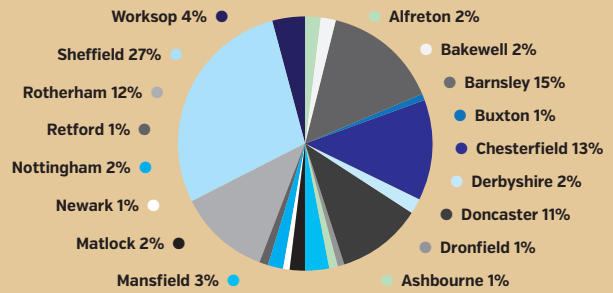


## TURNOVER BY AREA



**Manufacturing**  
2015: 2,368  
2016: 2,848

**Retail**  
2015: 276  
2016: 299

**Services**  
2015: 4,340  
2016: 4,852

**Wholesale**  
2015: 644  
2016: 649

## PEOPLE EMPLOYED BY SECTOR



## HEADLINE STATISTICS

Total turnover in thousands  
**£1,603,856**

Total number of employees  
**8,648**

Total profit in thousands  
**£207,444**

# BHP committed to the Sheffield City Region

Once again BHP are delighted to have collaborated with Sheffield Newspapers for this 19th edition of our SME survey. We are also proud that our commitment to the region is once again recognised by our position as the largest provider of audit and advisory services to the businesses within the Top 100. This is a reflection of the quality of the advice our corporate finance, tax and advisory teams provide to a significant share of the local SME market.

Don Gray comments in his article on the performance and success of the businesses within the survey, whilst I will concentrate on activities within the overall Sheffield City Region [SCR] economy.

The following is a list of some, but by no means all, of the encouraging developments over the past 12 months.

- Growth Hub – Access to Finance and Skills Bank established, support for export and innovation in place. The Business Investment Fund has so far put £1.8m into local businesses, with £6m in the pipeline.
- Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund – the replacement for Finance Yorkshire is being launched this quarter.
- Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District – medium term plans to develop this district, to encompass the growing Olympic Legacy Park, are well underway. Funding has been obtained for the Henry Royce Translational Centre, Factory 2050 is established and the Lightweighting Centre is nearing fruition. These continuing developments will create a world class advanced manufacturing district in SCR and significant inward investments will surely follow.
- Regeneration of city centres – in particular the Retail Quarter in Sheffield has appointed Queensbury to move it forward and HSBC have confirmed their relocation, whilst work has commenced on the Waterside Development in Chesterfield.

- Integrated Infrastructure Plan (IIP) involving SCRIF (Sheffield City Region Investment Fund) and ESIF (European Structural Investment Fund) have progressed the following developments.

- Doncaster Sheffield Airport M18 link road
- Peak Resort
- Doncaster iPort
- National College for High Speed Rail

These form part of a £28 billion plan launched at MIPIM UK to help create 70,000 jobs and 6,000 new businesses.

- HS2 – commitment eventually received for a city centre station in Sheffield.
- Outdoor economy – significant progress in raising the profile of our region.
- Devolution/Northern Powerhouse – plans in place but has progress been delayed by the EU Referendum result?

Undoubtedly a year of significant progress in which our local authorities, universities and private sector have worked together to create conditions for growth within the SCR. I trust that the next 12 months will bring more visible results from this momentum.



**John Warner**  
[john.warner@bhp.co.uk](mailto:john.warner@bhp.co.uk)



# Success and succession

Let's start with the good news. The headline numbers from this year's survey suggest that our region's top SMEs are in good health.



**Don Gray**  
[don.gray@bhp.co.uk](mailto:don.gray@bhp.co.uk)

Jobs are being created. Together the Top 100 employ over 8,500 people, an increase of around 1,000 compared to last year. Financially speaking the collective profit and loss account also looks pretty robust. Sales are up 15% to £1.6 billion and profit before tax has increased by a third to just over £200 million.

The positive news applies across all business sectors. In particular our region's top businesses delivered a very impressive 20% increase in sales, accompanied by a similar rise in headcount. Whilst manufacturing still trails the service sector in terms of employment with 33% vs 56%, it is encouraging to see the pace at which the makers are marching.

If there was a chief exec of the Top 100, he or she would therefore probably be looking back thinking it had been a successful year. Of course, most chief execs don't spend too much time looking back. Instead they look forward to the opportunities and challenges that will present themselves in the short, medium and long term. In our experience, succession is one such issue that should feature on the agenda of company directors when considering future prospects.

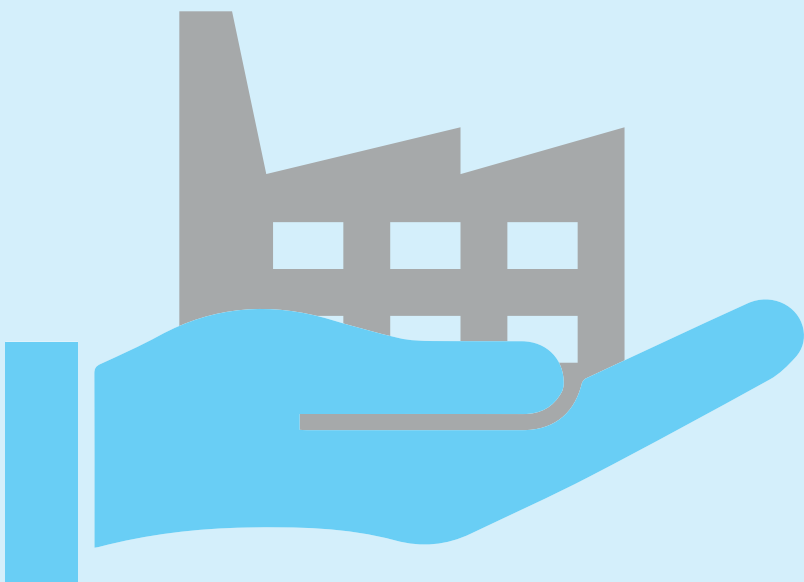
Succession in a business context generally splits into two areas – management and ownership. These are of course, very often inter-related within an SME.

Management succession is a vital pre-cursor for successful ownership succession. Many SMEs rely on their founder shareholders to lead and direct the business. Where the ownership succession plan involves selling the business, having in place a proven team which has already made the step up, or is demonstrably capable of doing so, will help attract buyers and maximise sale proceeds.

Equally, if the ownership succession plan involves passing the shares onto the next generation, the ability of a director shareholder to retire properly will require a safe pair of hands to lead the business. It is sometimes a difficult decision but the “safest” pair of hands is not necessarily within the family and separating ownership and management becomes in the best interests of the business.

At BHP we spend a lot of time with our clients advising on both management and ownership succession issues. Our consulting practice specialises in working with business owners to assess the strength of the management team, coaching and developing existing employees and where appropriate, helping recruit new senior leadership teams.

The business leaders of the Top 100 all deserve congratulations for their achievements in the past 12 months. Our own experience suggests that one of the keys to maintaining this in the longer term is to develop and regularly review a succession plan. Or in other words, succession breeds success.



2016	2015	Company name	Location	Latest accounts date	Activity	Profit before Tax 2016 £000s	Profit before Tax 2015 £000s	Turnover 2016 £000s	No of Employees 2016
1	3	Bolsover Cruise Club	Mansfield	31/03/15	Travel agency which specialises in cruise activities	6,211	4,844	10,338	111
2	8	Walker & Son (Hauliers)	Newark	30/06/15	Haulage contractors and providers of storage and warehousing facilities and property development	5,218	3,126	15,927	84
3	1	Melett Limited	Barnsley	31/05/15	Development, manufacture and supply of turbocharger repair parts	4,638	6,537	23,181	127
4	25	Silkstone Finance	Barnsley	31/01/15	Manufacture of furniture systems	4,377	2,018	25,194	184
5	17	Hamsard 3120	Rotherham	31/12/15	Manufacture and sale of cable management systems	4,193	2,306	21,979	171
6	5	Glass Recycling (UK)	Barnsley	30/09/15	Recovery and treatment of waste products	4,149	3,556	14,586	58
7	63	Bartec Auto ID	Barnsley	31/05/15	Development and manufacture of tyres	3,929	1,301	12,009	70
8	4	L Jackson & CO	Doncaster	31/08/15	Sale of ex-military vehicles, plant and machinery	3,633	3,716	8,966	9
9	10	Derbyshire Aggregates	Bakewell	31/03/16	Supply of rocks, stone and aggregates to the construction industry	3,544	2,525	17,703	53
10	9	Cathelco	Chesterfield	31/03/15	Provision of iccp and anti-fouling equipment for the marine industry through its engineering and the manufacture & supply of process control equipment	3,110	2,902	18,279	106
11		Fulcrum Group Holdings	Sheffield	31/03/15	Provision of gas connections, utility infrastructure gas and services transportation	3,085	(3,016)	6,234	129
12	6	Lion Trackhire	Worksop	31/03/15	Provision of temporary access solutions, predominantly through the supply of an aluminium based modular roadway system	3,041	3,310	15,427	132
13	54	Clee Hill Plant Holdings	Chesterfield	31/12/14	Provision of plant hire to the civil engineering industry	2,988	1,515	15,866	166
14	88	SRS Rail System (Holdings)	Chesterfield	30/04/15	Provision of specialist services to the railway industry	2,882	1,057	11,808	73
15	27	Carlton Main Brickworks	Barnsley	31/03/15	Manufacture and sale of bricks	2,814	1,980	14,322	69
16	15	Can UK Holdings	Chesterfield	28/02/15	Provision of rope access geotechnical services & special access trade services on structures such as high rise buildings and bridges	2,768	2,360	16,433	161
17	52	Ceramica Impex	Doncaster	30/09/15	Import and distribution of ceramic tiles	2,703	1,527	18,930	20
18	76	Griffingold	Sheffield	31/12/15	UPVC window manufacture	2,680	1,169	21,708	205
19	35	Dransfield Properties	Sheffield	30/09/15	Retail property development and investment	2,626	1,765	9,537	21
20	28	Wolf Safety Lamp Company (The)	Sheffield	30/06/15	Manufacture and sale of safety lamps	2,564	1,973	12,217	39
21	40	Moto Direct Holdings	Alfreton	31/12/15	Supply and distribution of motorcycle accessories	2,508	1,722	22,161	76
22	50	History & Heraldry Holdings	Rotherham	31/12/14	Gift distributor	2,481	1,540	19,892	102
23	13	Haywood And Padgett	Barnsley	31/10/14	Production of wholesale bakery products	2,432	1512	19,446	129
24	21	SCX	Sheffield	31/03/15	Design, manufacture and maintenance of materials handling and access equipment	2,380	2,192	19,678	131
25		Samuel Hodge Holdings	Sheffield	31/03/16	Gas pressure valves and dispensing equipment	2,379	975	25,558	183
26	26	Liberty Group Holdings	Sheffield	30/06/15	Manufacture, sale and hiring out of site cabins and related equipment	2,334	2,017	9,662	72
27	16	Thos.Winnard & Sons	Rotherham	31/12/14	Distribution of vehicle components	2,333	1,757	14,837	34
28	47	Robinson Healthcare Group	Worksop	30/06/15	Manufacture, marketing and distribution of personal hygiene, healthcare, veterinary products and medical devices	2,297	1,578	21,308	168
29		Carver Engineering Holdings	Doncaster	31/03/15	Provision of general engineering & fabrications	2,293	286	8,007	49
30	18	Buxton Consortium	Buxton	30/09/15	A holding company	2,288	2,248	19,856	129
31	11	Nationwide Retail Systems	Barnsley	31/12/15	Sale of cashless catering management systems	2,257	2,453	6,108	n.a.
32		Compass Engineering Holdings	Barnsley	31/12/15	Management and establishment services	2,253	n.a.	18,737	59
33	30	Charles Pugh (Holdings)	Nottingham	02/08/15	Wholesale and fitting of vehicle automotive glass	2,182	1,929	24,340	239
34	42	Go Green	Doncaster	31/12/15	Waste management brokers	2,174	1,670	19,206	71
35	20	Strawson Group Investments	Nottingham	28/02/15	Property investment	2,171	2,197	2,960	5
36	22	Paragon Property Investments	Doncaster	28/02/15	Property rental	2,136	1,287	32,155	122
37	39	Tours Abroad Group	Rotherham	31/12/15	Specialist holidays tours	2,130	1,750	32,408	119
38	14	AEW Paddock Motors	Matlock	31/12/14	Retailing of vehicle spares and property development	2,125	2,427	13,894	49
39		Dearnside Fabrications	Sheffield	31/03/16	Metal fabricators	2,030	698	13,604	102
40		Haughton Textiles	Barnsley	31/12/15	Manufacturing, processing and distribution of textile products	2,000	n.a.	21,700	229
41		H P Construction	Sheffield	31/03/16	General construction and civil engineering	1,942	452	14,231	15
42	41	C. Soar & Sons (UK)	Barnsley	30/06/15	Export of switchgear, transformers and metals	1,934	1,674	8,154	39
43		Ronald Hull Jnr.	Rotherham	31/01/16	Property investment, metal merchants, demolition and excavation contractors	1,927	1,668	19,106	130
44	19	Titan Developments	Mansfield	31/12/15	Joinery manufactures and interior contractors	1,918	2,198	10,623	31
45	31	URA Ventures	Chesterfield	31/12/15	Contract hire and sale of motor vehicles and other related services	1,916	1,854	12,113	30
46	53	Jakto Holdings	Barnsley	30/11/15	Haulage contractors, site clearance and excavation	1,910	1,521	14,113	57
47	2	Moorhen Holdings	Chesterfield	30/06/15	Roofing and cladding material manufacturers and distributors and property trading and investment	1,894	5367	24,054	50
48	67	Dialogue Group	Sheffield	31/07/15	Provision and management of interactive mobile communication services	1,858	1226	26,326	48
49	23	J.W. Sivil Holding	Dronfield	31/08/15	Construction of commercial buildings	1,855	2,133	14,057	12
50	92	Strawson Group Developments	Retford	28/02/15	Property development	1,843	1,028	4,551	14

#### Notes on Top 100 SMEs Sheffield City Region

Figures compiled by BHP, Chartered Accountants using latest published financial information at the time of carrying out this survey filed at Companies House and financial data provided by Bureau van Dijk's Fame. To qualify for inclusion, businesses must: • be an independent company OR the ultimate holding company of a UK group • be an SME, i.e. meets two of the following measures - less than 250 employees - less than £25.9m turnover per annum - less than £12.9m gross assets • not be a charity, academy, Limited Liability Partnership or listed Public Limited Company • be up-to-date in filing accounts at Companies House • be based in Sheffield City Region

2016	2015	Company name	Location	Latest accounts date	Activity	Profit before Tax 2016 £000s	Profit before Tax 2015 £000s	Turnover 2016 £000s	No of Employees 2016
51	45	Capital Refractories	Derbyshire	30/11/15	Manufacture and sale of refractory materials, ceramic cores and related products	1,815	1,647	24,630	237
52	100	Evolution Power Tools	Sheffield	31/12/14	Design and distribution of power tools and a property development project	1,811	978	25,597	67
53		Fircast	Sheffield	31/03/15	Wholesale supply and information technology service	1,799	1,593	3,790	1
54		Bessacarr Properties	Doncaster	29/02/16	Provision of foundation services to the construction industry	1,795	1,289	12,378	69
55		Nenplas Holdings	Ashbourne	31/05/15	Manufacture and distribution of extruded plastic products	1,747	1,241	15,252	138
56	12	IVY Cottage (Ackton)	Barnsley	31/03/15	Other personal service activities n.e.c	1,741	2,446	5,255	179
57	55	Heavy Duty Parts	Retford	31/12/14	Supplying of parts to commercial vehicle operators	1,660	1,503	6,961	20
58	87	D R Baling Wire Manufacturers	Sheffield	31/12/15	Manufacturers of baling wire	1,645	1,062	7,392	20
59	90	Elmsdale Estates	Sheffield	31/12/14	Property development and investment	1,643	1,056	4,417	26
60	49	Emsc Global	Sheffield	31/05/15	Design, manufacture and sale of energy saving products	1,642	1,546	11,400	83
61		Woolley Bros Holdings	Sheffield	31/12/15	Slaughter of cattle and supply of beef sides and quarters	1,634	1,866	41,778	92
62	33	Europa Engineering Group	Sheffield	31/03/16	Operation of lifting materials and mechanical handling, structural fabrication and general engineering activities	1,631	1,804	10,117	110
63		Lablogic Group Holdings	Sheffield	30/06/15	Supply of scientific data systems	1,614	721	12,006	69
64	64	Lidget Compton	Barnsley	31/03/15	Manufacture and erection of pre-cast concrete products	1,609	1,274	9,104	60
65		Price Thomas Holdings	Rotherham	31/12/15	Manufacture and sale of products to the automotive chemical trade	1,540	874	11,304	41
66	51	Magna Colours Holdings	Barnsley	30/04/15	Supplier of chemicals, dyestuffs, inks and auxiliaries to the textile industry	1,535	1,536	6,684	26
67		Pbst	Chesterfield	31/10/15	Provision of strategic document outsourcing through a multi-channel platform	1,516	1,194	12,842	102
68	48	FME Property Solutions	Sheffield	31/03/16	Property maintenance	1,511	1,434	13,198	122
69		I.Grunwerg	Sheffield	30/04/15	Import and distribution of cutlery, holloware, machinery and housewares	1,492	469	11,044	52
70		Millgate Computer Systems	Sheffield	31/07/15	Sale of computer hardware and software together with the provision of computer hardware support	1,482	1,006	40,266	90
71		QWP	Doncaster	31/10/15	Fume extraction	1,459	n.a.	4,767	26
72	58	OSL Group Holdings	Sheffield	31/12/15	Manufacture and factoring of components and services in the markets of fire and security	1,456	1,380	18,289	158
73		Roofdec	Rotherham	31/08/15	Roofing contractors	1,454	553	19,747	37
74		Mac's Transport (Northern)	Barnsley	30/04/16	Sale of commercial vehicles and the rental of residential properties	1,452	960	21,637	21
75	75	Underwood Meat (Holdings)	Rotherham	31/10/15	Catering butchers and meat distributors	1,423	1,181	45,962	249
76	98	Colortronic (U.K.)	Chesterfield	31/12/14	Manufacturers agents connection plastics industry, and the installation maintenance of this machinery	1,415	983	10,023	25
77	62	MB Group (UK)	Sheffield	30/04/15	Advertising and marketing agencies	1,411	1,311	15,583	103
78	96	E.E.Blyth & CO	Worksop	31/03/15	Trading in metals and minerals	1,395	996	15,699	68
79	61	David Nieper	Matlock	31/03/15	Manufacture and sale of lingerie	1,393	1,339	14,764	243
80		Whirlow Developments	Chesterfield	31/03/15	Providing sheltered accommodation for residents	1,381	88	7,215	254
81		Wordsworth Excavations	Barnsley	30/06/15	Site preparation for development and excavation	1,343	548	8,521	46
82		Vivid Wholesale	Sheffield	30/06/15	Sale of a variety of goods	1,337	n.a.	4,187	n.a.
83		Wcec Group	Chesterfield	30/11/15	Architectural services	1,329	479	7,728	138
84	57	Designer Contracts	Chesterfield	31/10/15	Supply and installation of carpets and household decorations to the building trade	1,325	1,396	34,113	213
85	65	Prime Focus Management	Sheffield	31/05/15	Data processing, hosting and related activities	1,321	1,262	6,829	n.a.
86		Jigsaw Foods	Mansfield	31/05/15	Manufacture and cryogenic freezing of sauces and condiments	1,320	886	21,801	139
87		Intake Developments	Barnsley	31/12/15	Operation of self service petrol filling stations	1,298	1,214	32,015	8
88		Johnson Bros (Tours)	Worksop	31/08/15	Coach and tour operators	1,281	826	10,243	143
89	93	Long Rake Spar Company (The)	Bakewell	31/03/15	Processing and sale of calcite spar and the merchandising of other decorative aggregates	1,280	1,011	15,258	56
90	60	OCF PLC	Sheffield	31/03/15	Sale of high performance computer and storage, solutions	1,243	1,357	20,625	35
91		Clear Line Holdings	Sheffield	31/03/15	Installation and maintenance of curtain wall facades for both commercial and residential premises	1,240	926	12,748	20
92		STL Distribution	Sheffield	30/06/15	Other business support service activities n.e.c	1,240	n.a.	4,094	n.a.
93		Navartis Holdings	Doncaster	31/03/16	General commercial activities	1,234	497	29,456	37
94	69	Extrudakerb (Maltby Engineering)	Doncaster	31/03/15	Civil engineering sub-contractors	1,221	925	17,404	79
95	37	Direct Trade (Yorkshire)	Doncaster	31/03/15	Manufacture and distribution of UPVC window frames, doors and conservatories	1,216	1,760	17,739	168
96		UK Egg Centre	Chesterfield	30/09/15	Import and export of egg products	1,165	900	30,163	10
97	77	Turbine Efficiency Group	Doncaster	31/12/14	Gas turbine industry supply and service	1,162	112	12,464	61
98		X-Cel Superturn (GB)	Sheffield	31/03/16	Manufacture of precision engineering components	1,153	4,488	20,336	163
99	83	P&D Specialist Services (Holdings)	Chesterfield	30/04/15	Electrical contractors	1,152	1,110	8,679	43
100		MMD Mineral Sizing (Europe)	Alfreton	28/02/15	Sale of special purpose mining machinery and equipment	1,150	969	6,862	19

For financial periods of more than or fewer than 52 weeks, the figures have been annualised on a pro-rata basis. Private company information can be incomplete; in preparing this table every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that no qualifying companies have been omitted. In certain circumstances the compilers of the table have made exceptions to the qualification criteria and their decision is final. The latest set of filed accounts (at the time of the search) has been used. Where this set has been included within previously published surveys these accounts have been omitted. Research finalised 30/09/2016.

Nominations for next year's table are welcome at [info@bhp.co.uk](mailto:info@bhp.co.uk).

# Entrepreneur or reality TV star – the choice is yours!

This year's Top 100 survey appears at a time when the television comfort blanket of the Great British Bake Off and Strictly Come Dancing is invaded on a Thursday night by The Apprentice.

At its best The Apprentice shows the strength of entrepreneurial spirit and endeavour in UK PLC – innovative, fleet of foot and mind, adaptive and yet decisive. At its worst it exhibits all that is bad about the corporate world, as each of the individuals fight, despite the best efforts of Karren Brady and the seriously scary Claude Littner, for Boardroom survival with a directness and viciousness that would make Charles Darwin proud.

Looking at those firms in our Top 100 survey it is clear that their success is testament to development of business plans and strategies that are as far removed from those of The Apprentice as physically possible.

The continued slow sustained growth out of recession would suggest that now is a time to develop a similar strategy for your business, one that is fit for purpose and future proof, and in doing so ensures that:

- It is framed by good corporate governance and housekeeping – the easiest way to punch holes in profit growth or wealth creation. Get this right now and you'll protect what you have created.
- It is tax efficient – from April 2020 the rate of Corporation Tax will be 17%, the most competitive in the G20. Couple that with the availability of Entrepreneurs' Relief to reduce Capital Gains Tax to 10% and business property relief at 100% from Inheritance Tax and UK PLC starts to look like a tax haven.

- It considers the structure of your business – would creation of a group structure achieve critical mass and economies of scale whereby the value of the whole is more than the parts? Alternatively, if this is not case then perhaps a Section 110 reconstruction or capital reduction demerger could be used to split up the various parts of the business such that the sum of the individual parts is worth more than the whole, or in the case of a capital reduction even return value tax efficiently to the shareholders.
- It considers Employee Share Ownership – would the introduction of this for key employees linked to performance targets and corporate goals enhance overall value?

All critical strategic decisions to consider with the help of your advisers – the alternative, a trip to the Boardroom, and in the words of Sir Alan, You're Fired.



**Chris Humphreys**  
[chris.humphreys@bhp.co.uk](mailto:chris.humphreys@bhp.co.uk)



# Soft or hard – does it make any difference?

The media has a lot to answer for in raising the matter of Brexit on a daily basis – can't they find anything better to do?

Do they think we're stupid? We know the previous government under Cameron and Osborn hadn't given a thought as to how we would negotiate our withdrawal from the EU, but nor had the 27 other member countries of the EU, so what is the panic? Of course uncertainty can cause concern, not least to the exchange rates, which has provided us with the single most intriguing conflict – great for exporters, but shocking for lovers of Marmite!

Anyone involved in international trade understands the consequences of a weaker pound: greater competitiveness in selling to overseas markets allied to an increase in the cost of goods purchased overseas. The UK is very vulnerable to the latter because of the sheer volume of goods both in raw materials and finished goods we import, but so far the only outcry has been Marmite!

However, through all the so called uncertainty, other than political reporters, the rest of us just have to get on with our day to day jobs of running businesses and it is here that the markets have surprised everyone:

- Highest employment figures ever
- Growth of 0.5% for the quarter following Brexit
- 2.3% growth for the year
- FTSE at new all-time highs

And what about the 'hard' versus 'soft' Brexit – well how do you like your boiled eggs, because this is a more pertinent question until we exercise Article 50 at the end of March '17.

The financial markets in London fear a hard Brexit because of the risk of losing its 'passport' status to open dealing with EU markets, but will the manufacturing sector face potential tariffs to the goods they export to the EU? This is highly unlikely when one considers the importance of the UK market to the other EU economies, not least Germany with our's being the biggest market in the EU for their cars and France with our's being the biggest market in the EU for their wine. As for collaborative projects

such as building Airbus aircraft, will tariffs be imposed on BAE and Rolls Royce – unlikely.

We must remain pragmatic about the whole affair and take it as an opportunity to review our own business targets and consider growth with the world outside Europe. Already 14 countries, inc. China, Brazil, India, Australia and Singapore, are queuing at the door to strike trade agreements with us and we must also use our historical connections with member countries of the Commonwealth, all English speaking, to renew levels of trade not seen since before we joined the EU.

What is of greater concern than the speculation over Brexit is the government's clamp down on support for exporting companies. Quite rightly the UKTI has been brought to book and had its activities cut through its ineffectiveness in delivering the level of growth in exports synonymous with the funding it has had over many years. As a result however, it is us who suffer more because there has been a complete withdrawal of regional support for participating at overseas exhibitions, for overseas group trade missions and even country visits. Yet the UKTI has been re-badged to now be called DIT (Department for International Trade) to make it look as though there is going to be a new approach with new initiatives to achieve the growth in international trade.

Meanwhile the spurious targets set by Cameron's government of doubling exports to £1 trillion by 2020 and increasing the number of exporting companies by 100,000 is still on the agenda! For the Sheffield City Region alone, this equates to over 2,500 new exporting companies at the rate of 50 every 3 months to meet the target. As such, programmes are still being devised with a view to reaching these targets – ludicrous!

They are not alert to the change in mood of many overseas countries who view Brexit as an opportunity to mutually increase trade between us. The ITF has led missions to both Alberta and Berlin in recent months and the message was clear

that they wanted to establish direct closer links with not just the UK, but specifically the Sheffield City Region because of the expertise it has in advanced manufacturing and new technologies. There was even a recent inward visit to Sheffield from Northern Ontario which had identified the SCR as potential partners and opened the door for further dialogue. Canada is definitely one country we are keen to increase links with the UK and even though they have finally agreed on a trade agreement with the EU, which one assumes we are still party to, it will be much easier to strike our own agreement with them, not least because we won't have to worry about Wallonia!

Soft or hard Brexit, the message is clear, we need to actively pursue developing links between all these different regions, from which our companies must inevitably benefit from the opportunities presented to them. But sadly, as usual, we will have to continue doing it in spite of government and public sector support.

As the only independent forum supporting and promoting growth in exports for its members, the ITF will continue to assess the most appropriate markets and sectors for them, so join us at the ITF to see how we can help you.

**William Beckett,**  
**Chairman**  
**International Trade Forum**



# Gunning for growth!

It is interesting to see many new additions to this year's list. It shows that there is growth potential out there, across all industries. Equally many have jumped up the rankings since 2015.

As a business owner, it is often difficult to find the time to take a step back and consider growth opportunities in front of you, or know how to tackle current barriers to growth.

It is imperative for the business owner to envisage such growth, it is also important for that vision to be shared and understood by your management team and passed to all staff members within the business. Often, the correct management team is already in place, but may need a boost to step up in to more senior roles to assist in driving your growth strategy. It may be that the requirement is to support and train your management team and enable them to develop their skill set to implement sales processes and growth plans effectively.

Other specific areas that may require improvement are; succession planning, in family and non-family businesses, operational improvements, identifying new market opportunities and all of the people issues that encompass all elements of the business.

Our aim at BHP Consulting is to enable you to achieve your aspirations by assisting you with implementing solutions to such challenges. Our corporate planning process is uniquely designed to assist you by undertaking various stages of consultation, review, solution and implementation.

Our team members have all owned, led and grown successful businesses and bring with them considerable personal experience in overcoming the challenges most businesses face today. Often, by seeking the advice of someone external to the day to day running of the business, it provides an objective view and new solutions or angles to growth challenges.

If you want to hear more about our experienced offering, and how we can help you secure a firm position in the table then please contact me.



**Mark Roberts**  
[mark.roberts@bhp.co.uk](mailto:mark.roberts@bhp.co.uk)

