

# Business

## MarketUpdate

FTSE 100: dn 11.29 at 4494.90  
 FTSE 250: dn 8.72 at 7749.86  
 GOLD FIX: 981.75 (\$/oz)  
 SILVER FIX: 967.96 (p/oz)

WALL STREET CLOSED: up 221.11 at 8721.44  
 TOKYO CLOSED: up 26.56 at 9704.31



### YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO BUSINESS IN THE AREA

## ShareWatch

BANKS & HP			INSURANCE		
Barclays	316 1/2	-1/2	Aviva	352 1/2	-4 1/2
Bk Ireland	153 1/4	-3/4	Legal & Gen	64 1/2	-1
Fortis	240 1/4	-1 1/2	Prudential	441 1/2	-7 1/2
HSBC	536 3/4	-15 1/4	RSA Insurance	125 1/2	-3/4
Lloyds Banking	71 1/2	-1 1/4	Standard Life	198 1/2	-3 1/4
Ryl Bnk Scotland	39 1/2	-1/2			
Schroders	874 1/2	-12 1/2	MINES		
Standard Chartrd	1259	-9	Lonmin	1500	-23
			Rio Tinto	2945	-37
			UK Coal	159 1/2	+3 1/2
BREWERIES ETC			MOTORS-AIRCRAFT		
Diageo	837 1/2	-5 1/2	Arriva	443 1/2	-3/4
Intercontl Htls	679 1/4	-2 1/4	Lookers	53 1/2	-1/4
Marston's	173 1/2	+1 1/4	Pendragon	24	-1/4
Mitchells&Butlers	250 1/2	-1 1/2	Smiths Gp	738 1/2	+10
Whitbread	887	-6			
BUILDING ETC			OIL		
Amec	703 1/4	-7 1/4	BP	521 1/4	-3 1/2
Balfour Beatty	348 1/2	-5/8	Ryl Ditch Shell A	1668	-20
Barratt Devel	171 1/2	-1 1/4	Ryl Ditch Shell B	1689	-25
Bellway	661	-7			
Carillion	274 1/4	+1	PAPER/MEDIA		
Costain	24 1/2	-1 1/2	4imprint	147	+4 1/2
CRH	1484 1/4	-13 1/4	BSkyB	447 1/4	-3
Galliford Try	48 1/4	+1 1/4	Chrysalis	59 1/4	+2
Heywood	5 1/2	-1/4	Compass Gp	344 1/2	-4 1/2
Keller	636 1/4	+1 1/4	Daily Mail	313 1/2	-9 1/2
SWP	83	-1/4	ITV	39 1/2	-1/2
Taylor Wimpey	34 1/2	-1/4	Pearson	659 1/2	-3
Wolseley	1055	-9	Reed Elsevier	499 1/2	-4 1/2
			Thomson Rtrs	1713	-27
CHEMICAL			Trinity Mirror	71 1/2	+7 1/2
Astrazeneca	2551	-25	Utd Business	438 1/2	-1 1/4
GlaxoSmithKline	1037 1/2	-3			
Rentokil	81 1/2	+1 1/4	POWER		
			BG	1147	-9
ELECTRICAL			Intl Power	277 1/2	+7 1/2
BT Gp	92 1/4	+1 1/2	National Grid	601	-2 1/2
Cable & Wire	136 1/4	-1 1/2	Scottish & Sthn	1158 1/2	-7 1/2
Chloride	156 1/2	+7 1/2			
Colt	127 1/4	+2 1/4	PROPERTY		
Delta	119 1/2	-1 1/2	Brit Land	395 1/2	-1 1/4
FW Thorpe	510	-1 1/2	Brixton	68 1/2	-1 1/4
Logica	72 1/4	-1 1/2	DTZ Hldgs	52 1/2	+1 1/4
Misys	168 1/2	-3 1/4	Land Secs	504 1/4	-1 1/4
Spectris	517 1/4	-2 1/4	Mucklow	257 1/2	+5 1/2
Vodafone Gp	117 1/4	-3/4	SEGRO	26 1/2	-1 1/4
			St Modwen	185	-3/4
ENGINEERING			STORES		
600 Gp	19	-1/4	DSG International	25	-1/4
Aga Rangemaster	92 1/2	-3 1/4	Home Retail	249 1/4	+7 1/4
Alumasc	86 1/2	-1 1/2	Kingfisher	186 1/2	+2 1/2
BAE Systems	335 1/2	+1 1/2	Marks & Spencer	285 1/2	+1 1/2
Bodycote	148 1/2	+2 1/2	Mothercare	440	-3 1/2
Castings	142	+5	Next	1503 1/2	-1 1/2
Chamberlin	61 1/2	-1 1/2	S & U	405	-1
Crimson Tide	1 1/4	-1 1/2	Signet Jewelers	1164	+1
Delta	119 1/2	-1 1/2	Smiths News	104	-1
Energy Tech	6 1/4	-1 1/2	WH Smith	446 1/4	-3
GKN	127 1/4	-2 1/4			
Goodwin	847 1/2	-2 1/2	MISCELLANEOUS		
Hampson Ind	102	-1 1/2	3i	253 1/2	+1 1/4
Hill & Smith	206 1/2	+4 1/2	Andrews Sykes	70	-1 1/2
IMI	355 1/4	-2 1/2	BHP Billiton	1532 1/2	-21 1/2
Man Bronze	174	+1	Br Am Tob	1686 1/2	-12 1/2
Metalrax	6	-1 1/4	British Airways	154 1/2	-2 1/4
Rolls-Royce Gp	330 1/2	-1	Centrica	236 1/4	-1 1/4
Source Bioscience	6 1/4	-1 1/2	Cookson Gp	305 1/2	-6 1/2
Tomkins	150	+1	Experian	461 1/2	-3 1/2
			Fenner	87	-1
ENTERTAINMENT			Findel	73 1/2	-2 1/4
Ladbrokes	204 1/4	-1 1/4	Hays	82 1/2	-3/4
			Imperial Tob	1581	-18
FOOD			London Stk Exch	714 1/4	-14 1/4
Ass Br Food	728	-1	National Exp	325 1/2	+1 1/2
Cadbury	534 1/2	-5 1/2	Old Mutual	77 1/2	-3/4
Greggs	397 1/4	-2 1/2	Rank Org	63 1/2	-1 1/4
North Foods	59 1/2	+1 1/4	Reckitt Bencksr	2670	-16
Sainsbury	308 1/2	-1 1/2	Rexam	321 1/2	-3/4
Tate & Lyle	298 1/2	-4 1/4	S&U	405	-1 1/2
Tesco	356 1/4	-3 1/4	Severn Trent	1129 1/2	-10 1/2
Uniq	20 1/2	+1 1/4	Smith & Nephew	459 1/2	+2 1/2
			Spirent Comms	65 1/2	-1 1/4
FOOTBALL			Spring Gp	37 1/2	-1 1/2
Birmingham City	27 1/2	-1 1/2	Stagecoach Gp	130 1/2	+1 1/2
Celtic	41 1/2	-1 1/2	Unilever	1455	-15
Tottenham	86 1/2	-1 1/2	WPP	475	-4 1/4

## PROPERTY: Brighter outlook after first rise in a year

# Price boost for houses

By Graeme Brown

**HOUSE prices in the West Midlands have risen for the first time in a year in the latest sign that life is returning to the region's economy.**

Latest Land Registry figures show the average price paid for a home in the region rose 0.8 per cent in April – the biggest monthly jump since February last year.

The figures come as research from the Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply (Cips) showed manufacturing activity also reached its highest level for a year.

RICS spokesman Richard Franklin said the rise in property prices – no matter how slight – could mark the start of a brighter outlook for the region's house market.

Mr Franklin, of Franklin Property Consultancy, said: "As Land Registry data is based on actual transactions rather than mortgage applications, this is an important barometer of the current market."

"Whilst it is dangerous to consider the data in isolation, I believe this could mark the start of a slowdown in price drops across in the region."

"This data is consistent with the recent trend in the RICS

sales to stock ratio which has now risen for four consecutive months which has historically been a good lead indicator of turning points in house price inflation."

The annual rate at which property prices in the West Midlands are declining has now dropped to 15 per cent after a 12-month slide. However, the number of transactions remained low. Latest figures show a total of 7,931 deals were agreed on new homes in the three months to March, compared to 17,813 in the same period last year, when the average property in the region was valued above £150,000.



The Big Brum Buz on its route around the famous Selfridges building in Birmingham.

## Big Brum Buz support sought

**BIRMINGHAM'S Big Brum Buz wants new friends to hop on board and keep it on the road.**

Since its launch in April, the City's first open top, live guided tour bus since the mid-1990s has become a popular attraction for both tourists and local Brummies wanting to learn more about Birmingham and its heritage.

Now, Birmingham Tours, the company behind the privately funded initiative, wants financial support to ensure the

bright red double-decker can continue its sightseeing trips.

For a minimum donation of £250 a range of advertising, promotional and sponsorship packages are being made available together with transferable pass arrangements and reciprocal website links.

Sue Behan, director of Birmingham Tours, said: "We are inviting everyone to become a Friend of the Big Brum Buz so that we can

continue to promote the city's popular tourist attractions, hotels, restaurants and businesses as well as our unique heritage sights. We are suggesting a minimum donation of £250. The bus is also available for hire."

Big Brum Buz tours start from Church Street, Colmore Row, next to St Philip's Cathedral each Saturday at 10.30am, 12pm, 1.30pm and 3pm, running every Saturday until 26th September.

## Ryanair in red as fuel costs soar

**LOW-cost airline Ryanair revealed today that it dived into the red by 169.2 million euros (£145.9 million) in the year to March after being hit with a 59 per cent rise in its fuel bill.**

The loss compares with a profit of 390.7 million euros (£336.8 million) the previous year and comes after Ryanair faced record oil prices and a hefty write-down on the value of its investment in rival Irish carrier Aer Lingus.

But Ryanair – led by flamboyant boss Michael O'Leary – said it hoped to see a recovery in the current year, forecasting after-tax profits to "at least double" thanks to expected lower fuel costs.

Ryanair shares fell six per cent following news of the loss in the year to March 31 – thought to be the first in the airline's history.

However, the company maintained that on an underlying basis and with a 91.6 million euro (£79 million) write-down on the Aer Lingus stake stripped out, its figures showed a more "robust" net profit of 105 million euros (£90.5 million).

Ryanair also pledged to continue slashing prices to attract consumers in the recession.

It saw fares fall by eight per cent in the past year and said average prices would drop by another 15 per cent to 20 per cent this year to around 32 euros (£27.60) per passenger.

## Abroad

EURO		1.0910
AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, CYPRUS, FINLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, GREECE, HOLLAND, IRELAND, ITALY, LUXEMBOURG, MALTA, PORTUGAL, SPAIN		
AUSTRALIA (Dollars)	1.90	
BANGLADESH (Taka)	105.61	
CANADA (Dollars)	1.68	
CZECH REP (Korunas)	28.19	
DENMARK (Krone)	8.10	
INDIA (Rupees)	67.07	
JAPAN (Yen)	146.76	
NORWAY (Krone)	9.72	
PAKISTAN (Rupees)	124.11	
POLAND (Zlotys)	4.50	
SWEDEN (Krona)	11.70	
SWITZERLAND (Francs)	1.65	
TURKEY (New Lira)	2.35	
US (Dollars)	1.55	

Prices supplied by Travelex. For indication purposes only.