sales £255.0m ▲8% Profit £6.5m ▲18% This motor retailer has showrooms across Scotland and the north of England. It sells private and commercial vehicles, predominantly for Ford, and offers a full after-sales service. Falkirk-based Peoples has revamped its sites in Liverpool and Edinburgh to create top-end 'FordStores', where it also sells the American car giant's luxury Vignale brand. Chairman Brian Gilka, 66, founded the company in 1982.

68 STEWART MILNE

Sales £252.7m ▲20% Profit £11.8m ▼18% Aberdeen Football Club chairman Stewart Milne, 66, started out by converting kitchens and bathrooms. Today his housebuilding company has expanded beyond Scotland, with offices in Manchester and Oxford, as well as in Edinburgh. After 10 years ago, it has started work on its E1bn Councilswells development in Aberdeen, aiming to build 3,000 homes over 15 years, having secured an £86m loan guarantee from the Infrastructure and Projects Authority part of the Treasury.

69 REDFERN TRAVEL

Sales £252.2m ▲8% Profit £4.2m ▼17% Redfern focuses on the corporate travel market and has developed an automated online booking system that reduces costs by suggesting time and money-saving tips. Chief executive Mark Bowers, 53, led a management buyout in 2014. Last year the Bradford company won government travel contracts worth more than £700m over three years.

70 MKM BUILDING SUPPLIES

Sales £251.9m ▲18% Profit £15.9m ▲27% Celebrating its 21st anniversary this year, Hill's MKM is one of Britain's largest independent builders' merchants, with 42 branches across England and Scotland. It is led by founder and chairman David Kilburn, 71, and chief executive Philip Johns, 53, and has benefited from stronger construction activity, with sales up 18% to £251.9m in 2015.

71 JRL GROUP

Sales £251.7m ▲2% Profit £5.8m ▲33% Since it was founded in 1996, this Hertfordshire firm has grown from a company specialising in groundworks to a construction and environmental services servicing the construction industry. It supplies 150-metre-high cranes and machines that bore 70 metres below ground for projects such as the £200m regeneration of Brighton Marina. Founder John Reddington, 44, is chairman.

72 FM CONWAY

Sales £247.8m ▲6% Profit £14.4m ▲17% Frank Michael Conway started this Kent highways contractor in 1961 with one

lorry and two men. Twenty years later, his son, current chief executive Michael Conroy, 61, took over the company and developed it into a leading infrastructure services business. It works for private and public clients, and last year constructed the first phase of the East-West Cycle Superhighway from Tower Hill to Parliament Square for Transport for London.

73 HOLIDAY EXTRAS

Sales £247.2m ▲18% Profit £3.8m ▲85% More than 7m holidaymakers a year use Holiday Extras websites to book airport hotels and parking, travel insurance, foreign currency, car hire and UK short breaks. The group acquired Essential Travel in 2013 for £2.1m and has also expanded into mainland Europe. Founded by Gerry Pack in 1983 and still part-owned by the Pack family, the Kent-based group is now led by Gerry's son, Matthew, 40.

74 SKY BETTING AND GAMING

Sales £247.0m ▲35% Profit na More than 1m customers place sports bets or play casino games with this Leeds-based bookmaker, which was formed by Sky in 2001 and grew rapidly through its association with Sky Sports. Last year, private equity firm CVC bought a majority stake, valuing the group at £800m. Sky retained a 20% stake and agreed to a long-term licence of its brand. The company is led by chief executive Richard Flint, 44.

75 FOSTER + PARTNERS

Sales £243.0m ▲22% Profit na Since Foster + Partners was founded in 1967 it has won more than 750 awards for design excellence and established 13 offices worldwide. The firm is responsible for dozens of landmark buildings, including Monaco Yacht Club and France's Millau viaduct, the world's highest road bridge. Led by founder and chairman Louis (Norman) Foster, 81, the group bought back a 40% stake from investor 3i for £108m in 2014. Sales rose 22% to £243m in 2016.

76 CNG

Sales £240.9m ▲22% Profit £8.1m ▲70% Harragat's CNG supplies gas to small and medium-sized companies, and counts restaurant chain Prezzo as one of its larger customers. It was founded in 1994 after the deregulation of gas and electricity markets, and managing director Jacqui Smith, 53, led a buyout 10 years ago. Despite a near halving of wholesale gas prices since 2013, new customer helped sales increase 22% to £240.9m in 2015.

77 PENTAGON FREIGHT

Sales £240.8m ▲20% Profit £6.3m ▲2% Headquartered in Kent, Pentagon is a freight forwarding company that specialises in the energy sector. The business was established in 1974 by co-founder and chief executive Geoffrey Smith, 77, and now has 60 offices in 34 countries on five continents, handling more than £1.7bn of shipments a month. The business also provides non-transportation services such as management of dangerous goods.

78 FERRENDALE FOODS

Sales £240.3m ▲11% Profit £17.1m ▲114% Ferrendale supplies ready meals to retailers, airlines and food service outlets, and also makes own-label products for supermarkets such as Waitrose and Sainsbury's. An increase in volume sales, combined with a drop in the costs of raw material and energy, helped profits more than double to £17.1m in 2015. The family-owned Somerset firm is chaired by founder John Biggswood, 71.

79 PARAGON

Sales £240.0m ▲61% Profit £7.3m ▲4% A series of acquisitions, including Service Point, Melleghragh and Magnadeta, helped this Sunderland business bolster its sales by 61% to £240m in 2015. The group has clients in 40 countries, and provides a diverse range of services from election campaign management and digital marketing to e-tickets and smart cards. The group is owned and run by chief executive Patrick Crane, 53.

80 THE EMERSON GROUP

Sales £239.5m ▲26% Profit £7.6m ▲4% Chairman Peter Emerson and his family started this Cheshire builder and

Yeo Valley: in a field of its own

The new Yeo Valley (No 57) in a market that is increasingly dominated by multinational dairy processors is a credit to the family, directors and 1,650 women and men behind one of the UK's best-loved brands. The dairy industry has consolidated considerably in the past two decades and Yeo Valley is now one of the largest privately owned dairy processors, selling its branded milk and non-organic milk and yoghurts, as well as making own-brand yoghurt for some of the UK's largest supermarkets.

Founded in the 1970s, the business is still run by the Mead family – Tim is chairman and runs the company with his mother, Mary. The Meads say a key part of their success is authenticity – marketing is based on the "real" story of their farm, a small part of the English countryside they actively encourage customers to visit. Tim Mead believes this differentiates Yeo Valley from its corporate-owned competitors, which have to create a brand and then spend heavily trying to encourage consumers to believe in it. He also believes Yeo Valley has become a brand and a business with a reputation for being trusted and honest.

Perhaps because of this, just two weeks after former Tory leadership hopeful Andrea Leadsom became secretary of state for environment, food and rural affairs she headed to Yeo Valley's picturesque HQ, nestled among the Mendips Hills in Somerset, to talk about her ambitions for the UK's food and farming industry.

She is not the only one keen to form an association with this authentic, family-owned business – or to enjoy a lunch in the award-winning canteen and admire the best views in the UK. Perhaps because of this, just two weeks after former Tory leadership hopeful Andrea Leadsom became secretary of state for environment, food and rural affairs she headed to Yeo Valley's picturesque HQ, nestled among the Mendips Hills in Somerset, to talk about her ambitions for the UK's food and farming industry.

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81 OAK VANGUARD LAND

Sales £228.6m ▲25% Profit £2.8m ▲79% Several years as a furniture salesman convinced Jason Bannister, 45, to set up his own business in 2004. Strong demand for hardwood products, which Bannister designed himself, has seen the Swedish firm expand to 70 showrooms nationwide. A sister brand, SofaStore, was launched in 2014. It deals directly with manufacturers, which enables it to keep prices low. Its latest TV advertising campaign helped sales rise 25% to £239.5m last year.

82 RESOURCE SOLUTIONS

Sales £228.0m ▲36% Profit £11.8m ▲50% RSG has grown from a single Bristol recruitment company into a nationwide recruitment business operating under the brands Sanderson and Resource Management. Sales grew 36% to £229m last year, fuelled by strong performance across sectors including IT, finance, health care and defence. The company is led by chief executive Mike Beesley, 59, and founder Keith Dave, 65, who is also chairman of Bristol City Football Club.

83 WRIGHTS

Sales £227.7m ▲13% Profit £12.8m ▲178% Wrights' latest blend of electric buses has been ordered by the UK's Home Office to boost charge from plates in the road, allowing them to run for longer. The family-owned Co Antrim firm pioneered low-floor buses in Britain and built London's fleet of 1,000 hybrid electric Routemasters. Chairman and chief executive Mark Nordman, 60, is leading its international expansion in countries such as India. As we went to press, the group reported sales rose to £276.1m and profits also increased to £13.6m.

84 MAPLIN ELECTRONICS

Sales £227.0m ▲3% Profit £22.1m ▲392% Set up in 1972 as a mail-order firm, this Rothamsted retailer sells more than 15,000 electronic products, online and in store. Sales rose by 3% to £227m in 2015. The group reported sales rose to £276.1m and profits also increased to £13.6m.

85 DR MARTENS

Sales £225.3m ▲13% Profit £25.5m ▼14% Invented in 1945 by a German army doctor who designed the air-cushioned sole to ease the pain of a skiing injury, Dr Martens shoes have become a fashion accessories now include luggage, clothing and children's boots and shoes. Private equity firm Permira bought the Northamptonshire firm for £300m in 2014. Steve Murray, 56, is chief executive.

86 VOLAC

Sales £225.1m ▲18% Profit £33.8m ▲43% This dairy business has benefited from growing worldwide demand for milk-based products as diets become more westernised. Founded in 1970 to make animal nutrition products, the company has expanded into food and drink markets, and sells whey protein under the Uplift brand. The third-generation family firm is led by chief executive James Neville, 49, alongside brothers David, 47, and Mark, 41.

87 CIVICA

Sales £225.0m ▲8% Profit £12.5m ▲12% It deals with everything from council tax processing to fire safety, London firm Civica provides IT-based business process services to more than a million public sector and regulated organisations in 10 countries. Chairman Simon Downing, 51, led the recent acquisition of Ashford software integration consultancy Bestka from Hong Kong. The London-based Civica Group for £11m, which will contribute to further sales growth this year.

88 DURKAN HOLDINGS
Sales £222.9m ▲ 80% Profit £21.0m n.a.%
This Hertfordshire-based housing developer and contractor focuses on newbuild, local authority refurbishment schemes and senior living developments across London and southeast England. Set up by William Durkan in 1970, the firm is now run by his son Daniel, 52. Sales grew 60% to £232.9m in 2015, helped by a strong development pipeline and improved performance of its construction division, returning the company to profit.

89 MARTIN-BAKER
Sales £232.3m ▲ 11% Profit £86.3m ▲ 14%
Martin-Baker says its aircraft ejection seats and survival equipment have saved 7,500 lives. Founded in 1934 as an aircraft manufacturer by Irish engineer Sir James Martin and test pilot Captain Valentine Baker, the Buckinghamshire-based company has since expanded its operations to France, Italy and America, which is now its largest single market. It is headed by Martin's twin sons John and James, 73.

90 WAGAMAMA
Sales £229.9m ▲ 19% Profit £17.1m ▲ 82%
Wagamama – which means “tasty child” in Japanese – serves a Japanese-inspired menu of noodles and Asian food. The company has more than 116 restaurants in Britain and America, and 35 operating under franchise agreements in other countries. Under the stewardship of chief executive David Campbell, 57, and chairman Allan Leighton, 63, this year's operating profits rose 62% to £17.7m.

91 KITWAWE WHOLESALE
Sales £227.8m ▲ 16% Profit £4.7m ▲ 27%
This wholesale cash-and-carry firm delivers “impulse” food and drink, such as confectionery, crisps and ice cream, to more than 20,000 independent retailers. In March this year, private equity firm NYCA raised its 40% stake in the company from Frisco Capital and Allstate joining the group. As a result of the deal, founder and chief executive Paul Young, 56, plans to make further acquisitions to expand the group.

92 MAREX SPECTRON
Sales £227.6m ▲ 2% Profit £14.5m ▲ 82%
This company was formed in 2011 by the merger of metals broker Marex Financial and energy broker Spectron Group. Headquartered in London and with offices in New York, Hong Kong and Singapore, the brokerage trades in other markets include agricultural products, freight and financial futures. Led by Ian Lovell, 52, it is majority-owned by private equity firm Amphitryon.

93 BAXTERS
Sales £226.3m ▲ 41% Profit £10.3m ▲ 31%
Chairman Audrey Baxter, 55, is the fourth generation of the family to lead this Scottish business, founded in 1868. Baxters has manufacturing sites in five locations worldwide, producing soups, ready meal, chutneys and confections that are sold in more than 40 countries. In 2015, the company acquired US military food firm Wornick for £87m, helping sales grow 41% to £226.3m.

94 ENCON
Sales £221.0m ▲ 1% Profit £1.0m ▲ 68%
West Yorkshire's Encon distributes thermal and acoustic insulation, fire protection and roofing materials, from 24 warehouses across Britain. Chief executive Stuart Moore, 52, led a management buyout from Wolsley in 2010, and in 2014 secured a £50m refinancing with Farallon Capital and Lloyds Bank.

95 DREAMS
Sales £225.8m ▲ 17% Profit £14.9m ▲ 72%
Three years ago, bed and mattress superstore Dreams was bought out of administration by the European division of Sunbelt, an American private equity firm. It acquired its manufacturing plant, supply chain and 171 best stores, and installed a new chief executive, Mike Logie, 44, to turn around the business. His sales streamlined operations and company invested in staff, products and logistics, leading to profits of £14.9m in 2015, an eightfold increase on the year before.

96 RYDON GROUP
Sales £224.1m ▲ 36% Profit £9.7m n.a.%
This East Sussex construction and development group specialises in the house, health and education markets. Work under way includes the regeneration of several housing estates in London and the construction of new schools across southern England. Growth in its property refurbishment and homes divisions helped boost sales by 36% to £224.1m. The group is led by chief executive Bob Bond, 39.

97 ADVANCED
Sales £220.5m ▲ 3% Profit £21.8m ▲ 22%
Advanced develops business management software across a wide range of sectors, including healthcare, legal and financial services. The Berkshire company has offices in Britain, America and India. Led by chief executive Gordon Wilson, 56, it has undergone a major restructuring exercise this year and plans to create 1,000 new roles by the end of 2017. It was delisted from AIM in March last year, when it was acquired by private equity firm Vista Equity Partners for £72.5m.

98 CHILTRON INTERNATIONAL
Sales £217.6m ▲ 20% Profit £2.0m ▲ 9%
In the last five years, Chiltron has conducted nearly 2,000 clinical trials for clients across the pharmaceutical, biotech and medical device and diagnostics sectors, with a focus on testing new cancer therapies. Chief executive Tim Eshinshar, 33, oversees staff in 47 countries and sales at the Slough firm rose 36% to £217.6m in 2015, helped by the acquisition of American clinical research company Theorem for an undisclosed sum in September last year.

99 PROCAM EUROPE
Sales £217.0m ▲ 4% Profit £7.7m ▲ 10%
Founded in 1979 by chairman Tony White, 74, this Cambridge agronomy



Led by founders Marg Randles and John Woodward, Busy Bees (No 100) has become the UK's largest private childcare provider and last year acquired 60 nurseries in Asia

business helps growers maximise crop yields and profitability. Using a mix of its own agronomists and predictive systems based on real crop data, the company claims to increase its customers' gross margins by 25%. International income accounts for almost half of total sales, driven mainly by its Polish business, acquired in 2004.

100 BUSY BEES
Sales £216.8m ▲ 3% Profit £15.4m ▲ 2%
This nursery operator was founded in 1983 by three families unhappy with the childcare options available to them. The Staffordshire company is now the UK's largest private provider of childcare services, with 267 nurseries nationwide and sales of £217m in 2015. Investor Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan acquired the business three years ago in a deal that reportedly valued it at £220m, enabling international expansion. Last year, co-founders John Woodward, 61, who is chief executive, and managing director Marg Randles, 59, led the acquisition of 60 nurseries across Singapore and Malaysia.

101 MALCOLM GROUP
Sales £215.8m ▲ 12% Profit £3.4m ▲ 28%
Integrated road, rail and warehousing services, alongside civil engineering and groundwork, are the services offered by this logistics and construction group based in Linwood, near Glasgow. The business was founded in the 1940s by 14-year-old Donald Malcolm and is now run by his sons, chief executive Andrew, 54, and director Walter, 55.

102 NORBROK LABORATORIES
Sales £215.7m ▲ 3% Profit £26.5m ▲ 68%
This pharmaceutical firm, founded in 1969, researches, develops and produces a wide range of veterinary and human drugs sold in 120 countries. It is based in Northern Ireland and has manufacturing facilities in America, Kenya and Australia. A strong pipeline of new products helped profits grow 68% to £26.5m. Liam Nagle, 54, is chief executive.

103 PHOTOBOX
Sales £215.9m ▲ 2% Profit £12.5m ▲ 106%
This company turns customers' snaps into personalised items including mugs and clothing, which it ships to 20 countries. It bought online print company Moopig for £120m in 2011 and was sold to private equity firms Exponent and Electra last year for a reported £400m. Sales rose 2% to £215.9m in 2015, under Stan Laurent, 47, who stepped down as chief executive earlier this year. He was succeeded by Jody Ford, 41, who joined from eBay.

104 THE IMAGINATION GROUP
Sales £214.9m ▲ 9% Profit £8.2m ▲ 17%
This London-based marketing company employs the skills of a wide spectrum of people including architects, 3D and 2D designers, film makers, journalists, social media experts, bloggers and creative strategists. Led by firm chief executive Douglas Broadley, 48, the group says it creates campaigns that let consumers experience the brands of its clients, including B&W, the BBC and Coca-Cola, rather than simply hearing their messages.

105 ANESCO
Sales £213.7m ▲ 3% Profit £24.6m ▲ 19%
Reading-based Anesco installs and maintains renewable energy equipment such as solar panels and heat pumps for homeowners, local authorities and businesses. Demand was boosted by government subsidies that have since been cut, but the company has been able to diversify into other areas, from street lighting to energy storage. Led by chief executive Kevin Moutat, 55, was appointed chief executive in June following the retirement of co-founders Adrian Pike, 49, and Tim Payne, 53.

106 T.O.M. VEHICLE RENTAL
Sales £213.2m ▲ 4% Profit £14.5m ▲ 13%
Started 25 years ago as a single MOT centre, this Lancashire firm now operates a fleet of 11,000 rental vehicles. Following continued expansion across England, sales grew 4% this year to £213.2m, led by chief executive Robert Stewart, 34. In December, the family-run firm won a three-year deal to supply rental vehicles to Scottish Power.

107 THE SWIFT GROUP
Sales £210.9m ▲ 4% Profit £8.3m ▲ 11%
This Yorkshire firm says it is the largest British manufacturer of caravans and motorhomes, with brands that include Swift, Sterling and Sprite. It also makes holiday homes for holiday parks such as Parkdean Resorts. Managing director James Turner, 46, led a partial management buyout in 2012 from the founder's son, Peter Smith, 67.

108 LA INTERNATIONAL
Sales £210.1m ▲ 11% Profit £10.4m ▲ 14%
LA International supplies IT and engineering contractors to organisations such as Nato, Huawei and Hewlett-Packard. It also provides security-cleared contractors to the British government. The Stoke company's founder and chief executive, Paul Lukic, 63, has invested in its international division, which now provides services to multinationals across 23 countries in industries such as cyber-security and cloud computing.

109 LGC
Sales £208.8m ▲ 1% Profit £12.3m ▲ 55%
Headquartered in London, LGC is an international life sciences measurement and analytical testing company serving pharmaceutical, food, environmental and government markets. Last December, chief executive Tim Robinson, 53, announced a major investment in the company by private equity firm KKR to fund further international development, particularly in America and Asia.

110 BSW TIMBER
Sales £207.8m ▲ 14% Profit £10.5m ▲ 72%
This Berwickshire business has eight sawmill sites supplying the pulp, packaging, gardening and DIY sectors with a 1969, researches, develops and produces a wide range of products, such as garden sheds. Last year it acquired forestry management business Tiltill, which will help grow turnover to more than £300m. In March, to meet growing demand, chief executive Tony Hackney, 58, announced a £3.6m investment in its fencing business.

111 WHITWORTH BROS
Sales £208.0m ▲ 7% Profit £8.7m ▲ 89%
Although this family firm has been milling flour since 1886, it has also been at the forefront of new milling and heat-treatment technology, and in 2014 opened a £1.2m quality and innovation centre at its Northamptonshire headquarters. Led by chairman Martin Goswami, 73, £215 led to a 7% drop in the price of wheat and other raw materials, but increased sales volume led profits 89% to £8.7m.

112 CAR SHOP
Sales £208.6m ▲ 7% Profit £5.5m ▲ 106%
Car Shop has sold more than 250,000 used cars since launching its first auto supermarket in Northampton in 1999. Led by chief executive Jonathan Dunkley, 32, it now has five sites and plans to add another location every year to more than double the number of cars it sells, to 46,000 a year, by 2019. Increasing demand for cars helped profits more than double to £5.5m in 2015.

113 HATFIELD'S
Sales £208.5m ▲ 17% Profit £8.8m ▲ 23%
Ernest Hatfield began selling cars in Sheffield in the 1920s, setting up one of the world's first large dealerships. Under managing director Gareth Williams, 52, the motor group now has 11 dealerships across northern England, selling Jaguar, Land Rover, Volvo and Hyundai.

114 TINOPOLIS
Sales £208.0m ▲ 1% Profit £18.3m ▲ 24%
Welsh producer Tinopolis makes TV favourites such as Robot Wars, Ninja Warriors and Hell's Kitchen – everything from drama, entertainment, factual and sport programmes for international broadcasters including the BBC, NBC, Fox and BT Sport, to content for brands such as Heineken, Nike and Gillette. Led by chief executive Arwel Rees, 59, the group also provided last month's live coverage of the Paralympics for Channel 4.

115 QHOTELS
Sales £205.5m ▲ 55% Profit £33.2m ▲ 69%
Founded as Quintessential Hotels in 2003, this leisure group operates hotels and lodges, including six former De Vere hotels acquired for £151m in 2014. It was placed into administration in 2013, before

being sold to private equity firms Bain Capital and Canyon, which also took on £370m of debt. Still led by co-founder and managing director Michael Purill, 65, it is investing £50m over the next two years to revamp its hotel interiors.

116 O'HALLORAN & O'BRIEN
Sales £204.5m ▲ 18% Profit £18.2m ▲ 64%
Founded in 1972, this Surrey company has evolved from a small groundworks firm to a large construction contractor, offering civil engineering, plant hire and reinforced concrete frames. With clients that include Berkeley Homes, Peter Wimpey and Crest Nicholson, the firm's profits rose 84% this year to £18.2m. Its co-founder and chairman is Tom O'Brien, 69.

117 FES
Sales £204.1m ▲ 17% Profit £8.8m n.a.%
FES is a family-owned group providing construction support services across Britain. Based in Stirling, the company has expanded geographically under managing director Duncan Fletcher Junior, 49, and now has offices in London, Leeds, Reading and Stornoway. The growth in construction activity helped profits total to £6.6m in 2015, as turnover reached a record £204.1m.

118 VOYAGE CARE
Sales £203.0m ▲ 9% Profit £3.54m ▲ 12%
Voyage Care supports people with physical disabilities, brain injuries and other needs both in their own homes and in 21 care homes across the UK. In 2014, private equity owners Duke Street acquired the Staffordshire-based care

122 DAWSONGROUP
Sales £197.4m ▲ 9% Profit £45.5m ▲ 8%
Founded in 1935 as a road haulage company, Dawsongroup is now a rental and sales business, specialising in commercial vehicles, with 21,500 rental assets ranging from trucks and campervans to road sweepers and temporary kitchens, and in recent years has expanded its continental operation. The Milton Keynes company is led by chairman Peter Dawson, 78, and group chief executive Michael Williams, 68.

123 BULKHAUL
Sales £195.1m ▲ 1% Profit £25.2m ▲ 91%
Bulkhaul transports a range of liquids, powders and gases around the world. Chairman Steve Gibson, 58, co-founded the Middlesbrough firm in 1981 at the age of 22 with a £1,000 loan from his father. It now operates on the big European, Pacific and Asian routes, and an uptick in global freight rates helped profits almost double to £25.2m last year. It also owns Middlesbrough Football Club and Rockliffe Hall, a luxury golf resort and spa on the border of Co Durham and North Yorkshire.

124 TIMPSON
Sales £195.1m ▲ 15% Profit £16.4m ▲ 36%
Founded as a Manchester shoe business by William Timpson in 1865, the company has since added key cutting, watch and mobile phone repairs, dry cleaning and photo services across a network of 1,500 stores. Photos now make up 30% of turnover, lifting profits 38% to £16.4m in 2015. Known for its self-styled upside-down management, which puts staff employees in charge of



ID Medical (No 131), led by chief executive Deenu Patel, left, saw sales grow 15% last year

provider, paying £375m to HgCapital as part of a consortium bid with French partner Tikeha and Swiss investment firm Partners Group. Chief executive Andrew Cannon, 47, joined last year from Bupa.

key decisions, the group is overseen by the founder's great-grandson, chairman John Timpon, 73, and his son James, 45, the chief executive.

125 TGI FRIDAY'S
Sales £192.4m ▲ 11% Profit £7.6m ▲ 27%
In the 50 years since this first TGI Friday's opened in New York, this cocktail and burger bar business has expanded to a global chain of 1,000 restaurants. The British franchise opened in Birmingham in 1986 and now has 66 branches across the country. In 2014, chief executive Karen Forrester, 57, oversaw TGI's sale to private equity company Electra Partners for a reported £225m.

126 PENTAGON INVESTMENTS
Sales £192.4m ▲ 21% Profit £4.4m ▲ 10%
The late Don Marshall founded this Derby-based truck, van and used car dealer in 1971 – in his son, 53, is managing director. The group's main subsidiaries are Mertrux, which sells Mercedes-Benz and Mitsubishi vehicles in the East Midlands, and Lothian Daf, which has truck dealerships in Preston and Edinburgh. Last year, sales rose 21% to £192.4m due to increased demand.

127 YEARSLEY
Sales £187.7m ▲ 10% Profit £5.0m ▲ 9%
Lancashire-based Yearsley operates 13 cold-storage and distribution depots in the UK, supplying 2.5m pallets of frozen food a year to retailers, wholesalers and large-scale caterers across Europe. Managing director Harry Yearsley, 50, is the third generation of the Yearsley family to run the business.

128 MULLALEY
Sales £187.8m ▲ 13% Profit £13.6m ▲ 20%
Essex-based Mullaley works largely with

public-sector clients across London and southeast England to build, refurbish and maintain commercial and residential properties. The firm is run by the O'Malley family, and says much of its growth is attributed to the construction of affordable housing. It says it has more than 500 newbuild affordable homes either underway or in planning for local authority clients that include Tower Hamlets, and Barking and Dagenham.

129 REWARD GATEWAY
Sales £187.5m ▲ 22% Profit £5.8m ▲ 59%
Reward Gateway is a pharmaceutical wholesaler whose clients employ their employees through benefits, rewards and improved communication. It runs schemes for more than 1,300 companies, including McDonald's, Unilever and Yahoo. Chief executive Glenn Elliott, 44, founded the London business in 2006 and since opened offices in America, Australia, Bulgaria and Macedonia. Private equity firm Great Hill bought a majority stake for £140m in July last year, and in April this year the group bought Periz, a competitor with clients that include Centrica, Honda and Biffa.

130 SMARTWAY
Sales £187.0m ▲ 7% Profit £7.5m ▲ 52%
Smartway is a pharmaceutical wholesaler whose principal business is exporting pharmaceuticals and medical consumables. Based in Wimbledon, the company was started in 1997 by a husband-and-wife team, Hitenra and Kirti Patel, 50 and 48 respectively. Its other divisions include sourcing drugs for clinical trials, while its marine division supplies the Caribbean offshore sector and other remote locations.

131 ID MEDICAL
Sales £186.8m ▲ 51% Profit £8.4m ▲ 107%
This medical recruitment firm has more than 4,000 candidates on its books, from doctors and nurses to radiographers and clerical staff. The Milton Keynes firm was founded in 1997 by a husband-and-wife team, Hitenra and Kirti Patel, 50 and 48 respectively. Its other divisions include sourcing drugs for clinical trials, while its marine division supplies the Caribbean offshore sector and other remote locations.

132 CONTROL RISKS
Sales £186.8m ▲ 2% Profit £2.5m ▲ 20%
This consultancy helps firms manage risk, whether political, security-related or connected to company integrity. It is based in London but has 36 offices worldwide. In 2015, Control Risks equity invested £12m, before exiting in 2016 when the company transitioned to a partnership model. Chief executive Richard Fenning, 53, heads the firm.

133 RANDALL PARKER FOOD
Sales £186.0m ▲ 7% Profit £4.3m ▲ 18%
Ron Randall, 69, chairman of Randall Parkers, a food wholesaler based in a butcher's shop. He opened his own shop at 21, and this wholesale meat distributor and trader now supplies processing plants, caterers and retailers nationwide.

134 DCS GROUP (UK)
Sales £185.6m ▲ 1% Profit £5.1m ▲ 74%
DCS supplies 200,000 retailers and 750 household brands, such as P&G, Unilever and Colgate. It groups owns the Enliven brand, which it exports to 75 countries, and recently purchased a new 25-acre high-tech response facility. The business is led by chairman and chief executive Deenu Syth, 52.

135 CHARLES TYRWHITT
Sales £184.5m ▲ 19% Profit £7.3m ▲ 8%
Charles Tyrwhitt has sold classic menswear since 1986, and has thriving online and mail-order businesses in Britain and America, Australia and Germany. Under chief executive Greg Hodder, 64, the group has also expanded to 25 shops, including its flagship Jermyn Street site, plus five in America. The business takes its title from the middle names of founder and chairman Nick Wheeler, 51.

136 THE WHITE COMPANY
Sales £184.3m ▲ 3% Profit £17.3m ▲ 35%
Selling predominantly white bed and bathroom linen, fashion and accessories, The White Company was founded in 1994 by Christie Rucker, 47, after she struggled to find high-quality, affordable linen and tableware. The retailer now has more than 50 UK shops, with new stores being opened in America and in 2016. Chief executive Will Kerman, 47, is planning to expand operations in the US.

137 TAYLOR MAXWELL
Sales £183.5m ▲ 31% Profit £5.8m ▲ 145%
Bristol-based Taylor Maxwell operates from 18 regional sites and specialises in the supply of facades, cladding and cladding materials to the construction industry. Led by managing director Eoin McCann, 60, it has made 10 acquisitions in the past 18 months, including a £17.2m buyout of an annualised £182.7m in 2015.

138 FP MCCANN
Sales £182.7m ▲ 5% Profit £14.0m ▲ 34%
This Belfast-based civil engineering contractor says it is the UK's largest precast concrete manufacturer. It has two plants in Northern Ireland and in Britain. Under chief executive Martin Gregory, 76, the company's sales by founder Douglas Gregory, 76, and run by managing director Martin Davis, 69, in

Grant Thornton

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188 REISS
Sales £145.2m ▲13% Profit £18.8m ▲6%
A favourite of the Duchesses of Cambridge, this London fashion retailer's profits rose 46% to £19.8m last year, helped by strong international sales and a management shake-up. In April, founder David Reiss, 73, sold a majority stake to US private equity house Warburg Pincus in a deal valuing the business at £230m. The company now has 160 outlets in 15 countries, opened its first Australian store in May and plans to open its first franchise store in India next year.

189 WHITE STUFF
Sales £144.6m ▲10% Profit £12.8m ▼9%
Selling casual clothes and accessories through 153 stores and concessions in Britain and Europe, wholesale and online, White Stuff has come a long way since Sean Thomas, 53, and George Teves, 52, began selling T-shirts in Val d'Isère in 1985. Under chief executive Jeremy Segal, 56, the London business upped sales by 10% to £144.6m in 2016, with an ongoing online sales, its European wholesale business and new concessions and stores in Germany.

190 STEVEN EAGELL
Sales £141.4m ▲2% Profit £3.8m ▲8%
This Toyota dealership was established in Milton Keynes in 2002 by founder and managing director Steven Eagell, 50. It acquired two new sites in Peterborough and King's Lynn this year, bringing its total to 11 branches across six counties in the southeast of England, East Midlands and East Angles.

191 WU GROUP
Sales £142.1m ▲3% Profit £3.0m ▲101%
This Southampton group supplies heating oil to homes and industry as well as fuels for motorway, agriculture, marine vessels and aviation. It also distributes Esso fuels and Mobil lubricants across the south of England. In February, managing director David Fairclough, 57, led the acquisition of Airport Energy, a firm providing fuel and fuel management services to UK airports, in which it already had a 40% stake.

192 COLT
Sales £141.7m ▼3% Profit £8.3m ▲77%
Having made light-blocking ventilation equipment to keep factories cool during Second World War blackouts, Colt now designs and supplies smoke control, ventilation, climate control and solar shading for clients in 50 countries. It has expanded production in China to meet demand from customers in Australia, Asia and the Middle East. Still owned by the founding O'Hea family, the Hawthorn firm is led by chief executive Mark Oliver, 53, who joined in April.

193 MOUNTAIN WAREHOUSE
Sales £141.4m ▲2% Profit £12.8m ▲1%
This outdoor clothing chain has more than 230 stores in Britain, Europe and North America, while its online business ships to 100 countries. Sales this year rose 2% to £141.4m, an annual best-selling summer of clothes for children and expanded its range of ski wear. In 2013, founder and chief executive Mark Neale, 48, led an £85m management buyout from private equity firm LDC.

194 AGILISYS
Sales £140.0m ▼4% Profit £10.8m ▲19%
Agilisys uses software platforms to help its customers reduce costs, generate revenue and improve services. The London firm specialises in helping local government and healthcare bodies to develop new services, making it easier to access services. In April, chief executive Steven Beard, 42, led the acquisition of technology company Quickchart, for an undisclosed sum.

195 CAMERON MACKINTOSH
Sales £138.9m ▲84% Profit £27.2m ▲37%
This producer's hit shows include Les Mouches. The Plymouth-based opera and cats - three of the longest-running West End musicals of all time. Sir Cameron Mackintosh, 69, also owns eight West End theatres - having bought the Victoria Palace Theatre in 2014 for £26m - and MTI, a New York theatrical licensing agency. The continuing global success of hit shows such as coffee shop helped lift sales 84% to £138.9m in 2015.

196 GROSVENOR CONTRACTS
Sales £137.1m ▲1% Profit £3.1m ▲18%
Founded by chairman Brian Johnson, 71, in 1981, this Northamptonshire group has five subsidiaries. Grosvenor Contracts Leasing and Interactive Fleet Management provide fleet-management services. The other businesses are York Ward & Rowlatt, a Vauxhall dealership; Eyebury Trucks, a Peugeot truck dealership; and Crolyand Motors, a used-car supermarket.

197 WESTON GROUP
Sales £138.5m ▲11% Profit £15.9m ▲38%
Established in 1987 by chairman and Aberdeen-based director Bob Weston, 64, Weston Homes builds new homes and mixed-use projects on brownfield sites in outer London and the surrounding commuter region. Profits for 2015 almost doubled to £15.9m as the Essex group focused on homes that are affordable for ordinary people, with 28% of the company's sales facilitated through the government's Help to Buy Scheme.

198 EH SMITH
Sales £138.2m ▲11% Profit £7.5m ▲5%
This Birmingham timber and builders' merchant was founded in 1924 by the father of chairman Kenneth Smith, 98. It has eight sites across the Midlands and southeast England stocking building supplies, trade products, paving and landscaping items. It diversified into sustainable products in 2008 and last year provided solar roof panels to Costa Coffee for the country's first 'zero-energy' coffee shop in Telford. Growth in its sector helped profits almost double to £7.5m last year.

199 SILENTNIGHT
Sales £137.5m ▲10% Profit £7.0m ▲29%
Lancashire's Silentnight makes more than half a million beds each year across



This approach to tackling one of the country's pressing problems - ensuring all young people have the right skills for the workplace - was anticipated by one software firm, Agilisys (No 194). In 2011, it formed a unit to train the apprentices it needed to support its rapid growth. Steven Beard, chief executive, said it focused initially on attracting young people from deprived parts of the country in which it operated, including inner-city boroughs of London. It prioritised digital marketing and general IT maintenance skills, and recruited its first apprentice in 2012. Since then it has trained 1,200 school-leavers, with 95% completing their course. Last year, the unit, now called Arch Apprentices, was spun off as a separate business, funded by the company. The acquisition of packed aggregate supplier Aggbag helped sales rise 36% to £136m in 2015. This year, chief executive Jon Fisher, 38, acquired six bagging plants from building materials group Cemex, and is focusing on expanding the group's handling and logistics activities.

Agilisys: training a new generation of British talent

From next April, the government begins its reform of apprenticeship funding. Companies with annual payrolls of more than £3m face paying a new apprenticeship levy, which they will be able to claim back on qualifying training.

six brands including Sealy and Layezee, and last year launched its latest collection of 'Mirafiori' spring-free mattresses. Listed in 1972, it was privatised in 2003 by the founder's family before being acquired by the private equity firm HIG Capital in 2011. Steve Freeman, 60, is managing director.

200 NUMATIC INTERNATIONAL
Sales £137.4m ▲8% Profit £13.4m ▲29%
Smiley Henry vacuum cleaners are among the 4,000-plus cleaning and maintenance products this company makes every day at its Somerset base and ships around the world. It has subsidiaries in Europe and South Africa and this year completed the 60,000 sq ft expansion of its facility in Chard. The company is led by founder and managing director Christopher Duncan, 76.

201 NATURES WAY FOODS
Sales £137.1m ▲12% Profit £27.0m ▲38%
This fresh-food manufacturer, based in West Sussex, produces more than 20m units of leafy salads, protein-based salad mixes, coleslaw, potato salad and prepared fruit every year. Founded in 1994 by local brothers David and Robert Langmead, 53 and 48 respectively, the company now supplies supermarkets and food service companies such as Tesco, Morrisons, McDonald's, Zizzi and Pret A Manger. The group is led by chief executive Susan Barratt, 51.

202 CONSOLIDATED TIMBER
Sales £137.0m ▲2% Profit £3.0m ▲3%
This Surrey group imports, distributes and processes sustainable timber and timber products. Founded in 1990, it comprises eight companies including Triesse, a Leeds-based wood products manufacturer, which it acquired in 2013. It has a port facility at Tilbury and a half-share in Ramkor, which trades in timber products in the Middle East. It is majority-owned by chairman Nick Meyer, 71.

203 BALMORAL
Sales £136.5m ▲7% Profit £31.0m ▲401%
Founded in 1973 from a small hut in Fraserburgh, Scotland, and its inventory has grown to a quarter of a million litres. It now has 1,300 employees across 26 sites from the Faroe Islands to the Scottish Borders. It is owned and run by two generations of the Dingwall family.

205 GRS ROADSTONE
Sales £136.1m ▲7% Profit £18.6m ▲19%
Nuneaton-based GRS distributes aggregates and provides national waste management services to the construction

industry, distributes packed aggregates to builders' merchants and retailers, and provides logistics and handling services. The acquisition of packed aggregate supplier Aggbag helped sales rise 36% to £136m in 2015. This year, chief executive Jon Fisher, 38, acquired six bagging plants from building materials group Cemex, and is focusing on expanding the group's handling and logistics activities.

206 UPL
Sales £135.2m ▲1% Profit £98.5m ▲18%
UPL has built or is in the process of building 30,000 student bedrooms for 14 universities. It buys leaseholds from the institutions then designs, funds, builds and operates the schemes for up to 50 years. Its latest project is a £141m deal with the University of London for 1,200 bedrooms in Bloomsbury. Sean O'Shea, 53, is chief executive. Its profit of £66.5m represents a margin of 49%, which is one of the largest on the league table.

207 PENINSULA
Sales £134.8m ▲25% Profit £22.1m ▲9%
This employment law firm was started by Bettef co-founders and brothers Fred and Peter Done - 73 and 69 - after they were faced with an employment tribunal and experienced first-hand the lack of legal support for SMEs. The Manchester

business also provides HR and health and safety services for its 40,000 clients. Its expanding Australian business and the acquisition of Leicester HR firm Croner, for an undisclosed sum, helped 2016 sales rise 25% to £134.6m.

208 NRS HEALTHCARE
Sales £134.8m ▲18% Profit £5.8m ▲2%
This Coalville-based company was founded in 1947 to supply leather products to help rehabilitate war veterans. Today, it sells more than 2,500 disability aids online and from 14 stores nationwide. It also supplies the NHS and local authorities, including Kent, Dorset and Brighton. In 2013, chief executive Jerry Benson, 54, led a £24m buyout, backed by private equity firm LDC, before selling a majority stake to the following year to H2 Equity Partners.

209 ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION
Sales £133.5m ▲5% Profit £9.2m ▲79%
Founded in 1993 by managing director Seamus Shields, 47, this firm provides groundworks and civil engineering services to residential and commercial developments. Growth in its commercial side, as well as public sector contracts for health centres, hospitals and primary schools, helped the Lanarshire firm increase sales 55% to £133.5m last year.

210 FISH BROTHERS
Sales £133.1m ▲15% Profit £3.3m ▲53%
This car dealer was founded in 1948 by Derek Fish and today is run by his sons Mike, 64, and Tim, 61. Operating from 10 dealerships in Swindon and two in Faringdon, the group sells marques that include Toyota, Peugeot and Kia. Last year, the group increased the number of new cars sold by 30% to 16,936.

211 BELFIELD FURNISHINGS
Sales £133.0m ▲12% Profit £8.1m ▲55%
Belfield manufactures sofas, curtains, cushions and mattresses at its sites in Derbyshire and from three sites in north Wales. It supplies independent furniture stores and high street retailers such as John Lewis and Marks & Spencer. Chief executive Steve Hampton, 66, led a management buyout in July backed by private equity firm Northedge, which acquired a majority stake.

212 ECOTRICITY
Sales £131.4m ▲20% Profit £8.7m ▼9%
Stroud-based Ecotricity supplies electricity to its gas to more than 200,000 UK customers, with most of its energy generated from renewable sources - some 40% is derived from wind turbines and solar 'sun parks' owned by the company. Managing director Dale Vince, 55, founded the firm in 1995, and is rolling out electric car charging points across the motorway network, at which its customers can recharge their cars for free. The group is also planning a 100-acre sports and green technology copark next to the M5, with the potential to create more than 4,000 jobs.

213 EVEREST
Sales £131.4m ▲9% Profit £4.8m ▲38%
Everest has been in the home improvement business since 1965. Best known for its double glazing, the firm's other products include driveways, security systems and artificial grass. In 2012, Better Capital bought the company in a £25m-plus deal. Chief executive Roy Saunders, 57, is leading its turnaround from losses of £3.2m in 2011.

214 NEXUS
Sales £130.5m ▲21% Profit £8.1m ▲28%
This Essex business comprises two subsidiaries: Tandown, which specialises in building concrete frames for high-rise developments; and TFC Connect, which installs gas, electricity, water and broadband networks in new developments. The group is majority-owned by chief executive Michael Morris, 49, who is reported to be considering a stock market flotation this year.

215 TES GLOBAL
Sales £130.1m ▲29% Profit £38.4m ▼2%
Having begun life as a free in-set in The Times more than 100 years ago, TES Global is now a print and online jobs marketplace and a teaching resource used by more than 8m teachers worldwide. TPG bought a majority stake for £400m in 2013, prompting an ongoing acquisition spree that includes San Francisco-based learning platform Udacity, as well as a number of supply chain agencies and education technology firms. Under chief executive Rob Grimshaw, 45, these acquisitions boosted sales by 28% to £130.3m in 2015.

216 TUSKER
Sales £128.7m ▲37% Profit £7.3m ▲89%
The NHS and National Grid are among the customers using Tusker to enable their employees to buy a car, with the cost offset against their wages as a benefit in kind. In February last year, chief executive David Hosking, 53, led a buyout backed by private equity firm ECI, which bought a majority stake. Greater awareness of the salary-sacrifice scheme saw profits at this Watford firm double to £7.3m in the year to December.

217 WEDGE GROUP GALVANIZING
Sales £128.6m ▲17% Profit £15.4m ▲88%
A new visitor attraction at Chester Zoo and the restoration of a Swansea RNLB lifeboat station are among this company's recent galvanising projects. Founded in 1855, Wedge says it can galvanise anything from a 1.5mm thick washer to a 29-metre beam. It has 14 sites around the UK and in May opened a new £6m plant in West Suffolk. Jeremy Woolridge, 71, is chairman.

218 LANES
Sales £128.5m ▲26% Profit £7.1m ▲28%
This Leeds group provides drain and sewer maintenance for the likes of Thames Water - for which it removed a 10-ton 'fatberg' benefit from the sewer last year. Lanes also offers domestic drain services from 27 operating centres and five utility hubs around the UK, while its rail division has a shaft of a £300m contract to repair and upgrade drainage for 70 London Underground stations. Managing director Wayne Earnshaw, 52, bought Irish competitor Arlo this year.

219 JOHN GUEST
Sales £127.5m ▲8% Profit £22.7m ▲19%
John Guest's range of 'push-fit' connectors are used by plumbers in 60 countries but also have applications in the automotive, drinks dispenser and fire-protection markets. It is run from its West London factory by the late John Guest's three sons, twins Robert and Barry, 65, and Tim, 56, who are reportedly seeking outside investment. As we went to press, the group reported sales rose to £135.9m and profits were up to £24.3m.

220 JAMES DONALDSON
Sales £127.1m ▼4% Profit £5.1m ▲2%
Started in File in 1860 to import wood from Scandinavia and Russia, this family timber merchant now has 23 UK sites. Recent projects include the supply of 20,000 roof trusses for 625 forest lodges at Woburn Centre Parks. The company is led by fifth-generation family member Neil Donaldson, 61, who in April announced further expansion in Scotland.

221 CROWN OIL
Sales £126.4m ▼10% Profit £4.8m ▲34%
Crown Oil supplies diesel, red diesel, heating oil and lubricants to homes and businesses in Britain. The family-owned Lancashire firm also supplies mains gas, and can install gas, electricity and water connections. Matthew Greensmith, 42 - grandson of the founder Harry - is managing director. Sales tracked global oil prices, falling 10% to £126.4m, though profits rose by a third to £4.8m.

222 RIVIERA TRAVEL
Sales £126.2m ▲3% Profit £11.3m ▲82%
Michael Wright, 60, set up Riviera Travel about 32 years ago, organising coach trips to Paris, and still retains a minority stake in the business. Since 2012, he has led the UK's largest escorted tours operator and second-largest provider of river cruises. In 2014, managing director David Clemson, 48, led a management buyout backed by Phoenix Equity Partners.

223 ROBERT DYAS
Sales £125.5m ▲1% Profit £4.8m ▲12%
Started as an ironmonger in 1872, this chain of 95 stores now sells everything from electrical appliances to gardening products. In 2012, retail entrepreneur Theo Pappas, 57, paid a reported £10m for the business. Since then, he and chief executive Kypros Kyrianiou, 48, have invested and modernised, revamping its online business.

224 CCG
Sales £125.4m ▲42% Profit £7.4m ▲77%
This Glasgow construction company's recent projects include car maker McLaren's first showroom in Scotland and a £28m veteran's centre. CCG was founded in 1947 by chairman and chief executive, Alastair Whyte, 65. Helped by a strong performance from his specialist divisions, which include door and windows and an energy consultancy, sales grew 42% to £125.4m last year.

225 PURE GYM
Sales £125.2m ▲82% Profit £13.5m ▲77%
Most of Pure Gym's 165 sites are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and offer low-cost memberships with no fixed-term contracts. Peter Roberts, 71, founded the Leeds company in 2008 and sold a majority stake to American private equity firm CPM in 2013. After buying LA Fitness's 43 gyms in 2015, in a deal worth £74m, the company became the UK's largest gym operator, helping sales grow 82% last year. Under the leadership of chief executive Humphrey Cobbold, 51, the group plans to raise £190m by listing on the London Stock Exchange this month.

Ones to Recognise: 10 rising companies

Showcased below are 10 companies, from a variety of industries, that did not have high enough sales to rank on this year's Top Track 250 league table, but deserve recognition for their innovation, sustained growth or the contribution they make to the communities in which they are based.

Company	Activity	HQ location	Year end	Sales, £m	Profits*, £m	Staff	Founded
Barber's	Cheesemaker	Somerset	Mar 15	90.5	6.3	257	1833
This Somerset dairy claims to be the No 1 exporter of English cheddar to the US, and it has now set its sights on long-term growth in India and China							
Cartwright Group	Motor vehicle body manufacturer	Cheshire	Mar 15	100.5	3	600	1961
Its award-winning apprenticeships helped lift sales of its refrigerator trailers to over £100m and, after impressing Walmart, in August it began exporting to Chile							
Erith Group	Demolition contractor	Southeast London	Sep 15	114.9	6.9	407	1967
Has tripled profits to £7m in the last year as it brings contaminated brownfield land back into use and works to improve the safety of cyclists on urban roads							
Framestore	Visual effects maker	Central London	Mar 15	81.4	2.8	968	1986
This Oscar-winning special effects company invests more than £4m every year in R&D and is pioneering feature-film quality live action virtual reality campaigns							
Graze	Online food retailer	Richmond	Feb 15	68.1	4.4	306	2007
Has applied its innovative subscription model to make healthy snacks available to office workers across the UK and US, where it generates 50% of its revenues							
Great Rail Journeys	Tour operator	York	Oct 15	86.5	7	153	1980
This York firm has doubled sales and increased profits fourfold to £7m in the past decade as it has helped more people travel by rail							
Jigsaw	Clothing retailer	Surrey	Oct 15	187.9	13.9	853	1972
Chief executive Peter Ruis has turned around the fortunes of this high street fashion retailer. Its plans include expanding in Australia and Europe							
RSK	Environmental consultancy	Cheshire	Mar 15	90.4	6	1,015	1989
Has lifted sales 16% a year over the past three years and expects to hit £125m in 2017, driven by demand for services such as contaminated-land testing in Iraq							
Steelite International	Tableware maker	Stoke-on-Trent	Dec 15	102	7.4	1,147	1983
Its factory has provided skilled employment since 1875, and it continues to expand sales 10% a year, as it exports to more than 140 countries							
Strata Homes	Housebuilder and developer	Doncaster	Dec 15	98.9	10	162	1919
Run by chief executive Andrew Weaver and his father, Irving, this company plans to build 750 homes across Yorkshire and the East Midlands by 2018							

* Operating profits † Annualised figure

226 GRAY & ADAMS

Sales £125.0m ▲ 0% Profit £7.8m ▲ 14%
Gray & Adams manufactures refrigerated trailers from four sites in the UK and Ireland. Founded in 1957 in Fraserburgh, the company has since diversified into other products, including mobile shops and high-security prisoner escort vehicles. The family-owned business is led by managing director James Gray, 61, son of the co-founder.

227 ARGUS MEDIA

Sales £124.4m ▲ 15% Profit £32.3m ▲ 3%
Argus Media provides energy and commodity news, analysis and price information for traders and organisations such as Opec. It has 21 offices globally and is led by chairman Adrian Blinks, 62, and chief executive Neil Bradford, 44. In May this year, General Atlantic, the US investment group, bought out the family of founder Jan Nasmyth in a deal valuing the company at nearly £1bn.

228 BATHSTORE

Sales £124.1m ▲ 11% Profit £2.7m ▲ 29%
This retail chain offers bathroom fittings and a design and installation service, with 170 stores including five Bette Living concession stores and 29 franchises. An overseas franchise opened in Qatar in April. In 2014, chief executive Gary Favell, 60, led a management buyout of the Welwyn Garden City business for an undisclosed sum, backed by American billionaire Warren Stephens.

229 THE DELIVERY GROUP

Sales £124.1m ▲ 58% Profit £2.7m na %
When sending out marketing to customers, businesses such as Screwfix and Centrica use this company, which collects and sorts mail. The firm rebranded as The Delivery Group last year after its owner, private-equity firm Next Wave Partners, bought managed mailroom company CMS Network and combined it with its existing business Secured Mail. CMS continues to be led by its founder, Steve Stokes, 52, while Secured Mail is led by its founder, Mark Bigley, 47. The group is chaired by former UK Mail chief executive Paul Carvell, 61.

230 CCS MEDIA

Sales £123.8m ▲ 12% Profit £2.8m ▲ 85%
CCS provides IT, print and office supplies to more than 4,000 public and private-sector organisations in Britain every month. Partnering with vendors such as HP, Dell, Apple and Microsoft, it also helps organisations implement large-scale IT projects. Under managing director Terry Betts, 56, the Chesterfield firm extended its network of offices to 22 this year with new sites in Northampton and Glasgow.

231 CARTER THERMAL

Sales £123.4m ▲ 13% Profit £2.8m ▲ 14%
Started by war veteran John Carter in 1945, this Birmingham group makes



Anna Blackburn is the first chief executive at jewellers Beaverbrooks (No 243) to come from outside the founding Adlestone family

refrigeration systems for supermarkets such as Waitrose and Sainsbury's. It also supplies water tanks to regions as diverse as the Omani desert and southern China. Led by the founder's grandson, John Carter Scott, 53, the business acquired steel silo manufacturer Brice Baker in January for an undisclosed sum.

232 AINSCOUGH CRANE HIRE

Sales £122.4m ▲ 5% Profit £25.2m ▲ 32%
Ainscough hires out cranes to businesses in the petrochemical, energy, infrastructure and construction industries from its 30 depots across Britain. In March last year, managing director Robin Richardson, 57, led a management buyout backed by Oaktree Capital, which acquired the Wigan-based group from Goldman Sachs and private equity firm TPG for an undisclosed sum.

233 NATIONAL LIGHTING

Sales £122.1m ▲ 0% Profit £8.5m ▲ 34%
This Dorset business operates through Poole Lighting in the UK, designing lighting products that are manufactured in the Far East and shipped to retailers from its warehouse in Christchurch. The group also owns listed German lighting manufacturer Brilliant, supplying DIY and furniture stores throughout Europe. The group is led by founder and chief executive Meyer Maslo, 52.

234 WILLERBY HOLIDAY HOMES

Sales £122.1m ▲ 20% Profit £6.4m ▲ 34%
Named after the Yorkshire village where it began making caravans 70 years ago, Willerby has since moved to bigger premises in Hull, where it designs and assembles 6,500 holiday homes each year, sold under the BK Bluebird and Willerby brands. New products and increased market share helped annualised sales grow by 20% in 2015, under chairman Julian Cooper, 54.

235 MONEYCORP

Sales £122.0m ▲ 3% Profit £12.8m ▲ 27%
Moneycorp traded £22.6bn in 90 currencies last year, helping both large corporates and private individuals with foreign exchange and international payments. Mark Horgan, 50, is chief executive of the business, which was acquired by Bridgepoint in 2014 in a deal worth £212m. The group has expanded into Europe and America, and says it is one of the biggest providers of foreign exchange services outside of the banks.

236 TOMLINSON GROUP

Sales £121.5m ▲ 43% Profit £3.4m na %
On the roster for this family-run Derby-based construction firm are education and public-sector projects in the Midlands, including a £10m Innovation Centre for Derby city council and a £13m campus redevelopment at Nottingham Trent University. The

business is run by chairman Barry Searwards, 79, and his son, managing director Andrew Searwards, 48.

237 CLC GROUP

Sales £121.2m ▲ 2% Profit £8.8m ▲ 24%
Started in Southampton in 1969 as a painting contractor, CLC has grown into a national property maintenance provider with 14 bases across Britain. It specialises in refurbishment of occupied properties such as homes, schools, universities and hotels. Last year, managing director Nick Hilton, 55, led a management buyout, backed by Lloyds Bank.

238 RUSSELL & BROMLEY

Sales £120.8m ▲ 3% Profit £24.2m ▲ 3%
This footwear retailer opened its first store in 1880, when George Bromley and his wife, Elizabeth Russell, took over the running of her family's shop. Today, their great-grandson, chairman Roger Bromley, 72, leads the business, which sells shoes for men, women and children, as well as a handbags and accessories.

239 CASTLE VIEW

Sales £120.2m ▲ 3% Profit £5.7m ▲ 5%
Forty local authorities outsource the management of leisure facilities to this Stirling-based company. Run by group managing director Martin Bell, 54, son of founder Frank, it also makes own-brand pizzas for supermarkets and provides catering management software for NHS

trusts and local authorities. In 2015 it diversified further with the acquisition of Weight Management Centre and Discovery Learning.

240 SKYSCANNER

Sales £119.7m ▲ 29% Profit £12.8m ▲ 0%
Each month, 50m people use this firm's website and apps to book airline tickets, hotels and hire cars. Under co-founder and chief executive Gareth Williams, 47, the Edinburgh company has opened offices in Europe, America and Asia. Sales grew 29% in 2015 to £119.7m, boosted by a 60% rise in mobile traffic. In January this year Skyscanner raised £128m from investors including Artemis and Yahoo! Japan, valuing it at more than £1bn.

241 PAPERCHASE

Sales £119.2m ▲ 11% Profit £4.9m ▲ 42%
This London greetings card, stationery and gift retailer operates more than 130 stores in the UK, with more than 30 sites across Ireland, Holland, France, Germany and the Middle East. It also opened its first concessions in Canada last year, before chief executive Timothy Melgund, 62, wrapped up a £50m funding deal to support further growth.

242 GARDNER AEROSPACE

Sales £118.9m ▲ 3% Profit £3.7m ▲ 17%
Gardner manufactures civil and military aircraft parts in Britain, France, India and Poland. The firm's biggest customer is Airbus, which it supplies in Britain and mainland Europe. Under chairman Nick Sanders, 55, investment to expand and enhance overseas facilities and improving efficiency helped profits almost treble to £9.7m last year.

243 BEAVERBROOKS

Sales £118.0m ▲ 5% Profit £11.5m ▲ 13%
Beaverbrooks is still owned by the Adlestone family, who founded this jeweller in 1919. Three years ago it appointed its first non-family member to run the business, promoting Anna Blackburn to chief executive. Operating 67 shops, the business also partners with retail chain Next, which sells its own-brand products. Chairman Mark Adlestone, 57, received an OBE last year for services to business and charity.

244 SPARK ENERGY

Sales £118.8m ▲ 43% Profit £4.5m ▲ 38%
This Selkirk-based group supplies energy to the rented accommodation and social housing sectors. Chief executive Chris Gaud, 38, is leading a management buyout, reportedly backed by a consortium of four large institutional investors, including a UK pension fund. Contract wins helped sales rise 43% to £118.6m in 2015.

245 TRAINLINE

Sales £118.2m ▲ 10% Profit £21.4m ▲ 21%
Passengers used this company's website and mobile app to book £1.6bn worth of

rail tickets last year. The group was acquired by private-equity firm KKR last year for £450m and in March, Trainline's chief executive, Clare Gilmartin, 41, led the acquisition of French counterpart, Captain Train, for an undisclosed sum. This latest acquisition means it now provides access to 44 train operators across 24 countries in Europe.

246 SCOTT GROUP

Sales £117.4m ▲ 10% Profit £3.7m ▲ 34%
John Scott, 45, was just 18 when he took over the family sawmill in 1989. The business now produces more than 400,000 wooden pallets a week from sites across the UK and Latvia. Growing through acquisitions – buying Seahawk Apparel in April – the Dunfermline-based group, which is now led by John's brother, Norman Scott, 47, sells industrial supplies ranging from bespoke packaging to power tools and clothing.

247 STANMORE CONTRACTORS

Sales £117.3m ▲ 32% Profit £13.5m ▲ 38%
Stanmore takes on internal and external finishing projects – such as drywall, facades, glazing and metalwork – for building contractors and developers in London and southeast England. The Kent business is owned and run by Rajbir Singh Manak, 49, who first joined the company as a trainee plasterer. Winning clients such as Barratt Homes, Berkeley Group and Taylor Wimpey helped sales rise 32% to £117.3m in 2015.

248 LONDON CITY AIRPORT

Sales £117.0m ▲ 14% Profit £9.4m ▲ 53%
Used by more than 4.3m passengers last year, this airport was sold in February for a reported £2bn to a consortium of international infrastructure investors, including the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan. The business is led by chief executive Declan Collier, 61, and in July the government agreed to back its £344m expansion programme.

249 CRISP MALTING GROUP

Sales £116.8m ▼ 6% Profit £13.0m ▲ 30%
Started in Norfolk almost 150 years ago, this group now supplies a range of malted ingredients to brewers, whisky distillers and food producers. In February, chief executive David Thompson, 62, led the acquisition of German and Polish operation Global Malt Group for an undisclosed sum, increasing annual production to more than 400,000 tons.

250 CORMAR CARPETS

Sales £115.3m ▲ 11% Profit £7.5m ▲ 14%
While most carpet sold in Britain is imported, this family business still makes its products at its two Lancashire mills. Founded in 1956, Cormar recently began selling overseas, including in Hong Kong and South Korea. Led by managing director David Judge, 59, sales have almost doubled over the past decade, reaching £115.9m in 2015.

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