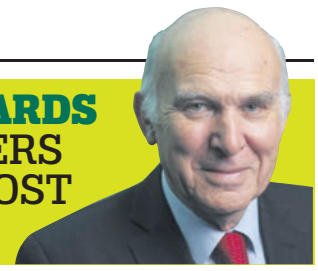
CITY A.M.

BUSINESS WITH PERSONALITY

SMALL STEPS JOIN THE ECO REVOLUTION WITH A £79K CLASSIC MINI **P23**

BALANCING BOARDS KICK THE WORKERS UPSTAIRS TO BOOST CAPITALISM **P20**



TUESDAY 14 MAY 2019 | ISSUE 3,370 CITYAM.COM FREE

RED MIST

SHARES TUMBLE AS CHINA HITS BACK AT TRUMP'S TRADE WAR WITH MORE TARIFFS

HARRY ROBERTSON

@henrygrobertson

STOCK markets sank into the red yesterday as China retaliated against US President Donald Trump by announcing tariffs on $60bn (£46.3bn) worth of American goods.

Fears of a full-blown trade war between the world's biggest economies prompted investors to flee risky assets, with the Nasdaq index in New York suffering its worst fall of the year.

The Chinese ministry of finance said it would impose tariffs of between five and 25 per cent on around 5,000 US goods from 1 June.

Earlier in the day Trump, who has pursued an aggressive policy of re-writing trade deals, warned China not to hit back against tariffs introduced by the US last week.

"There will be nobody left in China to do business with. Very bad for China, very good for USA!" he tweeted.

"But China has taken so advantage of the US for so many years, that they are way ahead (our Presidents did not do the job). Therefore, China should not retaliate – will only get worse!"

However, last night Trump struck a more conciliatory tone, saying in the Oval Office that he had not decided whether or not to go ahead with further tariffs on another $325bn of goods, and that a meeting with Chinese representatives next months could be productive.

"We're dealing with them. We have a very good relationship," he said. "Maybe something will happen. We're going to be meeting, as you know, at the G20 in Japan and that'll be, I think, probably a very fruitful meeting."

Shares pared some losses on the President's comments.

US trade representative Robert Lighthizer said last Friday that he was drawing up plans to slap tariffs on almost all imports from China.

CONTINUES ON P4

Metro Bank shares slide to record low

CALLUM KEOWN

@CallumKeown1

METRO Bank shares yesterday sunk to an all-time low after the challenger bank was forced to quash rumours of financial turmoil ahead of its £350m rights issue.

Some customers rushed to branches in west London over the weekend to withdraw money and items from safe deposit boxes following warnings on Whatsapp.

The bank said the rumours were false and attempted to reassure customers and investors that its £350m capital raise – in response to a major loans blunder – was "well advanced".

The bank said it remained a "safe and secure haven" for customers' money.

Shares fell 11 per cent yesterday to close at fresh trough of 475p. Its stock is down 78 per cent since the lender admitted in January that a swathe of commercial loans had been wrongly classified.

"Chatter on social media that customers' money wasn't safe spiralled out of control at the weekend, with memories of the run on Northern Rock in 2007 still in many people's minds," AJ Bell's Russ Mould said.

Peter Hahn, professor of banking at the London Institute of Banking & Finance, said regulators must be ready to respond to online rumours: "Imagine if this happened to one of the largest banks?"

FTSE 100▼ 7,163.68 -39.61 FTSE 250▼ 19,126.88 -239.92 DOW▼ 25,324.99 -617.38 NASDAQ▼ 7,647.02 -269.92 £/$▼ 1.296 -0.004 £/€▼ 1.155 -0.002 €/$▼ 1.122 -0.002

CITY A.M.

THE CITY VIEW

Economists are united on Trump's trade folly

IN GEORGE Bernard Shaw's words, if all the economists were laid end to end, they'd never reach a conclusion. Scour the pool of practitioners of the dismal science, and you will find supporters and detractors for almost every economic theory, from free markets to socialism. The one exception, however, is protectionism. Whether from the left or the right, economists agree that there are no winners from a trade war, and that tariffs succeed only in making everyone poorer. This is a lesson in theory that America is currently finding out in practice. After Donald Trump executed his threat to double US tariffs on $200bn of Chinese goods, Beijing retaliated yesterday, announcing that it would impose its own new tariffs and raise taxes by 25 per cent on American products. US markets plummeted instantly, with the Dow Jones dropping 2.38 per cent, and Europe's markets have also fallen. Trump, who has self-defined on Twitter as "Tariff Man", seems to believe that even if this response hurts US exporters, America will still "win", as its trade deficit with China means that Beijing has more to lose. But even if this were true, it overlooks the impact on US consumers. The effects of the tariffs can already be seen in hikes in consumer prices since the trade war began. This impact is felt by US businesses which use Chinese materials or component parts. They therefore hurt the very manufacturers that they are ostensibly meant to save. This is not a contentious or partisan view. While Trump has claimed that the tariffs will be "paid for mostly by China... not by us", his own economic adviser conceded that this is not the case. Brought onto Fox News to defend his boss, Larry Kudlow was forced to admit that "both sides will pay".

> The effects of tariffs can already be seen in hikes in consumers prices

These four words summarise the sheer economic illiteracy of tariffs, which compel governments to tax their own citizens in a war that they can never win, and whose collateral damage risks wiping billions off the global economy. One of Trump's former economic advisers was reportedly so concerned at the President's nonsensical trade policy he stole papers off his desk to prevent him from signing them. Given that the IMF has warned that this trade war could cost 0.5 per cent of world GDP, it is a shame that no one tried this tactic with Trump's tariff increase last week.

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GAME THEORY Finance teams compete in immersive overnight challenge across London to raise thousands for small charities

TEAMS from the UK's finance sector battled to outsmart each other last weekend as they took part in the charity fundraiser Midnight Madness, an immersive game across London. The challenge took the competitors from a disused tube platform at Charing Cross to a speedboat on the way to Battersea Power Station, raising £350,000 along the way.

London shines as the UK is named fintech leader

JESS CLARK
@jclarkjourno

THE UK has been named the world's top fintech hub as it was revealed that its high-growth fintech firms attracted more than £4.5bn in investment between 2015 and 2018.

London continues to lead the country in attracting high-growth tech investment, as firms in the capital secured £9bn in funding between 2015 and 2018, followed by Cambridge with £583m.

Scaleup firms in London grew more than 56 per cent between December 2018 and February this year, more than anywhere else in the world, according to a report published today by Tech Nation.

Tech Nation chair Eileen Burbidge said: "The UK has an incredibly pivotal role in the global tech scene.

"Nowhere is this more evident than in the fintech sector where the UK is ranked number one in the world, an enviable position that has been established with decades of hard work, entrepreneurial talent, innovation and supportive policymakers.

"I'm confident that we have all the ingredients needed for continued success and even greater acceleration of the tech sector here in the UK."

Total venture capital investment in UK tech topped £6bn last year – more than any other European country – and 80 per cent of the funding was invested in high-growth businesses.

Meanwhile, the UK was fourth in the world overall for scaleup investment, following the US, China and India.

Last year, UK high-growth tech firms secured five per cent of global scaleup investment totalling £4.9bn, up from £3bn in 2017 and £1.56bn in 2016, putting them ahead of their European rivals Germany, France and Sweden.

Prime Minister Theresa May said the UK is a "global tech powerhouse," adding that the companies are "delivering significant economic value to the nation through the investment they raise, the jobs they create, and the innovative products and services they deliver".

To date, 35 per cent of Europe and Israel's tech unicorns, which are firms with a valuation of more than $1bn, have been created in the UK.

The latest data comes after it was revealed London is on track to become home to the same number of fintech unicorns as San Francisco, the current world leader.

Of the 29 fintech unicorns globally, nine are based in the Californian city while seven are in London, according to data from recruitment consultancy Robert Walters and market analysis firm Vacancy Soft.

WHAT THE OTHER PAPERS SAY THIS MORNING

FINANCIAL TIMES

VEGAN FIRM IMPOSSIBLE FOODS RAISES $300M
Plant-based meat company Impossible Foods has raised $300m (£231.5m)in its latest funding round — increasing its value by two-thirds to $2bn in the past month alone. The latest cash injection, led by Temasek of Singapore and Li Ka-shing's Horizons Ventures, takes the total raised by Impossible to more than $750m, and follows the success of rival Beyond Meat's initial public offering this month.

AUTONOMY FINANCE CHIEF JAILED FOR FIVE YEARS
The former finance chief of Autonomy has been sentenced to five years in prison for accounting fraud linked to the $11bn (£8.49bn) sale of the software company to Hewlett-Packard. Sushovan Hussain, a 55-year-old British citizen, was convicted on 16 counts of wire and securities fraud last year.

THE TIMES

TORY DONORS BACK JAVID IN LEADERSHIP RACE
Sajid Javid has become the latest Tory leadership candidate to tap up Conservative donors in the race to succeed Theresa May. The home secretary is due to report £50,000 from five donors including Ian Taylor, chairman of the energy trader Vitol, who has given more than £300,000 since 2017.

LANDLORDS CASH IN FROM BUY-TO-LET REFORMS
Hundreds of thousands of landlords are planning to cash in gains from rising property prices as buy-to-let reforms encourage a mass exodus from the market.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

VODAFONE OFFLOADS NEW ZEALAND BUSINESS
Vodafone has agreed to sell its New Zealand operation to a private equity consortium for €2.1bn (£1.8bn) after an attempt to merge it with a pay-TV broadcaster was blocked by competition watchdogs. Chief executive Nick Read said the exit demonstrated its commitment to bringing down debts.

SURGICAL ROBOT OPERATES ON HUMANS FOR FIRST TIME
Surgeons in India carried out 30 operations using CMR Surgical's robot Versius, which was developed in Cambridge, with no complications reported so far.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

IMF BAILOUT SCOTCHES PAKISTAN'S SOCIAL REVAMP
Conditions imposed under a $6bn bailout from the International Monetary Fund for Pakistan will upend the government's promises to improve education, health care and create a welfare state as it instead raises new taxes and cuts spending, experts said.

BOEING 737 MAX RETURN SET TO BE DELAYED
Boeing's grounded 737 Max planes were expected to fly again well before the end of the summer travel season however their return could be delayed until mid to late August, posing more headaches for airlines that rely on the jets.

Supreme Court rebuffs Apple in App Store suit

EMILY NICOLLE

@emilyjnicolle

THE US Supreme Court yesterday gave the green light to a lawsuit on behalf of consumers that accuses Apple of creating a monopoly on iPhone apps and forcing users to overpay with high commission fees.

In a 5-4 ruling, the Supreme Court upheld a decision to allow the class action to proceed. The iPhone users argued Apple's requirement that all apps be sold through its App Store and its 30 per cent commission on all purchases were anti-competitive.

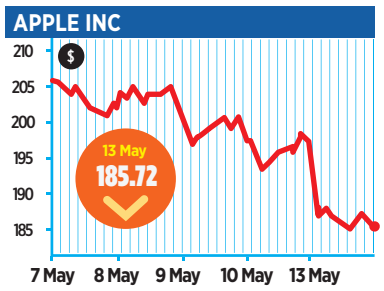
Apple shares fell 5.2 per cent. The Cupertino tech firm said it was only acting as an agent on behalf of app developers, which set their own prices and pay Apple commission.

Justice Brett Kavanaugh said a 1977 ruling which Apple argued had set a precedent was "not a get-out-of-court-free card for monopolistic retailers".

In that case, the court limited damages for anti-competitive conduct to those directly overcharged rather than indirect victims who paid an overcharge passed on by others.

An Apple spokesperson said: "Today's decision means plaintiffs can proceed with their case in district court. We're confident we will prevail when the facts are presented and that the App Store is not a monopoly by any metric."

The suit, which was first filed in 2011, was supported by 30 state attorneys general. Apple, which was backed by the Trump administration and the US Chamber of Commerce, sought to dismiss the case, arguing that the plaintiffs lacked the required legal standing to bring the lawsuit.



Oil prices increase after two Saudi tankers attacked in Gulf of Oman

AUGUST GRAHAM

@AugustGraham

OIL PRICES ticked up yesterday as Saudi Arabia, one of the world's largest producers, said two tankers carrying its oil were attacked in the Gulf of Oman, despite tensions between the US and China exerting downward pressure.

Authorities in the UAE confirmed on Sunday that four ships had been sabotaged at a port near the Straits of Hormuz, with two of them confirmed as Saudi yesterday morning.

The incident will ramp up tensions in a region where Saudi Arabia and Iran have been at loggerheads for decades for local supremacy.

A US official familiar with American intelligence on the incident said yesterday the US has limited information as yet about who may have been responsible for the attacks.

Foreign minister Jeremy Hunt warned of the risks of "a conflict happening by accident" with an unintended escalation between Washington and Tehran over an unravelling nuclear deal.

Iran's foreign ministry called for an investigation into the "worrisome and dreadful" incidents.

BRIDGE BLUNDER TfL confirms it did not see Garden Bridge construction contract

TRANSPORT for London (TfL) said yesterday it did not see the contract that the Garden Bridge Trust signed with a construction company for its proposed crossing over the Thames, which was later scrapped to the tune of £53.5m.

London leads charge in economic productivity for last two decades

HARRY ROBERTSON

@henrygrobertson

LONDON has been far more economically productive than the rest of the country over the last two decades while earnings in the capital are much higher than elsewhere, a new study by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) has shown.

The IFS has today launched the Deaton Review of inequalities in the UK, which it said will be "the most comprehensive scientific analysis of inequalities yet attempted".

The five-year project will be chaired by Nobel prize-winning economist Sir Angus Deaton and funded by the charity the Nuffield Foundation. It aims to understand inequality in income, wealth, health, social mobility and political participation in Britain.

In a study released today to mark the launch of the review, IFS economists found that real economic output grew 3.1 per cent per year in London on average between 1998 and 2017, compared with 1.9 per cent in the UK as a whole.

Global shares take a beating after limited progress on US-China trade

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Lighthizer's comments came as the US lifted tariffs to 25 per cent on $200bn worth of Chinese goods from their previous level of 10 per cent.

The Dow Jones closed down 2.38 per cent last night. The Nasdaq lost 3.41 per cent and the S&P 500 fell 2.41 per cent.

On this side of the pond, the FTSE 100 dropped 0.6 per cent to a seven-week low, while the FTSE 250 tumbled 1.2 per cent. The German Dax slid 1.5 per cent, while French shares fell 1.2 per cent. Billions have been wiped off shares this month as the standoff between Trump's administration and Beijing escalates.

US technology firms with strong trade links to China fell sharply. Technology has been largely exempt from US tariffs so far but would be hit if the Trump administration levied all Chinese imports.

Car firms also took a beating, with Tesla falling five last night after Volkswagen dropped 1.3 per cent.

Turmoil in the stock markets sent investors running for cover towards safe-haven assets, sending US Treasury yields down, while gold surged and the Japanese yen rose.

In soft commodities, cotton fell in value as tariffs threatened trade in apparel. Meanwhile, soybeans – one of the US's main exports to China – fell below $8 a bushel, the lowest level in a decade.

CAR CRASH Uber slides on second day of US trading after disappointing flotation

UBER shares dropped nearly 11 per cent yesterday on its second day of trading in New York following a disappointing $82.4bn (£63.2bn) debut on Friday. The tech giant's stock fell to $37.08 from its $45 listing price.

10.79%

Honda confirms Swindon plant will close in 2021

ALEX DANIEL

@alexmdaniel

JAPANESE car manufacturer Honda ended workers' hopes it would reverse plans to pull down the shutters on its Swindon factory in 2021 after confirming the closure yesterday, meaning 3,500 employees now face redundancy.

The company said that after talks with the government and trade unions it had decided there were "no viable alternatives" to closing the plant, which currently builds the Civic model.

The news that Swindon was under threat first emerged in February, when the firm blamed "unprecedented changes in the global automotive industry". Since then, Honda said it has carried out a "meaningful and robust" consultation on whether it could be saved.

Honda's UK manufacturing director Jason Smith said: "It is with a heavy heart that today we confirm the closure of Honda's factory in Swindon. We understand the impact this decision has on our associates, suppliers and the wider community."

The firm said discussions around redundancy packages for its workers would begin immediately.

A spokesperson for Prime Minister Theresa May said the decision was "clearly disappointing".

Business secretary Greg Clark said: "We will ensure everything is being done to support those affected and to continue Swindon's record of attracting investment to create highly skilled jobs that offer fulfilling careers for years to come."

Unite national officer Des Quinn said the decision was a "body blow which is nothing short of a betrayal of the workforce, customers and the wider supply chain which relies on Honda Swindon for work".

Pressure builds as EU exit talks end in deadlock

OWEN BENNETT

@owenjbennett

CRUNCH Brexit talks between the Conservative and Labour frontbenches ended in stalemate yet again last night despite frantic speculation a crunch vote was set for later this week.

Tory MPs were told a three-line whip was in operation for Thursday – meaning an important vote was scheduled – before it was downgraded to a one-line whip.

The suggestion a crucial division was being planned prompted rumours in Westminster the Conservatives and Labour had reached an agreement over a cross-party Brexit deal which would see a temporary customs union.

However, a source close to one of those leading the negotiations for the government told *City A.M.* that while the Tories were preparing a new offer on a post-Brexit customs union, this had not been agreed with Labour.

After the talks were concluded at about 7pm, a Labour party spokesperson said: "Talks continued tonight and the Shadow Cabinet and the trades union will be updated on what has been discussed."

A source added that no substantive progress had been made.

A Downing Street spokesperson said: "In preparation for an update to Cabinet tomorrow, today's meeting took stock across the range of issues discussed in talks over the last few weeks. We continue to seek to agree a way forward in order to secure our orderly withdrawal from the EU."

The continuing deadlock will pile further pressure on Theresa May to pull the plug on the talks and put the matter to MPs through a series of indicative votes.

May is also facing increasing calls to set out a clearer timetable for her departure from Downing Street.

GREET EXPECTATIONS Woodford doubles Card Factory stake on turnaround strategy

FORMER star trader Neil Woodford doubled his stake in Card Factory yesterday despite high street woes hitting the retailer's sales last year. Woodford Investment Management increased its stake in the greeting card retailer to 10.06 per cent, in a significant bet on the company boosting its performance.

Tories fall to fifth place in polls as Brexit Party snaps up voters

OWEN BENNETT

@owenjbennett

THE CONSERVATIVES have slipped to a humiliating fifth place in London, according to a new opinion poll ahead of the European elections.

A survey carried out by YouGov showed just 10 per cent of Londoners are planning to back the Tories in the vote on 23 May, leaving them behind the Lib Dems on 17 per cent and the Green Party on 14 per cent.

Labour tops the poll, with 24 per cent support, while the Brexit Party – led by former Ukip leader Nigel Farage – is second with 20 per cent.

At the 2014 EU elections, Labour finished with 37 per cent of the vote, while the Tories scored 23 per cent.

IN BRIEF

CREDITORS APPROVE CVA FOR OUTDOOR RETAILER

The embattled retailer behind Cotswold Outdoors and Snow+Rock won approval from its creditors yesterday to press ahead with a controversial restructuring process to slash rents and close stores. Outdoor & Cycle Concepts said last night over 97 per cent of creditors approved a company voluntary arrangement. The group, which also owns brands Runners Need and Cycle Surgery, is the latest in a string of high street names to turn to a CVA in the wake of rising competition from online retailers.

SLACK PUBLIC DEBUT PLANNED FOR 20 JUNE

Slack Technologies, the owner of the workplace instant messaging app, plans to go public on 20 June, the company said yesterday, a test of investor appetite for loss-making technology stocks in the wake of Uber's underwhelming market debut. Slack is one of the most high-profile companies left to go public in 2019 and its debut could be a bellwether for other tech listings.

CITY OF LONDON CORP TO BORROW AROUND £1BN

The City of London Corporation is to borrow for the first time in 30 years as a number of projects, including a new centre for music, squeezes its finances. The corporation could borrow around £1bn over the next three years from its City fund, which meets the costs of its local authorities and police force, and its City cash fund.

Brewery giant swallows EU penalty

SEBASTIAN MCCARTHY

@SebMcCarthy

THE WORLD'S largest brewer was hit with a €200m (£172m) antitrust fine from the EU yesterday for restricting the cross-border sale of beer.

AB Inbev was handed the penalty by the European Commission, which said the firm abused its dominant position on the Belgian beer market by hindering cheaper imports of its Jupiler beer from the Netherlands into Belgium.

Margrethe Vestager, the EU's competition commissioner, said: "Consumers in Belgium have been paying more for their favourite beer because of AB Inbev's deliberate strategy to restrict cross-border sales between the Netherlands and Belgium. Attempts by dominant companies to carve up the single market to maintain high prices are illegal."

AB Inbev's fine was reduced 15 per cent for co-operating with the probe.

The firm has pledged to put mandatory food information in both French and Dutch on the packaging of its products following the investigation.

The infringement, which lasted from early 2009 to late 2016, involved the group restricting the possibility for supermarkets and wholesalers to buy Jupiler beer at lower prices in the Netherlands and to import it into Belgium, according to the commission.

Belgium-based AB Inbev is the world's largest brewer

Dealogic owner takes control of data firm Acuris

JUSTIN GEORGE VARGHESE

ION INVESTMENT Group, the owner of data provider Dealogic, yesterday bought a controlling stake in financial news and data firm Acuris, known for its Mergermarket and Debtwire brands, for £1.35bn including debt.

ION will buy the stake in London-based Acuris from BC Partners and Singapore's sovereign wealth fund GIC, making the Irish firm Mergermarket's fourth owner in 13 years.

Big buyout funds struggled to match BC Partners' price expectations and most investors have walked away, sources told Reuters last month, adding that some funds were allowed to progress in the auction.

Moody's was one of the strongest contenders to win the deal, Reuters reported last month, after credit rating agency Fitch pulled out of the bidding.

Moody's failed to buy Acuris in 2013 when Mergermarket, a former subsidiary of the Financial Times Group, was sold by Pearson to BC Partners for about £380m.

Acuris, led by chief executive Hamilton Matthews, has a sprawling portfolio of financial news outlets and data products. It employs about 1,300 staff and counts big investment banks among its most loyal subscribers.

"When we invested in Acuris in 2014, we saw an opportunity to accelerate its growth and to build a strong franchise, in partnership with Hamilton and the management team," said Nikos Stathopoulos, partner at BC Partners and chairman of Acuris.

Under BC's ownership, Acuris bought a series of news outlets including private equity publication Unquote.

In 2017, GIC bought about 30 per cent of Acuris. *Reuters*

Britain on track to miss spend targets for R&D

ALEX DANIEL

@alexmdaniel

BRITAIN is set to miss its own research and development (R&D) spending target of 2.4 per cent of GDP if investment growth continues at the current rate, according to research published this morning.

The government has set a target to hit the figure by 2027, but at the current rate of spending the UK will not reach it until 26 years later in 2053.

A joint report by the CBI and Nexus released today said the UK's R&D spending lags behind other European nations such as Germany, which just last week announced an extra £17bn boost to research funding over the next decade.

The CBI has called on the government to publish a comprehensive roadmap to set out how it will hit the 2.4 per cent target, as well as introducing changes to make it easier for businesses to navigate and access financial support for investing in innovation.

The report shows advanced data analytics is opening up as a potential new way for businesses to invest in R&D, which could help address the shortfall. But among many companies, data is an underexploited asset because businesses are facing a range of challenges, from skills shortages to navigating funding support, it said.

CBI director of digital and innovation Felicity Burch said: "The government must speed up its effort to hit the 2.4 per cent target or the UK is at risk of falling further behind.

"Advanced data analytics are opening up a new frontier for UK R&D, to ensure we benefit we must have a comprehensive roadmap underpinned by a boost in public funding to spur growth in UK R&D investment."

Property giant Intu owns a swathe of shopping centres across the UK

JP Morgan downgrades retail landlord Intu

SEBASTIAN MCCARTHY

@SebMcCarthy

INVESTOR concerns over beleaguered retail landlord Intu showed no sign of fading last night as shares closed down nearly four per cent.

The shopping centre owner was one of the leading fallers on the London Stock Exchange yesterday after an analyst note released late on Sunday from JP Morgan concluded that "despite a tough 2018, the outlook for Intu hasn't stabilised in our view". The broker downgraded the FTSE property firm to an "underweight" rating.

The company said in a statement: "Management is moving it in the right direction, but we think this will take time and we await further evidence of improvement in the wider UK retail market."

The bank said it saw limited likelihood of UK disposals and that the future earnings per share multiple did not look compelling relative to other retail peers.

Shortsellers have been stepping up their bets against Intu in recent months, as they look to cash in on the embattled shopping centre owner's current retail troubles.

NSF expects to ease watchdog takeover fears

CALLUM KEOWN

@CallumKeown1

NON-STANDARD Finance (NSF) said yesterday it expected to alleviate the competition watchdog's concerns over its £1.3bn bid for rival subprime lender Provident.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) launched an investigation into the potential deal in February and prevented NSF from taking steps to integrate the businesses.

Provident shareholders have until tomorrow to decide whether to accept the hostile takeover bid.

However, investors will have to make that decision without any CMA findings, as NSF confirmed it had yet to make a filing with the watchdog.

NSF said the CMA's concerns would be limited to home credit but that its proposed demerger of its own Loans at Home business would eradicate those concerns.

Provident said the delay meant shareholders would not possibly be able to make an "informed decision" on the offer.

NSF had support from 50.7 per cent of Provident shareholders when it launched its hostile bid in February – including Neil Woodford, Invesco Asset Management and Marathon Asset Management.

The trio also hold a stake in Non-Standard Finance.

But the subprime lender has since been unable to convince any other investors to support its case.

Provident's third-largest shareholder Schroders refused to support NSF's bid last week as it was not in the best interests of shareholders.

The UK fund manager, which holds a 14.6 per cent stake in Provident, raised concerns that the rights of minority shareholders were "not being protected."

In another blow for NSF, US hedge fund Coltrane Asset Management is also set to reject the takeover bid.

Brompton makes around 45,000 folding bikes a year at its west London factory

Brompton hunts for new chair as company aims to double size

JESS CLARK

@jclarkjourno

FOLDING bike company Brompton Bicycle is searching for a successor for its chairman as the London-based company aims to double in size over the next five years.

The firm has appointed headhunters to find a successor to its long-serving chairman Tim Guinness, Sky News reported.

Brompton, which is privately owned, makes around 45,000 of its bikes a year at its west London factory.

In its latest accounts the company said it made a profit of £3.1m in the financial year to 31 March 2018, and reported turnover of £36.1m.

Euronext clears major hurdle in Oslo Bors battle

CALLUM KEOWN

@CallumKeown1

EURONEXT won clearance from the Norwegian government to buy stock exchange Oslo Bors yesterday, handing it almost-certain victory over rival bidders Nasdaq.

The pan-European exchange said it now expects to complete the transaction by the end of next month.

The US giant, which has support from 37 per cent of Oslo Bors shareholders, had hoped the Norwegian finance ministry would rule that a two-thirds majority of shares was needed to secure a deal.

The ministry confirmed there were no restrictions, handing the advantage to Euronext, which has support from 53.2 per cent of Oslo Bors shares.

The pair have been locked in an intense battle over the Norwegian stock exchange since December.

Both offers of 158 Norwegian kroner per share value the business at roughly 6.8bn Norwegian kroner (£600m).

Nasdaq said the Norwegian finance ministry's ruling was "disappointing" and it would assess its options.

Analysts predict Centrica could slash dividend

AUGUST GRAHAM

@AugustGraham

ANALYSTS have warned a dividend cut is on the horizon at British Gas owner Centrica after several external factors hit performance in the opening months of 2019.

Centrica said that the government's new energy price cap had dented its figures, including a one-off £70m impact in the first quarter.

It also pointed to the negative impact from warmer-than-usual weather for the time of year, falling natural gas prices in the UK and outages to the Dungeness B and Hunterston B nuclear power stations, which it does not run.

In a trading update yesterday, Centrica also revealed that it has lost 234,000 energy customers in the UK.

However, the company said a cost programme would still help it reach adjusted operating cash flow targets of £1.8bn to £2bn in the full year of 2019, sending shares up three per cent to 95.40p.

It expects to reduce its headcount by between 1,500 and 2,000 people over the year to help deliver efficiencies of £250m, and divest £500m in business.

"Good cost control means this update isn't as bad as it could have been, but with a strategic review now pencilled in, the stage is set for a dividend cut," said Hargreaves Lansdown analyst George Salmon.

Centrica chief executive Iain Conn has faced criticism over his 44 per cent pay rise last year, which corresponded to around £1 for every one of the 742,000 customers his firm lost in 2018.

The company's shares have this year hit a 20-year low as it faces challenges from the price cap.

Yesterday, Conn said that operational performance had stayed in line with plans, while external factors challenged the company in the first four months of the year.

THAT'S OBSCENE Desperate bid to keep £56k copy of Lady Chatterley's Lover in UK

ARTS minister Michael Ellis has led calls to prevent a copy of Lady Chatterley's Lover, worth more than £56,000, from leaving the UK. Ellis has issued a temporary export ban on a copy of DH Lawrence's novel used by the judge who presided over the infamous 1960 obscenity trial. The book could be exported unless a buyer is found.

Risk warning as global energy demand outstrips fuel supply

AUGUST GRAHAM

@AugustGraham

THE WORLD is "storing up" future risks as investment in both fossil fuels and renewables may not meet global increases in energy demand, the head of the International Energy Agency (IEA) has warned.

More than $1.8 trillion (£1.4 trillion) was invested in global energy projects in 2018, broadly flat on the year before, the IEA said today.

But it warned there is not enough investment in energy efficiency and clean energy sources to bring the world in line with the Paris Agreement targets on climate change.

Funding for fossil fuels is also not high enough to meet demand.

Eon reports fall in revenue due new price cap

AUGUST GRAHAM

@AugustGraham

THE GOVERNMENT's energy price cap put a dampener on Eon's revenues in the first three months of the year.

UK sales decreased by six per cent to €153m (£132m), the company said in its first quarter results yesterday, adding it had been hit by a triple-whammy including lower energy prices and reduced sales volumes.

UK energy suppliers have all faced a tough opener to the year after Ofgem capped the amount they could charge for their default tariffs, promising savings to customers.

Eon's announcement came alongside another update from British Gas owner Centrica yesterday morning, saying its business had taken a £70m hit from the price cap.

"Aside from the special case of the United Kingdom, our core businesses delivered a solid performance," Eon chief financial officer Marc Spieker said.

"We can therefore unequivocally reaffirm our forecast for the 2019 financial year."

Capital's rental growth edges up during April

SEBASTIAN MCCARTHY
@SebMcCarthy

LONDON rents grew at a slower pace than the rest of the UK in April, dragging down the city's average despite large rises in areas such as Edinburgh and Nottingham.

While London areas such as Islington, Wandsworth and Southwark all witnessed a rise in rent by more than one per cent in April, average rents across the capital edged up by a modest 0.66 per cent.

The boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster have both seen rental values slip slightly during the last 12 months.

Average rents in the capital stood last month at £1,906, compared with the nationwide figure of £1,218.

Scotland had the UK's highest year-on-year growth for landlords, with rents in Edinburgh and Glasgow jumping 5.44 per cent and 2.59 per cent respectively.

Wales was second to Scotland in the highest UK growth.

In England, Nottingham boasted the highest rate of rental growth at 3.84 per cent, according to the new research from the latest Landbay Rental Index.

"Landlords can rest assured that there is decent rental growth to be found across the UK, particularly if they look north of London," according to John Goodall, chief executive and co-founder of Landbay.

"On the face of it, landlords have had a tough time in the past few years, from increased regulatory pressure to a significant increase in stamp duty costs, yet they have managed to shoulder many of these costs without passing them onto tenants."

He added: "For tenants, wage growth hitting a new decade high should be welcome news. This improvement in affordability should help renters and would-be buyers alike."

The building is situated 100m from the Elizabeth Line at Tottenham Court Road

Central Soho office block sold to Royal London in £75m purchase

SEBASTIAN MCCARTHY
@SebMcCarthy

AVIVA Investors sold off a grade A office block in the heart of Soho for more than £75m yesterday.

Royal London Asset Management snapped up the 44,000 square foot building at 25 Soho Square, near Tottenham Court Road station which is let to five tenants, including US software firm Palantir Technologies.

Keith Miller, a senior fund manager and head of offices at Royal London Asset Management, said the purchase "perfectly fits our strategy of buying best-in-class buildings in prominent central London locations".

CBRE advised Royal London Asset Management and JLL acted for Aviva Investors.

Bitcoin passes $8,000 to hit 12-month high

EMILY NICOLLE
@emilyjnicolle

BITCOIN has surged further in value to break through the $8,000 (£6,174) mark, its highest level in a year, after hitting a nine-month high over the weekend.

The cryptocurrency built on a recent period of gains to climb as high as $8,166 yesterday, its highest level since May 2018, according to data from Luxembourg-based exchange Bitstamp.

The 12-month high comes after a recent surge in value for bitcoin, which has defied wider market jitters over the US-China trade war to jump more than 60 per cent over the last month.

"The outlook for bitcoin remains bullish," said Marcus Swanepoel, chief executive of cryptocurrency investment firm Luno.

The rise was largely attributed to positive news from several major cryptocurrency conferences yesterday, as well as a $1bn fundraise by crypto exchange Bitfinex.

Ethereum, the second-largest cryptocurrency by market capitalisation, enjoyed a more modest uptick, rising to a six-month high of more than $205.

Outernet partners with Technicolor for Tottenham Court Road landmark venue

JAMES WARRINGTON
@j_a_warrington

ENTERTAINMENT venue firm Outernet Global has teamed up with French giant Technicolor to create a new immersive advertising and live entertainment space in London.

The firms have agreed a partnership as part of a multi-billion-pound project to create a new media hub offering a unique broadcasting environment in the West End.

The project, first unveiled earlier this year, includes a new 2,000 capacity live music venue, which will be located on the corner of Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road.

Outernet London will also include a live broadcasting area comprising 23,000 square feet of 8K-enabled screens.

Outernet said it will work with Technicolour to create a series of AR, VR and AI advertising campaigns, providing brands with a canvas at one of the highest-footfall areas of London.

"We're building the largest-capacity entertainment venue in London since the 1940s, with the highest-resolution screens anywhere in the world," said Outernet president and chief executive Philip O'Ferrall.

The new city centre hub is due to open in summer 2020, with plans underway to open similar sites in cities including New York, Los Angeles, Berlin and Dubai.


Outernet London will boast 23,000 square feet of 8K-enabled screens

Angling Direct scraps dividend in growth drive

JOE CURTIS

@joe_r_curtis

ANGLING Direct boosted sales by 40 per cent in its latest financial year but denied investors a dividend, as it doubled down on expansion plans both online and on the UK high street.

The firm said yesterday it would not pay shareholders a dividend as it reinvests cash into growing the business.

Investors were instead faced with a 0.55p loss per share in the year to the end of January 2019, compared to a 0.10p profit per share last year.

The fishing equipment retailer made an operating loss before tax of £300,000, down from a £200,000 profit in 2018, as it invested in growing its online and offline markets.

Group sales rose 39 per cent to £42m, compared to the previous financial year.

Gross profit rose 40 per cent year on year to £13.8m with a gross margin of 32.9 per cent, while net cash stood at £13.5m compared to just £800,000 in 2018 after a successful £20m share placing in October.

"It has been a transformational year for Angling Direct, achieving record sales across the store network and online," said chief executive Martyn Page.

He added the £20m placing in October 2018 had enabled the firm to accelerate its expansion strategy with three stores opened across the financial year.

"As the UK market consolidates, we are seeing a corresponding increase on our margins as the level of discounting from competitors decreases," Page said.

"Coupled with this are encouraging customer habits with increasing numbers of returning customers both in-store and online as Angling Direct becomes the retailer of choice."

Shares fell almost three per cent during yesterday's trading session, before closing up 0.6 per cent.

PPL collects royalties for musicians and rights holders including Rita Ora

Music royalties firm PPL collects record £247m in artist revenues

JAMES WARRINGTON

@j_a_warrington

MUSIC licensing company PPL posted its highest-ever annual revenue yesterday, as it paid out to a record number of musicians.

PPL, which is one of the UK's two main royalties agencies, collected revenues for its members of £246.8m in 2018, up 13 per cent on the previous year.

It came as PPL distributed royalties to 105,000 performers and recording rights holders, the first time the company has paid out to more than 100,000 people in one financial year.

In the last 12 months, the firm has signed deals with artists including Rita Ora, Emeli Sande and Plan B.

SEC approves first negative fee fund in US

JESS CLARK

@jclarkjourno

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission (SEC), the US financial regulator, has approved the first ever "negative fee" fund, which will pay investors for depositing their money.

New York-based investment manager Salt Financial has been given the go-ahead to waive its 0.29 per cent fee and will contribute 0.05 per cent to the fund instead, meaning an investor will receive $5 (£3.86) for every $10,000 invested in the new exchange-traded fund (ETF).

Investors in the Salt Low Tru Beta US Market ETF will benefit from the fee waiver agreement until the fund reaches $100m of assets.

In a filing, the company said: "The adviser has contractually agreed to waive the fund's full unitary management fee of 0.29 per cent of the fund's average daily net assets on the first $100m in net assets until at least 30 April 2020."

It added that it would "contribute to the fund's assets an amount equal to an annual rate of 0.05 per cent of the funds average daily net assets on the first $100m in net assets".

Chinese car sales decline for tenth straight month

ALEX DANIEL
@alexmdaniel

CAR SALES in China, the biggest automotive market in the world, fell for the 10th consecutive month in April.

Sales fell to 1.98m vehicles in April, according to the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers (Caam), marking a 14.6 per cent year-on-year decline.

After a 14 per cent drop in February, followed by a 5.2 per cent drop in March, it appeared the swift decline of the Chinese market was softening.

But as a crippling trade war with the United States moved into the next phase with another sharp escalation of tariffs from US President Trump's side last week, automotive sales also relapsed.

European car makers such as Volkswagen and Jaguar Land Rover have all suffered declining car sales for months as they adapt to the previously dependable Chinese market shrinking.

"This was not massive news for the car makers as they have been feeling the pinch for months but it was a confirmation of how negative the situation was," said analyst at City Index Fiona Cincotta.

April's sales also suffered from some Chinese provinces implementing new vehicle emission standards earlier than expected, which stoked uncertainty among manufacturers, according to Caam.

The government will require that all light vehicles adhere to tougher emission standards by 2020 as part of anti-pollution efforts. Sales of so-called new energy vehicles, a category which includes hybrid and electric cars, rose 18.1 per cent in April to 97,000 vehicles.

Last week, it emerged the number of new cars registered in the UK fell 4.1 per cent in April compared to the year before, as demand among consumers shrank.

Meanwhile, registration of new plug-in hybrids declined dramatically, falling 34.4 per cent year-on-year.

The drop off in hybrid purchases was due to the government "prematurely removing upfront purchase incentives before the market is ready", according to the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), which released the figures.

Diesel registrations fell again, but the pace of decline slowed considerably compared to March, falling 9.4 per cent to 46,589 cars. A total of 161,064 new vehicles were registered in April, giving diesel vehicles a 28.9 per cent market share.

Demand for alternatively-fuelled vehicles rose, with 12.7 per cent more cars leaving showrooms than a year earlier.

All change please: US investor calls for ousting of Firstgroup's board

JAMES BOOTH
@Jamesdbooth1

TRANSPORT company Firstgroup is set for a boardroom scrap after investor Coast Capital demanded a general meeting in an attempt to oust six of its directors, it said yesterday.

US investment management firm Coast Capital, which owns 9.77 per cent of the company's shares, wants to remove six of the eleven current directors and replace them with seven of its own nominees.

Those it is targeting include chief executive Matthew Gregory and chairman Wolfhart Hauser.

Former chief financial officer Gregory was appointed as chief executive in November after previous boss Tim O'Toole stood down in May 2018 following a £327m annual loss.

Coast's founding partner James Rasteh said: "The existing leadership team has a track record of value destruction and under-performance."

Firstgroup said its board was "focused on delivering shareholder value" and said it was "confident that the company has the right team with the right experience and plans in place to do so".

Grave danger: Dignity posts falling profit as deaths dip hits results

AUGUST GRAHAM

@AugustGraham

A DIP IN the number of Brits dying in the first three months of the year buried profits at Dignity, the funeral provider reported yesterday.

The slide comes as pressure builds on the funeral industry, which is facing a competition probe into its practices and prices.

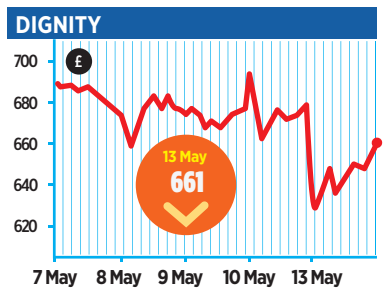
Underlying operating profit fell 42 per cent to £21.7m.

The drop was driven largely by a dip in its funeral business, which fell 34 per cent to £18.4m, £6.8m of which came as the death rate fell 12 per cent to 159,000 in the quarter.

Average income per funeral also dipped in the quarter, as Dignity introduced a new, cheaper, plan in a time when pressure is growing on funeral providers over pricing.

The company's overhead costs increased 55 per cent to 7.6m, helping to squeeze profits, while underlying revenue dipped 15 per cent in the quarter to £81.1m.

Dignity's share price, which as it is the UK's only listed funeral provider is seen as an indicator of how the sector as a whole is doing, fell 2.2 per cent in trading yesterday.



Lloyd's calls for survey support after scandal

CAROLYN COHN

LLOYD's of London has asked the Banking Standards Board to conduct a survey of the insurance market's 45,000 participants on issues such as honesty and respect to help to improve the working environment.

The reputation of the market, which started in Edward Lloyd's coffee house in 1688 and insures anything from ships to sculptures, has been tarnished by recent allegations of sexual harassment in the workplace.

It is stepping up efforts to modernise attitudes.

Lloyd's has already banned alcohol at its in-house bar before 4pm and threatened lifetime bans from its building for bad behaviour.

Chief executive John Neal said the survey would help Lloyd's to "put in place further measures to build a diverse and inclusive market in which everyone is respected and valued".

The Banking Standards Board, set up after the Libor scandal to improve staff behaviour in the financial sector, has carried out surveys for banks since 2016 on topics such as honesty, respect and shared purpose.

The survey was sent out on yesterday, a Lloyd's spokeswoman said.

The confidential survey will run until 31 May, after which the outcome and a resulting action plan will be reported back to the market. *Reuters*

Lloyd's has banned daytime drinking

Volkswagen poised to announce battery cell production plans ahead of investor meeting

JAN SCHWARTZ

VOLKSWAGEN's supervisory board is on the brink of announcing the automaker's entry into battery cell production, two people familiar with the matter said yesterday.

Production is expected to be implemented in Germany, one of the insiders said. The supervisory board was meeting in Berlin on the eve of the firm's annual general meeting. Volkswagen declined to comment.

Battery cells are a key battleground in the automotive industry as it shifts to electric mobility. Currently, the industry chiefly sources its requirements from Asian manufacturers.

Volkswagen chief Herbert Diess said last year the company was considering building its own solid-state battery cells, with possible serial production from 2024 or 2025.

It follows recommendations from three shareholder advisory groups that investors vote against the stewardship of all but one members of the board at tomorrow's meeting. *Reuters*

TRADING

More market players are trading regardless of price

JAMES CLUNIE ON PASSIVE INVESTING PAGE 22

CITY A.M.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

CITY OF LONDON

THE PLANNING ACTS AND THE ORDERS AND REGULATIONS MADE THEREUNDER

This notice gives details of applications registered by the Department of The Built Environment Code: FULL/FULMAJ/FULEIA/FULLR3 – Planning Permission; LBC – Listed Building Consent; TPO – Tree Preservation Order; OUTL – Outline Planning Permission

26A Savage Gardens & 9A-9B Crutched Friars, London, EC3N

19/00292/FULL

Change of use of part ground floor from betting office (sui generis) to a sui generis mix of restaurant / cafe and drinking establishment (Class A3/A4) and works comprising: (i) replacement of shopfront on Crutched Friars; (ii) replacement of first floor windows on Crutched Friars and Coopers Row; (iii) replacement of first floor rear doors and windows fronting rear yard with new doors and glazing under the arches and installation of an external shutter; (iv) replacement of door and installation of windows to the rear at ground floor; (v) extension of external walkway on first floor rear elevation and replacement of external stairs for use as a means of escape; (vi) installation of a fence between the external walkway and neighbouring residential properties; and (vii) replacement of extract flue on rear elevation.

St Nicholas Cole Abbey , 114 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4BJ

19/00367/FULL

The installation of 1No. GPS antenna and associated development.

Leadenhall Market, London, EC3V 1LR

19/00394/LBC

Application under Section 19 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to vary condition 1 of listed building consent (application no. 18/00399/LBC) dated 19th June 2017 to extend the temporary time period for the installation of the sculpture' I'm Staying' by Shaun C Badham for a period of up to one year, to be taken down on or before 01.06.2020.

85 Fleet Street, London, EC4Y 1AE

19/00416/FULL

Installation of four condenser units at roof level.

85 Fleet Street, London, EC4Y 1AE

19/00417/LBC

(i) Installation of four condenser units at roof level; (ii) installation of four compressor units within the existing plant room, and associated piping, at ninth floor level.

Livery Hall, Dyers Hall, 10 Dowgate Hill, London, EC4R 2ST

19/00452/FULL & 19/00453/LBC

i) Formation of a new door way within the eastern wall of the internal lightwell; ii) removal of an existing window and the formation of new opening for a replacement window; and iii) provision of a new flying staircase across the width of the internal lightwell.

Leadenhall Market, London, EC3V 1LR

19/00459/LBC

Temporary installation of a sculpture 'The Source' by Patrick Tuttofuoco for a period of up to one year, to be taken down on or before 01.06.2020.

Applications can be viewed at www.planning2.cityoflondon.gov.uk or at the Department of the Built Environment, North Wing, Guildhall, Basinghall Street, London EC2, between 09.30 and 16.30. Representations must be made within 21 days of the date of this newspaper online or in writing to PLNComments@cityoflondon.gov.uk or the Chief Planning Officer, PO Box 270, Guildhall, London, EC2P 2EJ. In the event that an appeal against a decision of the Council proceeds by way of the expedited procedure, any representations made about the application will be passed to the Secretary of State and there will be no opportunity to make further representations.

CITY OF LONDON

Julian Assange was expelled from the Ecuadorian embassy last month

Sweden reopens rape case against Wikileaks founder Julian Assange

AUGUST GRAHAM

@AugustGraham

SWEDISH prosecutors yesterday reopened a case of alleged rape against Wikileaks founder Julian Assange.

Assange sought asylum in Ecuador's London embassy in 2012 after a British judge ordered his extradition to Sweden.

The alleged rape is said to have happened in August 2010 when Assange visited Enkoping in Sweden.

The preliminary investigation was closed in 2017 because Assange was unreachable inside the embassy. Prosecutor Eva-Marie Person cited "new circumstances" in her decision to reopen the case, pointing to a request from the plaintiff to restart the preliminary investigation.

It comes after Assange was ejected from the embassy in April.

Assange is currently sitting in prison in the UK for breaking his bail conditions. He is also wanted in the US on hacking charges.

Prosecutors now intend to ask a court to remand him in absentia. They will then issue a European arrest warrant, requesting Assange's extradition to Sweden.

Wikileaks said the reopening of the case "will give Julian a chance to clear his name."

Diploma looking for deals amid mounting profit

ALEX DANIEL

@alexmdaniel

TECHNICAL components firm Diploma's shares dipped yesterday despite double-digit growth in both profit and revenue in the first half of its financial year, as it noted a slowdown in the industrial seals market.

Profit before tax grew 13 per cent to £40.1m in the six months ending 31 March, while revenue grew 11 per cent to £260.4m.

Free cash flow declined 21 per cent to £14m, while earnings per share rose 15 per cent to 26.4p. Interim dividend per share was up 10 per cent to 8.5p. Shares fell 0.7 per cent yesterday.

The firm said it was "optimistic" about the next six months, saying it is on track to meet its full-year guidance, but there were "early signs of slower activity in the industrial seals markets", which account for around 39 per cent of the firm's revenue.

Diploma also said it hoped to grow through acquisitions as the year goes on, after picking up three businesses last year: Clarendon Specialty Fasteners, which supplies seals to the aerospace and defence sectors, FS Cables, which sells electrical and communications cables within the UK, and Gremtek, which makes sleeves for electrical insulation and thermal and mechanical protection.

Diploma appointed chief executive Johnny Thomson in January.

Thomson said: "Diploma has delivered another good performance in line with our expectations.

"Despite macroeconomic uncertainties, the group remains on track to deliver good growth in revenues with modest margin progression for the full year.

"Acquisitions remain an integral part of the group's growth strategy and although opportunities are very competitive, we remain optimistic about acquiring some quality businesses as the year progresses."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

The City of London Corporation hereby gives notice that it has made an order entitled the Stopping Up of Highways (City of London) (Number 1) Order 2019 under section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to authorize the stopping up of four areas of highway on the western side of Vine Street to enable the redevelopment of Roman Wall House and Emperor House, 1–2 Crutched Friars and 35–36 Vine Street, London, EC3N 2HT.

Copies of the order and accompanying plan may be inspected free of charge at the offices of the City of London Corporation, Guildhall North Wing, Basinghall Street, London, EC2V 7HH from Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays and bank holidays) during normal office hours for a period of 28 days from the date of this notice; and may be obtained free of charge by e-mailing Transport.Planning@CityOfLondon.Gov.UK or by writing to Transport Planning, City of London, PO box 270, Guildhall, LONDON, EC2P 2EJ.

Any person aggrieved by the order and desiring to question the validity thereof, or of any provision contained therein, on the ground that it is not within the powers of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or that any requirement of that Act or of any regulation made thereunder has not been complied with in relation to the order may, within six weeks of the date of this notice, apply to the High Court for the suspension or quashing of the order or of any provision contained therein.

Dated 14 May 2019.

John Barradell
Town Clerk

CITY OF LONDON

Huawei boss Meng Wanzhou thanks firm's employees in emotional letter

JAMES WARRINGTON

@j_a_warrington

HUAWEI's chief financial officer Meng Wanzhou has penned an emotional letter to the company's employees, saying their support has "brought her to tears".

Meng, who is fighting extradition to the US from Canada, thanked staff at the Chinese tech firm for showing concern for her wellbeing during her detainment in Vancouver.

"Despite being physically restricted to a very limited space during my time in Vancouver, my inner self has never felt so colourful and vast," wrote Meng in an internal company letter first published by Chinese media yesterday.

"Your concern has warmed my heart and your support has filled me with power," she added.

Meng, who is the daughter of Huawei founder Ren Zhengfei, was arrested in Vancouver in December on charges relating to the violation of sanctions against Iran.

Lawyers for the Chinese executive have insisted the allegations against her are unfounded and politically-motivated, and have said she will seek a stay of extradition over alleged civil rights abuses.

But in the letter Meng said she has been heartened by messages of support from Huawei employees.

"Every time I saw these messages, an indescribable feeling would arise from the bottom of my heart," she wrote. "I believe that every time I take a step forward, there are 180,000 Huawei employees taking that step with me."

The letter has since been shared online, and a spokesperson for Huawei confirmed its authenticity.

Meng is under house arrest, but last week won approval to move to her newly-renovated CA$13m (£7.4m) mansion in Vancouver.

Meng Wanzhou is fighting extradition to the US from Canada

FTSE chiefs from tech background at a record high

HARRY ROBERTSON

@henrygrobertson

CHIEF executives of the UK's top firms have more technological experience than ever before, helping them better deal with a digitally-focused world, a new study has shown.

The annual Robert Half chief executive tracker, released today, has shown that the proportion of FTSE 100 chief executives with a background in technology increased by 27 per cent in the last year, with 14 per cent now having a background in the sector in 2019.

However, diversity among FTSE 100 chief executives has decreased in 2019, with the number of female heads of firms decreasing from seven per cent in 2018 to six per cent.

The average age for a FTSE 100 boss is 55, unchanged from the previous two years, while 18 per cent are Oxbridge-educated, an increase from 16 per cent in 2017.

Financial experience has seen a resurgence amongst the UK's top bosses, with the number of chief executives with a background in banking or similar sectors increasing from 40 per cent in 2018 to over half in 2019.

Finance remains the most common route to the top, but the trend is declining. The number of bosses with a banking or similar background having fallen from 55 per cent in 2016 to 43 per cent a year later.

The chief executive tracker showed that the number of bosses promoted internally has surged in 2019, with nearly half of current heads of firms having been appointed as a result of internal promotion. This compares to 30 per cent in 2018.

Charlie Grubb, UK managing director of Robert Half Executive Search, said: "Today's chiefs require a changing blend of skills and experience to successfully lead their businesses into the future, with backgrounds in technology and finance equipping an increasing number with the ability to do so."

He said: "This is a trend that is increasingly becoming a focus for executive and senior leadership hires within a business as well – especially when coupled with invaluable softer skills such as communication, adaptability and resilience."

"We're seeing an evolving leadership landscape whereby traditional backgrounds may no longer be the set criteria for leading the top firms of the future. Global experience, education and values such as loyalty and tenure, however, will always be important," Grubb said.

The education path to becoming a chief executive officer is clear, with eight out of ten FTSE chief executives holding a university degree or higher. Twenty-eight per cent have Bachelor of Arts degrees.

Swedbank's chief executive Birgitte Bonnesen stepped down earlier this year

Swedbank plans its new board after money laundering claims

AUGUST GRAHAM

@AugustGraham

INVESTORS in under-fire Swedbank will vote on the future of the Swedish lender within the next six weeks, as the company yesterday formally proposed a new board headed by the country's former Prime Minister Goran Persson.

The bank's five largest shareholders have called for an extraordinary general meeting to be held before the midsummer holiday on 21 June.

Persson led the Social Democrats for 11 years from the late 1990s into the 2000s, serving as Prime Minister for ten of those years.

His chairmanship will be put to shareholders alongside the election of Bo Magnusson, a former SEB Group executive who now chairs two other Swedish banks, and experienced anti-money laundering lawyer Josefin Lindstrand.

Swedbank is likely hoping that Lindstrand's appointment, and the chairmanship of Persson, will steady the ship after a money-laundering scandal rocked the bank to its core.

Both the firm's chairman and chief executive have left after reports emerged linking Swedbank to suspected money laundering in the Baltics.

The claims came after similar allegations rocked fellow Scandinavian lender Danske Bank.

Monsanto likely 'kept files' on key influencers

LUDWIG BERGER

BAYER said yesterday its Monsanto unit, which is being investigated by French prosecutors for compiling files of influential people such as journalists in France, likely did the same across Europe, suggesting a potentially wider problem.

French prosecutors said last week they had opened an inquiry after newspaper Le Monde filed a complaint alleging that Monsanto – acquired by Bayer for $63bn (£48.6bn) last year – had kept a file of 200 names, including journalists and lawmakers in hopes of influencing positions on pesticides.

On Sunday, Bayer acknowledged the existence of the files, saying it did not believe any laws were broken but that it will ask an external law firm to investigate.

"It's safe to say that other countries in Europe were affected by lists... I assume that all EU member states could potentially be affected," said Matthias Berninger, Bayer's head of public affairs and sustainability, yesterday.

While he did not say there had any illegal activity and added it was up to the external law firm to evaluate the conduct, Berninger said there were signs Monsanto had not played fairly in the use of private data.

"There have been a number of cases where – as they would say in football – not the ball was played but the man, or woman, was tackled," he said.

"When you collect non-publicly available data about individuals a Rubicon is clearly crossed," Berninger added.

Reuters

CITY DASHBOARD YOUR ONE-STOP SHOP FOR BROKER VIEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

LONDON REPORT

FTSE 100 falls as investors hang up on Vodafone

THE FTSE 100 slipped to a seven-week low as China slapped retaliatory tariffs on US goods, further escalating their protracted trade dispute, and as telecom giant **Vodafone** slipped after a report of a dividend cut.

The FTSE 100 ended down 0.6 per cent while the FTSE 250 tumbled 1.2 per cent yesterday, led by a slump in **Metro Bank** .

Beijing said it would impose higher tariffs on most US imports on a revised $60bn (£46.3bn) target list. Financial heavyweights were among the biggest drags on the main bourse as a result, while an index of miners skidded to its lowest in almost three-and-a-half months.

Vodafone tumbled 5.2 per cent on its worst day in nearly five years after the Times reported that the world's second-biggest mobile operator was set to slash dividends to pay for auctions for mobile phone airwaves in Germany and Italy.

Brexit worries also weighed on sentiment, amid a lack of clarity over where cross-party talks were headed and growing calls for Prime Minister Theresa May's departure.

UK-focused banks and industrial groups traded in the red on both indexes.

ITV slipped 6.3 per cent to be the worst performer on the FTSE 100. The broadcaster said The Jeremy Kyle Show, one of Britain's best-known daytime television programmes, was taken off-air indefinitely after a guest died a week after appearing on the talk show.

But a notable blue-chip gainer was British Gas owner **Centrica**, whichadded three per cent after maintaining its annual operating cash flow and net debt forecast and as defensive stocks were in demand.

ITV skidded as it revealed The Jeremy Kyle Show would be suspended

Metro Bank, which has lost more than two-thirds of its value this year, fell 11 per cent to hit another all-time low on the mid-cap index.

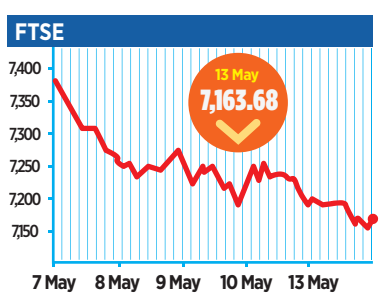
It said on Friday its plan to raise equity was well advanced, while a Financial Times report on Sunday said it was looking to sell loans that were hit by an accounting error.

TOP RISERS

1. **Centrica** Up 3.02 per cent
2. **National Grid** Up 1.69 per cent
3. **Compass Group** Up 1.38 per cent

TOP FALLERS

1. **ITV** Down 6.33 per cent
2. **TUI** Down 5.65 per cent
3. **Vodafone Group** Down 5.19 per cent



BEST OF THE BROKERS

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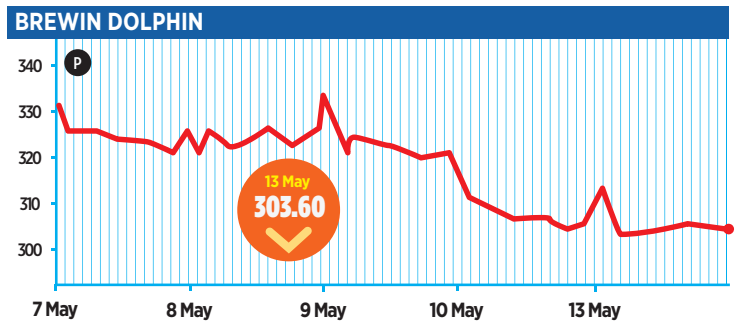
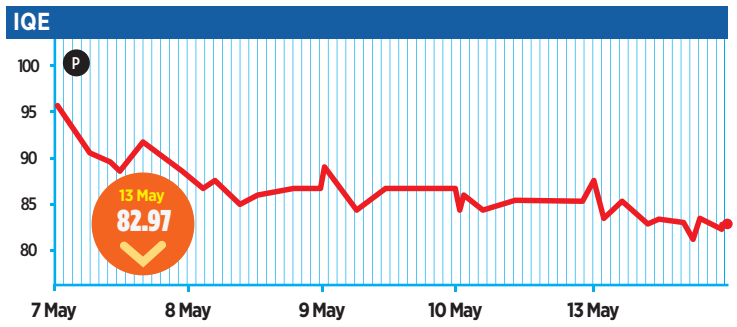
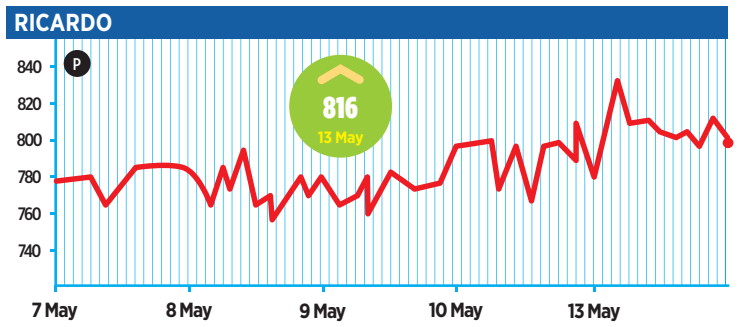


It's smooth swimming for UK investment management giant Brewin Dolphin after a "significant, strategic, accretive acquisition in Ireland," according to analysts at brokers Liberum. The firm agreed to buy Investec's Irish wealth arm for €44m (£38). Investec said the sale was due to Britain's exit from the European Union causing it to change its business model, but Liberum are positive about Brewin's acquisition in Ireland. "Discretionary net flows are still running at 4.3 per cent, even in these tough times," Liberum says. It gives a "buy" rating at a target price of 351p.



Semiconductor and technologies company IQE has got a new mega-foundry, and it's mega-good, say analysts at broker Canaccord Genuity. The site in Newport, Wales shows the company's ability to produce large amounts of the sort of materials in smartphones and network infrastructure as demand ramps up. IQE's size increase allows the chip makers they work with to "significantly improve the functionality, efficiency and cost of the end product," the analysts say. Canaccord Genuity leave their "buy" rating on the Welsh company unchanged, with a 130p target price.



Ricardo, the English company that develops engines, vehicle systems, transmissions and more, has started an Aussie adventure. It recently bought Transport Engineering, an Australian railway consultancy, for £29m. Analysts at Peel Hunt say the purchase "is in line with Ricardo's strategy of diversification both geographically and market sector". The acquisition will immediately enhance earnings per share, Peel Hunt says, and provide the company with a strong foothold in the growing Australian railway market. Peel Hunt says "hold" at a target price of 691p.

NEW YORK REPORT

Wall Street shudders as trade tiff rises

WALL Street sank yesterday after China defied Washington by announcing retaliatory tariffs, the latest salvo in the two countries' increasingly belligerent trade war, sending investors fleeing equities for less risky assets.

All three major US indexes lost ground in a widespread sell-off, with the tech-heavy Nasdaq posting its biggest one-day percentage loss this year. The S&P 500 and the Dow both had their largest percentage drop since 3 January.

Investors responded by fleeing equities for safe-haven assets.

US Treasury yields fell to six-week lows, with 10-year yields falling below those of three-month bills, an inversion seen by many as a potential harbinger of recession.

Gold prices rose to a near three-month high.

The CBOE Volatility index, a gauge of investor anxiety, posted its biggest daily point gain so far this year.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 617.38 points, or 2.38 per cent, to 25,324.99, the S&P 500 lost 69.53 points, or 2.41 per cent, to 2,811.87 and the Nasdaq Composite dropped 269.92 points, or 3.41 per cent, to 7,647.02.

Of the 11 major sectors of the S&P 500, only utilities ended the session in the black.

Among stocks particularly vulnerable to US-China tariffs, **Boeing** slid 4.9 per cent and **Caterpillar** fell 4.6 per cent while the Philadelphia Chip index was down 4.7 per cent, posting its biggest percentage drop since 3 January and extending last week's six per cent decline.

Shares of **Apple** sank 5.8 per cent on the double whammy of heightened trade tensions and a decision by the US Supreme Court to allow an antitrust lawsuit accusing the company of monopolizing the iPhone app market.

Uber extended its slide, falling 10.8 per cent on its second day as a publicly traded company following Friday's underwhelming debut.

Ride-hailing peer **Lyft** was also down, dropping 5.8 per cent.

CITY MOVES WHO'S SWITCHING JOBS

AVIVA INVESTORS

Aviva Investors, the global asset management business of Aviva, has announced the addition of Stephanie Niven as a named manager to the Global Equity Endurance Fund. She will work alongside Giles Parkinson, who has been manager of the fund since its launch in November 2016. Stephanie joined Aviva Investors in October 2018 as a portfolio manager in the Global Equities team, having previously worked for six years at Tesco Pension Investment. Prior to Tesco, she worked at Javelin Capital and Goldman Sachs. She reports to Mikhail Zverev, head of global equities. Her arrival was part of a significant expansion of Aviva Investors' equities capabilities following the arrival of David Cumming as chief investment officer, equities, in January 2018. Since then, 15 investment professionals have joined the equities platform, including four to the global equities team.

FREEDOM FINANCE

Fintech platform Freedom Finance has appointed Jake Ranson as chief customer officer to further drive its digital transformation. Jake joins from Equifax where he held the position of chief marketing officer for Europe. Jake will be responsible for furthering Freedom Finance's customer strategy, helping potential borrowers to understand and unlock the power of their personal data to achieve the best possible outcomes for their individual circumstances. He brings significant expertise from the UK's consumer finance market, particularly in creating digital products that make financial decisions engaging and straightforward. Jake, who brings extensive knowledge in commercial strategy, digital innovation, and end-to-end product lifecycle management, will also lead the development and capabilities of Freedom Finance's app

AMUNDI

Amundi has announced the appointment of Richard Deutsch as head of credit research, fixed income. Richard will be based in London. He joins Amundi from HSBC Global Asset Management where he was global head of credit research (2010-2018). He was responsible for the creation and ongoing evolution of the firm's credit research policy and analytical methodology, global sector research groups and supervised the development of the intranet platform for the communication of credit research recommendations. Prior to HSBC Richard ran credit research and the credit trading desk analytical units at BNP Paribas CIB in London (1999-2008). He had previously been European head of the high yield and investment grade fixed income research at Merrill Lynch (1994-1999).

To appear in CITYMOVES please email your career updates and pictures to citymoves@cityam.com

Index	Value	Change
FTSE 100	7163.68	↓ 39.61
FTSE 250	19126.88	↓ 239.92
FTSE ALL SHARE	3929.52	↓ 26.29
DOW JONES	25324.99	↓ 617.38
NASDAQ	7647.02	↓ 269.92
S&P 500	2811.87	↓ 69.53

£/€	1.1542	↓ 0.0021	€/$	1.1236	↑ 0.0001
£/$	1.2966	↓ 0.0034	€/£	0.8664	↑ 0.0020
£/¥	141.75	↓ 1.1812	€/¥	122.79	↓ 0.7571

GILTS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Tsy 3.750 19	100.94	-0.02	104.1	100.9
Tsy 2.000 20	101.52	-0.01	103.0	101.5
Tsy 4.750 20	103.27	-0.03	107.4	103.2
Tsy 3.750 20	103.97	-0.03	107.1	103.9
Tsy 2.500 20	356.12	-0.05	362.3	355.9
Tsy 8.000 21	115.04	-0.05	122.0	114.7
Tsy 4.000 22	109.20	-0.02	112.2	109.0
Tsy 0.500 22	99.29	0.02	99.6	97.5
Tsy 1.875 22	116.10	-0.04	119.2	115.5
Tsy 2.250 23	106.23	0.01	106.8	104.7
Tsy 2.500 24	362.99	-0.04	369.1	357.5
Tsy 0.125 24	112.50	-0.04	114.1	110.9
Tsy 5.000 25	123.54	0.00	125.9	122.1
Tsy 4.250 27	126.84	-0.05	128.3	122.6
Tsy 1.250 27	132.83	-0.18	135.6	128.4
Tsy 6.000 28	144.82	-0.06	146.6	140.5
Tsy 0.125 29	124.76	-0.20	127.6	118.7
Tsy 4.750 30	138.32	-0.07	140.2	132.1
Tsy 4.125 30	371.58	-0.15	379.4	354.8
Tsy 4.250 32	135.18	-0.11	137.4	128.5
Tsy 1.250 32	152.19	-0.22	156.9	144.1
Tsy 0.125 36	143.69	-0.24	149.8	133.4
Tsy 4.250 36	141.15	-0.14	144.0	133.1
Tsy 4.750 38	154.23	-0.18	157.8	144.9
Tsy 0.625 40	164.52	-0.37	172.7	152.8
Tsy 4.500 42	156.49	-0.22	161.0	145.9
Tsy 3.500 45	138.57	-0.26	143.0	128.0
Tsy 4.250 46	157.32	-0.26	162.7	145.7
Tsy 4.025 49	162.93	-0.29	169.0	150.0
Tsy 0.500 50	193.01	-0.58	207.7	173.7
Tsy 0.250 52	189.24	-0.63	204.9	168.8

AEROSPACE & DEFENCE

	Price	Chg	High	Low
BAE Systems	461.1	-8.2	676.4	445.5
Cobham	113.2	-1.2	131.7	96.8
Meggitt	533.6	-1.2	572.0	458.0
QinetiQ Group	297.0	-3.2	311.4	235.0
Rolls-Royce Holdi	897.8	-20.8	1094.0	759.2
Senior	226.2	-2.6	334.4	185.4
Ultra Electronics	1612.0	-26.0	1743.0	1232.0

BANKS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Bank of Georgia G	1684.0	-16.0	3444.0	1310.0
Barclays	155.1	-2.4	214.5	146.1
Close Brothers Gr	1505.0	-21.0	1660.0	1406.0
CYBG	184.7	-5.3	364.2	173.9
HSBC Holdings	650.0	-2.0	745.7	600.8
Lloyds Banking Gr	59.8	-1.3	67.1	50.0
Metro Bank	475.0	-58.5	3436.0	475.0
Royal Bank of Sco	226.3	-6.6	296.0	203.0
Standard Chartere	668.2	-11.6	770.3	519.8
TBC Bank Group	1660.0	-40.0	1788.0	1290.0

BEVERAGES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Barr (A.G.)	836.0	15.0	852.0	665.0
Britvic	901.5	-6.5	956.0	745.0
Coca-Cola HBC AG	2710.0	-22.0	2801.0	2244.0
Diageo	3254.0	8.5	3268.8	2523.5

CHEMICALS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Croda Internation	5010.0	-60.0	5447.7	4576.0
Elementis	151.5	-3.9	279.1	150.7
Johnson Matthey	3065.0	-94.0	3823.0	2620.0
Sirius Minerals	17.2	-2.1	38.5	15.2
Synthomer	394.2	-5.4	575.5	347.4
Victrex plc	2060.0	-160.0	3408.0	2060.0

CONSTRUCTION & MATERIALS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Balfour Beatty	239.4	-3.4	311.1	230.6
CRH	2430.0	-25.0	2857.0	1971.5
Galliford Try	545.0	-6.5	1104.0	512.0
Ibstock	245.4	-3.4	300.2	193.1
Kier Group	321.8	-9.2	1072.1	316.0
Marshalls	641.0	-4.5	657.0	399.8
Polypipe Group	420.2	-3.6	439.6	307.8

ELECTRICITY

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Contour Global	202.5	-1.0	252.0	150.1
Drax Group	328.4	2.2	427.2	318.2
SSE	1115.0	2.5	1440.5	1032.5

ELECTRONIC & ELECTRICAL EQ.

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Halma	1736.5	-19.5	1803.0	1237.0
Morgan Advanced M	257.0	-1.8	363.0	237.0
Renishaw	4134.0	-146.0	5685.0	3670.0
Spectris	2537.0	-87.0	2908.0	1966.5

EQUITY INVESTMENT INSTRUM.

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Aberforth Smaller	1266.0	-14.0	1442.0	1120.0
Alliance Trust	753.0	-8.0	789.0	672.0
Apax Global Alpha	149.0	-1.0	153.0	127.0
Baillie Gifford J	759.0	-7.0	869.0	663.0
Bankers Inv Trust	868.0	-8.0	914.0	766.0
BBGI SICAV S.A. (	159.0	-0.5	168.0	130.5
BlackRock Smaller	1450.0	-10.0	1600.0	1160.0
BMO Global Smalle	1302.0	-16.0	1495.0	1220.0
British Empire Tr	717.0	-5.0	767.0	660.0
Caledonia Investm	2990.0	-40.0	3060.0	2650.0
City of London In	407.0	-2.5	442.5	376.0
Edinburgh Inv Tru	602.0	-8.0	712.0	588.0
F&C Investment Tr	679.0	-4.0	741.0	616.0
Fidelity China Sp	218.0	-7.0	268.0	182.4
Fidelity European	225.5	-2.0	239.0	202.0
Fidelity Special	254.0	-5.0	280.0	220.0
Finsbury Growth &	867.0	-10.0	881.0	740.0
GCP Infrastructur	127.8	-0.4	130.8	119.0
Genesis Emerging	698.0	-19.0	739.0	615.0
Greencoat UK Wind	136.4	-1.0	143.2	118.4
HarbourVest Globa	1526.0	-4.0	1546.0	1220.0
Herald Investment	1334.0	-22.0	1370.0	1055.0
HGCapital Trust	2135.0	-5.0	2170.0	1750.0
HICL Infrastructu	163.6	-1.8	170.1	140.0
International Pub	161.2	-0.6	163.0	141.4
JPMorgan American	436.5	-3.5	472.0	386.5
JPMorgan Emerging	934.0	-11.0	972.0	759.0
JPMorgan Indian I	692.0	-15.0	734.0	566.0
JPMorgan Japanese	416.0	-8.0	472.0	367.0
Jupiter European	777.0	-6.0	895.0	666.0
Law Debenture Cor	596.0	-4.0	636.0	534.0
Mercantile Invest	207.1	-1.9	226.0	168.0
Monks Inv Trust	846.0	-9.0	891.0	710.0
Murray Internatio	1126.0	-6.0	1208.0	1056.0
NB Global Floatin	90.2	0.2	94.5	87.6
NextEnergy Solar	118.5	-0.5	124.5	107.5
Pantheon Internat	2155.0	-15.0	2200.0	1955.0
Perpetual Income	319.5	-4.5	375.0	301.5
Pershing Square H	1324.0	-6.0	1398.0	962.0
Personal Assets T	40600.0	50.0	40800.0	38900.0
Polar Capital Tec	1288.0	-14.0	1386.0	1066.0
RIT Capital Partn	2035.0	-10.0	2130.0	1892.0
Riverstone Energy	908.0	-20.0	1298.0	908.0
Schroder Asia Pac	436.5	-8.0	481.0	379.0
Scottish Inv Trus	769.0	-9.0	902.0	748.0
Scottish Mortgage	505.0	-9.0	568.3	441.4
Sequoia Economic	111.6	-0.2	114.2	106.0
Smithson Investme	1164.0	-16.0	1222.0	1000.2
Syncona Limited N	258.0	4.0	302.5	211.0
Temple Bar Inv Tr	1280.0	-12.0	1366.0	1116.0
Templeton Emergin	739.0	-11.0	792.0	649.0
The Renewables In	125.0	0.2	125.6	104.3
TR Property Inv T	401.5	-1.5	433.5	353.5
Vietnam Enterpris	421.5	-3.0	472.0	390.0
VinaCapital Vietn	328.5	-1.5	350.0	306.0
Witan Inv Trust	1038.0	-10.0	1138.0	948.0
Woodford Patient	79.3	-0.7	91.0	73.3
Worldwide Healthc	2495.0	-25.0	2915.0	2325.0

FINANCIAL SERVICES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
3i Group	1032.5	-10.0	1088.5	756.2
3i Infrastructure	280.0	0.0	288.5	221.0
AJ Bell	445.0	-28.0	477.0	220.0
Allied Minds	58.8	0.8	121.6	37.3
Amigo Holdings	225.0	1.0	310.0	154.5
Arrow Global Grou	191.0	-0.1	335.5	167.2
ASA International	406.0	-4.0	510.0	336.0
Ashmore Group	450.0	-4.8	488.0	337.0
Brewin Dolphin Ho	304.8	-1.2	388.0	295.4
Charter Court Fin	349.0	-2.0	375.0	228.8
City of London In	412.0	7.0	440.0	360.0
CMC Markets	78.9	1.5	206.0	76.0
Coats Group	82.2	-0.8	91.3	69.8
Georgia Capital	985.0	-14.0	1260.0	959.0
Hargreaves Lansdo	2252.0	-46.0	2321.0	1633.0
IG Group Holdings	495.7	-1.8	954.5	491.1
IntegraFin Holdin	392.0	6.2	401.0	269.0
Intermediate Capi	1149.0	-20.0	1203.0	899.0
International Per	163.0	-2.0	248.8	161.2
Investec	471.7	-5.7	594.8	423.4
IP Group	90.6	-2.2	142.8	87.8
John Laing Group	376.4	-1.6	402.0	264.2
JTC	400.0	-5.0	410.0	287.0
Jupiter Fund Mana	351.3	-6.5	488.0	287.6
Liontrust Asset M	662.0	-4.0	688.0	532.0
LMS Capital	50.4	-0.1	53.5	44.0
London Finance &	40.5	0.0	45.5	39.5
London Stock Exch	5050.0	-22.0	5186.0	3867.0
Man Group	144.0	-7.8	196.3	126.8
OneSavings Bank	426.0	-3.0	449.6	330.0
Paragon Banking G	463.0	0.8	552.5	379.2
Plus500 Ltd (DI)	561.0	4.4	2040.0	495.0
Provident Financi	479.8	-24.4	692.6	479.8
Quilter	141.2	-2.6	156.6	110.6
Rathbone Brothers	2325.0	-10.0	2652.0	2198.0
Real Estate Credi	174.0	0.5	175.5	163.0
Record	31.0	0.2	47.0	27.3
River and Mercant	251.0	-2.5	330.0	212.0
S&U	2160.0	-10.0	2790.0	1767.5
Sanne Group	655.0	2.0	724.0	450.0
Schroders	3007.0	-69.0	3488.0	2334.0
Standard Life Abe	258.0	-8.0	423.9	224.9
TP ICAP	271.0	-3.4	441.9	259.7
VPC Specialty Len	72.2	-0.8	84.4	71.4
Walker Crips Grou	26.0	1.0	39.0	24.0
XPS Pensions Grou	163.0	-1.0	192.0	132.0

FIXED LINE TELECOMS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
BT Group	205.3	-3.5	264.7	202.4
TalkTalk Telecom	123.0	-2.2	137.0	96.6
Telecom Plus	1446.0	10.0	1524.0	1010.0

FOOD & DRUG RETAILERS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Greggs	1790.0	-3.0	1861.0	942.0
Morrison (Wm) Sup	211.7	-3.7	269.4	210.6
Ocado Group	1319.5	-19.5	1435.0	545.2
Sainsbury (J)	205.5	-6.2	341.5	203.1
SSP Group	691.0	7.0	744.4	615.1
Tesco	237.8	-4.3	266.2	189.6
UDG Healthcare Pu	656.5	-7.5	940.0	551.0

FOOD PRODUCERS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Associated Britis	2488.0	-22.0	2836.0	2041.0
Bakkavor Group	125.0	-0.2	206.0	113.0
Cranswick	2740.0	-18.0	3460.0	2472.0
Greencore Group	225.6	-0.4	230.0	155.3
Hilton Food Group	1040.0	24.0	1046.0	884.0
Tate & Lyle	774.0	-0.4	782.4	597.0
Unilever	4649.5	40.0	4662.0	3931.0

FORESTRY & PAPER

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Mondi	1643.5	-14.0	2236.0	1584.0

GAS, WATER & MULTIUTILITIES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Centrica	95.4	2.8	163.7	92.6
National Grid	849.6	14.1	889.2	748.7
Pennon Group	734.0	10.6	812.4	684.2
Severn Trent	1982.5	21.0	2091.0	1770.0
United Utilities	803.6	6.4	873.6	682.4

GENERAL INDUSTRIALS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
RPC Group	789.8	-0.4	834.8	632.2
Smith (DS)	332.8	-6.8	538.9	292.2
Smiths Group	1467.5	-31.0	1801.0	1279.5
Smurfit Kappa Gro	2166.0	-70.0	3292.0	1934.0
Vesuvius	552.5	-10.5	662.0	473.2

GENERAL RETAILERS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Auto Trader Group	569.0	-3.2	580.4	351.2
B&M European Valu	380.6	-5.7	426.3	278.6
Card Factory	185.0	-3.4	228.8	162.6
Dixons Carphone	124.9	-3.8	234.7	116.2
Dunelm Group	843.5	-3.5	912.5	482.8
Inchcape	588.0	-8.5	799.0	486.6
JD Sports Fashion	604.6	-15.4	635.6	318.5
Just Eat	652.6	-12.4	883.4	533.8
Kingfisher	239.9	-3.1	318.1	205.4
Marks & Spencer G	270.7	-0.5	314.5	242.4
Next	5604.0	-22.0	6202.0	3991.0
Pets at Home Grou	148.5	-4.2	163.2	110.0
Saga	52.8	-1.0	138.7	52.3
Sports Direct Int	287.2	-7.2	436.1	233.2
Ted Baker	1488.0	-76.0	2690.0	1420.0
Vivo Energy	124.8	1.6	185.0	96.0
WH Smith	2004.0	-10.0	2186.0	1697.0

HEALTH CARE EQUIPMETN & S.

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Assura	60.1	0.0	60.5	52.4
Convatec Group	141.5	-5.1	239.0	118.6
Mediclinic Intern	335.0	-9.0	704.6	301.3
NMC Health	2550.0	-88.0	4120.0	2192.0
Smith & Nephew	1612.0	0.0	1623.5	1258.0

HHOLD GDS & HOME CONSTR.

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Barratt Developme	597.6	-4.2	625.8	434.0
Bellway	2939.0	-26.0	3433.0	2419.0
Berkeley Group Ho	3662.0	-48.0	4321.0	3226.0
Bovis Homes Group	1042.0	-16.0	1301.5	828.0
Countryside Prope	312.8	-6.2	384.0	270.0
Crest Nicholson H	362.4	-8.6	493.8	296.4
McCarthy & Stone	133.4	-0.7	142.4	97.5
Persimmon	2060.0	-35.0	2880.0	1859.5
Reckitt Benckiser	6161.0	16.0	7155.0	5593.0
Redrow	573.0	-5.0	647.0	460.8
Taylor Wimpey	175.5	-1.8	205.0	129.3

INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Bodycote	800.5	-12.5	1055.0	676.0
Hill & Smith Hold	1246.0	-10.0	1523.0	902.5
IMI	976.2	-6.4	1242.0	870.0
Melrose Industrie	176.0	-6.3	247.0	146.3
RHI Magnesita N.V	4750.0	-6.0	5295.0	3318.0
Rotork	279.8	-17.6	361.4	235.7
Spirax-Sarco Engi	8060.0	-65.0	8335.0	5900.0
Weir Group	1546.5	-56.5	2325.0	1240.0

INDUSTRIAL METALS & MINING

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Evraz	556.4	-30.0	669.0	442.1
Ferrexpo	209.4	-4.8	301.3	143.5

INDUSTRIAL TRANSPORTATION

	Price	Chg	High	Low
BBA Aviation	271.6	-0.2	350.0	207.0
Clarkson	2300.0	-95.0	2900.0	1878.0
Fisher (James) &	1964.0	-36.0	2260.0	1600.0
Royal Mail	239.5	-4.3	631.0	234.1
Stobart Group Ltd	126.0	-15.0	266.5	125.0

NON LIFE INSURANCE

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Admiral Group	2028.0	-29.0	2281.0	1870.0
Beazley	529.5	-4.0	619.5	492.6
Direct Line Insur	311.0	-2.1	376.2	304.9
Hastings Group Ho	181.6	-2.7	274.2	174.0
Hiscox Limited (D	1553.0	-12.0	1711.0	1418.0
Lancashire Holdin	654.5	3.0	695.0	530.0
RSA Insurance Gro	551.2	-3.0	681.8	496.6
Sabre Insurance G	272.0	-1.0	294.0	241.0

LIFE INSURANCE

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Aviva	407.6	-7.5	552.0	364.6
Just Group	64.3	-2.5	150.6	58.3
Legal & General G	267.4	-3.6	291.2	223.7
Phoenix Group Hol	669.4	-8.4	724.8	544.0
Prudential	1590.5	-21.5	1954.5	1340.0
St James's Place	1085.0	-16.0	1240.5	914.0

MEDIA

	Price	Chg	High	Low
4Imprint Group	2640.0	110.0	2670.0	1715.0
Ascential	354.0	4.8	465.0	337.2
Bloomsbury Publis	240.0	8.0	254.0	179.8
Centaur Media	55.5	2.3	55.8	34.7
Entertainment One	444.4	-9.0	483.4	278.8
Euromoney Institu	1282.0	-6.0	1450.0	1132.0
Gocompare.com Gro	82.5	-1.2	139.0	64.6
Haynes Publishing	199.0	0.0	246.0	160.0
Huntsworth	91.2	-2.8	139.0	81.0
Informa	754.4	4.4	859.0	605.8
ITE Group	73.0	-2.0	92.9	56.3
ITV	111.8	-7.6	180.4	111.8
Moneysupermarket.	353.9	-4.1	372.1	264.0
Pearson	797.4	-5.0	1027.5	777.6
Reach	76.0	-3.1	87.0	54.6
Relx plc	1740.0	-2.0	1769.5	1491.5
Rightmove	548.7	-8.3	559.7	420.9
STV Group	372.5	2.5	458.0	318.0
Tarsus Group	312.0	-3.0	320.0	243.0
WPP	939.8	-22.8	1360.5	800.4

MINING

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Acacia Mining	148.2	-1.3	256.6	96.1
Anglo American	1864.0	-28.8	2226.0	1464.6
Antofagasta	803.2	-32.4	1149.0	727.2
BHP Group	1713.2	-29.8	1944.2	1490.6
Centamin (DI)	87.6	-1.9	164.6	79.8
Fresnillo	726.0	1.2	1340.0	712.6
Glencore	271.7	-9.2	400.4	269.1
Hochschild Mining	170.5	-0.5	222.7	149.1
Kaz Minerals	549.0	-29.2	1076.0	436.7
Polymetal Interna	772.6	-3.8	894.0	597.2
Rio Tinto	4368.0	-44.0	4771.5	3486.0

MOBILE TELECOMS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Inmarsat	532.4	-3.6	632.2	356.6
Vodafone Group	131.8	-7.2	210.1	131.3

OIL & GAS PRODUCERS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
BP	526.3	2.1	598.3	485.9
Cairn Energy	156.3	-4.5	267.6	140.0
Energean Oil & Ga	802.0	2.0	846.0	485.0
Premier Oil	86.4	-1.8	143.6	55.6
Royal Dutch Shell	2447.5	21.0	2748.5	2213.0
Royal Dutch Shell	2458.0	25.0	2841.0	2227.0
Tullow Oil	213.8	0.7	276.0	165.2

OIL EQUIPMENT & SERVICES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Hunting	540.5	2.0	914.0	453.6
Petrofac Ltd.	415.5	-3.2	663.4	381.5
Wood Group (John)	444.6	-2.7	796.4	438.0

PERSONAL GOODS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Burberry Group	1864.0	-57.5	2325.0	1623.5
PZ Cussons	195.6	1.6	252.8	178.6

PHARMACEUTICALS & BIOTECH

	Price	Chg	High	Low
AstraZeneca	5676.0	-16.0	6525.0	5182.0
BTG	834.0	-0.5	853.0	475.0
Dechra Pharmaceut	2644.0	-18.0	3168.0	2014.0
Genus	2400.0	-18.0	2992.0	2098.0
GlaxoSmithKline	1512.4	10.4	1621.6	1418.0
Hikma Pharmaceuti	1744.5	-6.0	2025.0	1314.5
Indivior	43.2	0.1	496.2	30.1

REAL ESTATE INVEST. & SERV.

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Capital & Countie	236.3	-4.9	308.9	226.3
CLS Holdings	227.5	-2.0	255.0	195.4
Daejan Holdings	5780.0	-40.0	6400.0	5600.0
F&C Commercial Pr	117.8	-2.4	155.0	117.0
Grainger	255.2	0.8	291.6	205.8
NewRiver REIT	227.0	-5.0	297.5	195.0
Safestore Holding	639.0	-2.0	657.0	499.4
Savills	864.0	-8.0	975.5	678.5
St. Modwen Proper	418.0	0.5	425.2	365.0
UK Commercial Pro	89.6	0.2	90.6	81.0

REAL ESTATE INVEST. TRUSTS

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Big Yellow Group	1046.0	-10.0	1063.0	852.5
British Land Comp	563.6	-6.4	697.0	523.0
Civitas Social Ho	87.7	0.1	114.0	84.2
Derwent London	3266.0	-22.0	3300.0	2761.0
Great Portland Es	755.0	-1.0	773.6	652.3
Hammerson	292.8	-7.0	561.2	291.7
Intu Properties	93.7	-3.7	207.3	91.1
Land Securities G	892.2	-11.0	977.7	791.8
LondonMetric Prop	202.8	-1.0	205.8	172.7
Primary Health Pr	132.2	-0.6	133.2	106.4
SEGRO	687.2	1.2	689.0	585.2
Shaftesbury	870.0	-8.0	1015.0	817.0
Tritax Big Box Re	147.5	-0.1	155.7	129.0
Unite Group	960.5	7.5	960.5	797.5
Workspace Group	965.5	-9.0	1165.0	789.5

SOFTWARE & COMPUTER SERV.

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Avast	298.0	-0.4	313.4	208.2
Aveva Group	3198.0	-38.0	3410.0	2284.0
Computacenter	1204.0	-26.0	1620.0	952.0
FDM Group (Holdin	969.0	-20.0	1128.0	734.0
Micro Focus Inter	1746.6	-38.4	2491.6	1427.2
Playtech	389.3	-7.6	826.6	361.8
Sage Group	704.2	-10.8	731.0	525.6
Softcat	885.0	-15.5	932.5	565.0
Sophos Group	327.5	-10.5	639.0	298.2

SUPPORT SERVICES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Aggreko	808.4	-7.4	882.0	641.8
Ashtead Group	1984.0	-44.0	2438.0	1586.5
BCA Marketplace	189.3	0.8	242.0	181.0
Bunzl	2100.0	-25.0	2551.0	2100.0
Capita	115.6	-3.2	169.1	102.3
DCC	6486.0	-104.0	7565.0	5555.0
Diploma	1519.0	-11.0	1634.0	1150.0
Electrocomponents	604.6	-12.8	761.6	480.0
Equiniti Group	225.0	-0.4	282.0	186.2
Essentra	400.2	-9.8	507.0	325.4
Experian	2174.0	-9.0	2247.0	1709.0
Ferguson	5436.0	-78.0	6556.0	4749.0
G4S	210.2	-0.1	282.0	175.9
Grafton Group Uni	895.0	-13.0	908.0	630.0
Hays	144.9	-2.3	212.0	135.7
Homeserve	1075.0	4.0	1166.0	757.0
Howden Joinery Gr	518.0	-1.2	539.0	416.4
Intertek Group	4989.0	-135.0	6014.0	4387.0
Pagegroup	514.5	-8.0	623.5	432.2
Rentokil Initial	381.6	-0.9	390.0	284.8
Robert Walters	590.0	2.0	475.0	814.0
Serco Group	120.3	-1.8	136.5	84.1
SIG	140.3	-3.2	153.0	102.2
Travis Perkins	1365.0	-15.5	1475.5	970.0
Spirent Communica	152.4	-1.6	166.2	110.6

TOBACCO

	Price	Chg	High	Low
British American	2865.0	26.0	4222.5	2375.0
Imperial Brands	2171.5	7.0	2987.5	2158.0

TRAVEL & LEISURE

	Price	Chg	High	Low
888 Holdings	133.8	-4.3	324.8	133.8
Carnival	3911.0	-38.0	5000.0	3659.0
Cineworld Group	294.7	-18.6	323.6	245.0
Compass Group	1730.5	23.5	1825.0	1483.0
Domino's Pizza Gr	256.7	-3.5	386.9	224.4
easyJet	1016.5	-17.5	1796.0	1009.0
EI Group	210.0	-0.2	223.8	125.6
FirstGroup	115.2	-1.2	117.6	79.3
Go-Ahead Group	1897.0	-1.0	2078.0	1388.0
Greene King	599.6	0.2	704.4	472.8
GVC Holdings	575.8	-21.4	1170.0	507.5
InterContinental	4828.0	-22.0	5055.0	3958.4
International Con	504.0	5.4	726.6	489.3
Merlin Entertainm	363.1	-6.2	410.5	307.1
Millennium & Copt	446.0	2.0	570.0	436.0
Mitchells & Butle	238.0	-6.5	291.4	238.0
National Express	407.0	-3.8	433.2	361.4
Paddy Power Betfa	5884.0	-94.0	9110.0	5525.0
Rank Group	157.4	-1.4	194.0	135.0
Restaurant Group	135.6	-3.4	237.1	111.9
Stagecoach Group	134.5	0.3	177.0	115.5
TUI AG Reg Shs (D	781.0	-46.8	1810.5	713.2
Wetherspoon (J.D.	1290.0	-15.0	1375.0	1066.0
Whitbread	4493.0	-27.0	5114.0	3883.0
William Hill	136.8	-5.9	332.9	136.3
Wizz Air Holdings	3327.0	-24.0	3797.0	2329.0

AIM 50

	Price	Chg	High	Low
Abcam	1366.0	-5.0	1539.0	1017.0
Advanced Medical	327.5	-3.0	370.0	260.0
Alliance Pharma	79.1	-1.3	102.0	60.0
ASOS	3652.0	-93.0	6834.0	2128.0
Blue Prism Group	1723.0	11.0	2575.0	1040.0
Camellia	10800.0	-50.0	12725.0	9100.0
CareTech Holding	354.0	-6.0	410.0	325.0
Central Asia Meta	222.5	-6.0	296.0	203.0
Clinigen Group	982.5	-8.0	1043.0	721.0
CVS Group	643.0	-12.0	1163.0	395.0
Dart Group	927.0	-8.5	1017.0	740.0
Diversified Gas &	123.0	0.0	130.0	92.0
Draper Esprit	469.0	-5.0	645.0	437.0
Eland Oil & Gas	123.8	1.8	137.5	97.0
EMIS Group	1144.0	-6.0	1164.0	860.0
Fevertree Drinks	2972.0	-78.0	3956.0	2131.0
First Derivatives	3025.0	-80.0	4680.0	2050.0
Frontier Developm	1080.0	-24.0	1825.0	740.0
Gamma Communicati	1070.0	-20.0	1130.0	688.0
GB Group	584.0	-5.0	630.0	410.5
Gooch & Housego	1380.0	10.0	1880.0	1095.0
Hurricane Energy	50.6	3.7	60.1	39.0
Iomart Group	352.0	-7.0	475.0	308.0
IQE	83.0	-3.9	129.8	56.3
James Halstead	510.0	0.0	524.0	367.0
Johnson Service G	148.6	0.6	153.0	113.6
Keywords Studios	1586.0	-18.0	2065.0	900.0
Learning Technolo	82.0	-1.7	166.5	62.2
M&C Saatchi	371.0	-4.0	410.0	270.0
M. P. Evans Group	684.0	-5.0	800.0	637.0
Majestic Wine	256.0	-0.5	485.0	219.0
Midwich Group	631.0	8.0	685.0	491.5
Mortgage Advice B	582.0	-2.0	720.0	490.0
Next Fifteen Comm	576.0	-14.0	600.0	455.0
Nichols	1785.0	-55.0	1840.0	1240.0
Numis Corporation	262.0	0.5	440.0	221.5
Polar Capital Hol	590.0	-6.0	732.0	448.0
Purplebricks Grou	105.2	-2.8	410.0	105.2
Redde	120.0	1.6	196.0	90.0
Renew Holdings	400.5	-1.0	410.0	333.0
RWS Holdings	608.0	-2.0	616.0	343.5
Scapa Group	362.0	-5.0	482.6	275.8
Secure Income Rei	409.0	1.0	414.0	371.0
Serica Energy	117.2	-3.2	142.0	57.4
Smart Metering Sy	515.0	-8.0	830.0	480.0
Staffline Group	840.0	-34.0	1340.0	670.0
Telford Homes	272.0	-3.0	471.5	266.0
Thorpe (F.W.)	314.0	2.0	340.0	248.0
Watkin Jones	225.0	0.5	232.5	192.2
Young & Co's Brew	1825.0	5.0	1875.0	1322.5
Young & Co's Brew	1155.0	-5.0	1325.0	1030.0

WebfinancialGroup

http://corporate.webfg.com
mailto:
globaltechsales@webfg.com

MAIN CHANGES UK 350

Risers ↑	%	Fallers ↓	%
Funding Circle Hol 253.0	3.1	Metro Bank 475.0	-11.0
Centrica 95.4	3.0	Sirius Minerals 17.2	-10.8
Hilton Food Group 1040.0	2.4	Stobart Group Ltd. 126.0	-10.6
Barr (A.G.) 836.0	1.8	Victrex plc 2060.0	-7.2
National Grid 849.6	1.7	ITV 111.8	-6.3
IntegraFin Holding 392.0	1.6	Cineworld Group 294.7	-5.9
Syncona Limited NP 258.0	1.6	Rotork 279.8	-5.9
Pennon Group 734.0	1.5	AJ Bell 445.0	-5.9
Compass Group 1730.5	1.4	TUI AG Reg Shs (DI) 781.0	-5.7
Ascential 354.0	1.4	Vodafone Group 131.8	-5.2

EU SHARES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
AB INBEV	73.26	-0.85	91.14	56.32
ADIDAS N	244.00	-9.05	257.55	178.30
AIR LIQUIDE	113.30	-0.25	119.10	101.85
AIRBUS BR	115.52	-1.98	124.00	77.50
ALLIANZ	195.80	-3.82	216.20	170.38
AMADEUS IT GRP BR-A	65.58	-0.76	82.20	58.06
ASML HLDG	171.00	-4.32	189.50	130.12
AXA	21.96	-0.15	23.90	18.40
BANCO SANTANDER	4.06	-0.06	5.49	3.80
BASF N	63.16	-2.48	90.00	57.26
BAYER N	56.66	-1.34	104.04	54.81
BBVA	4.98	-0.10	6.89	4.48
BMW	68.46	-1.36	93.44	67.10
BNP PARIBAS BR-A	44.78	-0.71	63.37	38.14
CRH PLC	28.05	-0.48	34.87	26.53
DAIMLER N	52.18	-2.56	68.57	44.54
DANONE	69.68	-0.14	72.54	59.72
DEUTSCHE POST N	28.39	-0.64	34.74	23.43
DEUTSCHE TELEKOM N	14.65	-0.30	15.88	13.09
ENEL N	5.51	-0.04	5.74	4.22
ENGIE	13.20	0.08	14.79	11.31
ENI N	14.42	0.16	16.89	13.42
ESSILORLUXOTT	110.35	0.15	129.55	95.50
FRESENIUS	49.11	-1.08	71.10	38.50
IBERDROLA	8.06	0.07	8.20	5.77
INDITEX	24.95	-0.24	30.30	21.85
ING GROUP	10.24	-0.21	13.58	9.09
INTESA SANPAOLO N	2.12	-0.04	3.18	1.86
KERING	491.00	-16.10	539.80	351.70
KON AH DEL BR	20.56	-0.03	24.01	18.60
L'OREAL	235.70	0.70	245.80	182.00
LINDE	158.85	-0.15	0.00	0.00
LVMH	323.75	-9.80	355.05	242.30
MUENCHENER RUECKV N	207.80	-3.20	224.00	175.00
NOKIA	4.25	-0.07	5.76	4.23
ORANGE	13.52	-0.21	15.25	13.15
ROY.PHILIPS	35.75	-1.43	40.01	29.05
SAFRAN	120.20	-2.85	130.00	97.08
SANOFI	72.96	0.24	80.44	63.25
SAP I	109.42	-1.96	117.02	84.02
SCHNEIDER EL	70.02	-1.28	78.66	57.54
SIEMENS N	104.54	-2.60	121.40	90.90
SOCIETE GENERALE	25.51	-0.58	43.01	23.56
TELEFONICA	7.02	-0.08	8.39	6.59
TOTAL	46.87	-0.01	55.39	44.23
UNILEVER CERT	53.10	0.20	54.05	45.12
VINCI	85.08	-0.76	90.14	69.98
VIVENDI	24.62	-0.14	26.69	20.40
VOLKSWAGEN VZ I	147.56	-4.74	176.50	131.02

COMMODITIES

Gold	1287.10	1.00
Silver	14.80	-0.02
Brent Crude	70.62	0.23
Krugerrand	1307.25	1.90
Palladium	1309.00	9.00
Platinum	858.00	2.00
Tin Cash Official	19625.00	25.00
Lead Cash Official	1858.50	-36.50
Zinc Cash Official	2725.00	25.00
Copper Cash Official	6103.50	-6.00
Aluminium Cash Official	1766.00	14.00
Nickel Cash Official	11710.00	150.00
Aluminium Alloy Cash Official	1300.00	0.00
Cocoa Futures	2333.00	7.00
Coffee 'C' Futures	90.03	-0.77
Feed Wheat Futures	141.00	-3.20
Soybeans Futures Continuation Contract	786.40	-10.40

CREDIT & RATES

BoE IR Overnight	0.750	0.00
BoE IR 7 days	0.750	0.00
BoE IR 1 month	0.750	0.00
BoE IR 3 months	0.750	0.00
BoE IR 6 months	0.750	0.00
LIBOR Euro - overnight	-0.474	0.00
LIBOR Euro - 12 months	-0.214	0.00
LIBOR USD - overnight	2.356	0.00
LIBOR USD - 12 months	2.693	-0.01
Halifax mortgage rate	3.990	0.00
Euro Base Rate	0.000	0.00
Finance house base rate	1.000	0.00
US Fed funds	1.91	0.00
US long bond yield	2.83	-0.06
Euro Euribor	-0.381	0.00
The vix index	20.55	4.51
The baltic dry index	1013.00	39.00
Markit iBoxx EUR	236.41	-0.07
Markit iBoxx GBP	334.05	-0.40
Markit iBoxx USD	247.56	0.25

WORLD INDICES

	Price	Chg	%chg
FTSE 100	7163.68	-39.61	-0.55
FTSE 250	19126.88	-239.92	-1.24
FTSE All-Share	3929.52	-26.29	-0.66
FTSE AIM All-Share	950.97	-6.36	-0.66
S&P 500	2811.87	-69.53	-2.41
Dow Jones I.A.	25324.99	-617.38	-2.38
Nasdaq Composite	7647.02	-269.92	-3.41
Xetra DAX	11876.65	-183.18	-1.52
CAC 40	5262.57	-64.87	-1.22
Swiss Market Index	9363.18	-109.65	-1.16
ISEQ Overall Index	6151.57	-91.31	-1.46
FTSEurofirst 300	1465.11	-16.32	-1.10
Hang Seng	28550.24	239.17	0.84
Shanghai Composite	2903.71	-35.50	-1.21
STI Index	3234.28	-39.22	-1.20
ASX All Ordinaries	6381.30	-11.80	-0.18

US SHARES

	Price	Chg	High	Low
3M	174.07	-1.79	219.75	172.79
ABBOTT LABORATOR	75.50	-0.95	80.74	60.22
ADOBE	267.70	-10.78	291.71	204.95
ALPHAB NON VTG-C	1132.03	-32.24	1289.27	970.11
ALPHABET-A	1136.59	-31.05	1296.98	977.66
AMAZON.COM	1822.68	-67.30	2050.50	1307.00
AMERICAN EXPRESS	115.90	-2.56	119.66	89.05
APPLE	185.72	-11.46	233.47	142.00
AT&T	30.47	-0.15	34.53	26.80
BANK OF AMERICA	28.25	-1.33	31.91	22.66
BERKSHIRE HATH RG-B	205.01	-4.01	224.07	184.75
BOEING CO	337.37	-17.30	446.01	292.47
CATERPILLAR	125.30	-6.04	161.60	112.06
CHEVRON	120.44	-1.55	131.08	100.22
CISCO SYSTEMS	51.30	-2.06	57.53	40.25
CITIGROUP	64.38	-3.52	75.24	48.42
COCA-COLA CO	48.05	-0.14	50.84	41.45
COMCAST-A	42.28	-0.87	43.96	30.67
DOW	50.95	-2.12	0.00	0.00
EXXON MOBIL	75.71	-0.85	87.36	64.65
FACEBOOK-A	181.54	-6.80	218.62	123.02
GOLDMAN SACHS GR	194.97	-7.08	245.88	151.70
HOME DEPOT	190.34	-4.24	215.43	158.09
IBM	131.42	-3.90	154.36	105.94
INTEL	44.76	-1.44	59.59	42.36
JOHNSON & JOHNSO	137.20	-1.85	148.99	118.62
JPMORGAN CHASE	109.45	-3.06	119.24	91.11
MASTERCARD RG-A	241.38	-6.05	257.43	171.89
MCDONALD'S	199.03	-0.96	200.36	153.13
MERCK	77.17	-1.02	83.85	57.49
MICROSOFT	123.35	-3.78	131.37	93.96
NETFLIX	345.26	-15.78	423.21	231.23
NIKE -B-	82.53	-1.42	90.00	66.53
ORACLE	53.43	-1.22	55.53	42.40
PAYPAL HOLDINGS	106.83	-3.58	113.69	74.66
PEPSICO	118.61	0.56	119.74	101.06
PEPSICO	127.16	-0.85	128.39	96.36
PFIZER	40.57	-0.15	46.47	35.07
PHILIP MRRS INT	83.70	-0.84	92.74	64.67
PROCTER&GAMBLE	106.11	0.10	107.20	72.60
TRAVELERS COS	143.41	-0.55	144.22	111.08
TWITTER	36.59	-1.86	47.79	26.19
UNION PACIFIC	171.79	-4.13	180.02	128.08
UNITEDHEALTH GRO	239.55	-1.04	287.94	208.07
UTD TECHS	131.96	-5.21	144.40	100.48
VERIZON COMM	56.75	-0.16	61.58	47.13
VISA RG-A	157.33	-3.38	165.74	121.60
WALGREENS BOOTS	52.12	-1.30	86.31	51.96
WALMART	99.89	-2.02	106.21	81.78
WALT DISNEY	131.34	-2.70	142.37	98.81
WELLS FARGO	46.33	-0.82	59.53	43.02

OFFICE POLITICS

Turn your workforce into an army unit

There is much that you can learn from the parallels between business and the military

IN TODAY'S business climate, you either embrace technology and establish it into the DNA of your company, or fall behind. However, investing in technology alone is not enough. Companies need to have the right talent to make everything sing.

Effective, sustained technology skill development is key to ensuring that businesses not only keep up but optimise available resources.

Of course, this is all easier said than done. So if you are a business leader looking for inspiration, where do you look for a blueprint?

The military may have the answer. Having spent 14 years as an officer in the British Army, I know first-hand the value of training to support streamlined units that can overcome complex tasks. Importantly, this training is democratised, giving everyone the chance to grow, learn, and succeed.

This becomes a virtuous circle, as units ensure that new recruits are also trained to value learning and moving as one. Combine this approach with strong leadership attributes, and you will create a team ethos to be envied.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING

We have all read online articles about the habits of successful people. Listening and learning feature prominently – and for good reason.

Effective training and repetition instil good habits that increase productivity. Employees that are equipped with the right skills and given clear objectives are better at collaborating as a team. In turn, teams can support each other in working towards the common goal of the entire organisation.

Much like an army company, the workforce becomes more effective and efficient when team members enjoy working as a unit. The end result will be a positive impact on business performance and profit.

For a real life example, consider the digital training programme launched by Marks & Spencer. The retailer is offering data skills development to more than 1,000 retail staff through an 18-month training initiative. Its goal is to create a culture optimised for the digital age, as it is planning to close more than 100 stores and move more of its business online.

Much like an army company, the workforce becomes more effective and efficient when team members enjoy working as a unit

Importantly, it is focused on closing the skills gap of its existing team, rather than relying on recruiting a new one. Much like the military, it knows that it can't just replace its entire unit. Instead, it is using the talent it has but giving them new tools and deploying them to a new theatre.

THE POWER OF LEADERSHIP

In the military, effective leaders are the key difference between success and failure. Although the individual capabilities within the team can remain constant, a less effective leader will prevent the unit from achieving its full potential. Training therefore must go hand-in-hand with leadership that can set businesses on a successful path.

This is never more important than when a skills gap exists, which can only be overcome by measured and accurate management. Well-informed leaders must remain engaged with technological developments and apply what they learn. This is a skill honed by military leaders: being decisive and making the right calls ensures that you emerge ahead of the competition.

NEVER STAND STILL

The military studies strategy in detail and plans for every contingency. History often repeats itself, so there's real value in drawing on past experiences.

This mentality carries over into the business world. A desire to continually seek self-improvement helps to motivate the team and displays commitment – crucial for boosting the performance of your workforce.

You can draw many parallels between the military and business. The qualities they possess can mean the difference between victory and defeat.

Sean Farrington is senior vice president EMEIA for Pluralsight.

ARMY BE THE BEST

LEFT RIGHT, LEFT RIGHT

100% Army Fit
Free

Now that you've adopted a military mindset at work, you could take an army attitude to your health and fitness. This app is a free training tool designed by the British Army to enable new recruits to prep for assessment tests, but even if you have no plans of enlisting, it can help you get fit and create training plans.

COFFEE BREAK

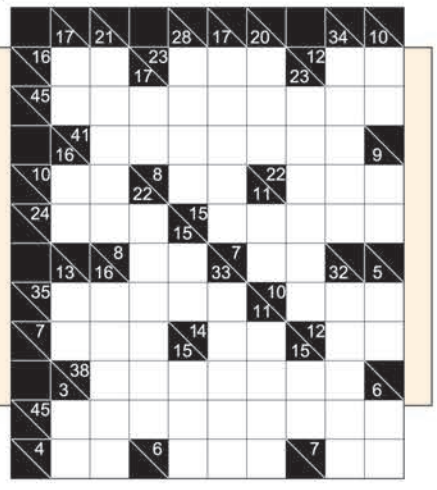
SUDOKU

Place the numbers from 1 to 9 in each empty cell so that each row, each column and each 3x3 block contains all the numbers from 1 to 9 to solve this tricky Sudoku puzzle.

2	8							
			5	4				
3		1	8		7			
				6	9		3	7
		9						5
	7	4						2
		8	4			3		
		3					6	
	6				8		5	

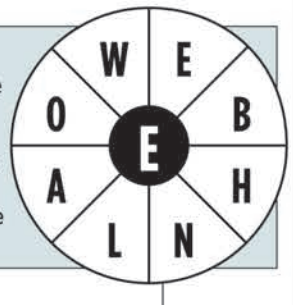
KAKURO

Fill the grid so that each block adds up to the total in the box above or to the left of it.
You can only use the digits 1-9 and you must not use the same digit twice in a block. The same digit may occur more than once in a row or column, but it must be in a separate block.

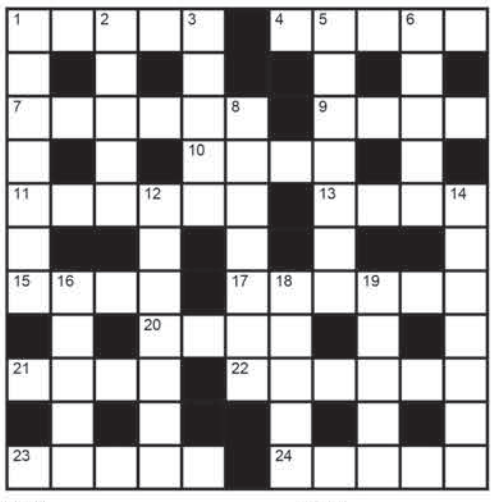


WORDWHEEL

Using only the letters in the Wordwheel, you have ten minutes to find as many words as possible, none of which may be plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. Each word must be of three letters or more, all must contain the central letter and letters can only be used once in every word. There is at least one nine-letter word in the wheel.



QUICK CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1 Saying: "He who pays the ___ calls the tune" (5)
4 Harsh or corrosive in tone (5)
7 Maltreater (6)
9 Group of people working together (4)
10 Obscure (4)
11 So (6)
13 Expression of incredulity (2,2)
15 Public passenger vehicle (4)
17 One who grants a tenancy (6)
20 Tidy (4)
21 Small velvety-furred burrowing mammal (4)
22 Spectres (6)
23 Units of speed used in navigation (5)
24 Lift up (5)

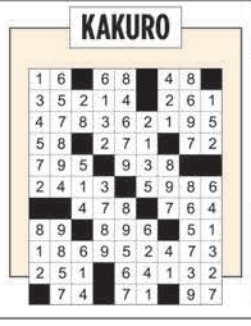
DOWN

1 Keyboard player (7)
2 Weight equivalent to 16 ounces (5)
3 Fasten by passing rope through a hole (5)
5 Short, curved sword (7)
6 Native of Baghdad, for example (5)
8 Danger signal (3,4)
12 Distinguished (7)
14 Predict (7)
16 Type of nut, in a cup-shaped base (5)
18 Liquid used as a solvent (5)
19 Japanese dish (5)

LAST ISSUE'S SOLUTIONS

QUICK CROSSWORD

KAKURO



SUDOKU

4	9	6	7	3	5	1	2	8
7	1	2	9	8	6	5	4	3
3	5	8	2	1	4	9	7	6
9	3	7	8	5	1	4	6	2
6	8	1	4	9	2	7	3	5
5	2	4	6	7	3	8	9	1
1	7	5	3	2	9	6	8	4
8	4	3	1	6	7	2	5	9
2	6	9	5	4	8	3	1	7

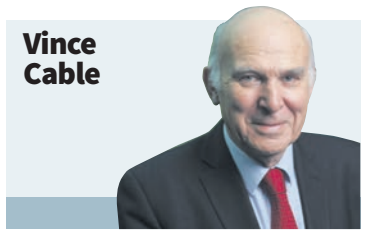
WORDWHEEL

The nine-letter word was **ATONEMENT**

FORUM

EDITED BY RACHEL CUNLIFFE

Could appointing workers to boards fix capitalism's crisis?



Vince Cable

CAPITALISM is being questioned in Britain more intensely than for decades. Some want to destroy it. Others believe that it is the only economic system which works, but want to reform it.

I am in the latter camp.

Part of the debate around Brexit has centred on preserving workers' rights, enshrined in EU law. But rights are just the beginning. To reform the corporate world and restore public trust in business, we need to bring down the barriers between owners of capital and senior management on the one hand, and the workforce on the other.

There are several models of how to do this, with varying degrees of radicalism. First, there's the worker-owned company, along the model of John Lewis or Arup .

This remains a rare species, despite encouragement from the government and relatively favourable tax treatment.

Many firms have share schemes for employees, but they are usually divorced from any meaningful control. When in government, I and my ministerial colleagues introduced one of the biggest worker share schemes, for the Royal Mail. But it did not alter the unionised workforce's hostility to private ownership.

Then there is worker control, or shared control.

The German (and wider continental) company model has a degree of employee control through works' councils and dual boards. The system appears to work well in aligning workers' interests with the firm in the promotion of productivity and long-term capital investment. But it makes drastic restructuring more difficult.

There was a moment in 1979, following the Bullock Report, when a similar system was being considered for the UK. Had Margaret Thatcher not won the election of that year, the system could well have found its way onto the statute book. It didn't. Some companies nonetheless have advisory boards including workforce representatives.

In the last few years, a different approach has become fashionable: workers on main boards. I advocated this during the coalition, and Theresa May adopted it when she first became Prime Minister (though – like so much else – it has disappeared into the Brexit bog).

There are essentially two quite different reasons for promoting this agenda.

The first is to act as a tougher check on executive pay.

The current system – evolving from the Blair government, my own reforms, then further reforms proposed by Greg Clark – has been to give shareholders greater control over the pay of chief executives.

While this has understandably acted as a brake on truly egregious awards, the widening gap between executive and median pay has led to calls for more radical action, including workers on boards and specifically on remuneration committees.

I think that this is worth trying, but there are some obvious governance issues, especially where there is a global workforce and where there is no recognised union which can put forward a representative worker, or where relations with the union are conflicted.

It would reflect the principle that companies belong to more than just the shareholders

Another approach is to appoint workers to boards to provide greater diversity, rather than to represent the workforce.

Some progress has been made in getting more women on boards, but there is a separate and additional reason for appointing employees: to add a fresh perspective based on experience of how the company actually operates on the ground, and of being on the receiving end of its HR policies.

It is therefore interesting to note that Capita is due to announce this week the recruitment of two of its employees to the main board, following the example of First Group in the FTSE 250.

How the company fares will be good case study to consider when looking at the impact of employee representation on boards.

Capita employed a careful recruitment process and had 400 applicants, including from overseas, for director roles on two to three-year contracts. Two thirds of applicants were non-managers: shop floor staff. The new worker directors will be trained in their duties and paid a full director's salary.

Time will tell whether they can make a difference to company performance – and are seen as making a difference by their colleagues in the workforce. For now, the secretary general of the TUC has given encouragement, and I am hopeful that this approach is worth trying.

Workers on boards is far from being a panacea, but it is a useful antidote to the current poisonous sense of distrust and malaise hanging over many of our big companies. Above all else, it would reflect the principle that companies belong to more than just the shareholders, and that their future is the legitimate concern of the workforce, consumers, and society.

This is a worthy mission for any government which genuinely wants to reform and improve the workings of British capitalism.

Sir Vince Cable is leader of the Liberal Democrats and former secretary of state for business, innovation and skills.

Churchill knew that design was crucial to Britain's global future – and so should we

Sarah Weir

IN 1944, when the UK was facing extremely uncertain times, Winston Churchill's government founded the Council of Industrial Design.

The plan was to invest heavily in design to ensure that we were making the best quality products that would allow us to win major industrial contracts in post-war Europe.

It worked. Even after an election the following year, Clement Attlee's government continued to develop the Council, realising the value of design to the economy.

The widespread macroeconomic uncertainty facing Britain now is thankfully not the result of a war, but today's businesses are experiencing similar upheaval and uncertainty about the future. We've reached another 1944 moment, and once again we need to start investing in design to ensure that we don't lose out in post-Brexit Europe.

The design economy generated £85.2bn in gross value added to the UK in 2016, growing 52 per cent since 2009. A recent McKinsey study showed that businesses that embraced design generated 32 per cent more revenue and 56 per cent more shareholder returns than rivals over a five-year period.

Here in London, the design industry turned over £39.9bn in 2015, and employed 1.69m people.

Yet design is hugely underestimated in terms of its power to drive economic growth. With Britain focused on entering new markets and forging new trade deals, this is a worrying oversight.

We need to ensure that the world views the UK as a leader in the excellent design of services, systems, processes, and products. At the moment, despite our prowess, this just isn't the case.

One of the key barriers is that good design is often invisible. It extends right the way across the economy, horizontally rather than vertically, making its impact very difficult for decision-makers to see.

For instance, a lot was made of the recent news that art and culture contribute more to the economy that agriculture.

But what people failed to consider is that good design – whether of a new museum building, online portal, video game, or piece of farming machinery – underpins the success and effectiveness of both of these industries, and just about every sector of the economy.

At the moment, design comes under the government's business, enterprise and industrial strategy department. But in reality, design feeds into every government department: from transport, trade and defence, to education, health, and work and pensions.

Another crucial barrier we must overcome is the widespread misconception that design is just a way to make something look nicer, rather than a discipline that can help businesses work better, be more productive, and employ more people.

Yes, design can make an aesthetic impact. But at its core, it is about pursuing a better outcome than what's currently available. It's about finding new ways to do things more efficiently and more effectively, which can have huge pay-offs right across the economy.

Churchill realised this back in the 1940s, and so did Attlee. And today, though we're now known simply as the Design Council, our founding principles remains the same.

Whatever may happen with Brexit, leaders in business and government must realise the potential of design to boost economic growth.

Sarah Weir OBE is chief executive of the Design Council.

LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR

Think of the kids

[Re: Boost minimum wage for young workers, Labour says]

Labour's pledge to raise the minimum wage of under-18s from £4.35 an hour to £10 sounds lovely, but doesn't pass the economic sniff-test. While Jeremy Corbyn's line that "equal pay for equal work is hardly a controversial idea" may win over young socialists, it's far more likely that this hike in wage rates would harm the employability of Britain's youth.

To be frank, 16 and 17-year-olds looking for their first job or part-time work will not have the skills or experience to command a higher wage. A teenager will not initially be able to make a sale, use the tills, or serve customers as well as their older, more experienced peers. Of course, there might be exceptions, but this is the assumption most employers will make.

However, by having a separate wage level for under-18s, employers are encouraged to take on these youngsters. The lower wage paid to young people is balanced by the fact that they will receive training, advice, and proper work experience. These skills will help them stand out in the job market as they become older.

But if an employer has to pay someone aged 16 the same as a 26-year-old, the incentive to hire a young person is stripped away. Why risk sinking time and money into someone with fewer skills?

Rather than helping young people, Corbyn's plan is more likely to harm their job prospects, reduce their employability, and lead to higher levels of unemployment.

Matthew Marcus

BEST OF TWITTER

China may stop purchasing US agricultural products and energy, reduce Boeing orders and restrict US service trade with China. Many Chinese scholars are discussing the possibility of dumping US Treasuries and how to do it specifically.
@HuXijin_GT

Is everyone enjoying their tax increase? Because that's what you get from this trade war.
@TheRickWilson

Trade war? Tariffs so far affect less than 3 per cent of global trade, so the catalyst for a change of trend is definitely not the US-China negotiation. The alleged trade war is being used as an excuse for the real reason behind the slowdown: debt saturation
@dlacalle_IA

Conservatives pushed into fifth place in our latest European Parliament voting intention survey (fieldwork 8-9 May)
Brexit Party - 34%
Lab - 16%
Lib Dem - 15%
Green - 11%
Con - 10%
Change UK - 5%
UKIP - 3%
@YouGov

It's Death Awareness Week, in case you weren't already crushingly aware of your own mortality
@rachelschraer

WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR VIEWS E: theforum@cityam.com **COMMENT AT:** cityam.com/forum : @cityam

India's economic reform needs a little more authoritarianism

Ed Smith

WITH the world's largest General Election now fully underway, more and more people are expressing concern of a national impasse in India: a crossroads in terms of social, economic, and perhaps even constitutional identity.

Since Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power in 2014, questions around India's economic potential have become inextricably linked to issues around the pattern of its politics – in particular, debates centred on authoritarianism.

Autocracy tends to be associated with a deficient rule of law and socio-political abuse, often with militarian tendencies. It goes without saying that this should be vehemently opposed.

But could India's economy do with a little more "authoritarian" direction? Or rather, is the Indian economy in need of a little more central planning?

Like China and the former Soviet Union, India used to have five-year plans, between 1951 and 1997. During this period, it sustained real growth rates of four per cent a year, thanks to a large demographic dividend and the process of bringing subsistence farmers into the industrial economy.

But central planning created a bureaucratic chimera, inhibiting innovation and efficiency. As the world became more integrated, India's central planners forgot about the need to be competitive on the international stage. Between 1950 and the early 1990s, India's share of world trade fell from 2.5 per cent to 0.5 per cent as it became increasingly protectionist.

For most of the western world, "central planning" remains a dirty term. Until the financial crisis, the Washington Consensus reigned supreme, with the dictum that the "freest" economies were the best economies. Even as capitalism has come under closer scrutiny in the past decade, statism remains treated with deep suspicion.

Yet the economic history books tell us that central direction was behind three of the greatest economic success stories of twentieth-century development: Japan in the first half of the century, and South Korea and Taiwan from the 1960s to the 1980s.

Korean and Taiwanese industrial policy extended well beyond the limits of genuinely pluralistic government. These were corporatist states, in which certain industrial giants were favoured over smaller interest groups.

By the 1980s, the 10 largest Korean conglomerates, or "chaebols", accounted for two thirds of Korean GNP, up from a third in the 1970s. The economic mechanism at work was the authoritarian use of the state to raise the investable surplus, directing it to industries and firms that could sustain higher wages in the future.

Central direction was behind the success stories of South Korea and Taiwan

The results were intense cycles of investment, sustained even as the global economy turned down, which led to a rapid rise in the demand for labour and a surprisingly wide distribution of the benefits of growth.

Of course, there are many more examples of central planning going horribly wrong. What separated Korea and Taiwan (and previously Japan) from the rest was not only an outward-looking, global focus and a coordinated attentiveness to the long-term economic issues, but also the particularly active involvement of the centralised state.

Today, India's economic policy is the worst of both worlds. It is heavily protectionist, with politicised and poorly run state-owned banks, but it lacks visionary central planning, with the global, long-term focus of Korea or Taiwan. Ostensibly capitalist, it lacks the institutions necessary to support the efficient allocation of capital, such as functioning bankruptcy laws or a corruption-free judiciary.

Worst of all, it is mired in layer upon layer of municipal, state and federal bureaucracy – which Modi, despite his promises, has made disappointing progress in reducing.

One way or another, India needs serious economic reform if it is to attract investment and turn its economy around. And if that economic reform takes on a subtle authoritarian hue, that may be no bad thing – if (and it's a big if) it's done right.

Ed Smith is head of asset allocation research at Rathbones.

DEBATE

Is it possible for Donald Trump to 'win' the trade war with China?

YES

JOHN HEMMINGS

While many people blame Donald Trump's "America First" policy for the trade war, it's likely that Hillary Clinton would have done the same, since Beijing's leadership has cheated on many of the rules agreed to in the WTO.

We note the expansion of Chinese state-owned enterprises in the Belt and Road initiative. We marvel at how Huawei went from 2.5 per cent of the European ICT market to 25 per cent between 2006 and 2014, buoyed by billions from Chinese state banks. We note how Made in China: 2025 aims to substitute Chinese products for western ones in China's vast home market.

While these subsidised Chinese firms find welcoming doors in the west, their western competitors struggle in China with IP-theft, forced joint ventures, and non-tariff barriers.

Trump's tariff war does inflict some pain on US consumers, but let's not forget US workers and manufacturers. He is trying to get Beijing to respect the rules that the US itself follows. Can he win? The world's largest economy, a source of high tech IP, and the dollar say he can but China has to want to change.

Dr John Hemmings is director of the Asia Studies Centre at the Henry Jackson Society.

NO

BRIAN KLAAS

Donald Trump drastically ratcheted up his Quixotic trade war with China, slapping sky-high tariffs on a much larger number of goods. China, predictably, responded in kind.

The President has infamously claimed "trade wars are good and easy to win". If you can find an economist who agrees, don't take investment advice from them, because they would fail Economics 101.

Even if Trump's reckless gambit eventually leads to a deal, it comes with a major cost. Americans – particularly American farmers – are already shouldering a devastating burden from his trade war. Beyond the US, Trump's protectionism risks geopolitical destabilisation. It ratchets up tensions between the world's biggest superpowers. And as both seek to unload products, they will dump them, depressing prices and undercutting producers in other countries.

Protectionism drastically worsened the Great Depression; we learned the hard way the lesson that nobody wins a trade war. Everybody loses, it's just a question of how much.

Dr Brian Klaas is an assistant professor of global politics at University College London.

CITY A.M.
Fountain House,
3rd Floor, 130 Fenchurch Street,
London, EC3M 5DJ
Tel: 020 3201 8900
Email: news@cityam.com

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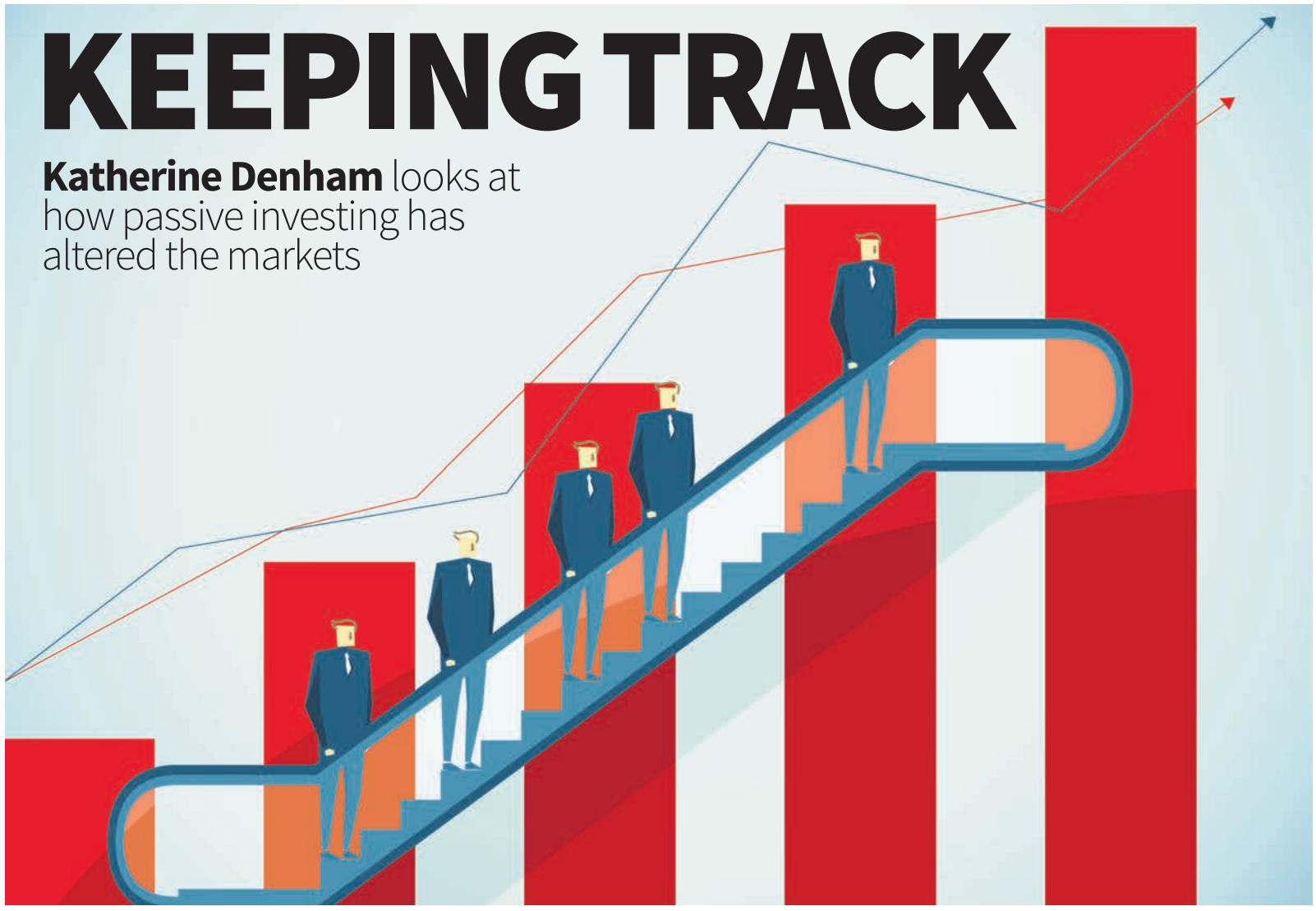


KEEPING TRACK

Katherine Denham looks at how passive investing has altered the markets

EVER since the first exchange-traded fund (ETF) listed in Europe 19 years ago, passive investing has proved hugely popular.

ETFs are traded like stocks, and simply track the big indices like the FTSE 100 or the Dow Jones, as opposed to having a fund manager cherry-pick individual companies for you.

And with the lowest annual charges of all collective investment schemes, it is hardly surprising that flows into ETFs keep rising. Recent data from research firm ETFGI found that assets invested in the European ETF industry reached $859bn in March – the highest on record.

The London Stock Exchange, which listed its first ETF on the main market in 2000, now has a 40 per cent market share of European trading turnover, and more than 1,100 ETFs listed.

But what impact has this trend for passive investing had on the markets?

BIGGER, NOT BETTER

Traditional index funds fully replicate the market, with the weighting of each stock based on the market cap within the index. Essentially, this means that most of your passive portfolio will be invested in larger companies, with no scrutiny of the price or any other factors.

As Jupiter fund manager James Clunie points out: "investors will select assets based on inclusion in an index, rather than evaluating whether or not the share price is appropriate."

With index approaches growing strongly in recent years, Clunie warns that an increasing number of market players are trading regardless of price.

Some experts think that passive investments are therefore making the markets irrational, potentially creating a momentum effect, which in turn leads to over-inflated asset prices.

DOMINO EFFECT

Passive investing's simplicity has made the markets more accessible to retail investors, who can now invest in a basket of stocks for a fraction of the cost of actively managed funds.

Ben Seager-Scott, head of multi-asset funds at Tilney Group, sees passive investing as a positive development, but warns that these products bring additional market dynamics, particularly because they can add pressure during times of market dislocation.

The worry is that when markets go down, investors panic and sell out, causing a domino effect as markets fall further. However, Seager-Scott says: "I reject the idea put forward by some that ETFs are dangerous because 'amateurs' could cause market crises and disruption – history has shown that 'professionals' in hedge funds and investment banks are more than capable of wrecking the market themselves."

REBALANCING ACT

As more money accumulates in market-cap index funds and ETFs, the weight of these assets has the capacity to influence market behaviour.

According to Howie Li, head of ETFs at LGIM, this is increasingly evident when you look at what happens just before the reshuffling of popular indices. He explains that passive fund houses collect data which preempt the announcements about additions and deletions of companies in indices, essentially giving them a head-start when rebalancing their portfolios.

"Opportunistic traders can act in advance of the implementation date of the changes," Li explains.

> "History has shown that 'professionals' are more than capable of wrecking the market

Generally speaking, this mechanism can prompt swings in prices around the date that indices rebalance.

According to LGIM, rebalancing of global equity indices every quarter between February 2015 to May 2018 meant, on aggregate, other investors lost up to 6.5 basis points of performance because prices moved.

PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE

Passive funds have also altered the wider asset management industry.

Seager-Scott says that the growth in the passive market is helping to reform the active market. "The provision of ultra-low cost trackers is helping to bring down the cost of active management, forcing fund managers to really justify their fees in a way that was simply not the case a few years ago."

Essentially, this focus on value will push poor-performing and mediocre active managers out of the market.

"Efficient markets require active participants," he says, suggesting we could see the market concentrate down to a smaller number of exceptional, high conviction fund managers, getting rid of closet trackers. "The rise of passive investing will be a driving force for this."

Passive funds like ETFs will continue to reshape the investment landscape, and this will bring both challenges and opportunities.

Seager-Scott concludes: "Investors should ensure that they fully understand the instruments they are using, while market regulators should remain alert to the developing dynamics in the market."

Big tech must take the lead against hate

CNBC COMMENT

David Reid

TECH companies face stiff criticism for their inability to prevent extremism from spreading via their platforms. This became particularly evident after a gunman killed 50 people at two mosques in the New Zealand city of Christchurch back in March, with a live-stream of the attack shared widely on social media.

As a result, a meeting of technology executives and global leaders has been arranged, with the ultimate aim of curbing violent extremism online.

Representatives from Google, Twitter, Facebook and Microsoft are all expected to attend, and French President Emmanuel Macron – who is co-chairing with New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern – already met with Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg last week. France has particularly strong views, and wants to introduce new rules which would punish any site that publishes violent content or extreme opinions.

Of late, large tech firms have displayed an increased willingness to curb extremist views on their platforms.

Facebook has banned several figures whom it regards as "dangerous individuals", including Louis Farrakhan, the Nation of Islam leader who has expressed anti-semitic views. Alex Jones, host of right-wing conspiracy website InfoWars, and its UK editor Paul Joseph Watson are also now banned.

But until these first steps, Facebook, Twitter and the like have been reluctant to accept their role as publishers or censors, arguing instead that they merely provide a platform for content to be shared.

It is problematic to instantly demand that a tech company be treated as a traditional media outlet, expecting it to run the rule of media law across the millions of posts, videos, and articles that appear every single day.

But neither is it fair for Silicon Valley titans to hold their hands up in innocence, pleading to the world that they are just the messenger, while raking in billions of dollars of advertising revenue.

Freedom of the press is a value that has struggled to translate to the internet age – it cannot be interpreted to mean that all things should be published.

It is obvious that shocking posts drive more clicks than established and mundane schools of thought. The wilder the position, the better the profit for the likes of Twitter, Facebook, Google, and YouTube.

Freedom of the press is the right to publish what is in the public's interest, and it this interpretation that big tech must understand and adopt. It may not be a legal compulsion, but it is a social responsibility, and companies which advertise on these platforms also have a duty.

If social media firms are the gatekeepers of twenty-first century content, boardrooms who sign off on the digital marketing budget must be ready to ask harder questions.

David Reid is a correspondent for CNBC.

MOTORING

BY MOTORINGRESEARCH.COM FOR CITY A.M.

FUTURE-PROOFING THE CLASSIC MINI

A motorsport company has electrified the original Mini - ensuring a London icon is ready for the future

A growing trend in the classic car world is future-proofing the things by converting them to electric. Jaguar was the first, with an electric E-type. More recently, Aston Martin has shown an electric DB6. The engineering is challenging but the premise is simple: swap the dirty old engine for an electric motor and batteries. The process is reversible, too, for originality obsessives.

Now, an engineering company in Swindon has introduced the most ambitious conversion yet – an all-electric original Mini. Called the Swind E Classic, it's been developed by Swindon Powertrain, a company famous for its British Touring Car race engines. The brainchild of MD Raphael Caille, he hopes it will not only future-proof classic Minis, but the engineering company he owns as well.

Swind may be the lifestyle arm of Swindon Powertrain – it also makes an electric mountain bike that, implausibly, can do 60mph – but it still benefits from the motorsport brainpower of its parent company. Rather than simply take out the engine, drop in an electric motor and bolt in batteries where they would fit, boffins with computers did the job properly.

They laser-scanned and reverse-engineered an original Mini. This enabled them, as with those Jaguars and Aston Martins, to fit the 24 kWh lithium ion battery cleanly into the original Mini platform, with no loss of space. In a car barely longer than three metres, this in itself is an achievement.

Remarkably, it is actually more practical than the original: doing away with the fuel tank swells the boot to 200 litres. And because the original engine was such a heavy lump of iron, swapping to electric power has only increased the car's weight by 80kg. It's hardly short on range, either, with Swind quoting 125 miles – about the same as Honda's upcoming E electric city car. Charging takes four hours, and it can use London's roadside chargers.

SWIND E CLASSIC	
PRICE:	£79,000
0-62MPH:	9.2 SECS
TOP SPEED:	80MPH
POWER:	110 HP
RANGE:	125MILES

THE VERDICT	
DESIGN	★★★★★
PERFORMANCE	★★★☆☆
PRACTICALITY	★★☆☆☆
VALUE	★★★☆☆

It looks... well, just like a beautifully restored original Mini. Which is good because, for licensing reasons, Swind can't actually call it 'Mini', or use any original Mini badges on its little EV conversion. Modern Mini, incidentally, has its own electric car coming out later this year, built just up the road in Oxford.

Minis are tiny so, after admiring it, I stoop down and climb in, knees resting somewhere around my ears. Swind has kept the interior simple, the only difference being the spine running up the centre of the car with batteries beneath. The spindly old gearlever is replaced by a tiny auto shifter; it has a single forward gear, so is far easier to drive than an original Mini.

It's easier to start, too. Simply switch it on and, when you're ready, whirr away in electric silence; as Minis were such noisy things, this is a revelation. The electric motor whines as speed gathers, but it's nothing like the shriek of a Mini engine. It's quick too, with 0-60mph in 9.2 seconds – and 110hp is easily enough to have the front wheels scrabbling away from the line.

But what stands out is the sheer normality of it. Swind's engineering excellence has blended the original Mini experience – cheeky, chuckable handling, sensory overload, friendly waves from pedestrians – with modern sophistication. And the price for an Extinction Rebellion-proof Mini? £79,000. Punchy, but those who know how much restored original Minis sell for may almost consider this a bargain.

The Mini is 60 years old in 2019. Today, if you want to drive one built after 1980 in Central London, it will cost you £24 a day, thanks to the ULEZ. By 2021, this will extend to Greater London. The Swinging Sixties, London and the Mini all go hand in hand. Going electric ensures history is future-proofed.

Richard Aucock works for automotive publisher motoringresearch.com

NOT CONVINCED? CHECK OUT THESE ALTERNATIVES...

JAGUAR I-PACE S

		THE VERDICT:	
PRICE:	£60,995	DESIGN	★★★★★
0-62MPH:	4.8 SECS	PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
TOP SPEED:	124MPH	PRACTICALITY	★★★★☆
POWER:	400HP	VALUE	★★★☆☆
RANGE:	292MILES		

BMW I3

		THE VERDICT:	
PRICE:	£35,230	DESIGN	★★★☆☆
0-62MPH:	7.3SECS	PERFORMANCE	★★★☆☆
TOP SPEED:	93MPH	PRACTICALITY	★★★☆☆
POWER:	170 HP	VALUE	★★☆☆☆
RANGE:	160 MILES		

TESLA MODEL 3

		THE VERDICT:	
PRICE:	£38,900	DESIGN	★★★★☆
0-62MPH:	5.3 SECS	PERFORMANCE	★★★★☆
TOP SPEED:	140MPH	PRACTICALITY	★★★☆☆
POWER:	TBA	VALUE	★★★★☆
RANGE:	258MILES		

CRYPTO A.M.

Our series on AI, Blockchain, Cryptoassets, DLT and Tokenisation

PARTNER CONTENT

CITY A.M.'S CRYPTO INSIDER

JAMES BOWATER

There is a definite change in the air when it comes to the world of crypto with positivity abound despite the $41m hack of the world's biggest crypto exchange Binance (see CryptoCompare Market View right). Thomas Lee, in his Guest Main Feature today, explains why he feels that crypto spring has begun.

Bitcoin (BTC) has had a breakout week and since last week's Crypto AM and at the time of writing BTC is trading at up 33.3% US$7,771.02; Ethereum (ETH) is up 19.3% at US$203.16; Ripple (XRP) up 5% at US$0.3259; Binance (BNB) pretty flat at US$23.16 and Cardano (ADA) up 8.9% at US$0.07636. Overall Market Cap is up 23.2% at US$228.64bn (data source: www.CryptoCompare.com)

Scalability remains one of cryptocurrencies' biggest barriers to mass adoption by both companies and individuals. Scalability is very important, as the higher the scalability the faster transactions can be processed and the lower the cost of processing. The amount of work being carried out in this area is very encouraging: from new companies such as Cardano and EOS building their initial blockchain infrastructure for high scalability to existing successful products like Ethereum developing their second generation with massive scalability a major feature the goal of a secure and scalable blockchain is coming ever closer. Joe Lubin, a co-founder of Ethereum and founder of ConsenSys was interviewed on Saturday by Cointelegraph saying that the Ethereum blockchain will become about 1,000 more scalable within 18 to 24 months. CasperLabs have also entered the fray with the aim of deploying a "fully decentralised, sharded and scalable next-generation blockchain".

There is, however, no need to look for a single winner in this race; high transaction blockchains have applications in the internet of things (IOT), financial markets, the legal system, personal identity and information, voting...; the list goes on and on, and each application will find its natural home on the blockchain that most suits it.

Finally last week in London, I caught up with old friend Vinay Gupta, Founder & CEO of Mattereum who had some good news to share: Mattereum will be partnering with sci fi legend William Shatner to document the authenticity of memorabilia and collectibles, on the Ethereum blockchain. This will be achieved with Mattereum's new Asset Passport technology, which uses legally-binding "smart contracts" to ensure the accuracy of records. The new initiative will create digital twins for science fiction and other collectible memorabilia. The first digital twin is for a one of a kind numbered action figure of William Shatner himself as "Capt. James Kirk in Casual Attire", autographed by Shatner. It will be stored on an immutable ledger and assure collectors that the item came from Shatner's personal collection, in fact Vinay is demonstrating this live this afternoon at Consensus in New York.

Designed by Phill Snelling, Bowater Media

THE crypto bear market of 2018 was more painful than any other prior crypto downturn because many of those hurt were retail investors "new to crypto." The crushing 85% decline not only wiped out investor capital, but lead many of those "new to crypto" to believe that Bitcoin and crypto were broadly declining into oblivion.

In spite of how bad 2018 was, 2019 has so far seen a surprising resurgence in crypto markets, both in prices and dynamism, which naturally begs the question—is the Crypto winter over?

Before I weigh in with my opinion at the end of this article, there are four areas we should analyse:

- Fundamentals. Has Bitcoin and crypto become more useful?
- Sentiment. Is Crypto rising on good news and shrugging off bad news?
- Price technicals. Are crypto technical indicators positive or negative?
- Equilibrium. Is the market reaching a balance between supply and demand?

HAS CRYPTO BECOME MORE USEFUL?

This is best answered looking beyond the blockchain, but it is worth noting that Bitcoin's onchain volumes are actually up YTD; the first increase since 2017. Several notable developments are positive for crypto this year. Facebook is developing its own decentralized platform including a native cryptocurrency, several banks have developed their own "stablecoins" which are digital versions of cash, and Fidelity Investments, a global financial institution, is soon to offer cryptocurrency trading.

Equally important, we have seen a surge in Bitcoin usage and volumes in countries where financial stability has worsened. Witness the spike in volumes reported by Localbitcoin in countries like Venezuela and Turkey. And most recently, the surge in Bitcoin trading as Wechat began to restrict crypto communications on its platform. Short answer—yes, Bitcoin and crypto have become a lot more useful in 2019.

IS CRYPTO RISING ON GOOD NEWS AND SHRUGGING OFF BAD NEWS?

There have been several notable negative developments in 2019. Among them, Bitfinex disclosed that it received unorthodox funding from Tether to replace cash that was purportedly seized by governments. This $850 million transfer represents a sizable capital shortfall for the stable token platform Tether. On May 7, Binance revealed that a sophisticated and coordinated hack on its hot wallets resulted in the theft of 7,000 bitcoin (~$42 million USD). Bitcoin and the crypto market's price has largely absorbed this bad news and continued to rise. This is a major shift in market dynamics compared to 2018.

Last year, headlines like "Goldman is not going to launch crypto trading" resulted in 10%-15% declines in a single day. This is a reversal of sentiment. In our view, this tells us that sentiment is so negative and holders are so skeptical, that bad news is not bringing selling pressure. This is a great sign.

PRICE TECHNICALS. IS CRYPTO IN POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE TREND?

The simplest arbiter of price trend in

Crypto A.M. shines its Spotlight on CoinSchedule

If you follow cryptocurrencies, you have probably noticed that the price of one Bitcon has gone up from £4000 to more than £6000 in a matter of days – the market is alive again! But if you had to name the one greatest problem in this space right now, what would it be? Hacks, lack of regulation, price volatility, scams? For CoinSchedule it's always been disinformation and bad actors, or to put it another way, the lack of trustworthiness of the different projects and market players. The inability for even advanced and experienced investors to determine the quality, legitimacy and potential of existing and emerging projects causes extreme inefficiencies in the allocation of capital and time in this market and consequently, the industry as a whole suffers.

CoinSchedule has been rating blockchain projects since 2016, and as the industry has become more mature and competitive, the company has learned to adapt and improve its methods. What started a side project, looking at a handful of token sales to rate every month, soon had to deal with hundreds of projects as the industry entered a hype phase in 2017. It was during that time that the company developed a unique approach to rating blockchain projects. Instead of taking the manual route, where each project is rated by an in-house analyst, CoinSchedule uses algorithms and the power of the crowd. "We realised early on that the only way to ensure consistency, scalability and fairness when rating the different blockchain projects, is to do so programmatically - code never lies." proclaims Alex Buelau, CEO of CoinSchedule.

The company partnered with scientists from the University of Oxford and released its first AI-powered rating algorithm called 'CoinSchedule TrustScore' early in 2018. TrustScore rates blockchain projects based on their credibility. It assigns a risk score to each project based on factual and verifiable information such as verified identities of team members, company paperwork, country of operation and the quality of publicly available data about the project. The algorithm works exactly the same for every project, ensuring a standardized and fair system for all stakeholders, which is very important since CoinSchedule works closely with regulators and major media publications, so it has to stay credible. Thus far, TrustScore has proven to be a great success with over 250 projects rated and 2000 team member IDs verified.

Alex Buelau, CEO of CoinSchedule

> "In a sense, we are becoming the Open Source Moody's of Blockchain

As the blockchain industry enters a new cycle of growth, with more institutional interest and demanding customers, CoinSchedule is getting ready to follow suit. "We are finishing a fundraise and will develop new algorithms to rate everything, from token sales to exchanges, from existing coins to wallets" says Alex. As part of this effort, and to ensure that the process is as transparent and trustworthy as possible, CoinSchedule has vowed to open source all of its current and future rating algorithms. "In a sense, we are becoming the Open Source Moody's of Blockchain" suggests Alex.

For more information visit: info@coinschedule.com

E: CryptoInsider@cityam.com @CityAm_Crypto In association with CryptoCompare

HAS BEGUN

any market is the price relative to the 200D moving average. I have followed markets for 25 years, so this simple rule of thumb works on any stock, asset, bond, etc. Anytime an instrument is above its 200D, it is considered to be in "positive trend." Bitcoin crossed above its 200-day on April 1, 2019, the first such positive close since March 2018 (13 months). A report Fundstrat (my firm) published last year shows that Bitcoin has an average 6-month gain of 193% when it's above its 200D and a mere 13% when it is below. Therefore, crossing the 200D is a big §deal. On April 23, Bitcoin saw a "golden cross" which occurs when the 50D moving average crosses above the 200D moving average. This is also another highly promising signal. Conclusion? Technicals are positive.

EQUILIBRIUM? LESS SCAMS? BETTER SUPPLY AND DEMAND?

ICO funding has dwindled to effectively zero, so the "get rich quick scams" are largely gone. In 2020 the next Bitcoin halvening will take place, which will half Bitcoin block rewards from 12.5 Bitcoins to 6.25 Bitcoins per block mined. This will reduce the daily supply of Bitcoin coming into the market from $9mm today to $4.5 million. That is a massive drop coming soon.

Bitcoin is the most important crypto asset at the moment, and its success creates a vast halo for the rest of the landscape. This favorable supply and demand dynamic is unequivocally positive for crypto.

MY CONCLUSION? YES, CRYPTO SPRING HAS BEGUN...

Bottom line, the evidence is strong that crypto winter is over. What does this mean for price action? We think prices have bottomed, and within the next 12-18 months we should be seeing new highs for Bitcoin and other useful tokens.

> "Crypto spring has begun, even in the face of mass skepticism

We view Bitcoin and crypto as an emerging asset class and recommend investors allocated 1%-2% of their investable capital to this. Whether one chooses to be more aggressive in gaining exposure rests entirely on a person's risk tolerance and financial position.

Thomas Lee, Co-Founder of FundStrat Global in conversation with James Bowater. Please visit FundStrat.com for further information or follow Thomas on Twitter @fundstrat

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS PROVIDED BY CITY A.M.'S CRYPTO INSIDER AND IN THE CRYPTO A.M. SECTION SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN AS INVESTMENT OR FINANCIAL ADVICE. ALWAYS CONSULT WITH YOUR FINANCIAL ADVISOR.

CRYPTOCOMPARE MARKET VIEW

Major Exchange Hack Can't Stop Bitcoin's Surge

Last week saw one of the most significant cryptocurrency thefts in recent memory as leading exchange Binance suffered a major hack, resulting in the loss of over 7,000 bitcoin - worth $40mn at the time. According to the exchange, hackers used various techniques including "phishing, viruses and other attacks" to access one of Binance's online crypto wallets which held 2% of the Binance's entire bitcoin holdings.

Although Binance CEO Changpeng Zhao briefly toyed with the idea of attempting a controversial "rollback" of the bitcoin blockchain to undo the hackers' transactions, the exchange instead confirmed that it would use its Secure Asset Fund for Users (SAFU) to ensure that users suffered no financial loss.

While the news caused a brief drop of around 2% in the bitcoin price, it failed to stop bitcoin's surge past the key $6,000 resistance level on Thursday. Bitcoin seemed unstoppable as it shot up to touch the $7,500 level on Sunday - a high not seen since September 2018. Altcoins too saw substantial gains, with ether briefly crossing the $200 mark for the first time since November last year.

In less dramatic news, last week saw Facebook announce that it is softening its stance on Cryptocurrency and blockchain ads. After an outright ban in January 2018, the platform revised its policy in June 2018 to allow "pre-approved partners." While the latest policy upholds the ban on ICOs, it no longer requires pre-approval for ads for "technology, industry news, education or events."

Finally, a new application for a cryptocurrency ETF has been filed with the US SEC. Created by Crescent Crypto Index Services, the ETF seeks to track the performance of market capitalization-weighted portfolio of bitcoin (BTC) and ether (ETH), and joins a growing list - including the hotly-anticipated VanEck SolidX application.

The CryptoCompare Digital Asset Summit will take place in London on June 12th. With keynote speaker Andreas M. Antonopoulos, the summit will feature presentations from some of the key companies in the space including Coinbase, Binance, Nasdaq, and UBS.

CRYPTO A.M. INDUSTRY VOICES

Inflation is the Enemy

When the elusive Satoshi Nakamoto invented the Bitcoin during the crash of 2008, Bitcoin exploded into the techno-geek market "mind" because the idea to challenge at-the-time dubious central-bank behaviours with a distributed, transparent and digitally-automated monetary system was just too cool.

Very real people have been ornery for decades at their constantly eroding savings, so the idea of an independent fiscal world operating from a mobile phone also attracted the establishment's excitement. Now nearly everyone knows what a Bitcoin is, and what it may portend.

Bitcoin took advantage of the perfect storm of advancing computing power, cryptographic technology and peer-to-peer computing—without which a viable digital currency could not exist. But the implicitly embedded idea of overcoming inflation has been lost in the hype. Now days, a "stablecoin" is just a digital currency pegged to a fiat currency—tied to a government currency.

In other words, the great opportunity for innovative advancement is being wasted on the idea of duplicating the fiat money's intrinsic worthlessness with a new, digital copy of that same baselessness.

It is time for a more scientific approach to money. Consider that much of the world worryingly anticipates the implications for their employer's or investments' bottom line when each new political scandal hits the press. "Will our margins disappear for the XYZ product line shipped overseas?" Have Trump or May said the wrong thing again—have our exports died until another day?

When an Argentine must endure 20% or so inflation every year, or half the rest of the world for that matter, it means that next year for the same stuff, 20% more of their currency must be paid. We are all so used to money losing value that it is considered an unavoidable part of existence. We recoil at the Venezuelan monetary nightmare, as their inflation exceeds 10 million percent, per the IMF's expectations for 2019.

Science and technology need to work their magic again to connect our currency to the world. Government monopoly, however progressive to advocate, really means 'No Innovation Allowed', or at least in the near future. Let's be honest, governments are never going to restore intrinsic value to currency—it simply would cost too much for the existing, very large money supplies.

Digital currencies, such as the FreeMark, can provide a consenting alternative. In a world of tomorrow, intrinsically-valued money tied to the basis of goods, for instance baskets of commodities, can offer a respite to constant inflation and the erosion of our wealth that is a consequence. Consumers should fight for the freedom of choice—for the economic liberty to select the most attractive money they save or spend, just as they choose which restaurant they go to or where they shop for groceries.

This freedom of choice ultimately produces incredible diversity of fulfilment of needs. Sure, your favourite local restaurant may close if not managed capably, or if it does not appeal to enough clients to ensure its survival. But we need better money—we need to have the opportunity to save, or to lose, to risk, or not to, so that we can let the newest offers bloom, see them to their fruition, and discover possibilities yet unborn. Some will fail to achieve their vision, but some will justify their risk.

Ultimately, risk is and must be proportional to reward. The risk of trying new digital currencies that may better preserve our wealth may deliver the reward of preservation of spending power, so that a Venezuela-type of outcome does not result in our financial world.

Kevin Alexander Paul Kirchman, CEO Worldfree Corporation, Ltd

BLOCKCHAIN ROOKIES

BLOCKCHAIN: BALANCING STAKEHOLDER INTERESTS

Troy Norcross, Co-Founder Blockchain Rookies

Today's supply chains have multiple stakeholders where there are multiple interests and priorities. To no one's surprise, these interests and priorities are not always aligned. Discrete systems lead to both a lack of transparency in goods and a lack of liquidity for remittances.

At one end of the supply chain are the enterprise clients. They want full visibility into their supply chain to ensure quality and traceability of the products as well as to reduce costs associated with insuring their supply chain. By transforming an entire supply chain to be digital and recording much of the information into a blockchain based ledger, this can add real value to the enterprise.

At the other end of the supply chain are the various sources of raw materials, logistics and transportation services, manufacturing and industry companies working to bring transform raw materials into the final goods and services required by the enterprise clients. These businesses are often very capital intensive. The challenge for these companies is that many up-stream companies in the supply chain hold onto payments for 60, 90 or even 180 days. Slow payments terms make for a cheap operating capital loan.

By putting the entire supply-chain, including both transfer and transformation of goods as well as payments onto the blockchain, allows stakeholders to use smart contracts to ensure that both quality of goods is assured and that payments are made nearly instantly upon successful receipt of products to the next point in the supply chain.

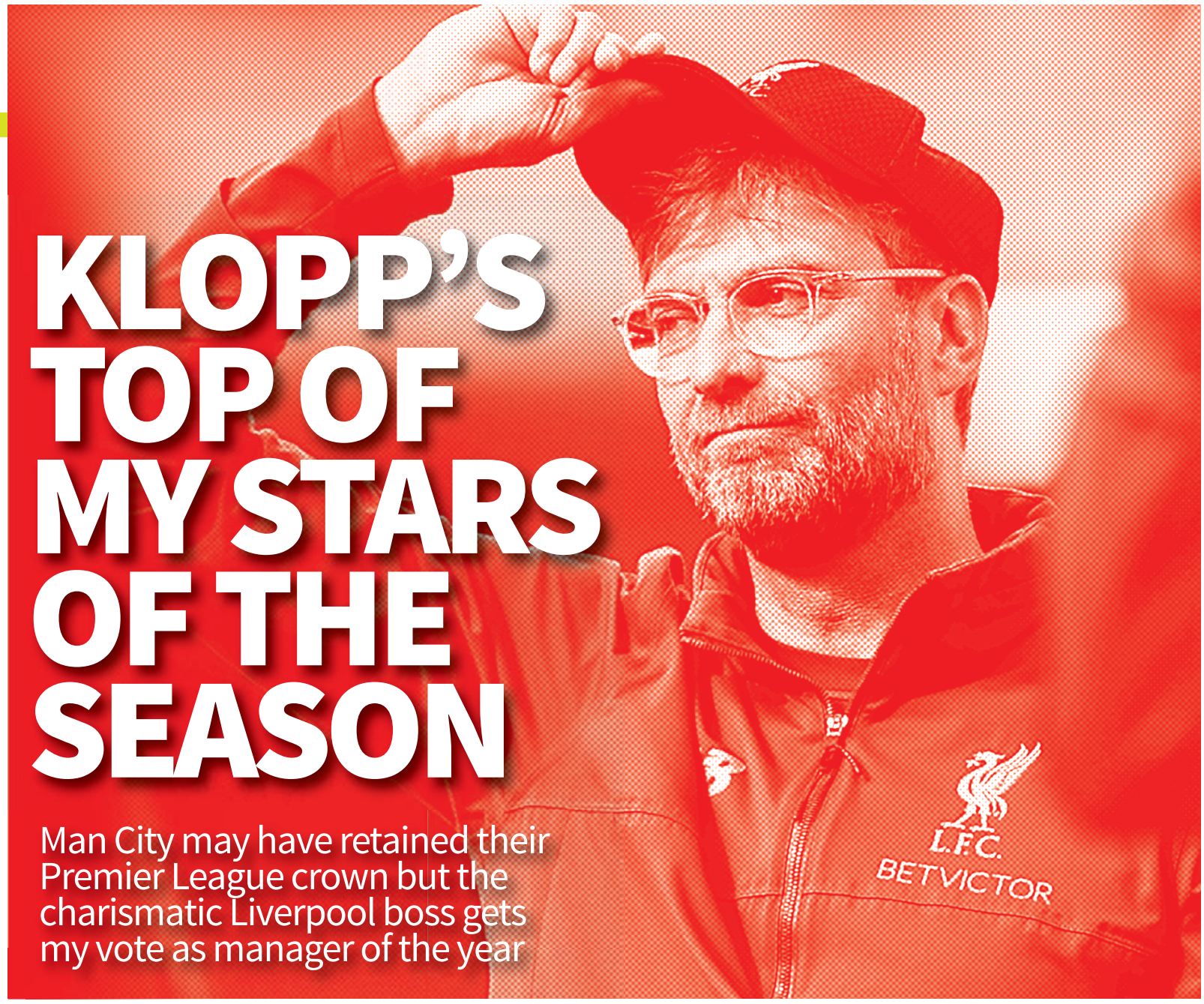
Establishing a blockchain for an industry where there are multiple participants can provide a unique environment where quality of products goes up in return for improved liquidity across the supply chain. All stakeholders have to give-a-little in order to get-a-little. The net result is an improvement across the supply chain for everyone – even the end consumer.

Get in touch with us info@blockchainrookies.com / Twitter @igetblockchain

SPORT

FOOTBALL COMMENT

Trevor Steven



KLOPP'S TOP OF MY STARS OF THE SEASON

Man City may have retained their Premier League crown but the charismatic Liverpool boss gets my vote as manager of the year

MANCHESTER City are champions again but they will never win a tougher Premier League title than this year's. They and Liverpool have played at such a high level for the duration of the top-flight campaign that I can't imagine we'll see anything like it again for a long while. That is reflected in my choices for best manager, goalkeeper, defender, midfielder and forward of this league season. All are from the top two teams, but there has simply been nothing to match them.

MANAGER

As an Evertonian this is difficult, and Pep Guardiola is obviously tremendous too, but for a number of reasons I have to say Jurgen Klopp. City separated themselves from the rest of the division in 2017-18 but this year Klopp has steered Liverpool to that level, turning a 25-point gap into just one point. I do admire Klopp for his character, openness and contagious enthusiasm. As a player, you'd love to play for him, and while that is also true of Guardiola, he isn't quite as buddyish. Liverpool's improvement is a continuation of Klopp's development of the team. He has also been instrumental in the flourishing of Trent Alexander-Arnold and Andy Robertson and deserves credit for that.

> "He has been instrumental in the flourishing of Alexander-Arnold and Robertson

GOALKEEPER

Alisson and Ederson are both of the highest quality, even if they have had outstanding defences in front of them, but for his adaptation to a new environment I'm favouring the former. He was under pressure initially due to his £67m price tag but I can't think of any costly errors that he made and he has proven to be the rock that Liverpool needed. The relationship and trust between a keeper and his defenders is a vital component in any strong side and Alisson has been money well spent.

DEFENDER

Virgil van Dijk has unbelievable quality and is an obvious candidate but on the basis of how far he has come since last summer I'd go with Alexander-Arnold. He takes free-kicks and corners, gets forward and defends tremendously. He has adapted to all the demands placed on a modern full-back and is doing it in the full glare of the world's biggest league. Van Dijk has been playing at his current level for a few seasons now. His Liverpool team-mate, meanwhile, has established himself as No1 choice at right-back aged just 20 and that's worthy of recognition.

MIDFIELDER

He may not have played much in the last few weeks of the season but this has been Fernandinho's best season in English football and has underlined his importance to City. The Brazilian has phenomenal quality all around him but he is the cornerstone of the team and a key factor in Guardiola's side defending their Premier League title. He's a mature holding midfielder who reads the game so well and can also weigh in with a goal. He does everything to a high standard, keeps City ticking over and allows others to play.

FORWARD

Another man who has been crucial to the consistency that saw City rack up 98 points is Raheem Sterling. He has chipped in with 17 goals and 10 assists in the league alone and been absolutely influential in some of the biggest matches. Sterling has also taken his game to a new level this year and that's what I'm looking for in my choices. His finishing is a case in point. A bad miss used to affect him for two or three matches but now he'll put it behind him and score in the same game, and that shows a strength of character you have to admire.

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

Two players who were written off long ago and deserve special praise for their contributions are James Milner and Vincent Kompany. Milner still runs more than anyone while Kompany, also 33, has come through various injury battles without losing faith in himself or his ability. Both bring huge amounts of leadership to Liverpool and City respectively and, in different ways, have matched that with some monumental contributions on the pitch.

Trevor Steven is a former England footballer who has played at two World Cups and two European Championships. @TrevorSteven63

MY SPORTING LIFE

SOUTHEASTERN RAILWAY MD **DAVID STATHAM** ON RACING AGAINST HIS MUM AND HIS CRYSTAL PALACE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE DREAM

WHAT IS YOUR SPORTING PASSION?

I live in south London, support Crystal Palace and I'm a regular at Selhurst Park – so I'll be hoping the Eagles soar next season. I'm also into other sports – ice hockey, field hockey, cricket, fencing, athletics and cycling, particularly the Tour de France. I far prefer watching sports in the flesh than watching on television.

HOW DID YOU FIRST GET INTO SPORT?

I wasn't great at sports at school. My mother was an athlete who specialised in marathon running and would always beat me in races! I got more into sports when I was an undergraduate at Oxford, and after moving to London I started going to live matches. My son is also a football fan – his first game, aged six, was a League Cup semi-final in 2012 in which Palace beat Cardiff City 1-0. It was a night game under the floodlights, [club live mascot] Kayla the eagle flew around as the crowd sang "Glad all over". They had us hooked before a ball had even been kicked.

DO YOU PARTICIPATE?

I've just started taking part in the Dulwich Parkrun – 5km against the clock on a Saturday morning, which is a bracing way to begin the weekend and has a brilliant community atmosphere. I've also done the Three Peaks challenge twice in aid of the Railway Children, which supports vulnerable young people around the world. Further afield, I've been a regular skier for 30 years and I love the fresh air and mountains. As a family, our last skiing holiday was in Sierra Nevada and it was very beautiful being able to look down and see the beaches from the snow-capped mountains. And I'm an enthusiastic trekker – I've been to Ecuador, Peru, Chile and Nepal.

MOST CHERISHED SPORTING MEMORY?

The World Athletics Championship in London in 2017 was amazing. I worked at Stratford Station and helped the team there get 11,000 sports fans through the barriers in less than an hour. A close second would be the first night of the athletics at the 2012 Olympics, which was a memorable week for all Londoners. I remember carrying my son home on my shoulders through such a terrific atmosphere.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST HOPE IN SPORT?

Naturally, to see Crystal Palace in the Champions League, although I'm not holding my breath. Perhaps more realistically, I'd like to see England host the World Cup – it's high time that football came home. We've got the venues, and we've got the right transport links to make it a success.

HUGHTON SACKED Brighton look to Potter after avoiding the drop

Brighton are thought be considering an approach for Swansea manager Graham Potter after sacking Chris Hughton yesterday. The Seagulls parted company with Hughton (pictured) following a run of three wins from 23 games, which saw them finish 17th in the Premier League. Despite avoiding relegation by two points chairman Tony Bloom said the poor form put Brighton's top flight status "at significant risk". Potter finished 10th with Swansea in the Championship this season after joining the club from Swedish side Ostersund in June 2018. Swansea are preparing for an official approach for the 43-year-old, who was linked with Celtic in April. Potter made 307 appearances in the Football League before beginning his managerial career with Ostersund in December 2010.

SPORT DIGEST

BUTTLER TO SIT OUT THIRD ODI AS ENGLAND ROTATE

Jos Buttler could be rested for England's third One-Day International against Pakistan at Bristol today, despite proving the match-winner on Saturday. Buttler blasted an unbeaten 110 from just 55 balls to help the hosts win by 12 runs at the Ageas Bowl, but is set to miss out today with England keen to provide everyone with match practice ahead of the World Cup. Joe Denly is likely to take his place, with Jonny Bairstow keeping wicket. Jofra Archer and Adil Rashid did not train yesterday so will probably join Buttler on the sidelines at the County Ground.

RELEGATED BOLTON ENTER ADMINISTRATION

Bolton Wanderers yesterday entered administration, meaning they will begin next season in League One with a 12-point deduction. The club, who have been relegated from the Championship, have taken the step after appearing in the High Court last week over an unpaid £1.2m tax bill. Bolton said the appointment of Paul Appleton and Asher Miller of David Rubin and Partners as joint administrators will "ensure the continued existence of the club".

WATFORD'S HOLEBAS GIVEN FA CUP FINAL REPRIEVE

Watford fullback Jose Holebas will be available for Sunday's FA Cup final against Manchester City after his red card against West Ham was rescinded. Holebas was sent off in the 48th minute of the Hornets' 4-1 defeat in the last game of the Premier League season for pulling back Michail Antonio when deemed to be the last man. The Football Association said in a statement that Watford's claim of wrongful dismissal had been upheld.

I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT WOODS, INSISTS KOEPKA

Brooks Koepka says he has no reason to be afraid of Tiger Woods at this week's US PGA Championship. Three-time Major winner Koepka will play alongside Masters champion Woods and Open champion Francesco Molinari on the first round at Bethpage Black in New York on Thursday. "There's no reason to be afraid of anybody," Koepka said of Woods. "We just know now that he's more than likely going to be there come Sunday."

KONTA AND NORRIE INTO SECOND ROUND IN ROME

Johanna Konta will play Sloane Stephens in the second round of the Italian Open after beating Alison Riske in straight sets yesterday. The British No1 took less than 90 minutes to overcome the American 6-4, 6-1 in Rome. Cameron Norrie will play Borna Coric today after beating John Millman 3-6, 6-3, 6-4, but Fernando Verdasco defeated British No1 Kyle Edmund 6-4, 4-6, 6-2.

STAGE WIN TAKEN OFF VIVIANI IN GIRO DRAMA

Home favourite Elia Viviani was stripped of his stage three win at the Giro d'Italia yesterday after swerving in front of a rival in the final metres. Colombia's Fernando Gaviria was declared victor following a review by race officials in Italy. Primoz Roglic kept his overall lead from Simon Yates, with Team Ineos' Tao Geoghegan Hart falling back by 88 seconds.