

## Key Global Indices

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	Last Close	1D% Chg	5D% Chg	1M% Chg	1Y% Chg		Last Close	1D% Chg	5D% Chg	1M% Chg	1Y% Chg
FTSE 100	7,429.8 <span style="color: green;">↑</span>	0.4%	2.3%	1.3%	5.9%	S&P 500	3,153.6 <span style="color: green;">↑</span>	0.4%	1.5%	3.8%	17.6%
FTSE 250	20,954.3 <span style="color: green;">↑</span>	0.4%	2.3%	3.7%	12.3%	DJIA	28,164.0 <span style="color: green;">↑</span>	0.2%	1.2%	4.0%	13.8%
DJSTOXX 50	3,362.5 <span style="color: green;">↑</span>	0.4%	1.4%	2.4%	15.1%	Nasdaq	8,705.2 <span style="color: green;">↑</span>	0.7%	2.1%	4.6%	22.9%
FTSEurofirst 300	1,603.0 <span style="color: green;">↑</span>	0.3%	1.4%	2.4%	13.8%	Nikkei 225*	23,430.6 <span style="color: red;">↓</span>	-0.03%	1.2%	2.5%	6.8%
German DAX 30	13,287.1 <span style="color: green;">↑</span>	0.4%	1.0%	2.7%	17.5%	Shanghai Composite*	2,894.3 <span style="color: red;">↓</span>	-0.3%	-0.9%	-2.6%	12.8%
France CAC 40	5,926.8 <span style="color: red;">↓</span>	-0.05%	0.6%	3.4%	18.9%	DJIA at London close	28,130.5				

\*Time - GMT 4:30

## FTSE 100



## UK Market Snapshot

UK markets finished higher yesterday, supported by gains in mining and tobacco related stocks. British American Tobacco gained 3.2%, after it forecasted annual revenue growth and operating profit to be at the upper end of its long-term target. Grainger added 2.1%, after the company reported a jump in its pretax profit for the full year and raised its final dividend. Bellway rose 1.5%, after a leading broker raised its target price on the stock to 3,750.0p from 3,500.0p. On the flipside, Compass Group dropped 2.1%, after a top broker lowered its target price on the stock to 2,000.0p from 2,240.0p and downgraded its rating to 'Hold' from 'Buy'. Cairn Energy lost 0.3%, following a deal to sell its Norwegian subsidiary, Capricorn Norge, to Solveig Gas for \$100.0 million. The FTSE 100 advanced 0.4%, to close at 7,429.8, while the FTSE 250 rose 0.4%, to end at 20,954.3.

## US Market Snapshot

US markets closed in the green yesterday, boosted by gains in technology and consumer discretionary sector stocks. Box surged 11.5%, after its third quarter revenue topped market expectations. Under Armour climbed 6.2%, following a rating upgrade on the stock to 'Strong Buy' from 'Outperform'. Autodesk advanced 5.5%, after reporting higher than expected revenue and earnings for the third quarter. On the contrary, Dell Technologies tumbled 5.4%, after its third quarter revenue missed analysts' estimates and lowered its annual revenue outlook. Deere declined 4.3%, after the company slashed its annual net income guidance, due to challenging market conditions. Boeing lost 1.5%, after the Federal Aviation Administration stated that it would be the sole issuer of certificates for any newly manufactured 737 Max jet before delivery to airlines. The S&P 500 gained 0.4%, to settle at 3,153.6. The DJIA rose 0.2%, to settle at 28,164.0, while the NASDAQ added 0.7%, to close at 8,705.2.

## DJIA



## Europe Market Snapshot

European markets finished mostly higher yesterday, led by gains in banking and technology sector stocks. Chipmakers, STMicroelectronics, Logitech International and ams rose 0.3%, 0.4% and 1.6%, respectively. Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken advanced 3.4%, after the Swedish bank dismissed market reports that accounts at the bank had links to suspected money laundering in Estonia. Roundtown gained 2.6%, after the company reported a rise in its profit for the third quarter and raised its annual profit forecast. On the flipside, Klepierre dropped 2.7%, after a top broker downgraded its rating on the stock to 'Hold' from 'Buy'. Deutsche Lufthansa fell 0.1%, following a deal to sell the European operations of its catering unit, LSG, to Switzerland-based Gategroup. The FTSEurofirst 300 index gained 0.3%, to settle at 1,603.0. The German DAX Xetra rose 0.4%, to settle at 13,287.1, while the French CAC-40 marginally fell to close at 5,926.8.

## Asia Market Snapshot

Markets in Asia are trading lower this morning. In Japan, NTT Data, Pacific Metals and Ebara have declined 2.0%, 2.2% and 2.5%, respectively. Meanwhile, Rakuten, Kyocera and Panasonic have risen 1.8%, 2.0% and 2.7%, respectively. In Hong Kong, China Mobile, China Unicorn Hong Kong and Techtronic Industries have dropped 1.6%, 3.0% and 4.3%, respectively. Meanwhile, PetroChina, Sino Land and Tencent Holdings have gained 0.8%, 1.2% and 1.4%, respectively. In South Korea, Woongjin Coway, Celltrion and NCSoft have fallen 1.4%, 1.6% and 1.7%, respectively. Meanwhile, AMOREPACIFIC, E-MART and LG Display have advanced 3.1%, 3.2% and 5.7%, respectively. The Nikkei 225 index is trading marginally lower at 23,430.6. The Hang Seng index is trading 0.1% down at 26,939.5, while the Kospi index is trading 0.2% lower at 2,124.0.

## Contents

Key Corporate Releases	2
Commodity, Currency & Bitcoin	3
Sector Performers & Key Economic News	4
Share Tips, Bids & Rumours and Newspaper Summary	5-8

## Key Corporate Releases Today

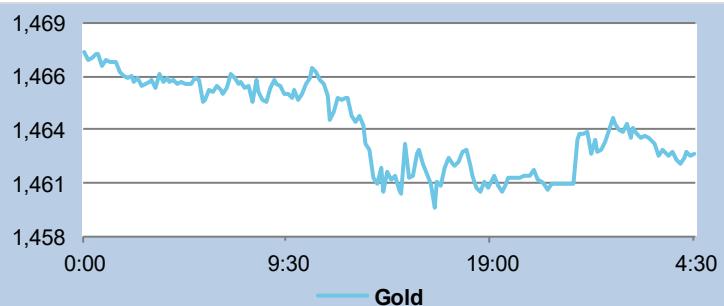
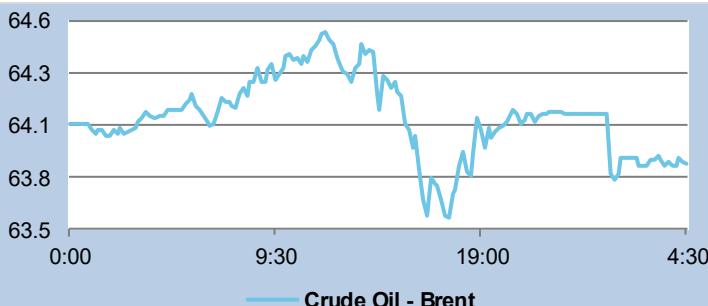
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### UK

Company Name	Results	Currency	Full Year Consensus	
			Estimated EPS	Estimated Revenue (Mn)
Virgin Money UK Plc	Final	GBP	0.25	1,643.56
Motorpoint group Plc	Interim	GBP	0.19	1,085.00
Mothercare Plc	Interim	GBP	(0.03)	483.50
DiscoverIE Group Plc	Interim	GBP	0.29	474.00
Jadestone Energy Inc	Interim	USD	0.13	354.00
Pan African Resources Plc	Interim	USD	0.03	303.43
Amigo Holdings Plc	Interim	GBP	0.17	287.67
Urban & Civic Plc	Final	GBP	0.03	168.00
OPG Power Ventures Plc	Interim	GBP	0.04	126.00
PayPoint Plc	Interim	GBP	0.65	121.80
XPS Pensions Group Plc	Interim	GBP	0.10	117.00
Ince Group Plc/The	Interim	GBP	0.24	102.50
Redcentric Plc	Interim	GBP	0.05	92.35
Premier Miton Group Plc	Final	GBP	0.14	48.20
AEW UK REIT Plc	Interim	GBP	0.08	17.10
Maestranco Group Plc	Final	GBP	(0.03)	0.89
AorTech International Plc	Interim	USD	(0.12)	0.58
James Latham Plc	Interim	GBP	-	-
Hornby Plc	Interim	GBP	-	-
Beowulf Mining Plc	Q3	GBP	-	-
Sutton Harbour Group Plc	Interim	GBP	-	-
Bluebird Merchant Ventures Ltd	Final	USD	-	-
Coral Products Plc	Interim	GBP	-	-
Hardy Oil & Gas Plc	Interim	GBP	(0.03)	-
Craven House Capital Plc	Final	GBP	-	-

Note: All Estimates are for Full Year

## Commodity, Currency and Bitcoin

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### Commodity

- At 0430GMT today, Brent crude oil one month futures contract is trading 0.30% or \$0.19 lower at \$63.87 per barrel. Yesterday, the contract declined 0.33% or \$0.21, to settle at \$64.06 per barrel, after the Energy Information Administration reported that the US crude oil inventories advanced by 1.6 million barrels in the week ended 22 November 2019. Meanwhile, Baker Hughes reported that the US oil rigs dropped by 3 to 668 for the week ended 27 November 2019.
- At 0430GMT today, Gold futures contract is trading 0.63% or \$9.10 higher at \$1462.50 per ounce. Yesterday, the contract declined 0.47% or \$6.90, to settle at \$1453.40 per ounce, amid rising optimism over the US and China partial trade deal.



### Currency

- At 0430GMT today, the EUR is trading 0.05% higher against the USD at \$1.1005, ahead of the Euro-zone consumer confidence index data for November, along with the German inflation data for November, due in a few hours. Yesterday, the EUR weakened 0.2% versus the USD, to close at \$1.0999. In economic news, the US economy grew more than expected in 3Q 2019, whereas the nation's durable goods orders surprisingly rose in October. Meanwhile, the US pending home sales fell more than expected in October.
- At 0430GMT today, the GBP is trading marginally higher against the USD at \$1.2927. Yesterday, the GBP strengthened 0.43% versus the USD, to close at \$1.2921.



### Bitcoin

- At 0430GMT today, BTC is trading 0.46% lower against the USD at \$7515.02. Yesterday, BTC advanced 6.14% against the USD to close at \$7550.07. In major news, the Indian government is working on a National Level Blockchain Framework to expand the technology's adoption in the country. In a key development, Afghanistan's Ministry of Public Health has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with blockchain company FantomOperations to incorporate blockchain technology into the country's healthcare sector.

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### UK Top Sector Performers

Sector	Current Price	1D Change	1D (%) Change	1M (%) Change	1Y (%) Change
Automobiles & Parts	5124.13	267.76	5.5%	25.1%	-33.2%
Tobacco	32624.66	965.94	3.1%	9.8%	1.3%
Industrial Metals	3519.72	81.12	2.4%	-1.5%	-18.1%
Life Insurance	7697.56	152.19	2.0%	0.1%	3.9%
Fixed Line Telecommunications	2267.45	42.80	1.9%	-4.0%	-25.3%

### UK Worst Sector Performers

Sector	Current Price	1D Change	1D (%) Change	1M (%) Change	1Y (%) Change
Aerospace & Defence	5020.24	-76.83	-1.5%	1.8%	8.4%
Oil & Gas Producers	8175.74	-62.20	-0.8%	-4.6%	-6.1%
Mining	18461.95	-87.54	-0.5%	1.9%	15.3%
Electricity	7693.42	-30.88	-0.4%	0.6%	11.4%
Chemicals	12976.12	-42.64	-0.3%	2.5%	-6.5%

## Key Economic News

### US annualised GDP rose more than expected in 3Q 2019

In the US, the second estimate of annualised gross domestic product (GDP) climbed 2.10% on a QoQ basis in 3Q 2019, compared to an advance of 2.00% in the previous quarter. Markets were expecting the annualised GDP to advance 1.90%.

### US pending home sales dropped more than expected in October

In the US, pending home sales eased 1.70% on a MoM basis in October, compared to an advance of 1.50% in the previous month. Market expectation was for pending home sales to drop 0.10%.

### US Chicago Fed purchasing managers index rose in November

In the US, the Chicago Fed purchasing managers index climbed to a level of 46.30 in November, lower than market expectations of an advance to a level of 47.00. In the prior month, the index had recorded to a reading of 43.20.

### US durable goods orders surprisingly climbed in October

In the US, the preliminary durable goods orders unexpectedly rose 0.60% on a MoM basis in October, higher than market expectations for a drop of 0.70%. In the previous month, durable goods orders had registered a drop of 1.20%.

### Fed's Beige Book: US economy growing at a 'modest pace'

According to the US Federal Reserve's (Fed) latest Beige Book report, the US economy expanded modestly from October through mid-November, with the outlook for growth being encouraging. Meanwhile, the report indicated that businesses across all regions were having to deal with continued worker shortages.

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## Share Tips, Bids and Rumours

- [The Daily Telegraph \(Questor share tips\)](#): "Buy" Asos; "Hold" Capita.
- [The Times \(Tempus share tips\)](#): "Hold" Informa; "Avoid" Renewi.
- [Daily Mail](#): The owners of four High Street chains - Jessops, Iceland, New Look and Virgin Active gyms - have signalled their wish to sell their stakes.
- [The Daily Telegraph](#): Uber founder Travis Kalanick has cashed in a bumper \$1.7 billion of his stock in November, as the ride-sharing company braces for onslaught from regulators.
- [The Times](#): Facebook has bought Beat Games, a small virtual reality games studio in Prague.
- [Financial Times](#): Deutsche Bank has offloaded a portfolio of emerging market debt derivatives to Goldman Sachs.

## Newspaper Summary

### The Times

#### Fraudsters target RBS's digital bank Bó:

The new digital bank set up by Royal Bank of Scotland to compete with rival financial technology groups has become a target for fraudsters.

#### Amigo told to spell out risks of guarantor loans:

Amigo Holdings has been ordered to explain more carefully the risks that people are taking on when they agree to guarantee a loan for a family member or friend.

#### FAA to check every Boeing 737 Max airliner:

The entry back into service of the Boeing 737 Max will take longer than expected after regulators demanded individual inspections of hundreds of aircraft.

#### Bank Chiefs face pay and pension cuts:

The pay and pensions of heads at three of Britain's biggest banks are to be cut in the not-too-distant future.

#### Pressure Technologies found guilty of worker's death:

A Sheffield precision engineer and producer of high-pressure gas storage cylinders to Royal Navy submarines and Royal Air Force aircraft has been found guilty of the death at work of one of its maintenance engineers.

#### Boohoo on an upswing in the race for downloads:

Black Friday, the start of the biggest shopping weekend of the year, is tomorrow, but you're unlikely to see dozens of millennials fighting over a 50in television in your local shopping centre any more. Many won't even be hunting for deals on websites. Instead, they'll be scrolling through apps on their smartphones — an increasingly important platform for retailers.

#### West coast train operator Avanti puts best foot forward:

Train services on the

west coast main line are to be rebranded under the name Avanti from next month when First Group and Trenitalia replace Virgin Trains as the holder of the franchise.

**Soaring costs for pubs push Marston's to a loss:** The impact of soaring costs on pub profits sent Marston's tumbling to a full-year loss of £20 million after impairments and writedowns totalling £121 million.

**Informa not making an exhibition of itself:** Just because it's big doesn't mean it's going to get noticed. Informa is a heavyweight beast of the FTSE 100 that weighs in with a market value of £10 billion, but its activities — even multibillion-pound takeovers — seem to slip under the radar among so much other hubbub.

**Zopa backer delays results over value:** Uncertainty over the value of Zopa has caused one of its backers to delay the publication of its results.

**HBOS compensation report delayed for a second time:** A review into a contentious Lloyds Banking Group compensation scheme for business owners damaged by a banking fraud has been delayed for the second time.

**Quindell shareholders go to court seeking compensation:** Burnt investors in Quindell have pressed the starting button on a lawsuit accusing the former stock market darling, now called Watchstone, of disadvantaging investors by misreporting its finances in its glory days.

**Grainger building up profits from rent:** Britain's largest listed residential landlord has announced a 30% increase in annual pre-tax profits on the back of rising rents and new developments.

**Facebook feels the force with Beat Games takeover:** Facebook has bought a small virtual reality games studio in Prague as it tries to boost the appeal of its headsets in a relatively niche market.

### Financial Times

#### Rio Tinto and First Quantum in Peru mine talks:

Canadian miner First Quantum Minerals has held discussions with Rio Tinto about a deal to develop La Granja, one of Peru's biggest untapped copper deposits.

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#### Citigroup's Jane Fraser to receive \$12.5 million pay grant:

Jane Fraser, the new President of Citigroup and next in line to be the bank's Chief Executive, will receive a \$12.5 million pay grant "in recognition of [her] recent promotion...and to enhance leadership continuity and management succession planning".

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#### Barclays to cut Chief Executive's pension allowance:

Barclays will join the other big U.K. banks in cutting the pension allowance of its Chief Executive, marking a significant win for investors who have pushed the industry to bring the perk into line with benefits for the wider workforce.

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#### Ex-Barclays banker denies devising Qatari side deal:

Roger Jenkins, a former top Barclays banker and the "gatekeeper" of the bank's relationship with Qatar, has denied devising a side deal that prosecutors say dishonestly funnelled £322 million in secret fees demanded by the Gulf state and its prime minister.

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**Fisher Investments' assets climb despite controversy:** The controversy over lewd and sexist remarks by billionaire asset manager Ken Fisher has not deterred some investors from putting more money with the firm that bears his name.

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**Deutsche Bank offloads assets to Goldman in restructuring:** Deutsche Bank has offloaded a portfolio of emerging market debt derivatives to Goldman Sachs, as Germany's biggest bank rids itself of billions of euros of assets as part of a radical restructuring.

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**RBS launches Bó as rival to digital bank start-ups:** Royal Bank of Scotland has opened its new digital bank Bó after almost two years of preparations in an effort to compete with start-ups such as Monzo and Starling.

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**Ant Financial builds \$1 billion start-up investment fund:** Ant Financial is building a roughly \$1 billion investment fund to back start-ups across south-east Asia and India, as Alibaba's financial technology arm looks to expand its reach across the region.

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**Elliott says Capgemini's €3.6 billion bid for Altran is too low:** Activist hedge fund Elliott has denounced a proposed €3.6 billion acquisition of engineering group Altran Technologies as too cheap, as it pushes for a higher offer from larger rival Capgemini.

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**Lloyds to cut Chief Executive's pay by £220,000:** Lloyds Banking Group is planning to cut the pay of its Chief Executive by more than £220,000 while spending £20 million on pay rises for the rest of its staff, as the bank moves to address criticism of its generous executive pensions policy.

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**France's Natixis suspends senior trader in NY:** French bank Natixis, which has been shaken by questions over its business model and risk management, has suspended a senior trader at its New York subsidiary.

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**Corbyn claims dossier shows NHS at risk from U.S. trade deal:** Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn claimed that leaked U.K. government documents prove the National Health Service will be "on the table" and "up for sale" if Boris Johnson concludes a post-Brexit trade deal with the U.S.

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**Tata Steel confirms 1,000 jobs will go in U.K.:** Tata Steel has confirmed that it will cut 1,000 U.K. jobs as the company forges ahead with transforming its European business.

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**Rolls-Royce suffers another blow to credit rating:** Rolls-Royce faces a longer haul to fulfil its ambition to return to a blue-chip single-A credit rating, after Standard & Poor's downgraded the aero-engine maker to one notch above junk, its second reduction in three months.

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**Deere slashes profit forecasts on farm industry pain:** John Deere has delivered a gloomy outlook for profits next year, as the woes of the U.S. farming industry catch up with the biggest maker of agricultural equipment.

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**Bidding war for Saks Fifth Avenue owner Hudson's Bay heats up:** One of the largest shareholders in the Canadian department store group that owns Saks Fifth Avenue has made a competing bid to acquire the company, calling a bid led by its Chairman "inadequate".

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**Iceland and New Look set to change hands again:** Iceland Foods and New Look are set for yet another sale as South African conglomerate Brait revealed plans to dispose of its stakes in both U.K. retailers within five years.

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**Thomas Cook collapse hits profits at On the Beach:** Online travel agent On the Beach said profits fell by more than a quarter in its last financial year as it struggled to contain the impact of British package holiday group Thomas Cook's collapse.

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**Man City stake sale breaks valuation record for a sports group:** Manchester City's owner has agreed to sell a \$500 million stake to Silver Lake in a deal that breaks a record in sports valuations and fuels the football group's international expansion.

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**BAT warns e-cigarette sales growth to hit low end of target:** British American Tobacco, the maker of Dunhill and Lucky Strike cigarettes, has warned that a looming crackdown on e-cigarettes will hit revenues this year even as its increased income from traditional tobacco.

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**Nasdaq on track to steal NYSE's IPO crown:** Nasdaq's listings business is on course to eclipse that of bitter rival the New York Stock Exchange for just the second year since the dotcom bubble.

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**Telefónica to unwind sprawling telecoms empire:** Telefónica has moved to unwind its sprawling global telecoms network after the Spanish company revealed a major overhaul of its business that leaves its future in Latin America in doubt.

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**Elliott suffers German court blow over Kabel Deutschland:** Elliott Management has suffered a significant setback after the hedge fund failed to convince a court that Vodafone should have paid more than €10.7 billion to buy Germany's largest cable operator Kabel Deutschland.

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**South African Airways close to collapse:** South Africa's state-owned flag carrier is on the brink of financial collapse after it paid only half of staff salaries this month and struggled to secure funds to survive.

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**Oil tanker group Frontline resumes dividend after two years:** Frontline declared its first dividend in more than two years as the Norwegian oil tanker group benefited from an increase in shipping rates.

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**Lex:**

**U.K. CEO pensions: high-hanging fruit:** Under pressure over pay, companies with

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big perks for retirement are making them less perky.

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**Elliott/Capgemini: twin spin:** Activist investor claims Altran's head is not getting best value for shareholders.

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**Green finance: credit check:** With U.S. regulators left on the sidelines, EU benchmarks could well be adopted globally.

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#### Lombard:

**BAT's tobacco strength buys some time in smoking's decline:** Judging by a recent trip to the theatre, the only place that people can still smoke in comfort these days is the West End stage. So the fact that British American Tobacco has just reported "a good performance from combustibles, with strong price mix and share gains" is remarkable.

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## The Daily Telegraph

**Future raises eyebrows in City as head sells £14 million of stock:** Future is this year's stock market darling, the publisher everyone wants to own after it defied a tough media market to treble in value. Yet a notable exception has emerged in the surprising shape its own Chief Executive.

**Primark owner could face investor revolt after pay policy is criticised:** Primark faces the prospect of a shareholder revolt next week over a bonus scheme which could hand head George Weston up to £7 million.

**Anger over start-up's anti-Conservative adverts plastered on London Underground:** A tech firm has sparked fury for attacking the Conservatives in the run-up to the General Election after plastering political adverts across London.

**China's latest coal mania is alarming but green technology has already won the battle that matters:** No further coal plants should be built anywhere in the world ever again. The great majority of existing plants should be phased out within fifteen years.

**British entrepreneurs hit by Trump's America First approach to visas:** Foreign entrepreneurs setting up businesses in the U.S. have become the latest victims of Donald Trump's "buy American and hire

American" policy, with British business leaders particularly affected.

**Office wars escalate as Xerox goes hostile with \$33 billion bid for HP:** Activist investor Carl Icahn appears to be pulling the strings as Xerox goes hostile with a \$33.5 billion bid for its bigger rival HP

**Ross McEwan faces new test Down Under as bank heads' heads keep rolling:** Ross McEwan graduated from one of the toughest jobs in British banking this year – calling time on six years leading the taxpayer-owned Royal Bank of Scotland through a long and painful turnaround.

**Apple condemned by Kiev after re-drawing Crimean border to meet Russian demands:** Apple has re-drawn the border between Russia and the U.K. rained on the Crimean Peninsula, meeting demands from Russian politicians to recognise its hold on the territory.

#### The Questor Column:

**Questor: the British tech firm whose systems are 'better than anything Amazon has':** The firm has ambitious overseas expansion plans but problems at key warehouses in Europe and America resulted in two profit warnings and a collapse in the share price from £77.30 in March last year to £31.40 at yesterday's close. "A lot of British retailers struggle overseas because they don't know what products work in foreign markets, but this was a matter of operational efficiency," he said. "The warehouse problems had a severe effect on profitability: global margins fell from 8% to 2%." In fact, what sets Asos apart from traditional clothing retailers is that it doesn't even try to predict what its young fashion-conscious buyers will like: instead, it uses its technology, some of the most advanced in the world in this area, to detect buying trends and respond to them instantly. "Asos makes full use of the data it collects to see if something isn't selling and switch the emphasis to something that is," Mr Hassan said. "This way you don't tie up money in things that aren't shifting. If you can do this quickly enough you don't need to try to predict what will be fashionable, unlike traditional retailers such as M&S. Not only is this no easy task, as different manufacturers tend to mean slightly different things by "size 10", for example, but it has a major influence on profitability because if customers can get the right size first time there will be fewer returns and less "over-ordering" (buying the same item in

various sizes and returning the sizes which don't fit). He also praised the company's broader business model. "It sees itself as a 'single point of contact' for its key demographic, people in their 20s," he said. "To be able to sell them almost everything it has teamed up with about 900 other brands, including Nike and Adidas, which account for 60% of sales. It's the Amazon model: a retail portal for style and clothes. You get a bigger share of customers' wallets than if you just sell your own brand." "It will make about £3 billion of sales this year. Margin improvement and sales growth should imply about £500 million in operating profits in three or four years, compared with £35 million last time. That would put the shares on a very low multiple, so they could double or even treble from here." Questor says, "Buy".

## Daily Mail

**Aston Martin rally motors on with shares surging 10.7% as new £158,000 SUV model wins fans:** Aston has pinned hopes of a revival on the £158,000 DBX, with the typical target customer seen by the company as a 40-something Californian working mother called Charlotte. The James Bond favourite surged 10.7%, or 56.6p, to close at 586.8p last night - and its shares have risen by a third since it launched its first SUV a week ago.

**High St chains Jessops, Iceland, New Look and Virgin Active gyms are all up for grabs:** The owners of the four chains have all signalled their wish to sell. Peter Jones, one of the stars of TV show Dragons' Den and the owner of Jessops, is reportedly in talks with potential buyers.

**Trump's defence Chief in court fight to back £4.7 billion sale of U.K. satellite firm Inmarsat to private equity consortium:** The U.S. Secretary of Defense, Mark Esper (pictured), is to intervene in a High Court case which will decide whether the sale of the British satellite telecommunications company can go ahead.

**Sofa chain ScS blames Brexit and election uncertainty for sales slump:** Sofa chain ScS has seen order numbers decline in the past four months with sales remaining under pressure amid the Brexit deadlock and in the run up to the election.

**Pepsi and J20-maker Britvic bemoan washout year in France but vows Christmas offensive against Coca-Cola:** Group profit slumped by 24% to £110

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million as it wrote down the value of some assets in France that are now set for disposal.

## The Scottish Herald

**North Sea job numbers increase as oil price rise lifts sector:** A majority of North Sea oil services firms have increased employee numbers in the last year amid the recovery in the area and diversification into related sectors such as renewable energy, a closely watched survey has found.

**Govan Law Centre to make Supreme Court bid in Serco lock-change case:** When the Court of Session ruled earlier this month that services company Serco had acted lawfully in seeking to evict a group of asylum seekers by changing the locks on their homes, Govan Law Centre's principal solicitor Mike Dally said it was "a truly sad day for human rights law in Scotland".

**£65 million loan will help City of London green projects:** Aberdeen Standard Investments has lent £65 million to the City of London Corporation to back a series of capital projects.

## The Scotsman

**Edinburgh traveltech Criton looks to scale with new advisory board:** Edinburgh travel tech firm Criton has unveiled the addition of a high-profile advisory board as it looks to scale in the U.K. and internationally.

**Cairn offloads Norwegian arm in \$100 million deal:** Cairn Energy, the Edinburgh-headquartered oil explorer and producer, is putting an end to owning assets in Norway by inking a \$100 million (£78 million) deal to offload oilfield operator Capricorn Norge.

**Islay brewery doubles sales after grant boost:** An Islay brewer has doubled its turnover and rebranded after being given funding and specialist support by Business Gateway.

**Aberdeen oil and gas supplier pushes into South American market:** Drilling equipment supplier Deep Casing Tools (DCT) has cemented its focus on the South American market by partnering with a Brazilian consultancy.

**DWF advises on Partick Thistle sale to Euromillions winner Colin Weir:** DWF's Scottish corporate team has advised on the sale of Partick Thistle FC to Euromillions winner Colin Weir.

**Brewin Dolphin boosts funds under management in 'resilient' year:** Wealth manager Brewin Dolphin has seen an annual rise in its funds under management, pointing to a "resilient" year.

**Iomart revenues jump after investment in sales arm:** Iomart, the Glasgow-based cloud computing and web hosting company, has recorded a jump in revenues on the back of investment in its sales functions.

**Glasgow contractor LDC turns over £19 million in first year:** Glasgow contractor Linear Design & Construct (LDC) has turned over £19 million in its inaugural year of trading, landing contracts with clients including KPMG.

**Scots firms urged to up social media sales after lagging behind global peers:** Scottish businesses are being urged to step up their selling via social media sites and apps to avoid missing out on vital sales – after a survey found that they lag behind both the U.K. and global averages.

**Pioneering carbon storage scheme could be in place in Scotland by 2024:** A ground-breaking new project that will prevent millions of tonnes of climate-warming carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere and permanently lock it up in undersea rock formations off the Scottish coast could be up and running within the next five years.

## Risk Warning & Disclaimer

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