

# Top 50 Fastest Growing Companies Index | 2017



*think* Sandwell



## Celebrating this year's Sandwell success stories

**Think Sandwell is Sandwell Council's initiative to support businesses of all sizes, whether they are starting up, relocating to or investing in our borough. Our overriding aim is to see local businesses thrive, keeping our region's economy healthy.**

Our team is always on hand with expert advice on business matters such as accessing finance, recruiting staff, and finding the right premises. We have helped to secure millions of pounds in funding for new and existing businesses in Sandwell, resulting in hundreds of jobs being created and safeguarded.

We also organise workshops and networking events to help local businesspeople acquire valuable knowledge and make new contacts. Our work has led to commercial partnerships being forged and new contracts being won by Black Country businesses.

Think Sandwell's continued efforts to boost Sandwell's economy include celebrating the firms that are doing well, and championing the borough as an accessible, profitable and dynamic place to do business.

So for the third year, we have identified 50 of the fastest growing companies in Sandwell. This report celebrates their impressive achievements. It conveys our thanks for their contribution to Sandwell employment and the prosperity of the region.

We hope you find it inspiring as well as informative. If you would like to know more about the Top 50, or see how Think Sandwell could help your business, contact us today via [www.thinksandwell.com](http://www.thinksandwell.com).



**Disclaimer**

The companies included in the Top 50 Fastest Growing Companies were selected by conducting an initial search of FAME for companies with registered offices in Sandwell. We took the fastest growing 50 companies by turnover, based on the most recent filed accounts. The current year financial information is based on the most recent filed accounts available on FAME, with the previous year comparatives based on the previous year's financial results for 50 companies.

To produce the financial information we analysed the data contained within FAME, with no consolidation adjustments. Depending on the accounts filed, some of our figures will be based on consolidated accounts and some on entity-only accounts. In addition, some of the financial information will be based on UK generally accepted accounting principles accounts and others will be based on International Financial Reporting Standards accounts. The financial information in this report has been compiled exclusively from publicly available information under the key assumptions and limitations outlined in the first two paragraphs.

It has been designed solely to illustrate trends in revenue growth of the Top 50 fastest growing companies in Sandwell. Sandwell Council has not carried out any verification work on the financial information in this report and give no opinion on the financial information. Sandwell Council makes no claims, promises or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness or adequacy of the contents of this report. No reliance should be placed on the information contained in this report and, to the fullest extent permitted by law, Sandwell Council does not accept or assume any responsibility or liability to anyone for the information contained in this report. Sandwell Council does not, and cannot, warrant the completeness or accuracy of the adjustments made during the aggregation.



# Foreword

by Councillor Steve Eling, Leader of Sandwell Council

## Congratulations are in order for every business listed in Sandwell's Top 50 Fastest Growing Companies Index for 2017.

While our country faces economic and political uncertainty, it is more important than ever to celebrate the businesses which are bucking the general downward trend.

With a combined revenue of £1.5bn and collectively employing 6,500 people, the rising stars in our report make a huge contribution to our local economy.

Twenty-seven of the 50 companies listed here have shown growth of 10% or more in the past year. The 12 fastest growing companies have enjoyed growth of 20% or more, while the highest revenue growth rate – from transport operator Diamond Bus – stands at an amazing 44%.

More than half of these businesses are engaged in manufacturing, while 22% operate in the wholesale and retail sector. One firm, Steel and Alloy Processing, has a revenue of £158m.

The success of Sandwell's Top 50 can only reflect hard work, great leadership, commitment and foresight.

Their growth also demonstrates Sandwell's position as a profitable place in which to operate. Our borough is ideally located at the heart of England and well connected by road, rail and air.

We have a highly skilled workforce and a strong heritage of manufacturing.

The wider West Midlands' spirit of innovation has always helped us ride out waves of political and economic uncertainty.

I am particularly heartened to see that 44 out of the 50 companies listed here are classed as small to medium sized enterprises. SMEs are vital to the UK's economy and through Sandwell Council business programmes such as Think Sandwell, we work tirelessly to support and nurture them.

Congratulations once again to every business on this list – and indeed to Sandwell organisations of all sizes which are striving to grow. You are part of Sandwell's future and we looking forward to seeing you flourish.



Top 50

# Findings at a glance

6,500

STAFF  
EMPLOYED

BY TOP 50  
COMPANIES

44%

HIGHEST REVENUE  
GROWTH RATE  
ACHIEVED BY  
DIAMOND BUS LTD

IN TOP 50

MORE THAN  
20%

GROWTH RATE BY  
TOP 12 COMPANIES

27  
COMPANIES

IN THE TOP 50  
EXPERIENCED GROWTH ABOVE

10%

Top 50

TOTAL REVENUE  
£1.5 bn  
FROM TOP 50 GROWTH COMPANIES

56%

- OF TOP 50 COMPANIES IN
- **MANUFACTURING**
- FOLLOWED BY
- **WHOLESALE & RETAIL** (22%)
- **CONSTRUCTION** (8%)

44  
ARE SMES  
COMPANIES

HIGHEST REVENUE IN TOP 50  
£158 m  
STEEL & ALLOY PROCESSING LTD

Top 50

RESTRUCTURE CREATES GROWTH



Arriving right on time at number one in our Top 50 report is Diamond Bus, which aims to provide a frequent, reliable, clean and friendly travelling environment in Worcestershire and the West Midlands. Thanks to a restructure, Diamond Bus has achieved growth of more than 43 per cent in the past year.

In November 2015 Diamond Bus and its parent company Rotala Plc relocated its West Midlands operations and group head office to Tividale. This move and consolidation created savings that led to Diamond Bus' remarkable growth in company turnover.

Diamond Bus also has one of three of its depots in Tividale – which CEO Simon Dunn describes as an “excellent location” for expanding the company’s Black Country network. The others are in Redditch and Kidderminster, and all are well placed to serve Diamond Bus’ many customers.

Growth enables businesses to invest in new technology and better ways of working – and Diamond Bus has achieved big advances on this front too.

“We have made considerable investments in 2017 – for example, in new ticket machines which are GPS-enabled and will allow us to monitor our services more proactively as well provide improved services to passengers, including real-time information and bus tracking via a mobile app,” said Simon.

“We have recently become the first operator in the West Midlands area to introduce the facility for contactless payment across the whole of our fleet. This enables passengers to purchase tickets using contactless bank cards, making life easier for them and our drivers.”

*“Sandwell is an excellent location” for expanding the company’s Black Country network”*

BETTER BUSINESS APPROACH SUSTAINS GROWTH



Transport and haulage contractor Sheldon Clayton Logistics has returned to our chart at number 43 with a solid 3.8 per cent growth in turnover.

The West Bromwich company started life around 40 years ago, servicing the North Sea oil boom. Today its strategy of “better business not more business” helps maintain stability and steady growth even through times of economic difficulty.

“We are a tough lot in the Black Country,” said group chairman and founder David Sheldon, referring to the entrepreneurial spirit of our region.

Sheldon Clayton Logistics has a substantial fleet of trucks and a customer base that spans the rail, energy, automotive and defence sectors. Company operations have increased this year thanks to growth by acquisition and by boosting customer service levels to attract new accounts.

David explained how the company remains a traditional family-owned operation while moving with the times: investing in new marketing, exhibitions and technology.

“We have also developed other services, such as storage and handling. We can now accommodate over 15,000 pallets in new warehousing on our 14-acre site,” he said.

David emphasised that stability is key to Sheldon Clayton Logistics’ enduring success. The company’s sales ledger has over a thousand customers and not one represents more than four per cent of the company’s turnover. “This ensures us of no peaks and troughs,” he said. “As we reach our optimum potential we will conciliate our position and not sacrifice our stability by seeking turnover for turnover’s sake.”

Top 50

**PUBLIC-SECTOR BIDDING FEEDS GROWTH**



**INVESTMENT NURTURES GROWTH**



Enjoying an almost 42 per cent growth in turnover since last year, Lift & Engineering Services is number four in our Top 50 fastest growing businesses report.

The company, which designs, manufactures, installs, maintains and repairs lifts, has its headquarters in Cradley Heath. Joint managing director Steve Smith puts its success down to work within the public sector. "Our focus has been on retaining existing contracts, gaining places on framework agreements, and securing ten-year partnership contracts," he said, explaining how excellent customer service and a rare in-house design service supported this focus.

"While everyone talked about public-sector cuts and squeezed budgets we took action to become more productive and make ourselves more attractive to public-sector buyers," said Roy Casey, joint managing director. "Rather than just ticking boxes we go extra miles to create in-depth evidence of achievement through awards, social value involvement, accreditations and training and qualifications. Our people are the number one differentiator from our competitors so we train and retain them."

"These actions have led to year-on-year growth in our sales. We have made a few acquisitions along the way but all of them relatively low key and none adding more than five per cent to overall sales."

Although its biggest growth area is London, there have been significant boosts to the company's West and East Midlands branches too.

Lift & Engineering Services' plan is continued organic growth, coupled with further possible acquisitions. This formula has served the company well so far, growing sales by 93 per cent and employee numbers by 40 per cent since 2011.

Steel & Alloy Processing Ltd processes and supplies steel to automotive clients that include Jaguar Land Rover, Honda and Toyota. Thanks to wise investment in people and infrastructure, and a resulting 3.6 per cent increase in turnover this year alone, Steel & Alloy features at number 45 in our Top 50.

Part of Gonvarri Steel Services, Steel & Alloy is the UK's largest automotive steel processor, employing more than 200 people and processing over 350,000 tonnes of steel every year. It is building a £27m factory in Oldbury which will create up to 150 jobs.

Finance director Paul Whitehouse explained how Steel & Alloy has positioned itself as a key partner within the automotive supply chain "Being part of a global steel service centre guarantees long-term sustainability, continued investment and future product development," he said. "Alongside UK automotive OEMs, we are developing long-term strategies to supply the industry's ever-changing, growing needs."

Like all successful businesses, Steel & Alloy strives for constant improvement.

"We have achieved year-on-year growth for the past five years. This is largely down to our commitment to exceeding customers' expectations whilst investing in our employees. We pride ourselves on having a well-trained, skilled workforce," said Paul.

"Now we will focus on increasing our processing capability to cater for the growing demand for the next generation of high-strength steels."

In 2018 Steel & Alloy will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Managing director Mark Cooper said: "We have for the vast majority of our time been located within Sandwell. We were very pleased with the help of Sandwell Council to be able to develop our new factory in the region."

*"We were very pleased with the help of Sandwell Council to be able to develop our new factory in the region."*

## Top 50 Fastest Growing Companies

COUNT	COMPANY NAME	SECTOR	TURNOVER £000S LAST AVAILABLE YEAR (N)	TURNOVER £000S IN PRIOR YEAR (N-1)	% GROWTH IN TURNOVER	LATEST ACCOUNTS DATE
1	Diamond Bus Limited	Transport & storage	20,407	14,193	43.8	30/11/2015
2	Corbetts Support Solutions Limited	Manufacturing	15,264	10,736	42.2	31/12/2015
3	Harper Group Construction Limited	Construction	4,319	3,046	41.8	31/12/2015
4	Lift & Engineering Services Limited	Manufacturing	15,119	10,666	41.7	30/9/2015
5	Stanford Industrial Concrete Flooring Limited	Construction	31,412	22,540	39.4	31/3/2016
6	A-Mir & Co. Limited	Manufacturing	14,264	10,388	37.3	30/11/2015
7	Forkers Limited	Construction	30,814	22,693	35.8	31/3/2016
8	Diamond Box Limited	Manufacturing	30,897	23,659	30.6	31/12/2016
9	Keltruck Limited	Wholesale & retail	155,738	120,702	29.0	31/12/2015
10	Solair Limited	Manufacturing	6,730	5,425	24.1	29/2/2016
11	Fire Glass UK Limited	Wholesale & retail	10,592	8,546	23.9	29/2/2016
12	Car Parts Industries UK Limited	Manufacturing	13,299	10,831	22.8	30/6/2015
13	International Tyres & Trading Limited	Wholesale & retail	19,237	16,166	19.0	28/2/2016
14	Olympus Distribution Limited	Wholesale & retail	19,593	16,575	18.2	31/3/2016
15	Huf UK Limited	Manufacturing	51,654	43,938	17.6	31/12/2015
16	Guest Motors Limited	Wholesale & retail	78,929	67,206	17.4	31/12/2015
17	UK Access Solutions Limited	Construction	4,784	4,085	17.1	30/9/2015
18	Pargat & Co. Limited	Manufacturing	32,023	27,462	16.6	30/9/2015
19	Purity Soft Drinks Limited	Manufacturing	18,587	15,994	16.2	1/4/2016
20	Bevan Motor Bodies Limited	Manufacturing	19,422	16,874	15.1	31/12/2015
21	Serene Furnishings Limited	Wholesale & retail	9,812	8,538	14.9	31/5/2016
22	Aquila Truck Centres (Italia) Limited	Wholesale & retail	17,026	14,871	14.5	31/12/2015
23	Apic UK Limited	Manufacturing	13,804	12,128	13.8	31/12/2015
24	Fred Smith & Sons (Motor Bodies) Limited	Manufacturing	7,596	6,720	13.0	30/6/2015
25	Jerseytex Limited	Manufacturing	15,827	14,148	11.9	31/5/2016
26	Reca-UK Limited	Wholesale & retail	8,796	7,929	10.9	31/12/2015
27	Unistrut Limited	Manufacturing	25,314	22,960	10.3	25/9/2015
28	Dalair Limited	Manufacturing	12,625	11,533	9.5	31/12/2015
29	Midshire Business Systems Limited	Other services	17,136	15,654	9.5	31/8/2016
30	Beeswift Limited	Manufacturing	41,900	38,868	7.8	30/9/2015
31	Ash & Lacy Building Systems Limited	Manufacturing	30,870	28,814	7.1	31/12/2015
32	Access Technologies Limited	Manufacturing	4,722	4,425	6.7	31/12/2015
33	Newby Foundries Limited	Manufacturing	13,742	12,979	5.9	31/12/2015
34	Direct Corporate Clothing Plc	Wholesale & retail	21,708	20,503	5.9	30/9/2015
35	Hadley Industries Plc	Manufacturing	109,956	104,376	5.3	30/4/2016
36	Tuke & Bell Limited	Manufacturing	7,295	6,930	5.3	31/12/2015
37	Hasco-Thermic Limited	Manufacturing	2,419	2,299	5.2	31/3/2016
38	A. Perry & Co. (Hinges) Limited	Manufacturing	9,423	8,979	5.0	31/12/2015
39	Carlyle Bus & Coach Limited	Transport & storage	15,584	14,855	4.9	31/10/2015
40	Voestalpine Metsec Plc	Manufacturing	89,427	85,663	4.4	31/3/2016
41	Lion-FPG Limited	Professional scientific & technical	8,815	8,467	4.1	31/8/2015
42	Narrow Aisle Limited	Manufacturing	19,304	18,552	4.1	31/12/2015
43	Sheldon Clayton Logistics Limited	Transport & storage	15,108	14,555	3.8	31/3/2016
44	Linak-UK Limited	Professional scientific & technical	10,830	10,446	3.7	30/6/2016
45	Steel & Alloy Processing Limited	Manufacturing	158,121	152,651	3.6	31/12/2015
46	Cuxson Gerrard & Co. Limited	Manufacturing	9,174	8,871	3.4	31/3/2016
47	James Lister & Sons Limited	Wholesale & retail	15,791	15,364	2.8	30/9/2015
48	Arcelormittal Tailored Blanks Birmingham Limited	Manufacturing	43,049	42,058	2.4	31/12/2015
49	Ian Smith Group Limited	Wholesale & retail	9,999	9,788	2.2	31/01/2015
50	West Bromwich Albion Football Club Limited	Other services	98,337	96,269	2.1	30/6/2016