

Recognising Sheffield's potential

By **GARRY MEAKIN**
Office Managing Partner,
Grant Thornton

SHEFFIELD is one of the fastest growing cities in the UK and is currently England's fourth largest city with a population of over 500,000. Over the last few years Sheffield has developed into an outstanding business location which is home to thousands of different successful companies.

Having been crippled by the collapse of the steel industry, Sheffield adjusted well to a change in its employment structure, shifting its strengths away from the manufacture of steel and towards, amongst other things, advanced manufacturing and materials technology. As a result, the city is now undergoing a real economic revival which, coupled with its ability to sustain growth and support rapidly expanding business clusters, makes it an increasingly attractive place for both new ventures and established companies looking to relocate.

The turnaround has been dramatic and Sheffield has been transformed into a hugely successful business centre with a GDP worth over £7 billion a year.

This growth in the economy has



Garry Meakin outside the Grant Thornton offices at Broadfield Court in Sheffield

proved to be very attractive to many different business sectors, including the creative and digital industries. The city has gained a reputation for being a key base for this market, making Sheffield and its surrounding area a major player when it comes to this field of expertise.

Two of the largest applied e-learning services operate from here, as well as numerous award-winning games software companies and some of the country's most recognised interactive

design and production businesses. The concentration of these companies in a relatively small area allows the firms to share resources, expertise and best practice, helping them go from strength to strength as well as attracting more creative, digital and ICT businesses to the city.

South Yorkshire is also fast becoming a relocation hot spot with businesses being drawn to the area because of excellent transportation links, great access to the countryside and an abun-

dance of new property aimed at young professionals. Many public sector organisations have already chosen Sheffield as their base and with the Government keen to move thousands more civil service jobs out of London, the city is set to be a major destination for other not for profit companies looking to relocate. Being only two hours away from London means that these establishments can enjoy all the benefits of operating outside the capital, such as cheaper office space and

lower employment costs, not to mention a more attractive place to live, without cutting themselves off from London completely.

The lure of life away from London has also tempted the business and financial services sector and the city is now home to some of the world's major financial and legal companies. The fact that Sheffield has two well regarded universities with fantastic business capabilities – the law school at the University of Sheffield and the IT department at Sheffield Hallam University – allows these companies to draw on the knowledge held within those establishments and provides excellent recruitment opportunities.

Grant Thornton is one of those companies to have recognised the potential in Sheffield and has recently invested heavily in the area, bringing in experienced partners and opening a new office in Broadfield Court.

With a wealth of businesses coming into the area, the need for access to good, locally based advisers quickly became apparent.

So far, our investment in Sheffield has proved very successful, and with the city continually attracting more and more organisations, we are confident that our business will go from strength to strength.

LITERAL
LITERAL
LITERAL
LITERAL

Lateral

Grant Thornton

Think beyond convention...think beyond the Big 4

There's no doubt that questions need answering. But it's how you answer them that's the important thing. At Grant Thornton we don't believe there's a stock answer for every question. Instead, we've earned ourselves a reputation for outstanding service by delivering solutions on an individual basis. Like thinking that's different?

Call us on 0114 255 3371 or visit www.thinkbeyondthebig4.com

OVER 100 COUNTRIES* · CORPORATE FINANCE · FINANCIAL MARKETS CONSULTING · FORENSIC ACCOUNTING
PROJECT FINANCE · RECOVERY & REORGANISATION · AUDIT · RISK MANAGEMENT · TAX · WEALTH CONSULTING

*Services are delivered nationally by the member firms of Grant Thornton International, a network of independent firms

How we can compete in the global market

AS ONE of the world's leading companies in the healthcare market we have, for over 165 years, focused on the needs and experiences of our customers as the guiding principle of our business activities.

In an increasingly global and competitive market, the principles of innovation and partnership are even more important today.

This can be seen with the management of risk within the NHS, particularly fighting the rising tide of hospital acquired infections, which is still a major driving force behind business development in the healthcare market.

Infections, such as MRSA, are believed to cost around £1 billion a year in the UK and affect nearly ten per cent of patients, and may be implicated in over 5,000 deaths a year. The Government aims to halve MRSA bloodstream infection rates in hospitals by 2008.

We have channelled our extensive experience, expertise and R&D capabilities to help the NHS meet that target by developing a range of ground-breaking medical hygiene products.

These include our alcohol-based Softalind hand rubs which are being used in hospitals and clinics across the UK. We have also just won major contracts to supply the National Blood Service and the

Sheffield-based B. Braun Medical Ltd is a member of the B. Braun Group, one of the world's leading healthcare companies. The company has just enjoyed a record year and B. Braun Medical Chief Executive Hans Hux believes innovation and partnership are the key to success in an increasingly competitive global market



Scottish Ambulance Service. If a company wants to thrive in an increasingly competitive global market it has to innovate and B. Braun has also developed a new range of products which aim to prevent MRSA and other viruses from reaching hospital in the first place.

The staphylococcus aureus bacteria is found harmlessly on the skin and nasal passage of around 50 per cent of the population. Problems develop when a patient or visitor with the MRSA strain of the bug enters hospital.

Prontoderm is a new generation of anti-bacterial washes and gels which eradicate MRSA from the

skin. Products include a special gel for the nose, as nasal antibiotics are becoming ineffective against the hospital 'superbug'. There is also a shower gel, a foam for bedridden patients, a mouthwash and a liquid solution.

In our 25th year in the UK, we are also working with NHS Trusts and the Government to improve the way surgical instruments are cleaned and sterilized after use in our hospitals.

We have been named as preferred bidder for two multi-million pound contracts to provide decontamination services for hospitals in West Yorkshire and the West Midlands.