

# Sun CITY

The FTSE 100 closed  
up 102.76 at 4319.35

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THE PAGE YOU CAN TRUST

## These 4 beat the crunch this year

IN one of the City's toughest years for decades a few key figures have not only emerged unscathed — they have even bolstered their reputations.

Here are Sun City's Champs of 2008:

**ERIC DANIELS:** The LLOYDS TSB chief was criticised for being cautious and conservative. But Lloyds kept clear of the sub-prime boom — and picked up HALIFAX BANK OF SCOTLAND on the cheap as a result.



**MARC BOLLAND:** The Dutchman has led MORRISONS to outperform Asda, Tesco and Sainsbury's. It has also made its mark in the south of England. One of the few genuine success stories of the year.



**DAVID BRENNAN:** Since taking over at ASTRA-ZENECA he has diversified the drugs giant's pipeline and resolved uncertainty over patents. The shares have climbed by more than 25 per cent this year.



**VINCE CABLE:** Few have had a better recession than the Lib Dem Treasury spokesman. His common sense has been a hit with millions — particularly over the nationalisation of Northern Rock.



**TOMORROW** we name the Chumps of 2008.

# ECONOMY 'WILL BE BETTER IN AUTUMN'

## Message of hope by guru who foresaw crisis

THE first City expert to predict a recession claims the British economy will begin to stabilise in autumn 2009.

Gerard Lyons, chief economist at Standard Chartered, urged companies to "keep their heads" and not threaten the speed of a recovery with drastic cost-cutting.

He said firms making large-scale cutbacks and redundancy rounds could find it harder to rebuild when the upturn comes.

The comments came as the Pound plunged to a new low against the euro — 97.98p — and a survey predicted the recession would claim at least 600,000 jobs next year.

Mr Lyons told Sun City: "I think we are in for a grim



## Reasons to be cheerful

MR LYONS, left, has four reasons to expect an autumn recovery.

**IT CAN'T** get worse. The economy will have contracted by five successive quarters and firms will have got balance sheets back in order.

**EMERGENCY** Government measures will begin to feed through, as will lower interest rates, which could be 0.5 per cent.

**LOWER BILLS.** The global recession should lead to lower petrol and food costs — meaning more discretionary spending for those in work.

**INTERNATIONAL** rescue. The low Pound will help to kickstart export markets and by next autumn world demand should begin to rise ahead of a year of recovery in 2010.

2009. The first six months will be very difficult.

"But the economy will have stabilised by next autumn, and people need to keep their heads and see through the downward spiral.

"In the early 1990s recession it took 14 quarters for the economy to get back to where

it was. If this is like the early 1990s it will take until the end of 2011 for a full recovery."

Mr Lyons said consumer confidence and bank lending were the two big challenges for the Chancellor. He added that the Government may need to push through more tax breaks in March and lend

directly to troubled firms in certain sectors.

He said: "The catchphrase in the film No Country For Old Men was 'You can't stop what's coming'. And you can't with the recession. But you can try and pull out all the stops and I think the Government is doing that."

## Nuke site island bid

GERMAN-owned energy giant RWE NPOWER has revealed plans to build a new nuclear power station on the Isle of Anglesey.

The group yesterday said it had bought land for a site in Wylfa, close to an existing Magnox plant on the island's north coast.

Any planning application is at least two years away, but RWE already has the rights to connect a future site to the National Grid.

It is the first time RWE has revealed firm plans for a new nuclear power plant — which are seen as crucial in replacing older gas-fired stations.

Chief executive Andy Duff said: "We are committed to progressing new nuclear options."

# BASIL FAULTY



Kids' favourite  
... Basil Brush

BASIL Brush, left, and Postman Pat could have a new owner — as troubled ENTERTAINMENT RIGHTS revealed it is holding takeover talks.

The debt-laden media rights company is desperate for funding after seeing its market value collapse to just £3million this year.

It produces DVDs and merchandise based on TV characters such as Basil, famed for his cry of "Boom! Boom!"

It negotiated a £13million loan from HBOS in October, but this runs only to March.

Canada's Cookie Jar Entertainment and leisure tycoon Trevor Hemmings have been linked with the company.



BP helped power the FTSE 100 up 100 points as oil prices surged on the back of tensions in the Middle East.

The oil heavyweight jumped 18.25p to 514.25. The International Energy Agency forecast crude prices would be back at \$100 a barrel by 2010.

Bargain hunters pushed a host of retailers higher — including SAINSBURY'S which rose 13.75p to 329.25.

BRITISH AIRWAYS jumped 3.7p to 173.30 despite fears its pension deficit could ground its takeover of IBERIA.

Among the small-caps, stockbroker PANMURE GORDON dropped 1.13p to 20.37 after a profit warning. Oil explorer VENTURE PRODUCTION rose 6.5p to 431.25 after first oil from a North Sea field it runs with DANA PETROLEUM, up 77p at £10.22.

Tech minnow DMATEK soared 57.5p to 199.4 after it agreed a £53million takeover by private equity firm FRANCISCO PARTNERS.

HOUSE-builder BOVIS HOMES has secured a new £220million loan with a six-bank consortium. It runs to 2011 and replaces a deal due to end next year. Bovis axed 40 per cent of its workforce in July.

## Tuna not that hot

SHARES in surf wear brand HOT TUNA dived 20 per cent after pre-tax losses widened to £5.8million over the year to June 30.

The group is aiming for more supply deals with high street retailers. It already supplies Debenhams and Littlewoods.