Hertford

q1 2012 business confidence report



headlines

• February 2012 saw a new record in company registrations in Hertford when compared to any previous February.

contents

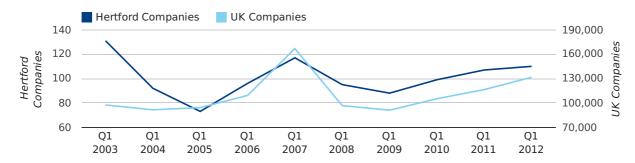
| new company registrations | |
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| closed companies (dissolved) | |
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A total of 110 companies were registered in Hertford during the first quarter of 2012 (Jan 2012 - Mar 2012).

This figure is an increase of 2.8% versus the same period last year (Q1 2011). This figure compares badly to the UK as a whole, which saw an increase of 13.0% against the same period last year.

| FIRST QUARTER (JAN 2012 - MAR 2012) | HERTFORD | UK |
|-------------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| 2012 | 110 | 131,491 |
| 2011 | 107 | 116,391 |
| % CHANGE | 2.8% | 13.0% |
| RECORD YEAR | 2003 (131) | 2007 (166,814) |

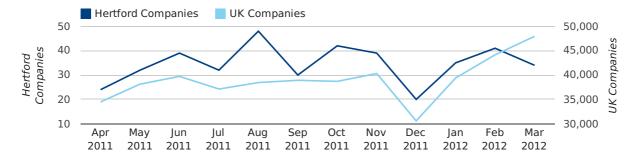
new companies by quarter



Monthly Data (Jan, Feb & Mar 2012)

February 2012 saw a new record in company registrations in Hertford when compared to any previous February.

new companies by month



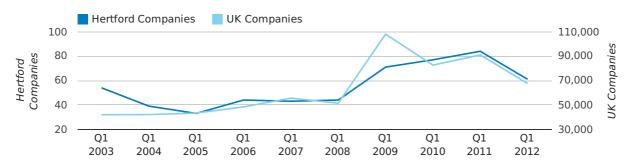
| | JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| NEW COMPANIES IN 2012 | 35 | 41 | 34 |
| NEW COMPANIES IN 2011 | 40 | 36 | 31 |
| % CHANGE | -12.5% | 13.9% | 9.7% |
| RECORD YEAR | 2011 (40) | 2012 (41) | 2003 (61) |

A total of 61 companies were dissolved in Hertford during the first quarter of 2012 (Jan 2012 - Mar 2012).

This figure is a decrease of 27.4% versus the same period last year (Q1 2011). This figure compares well to the UK as a whole, which saw a decrease of 25.7% against the same period last year.

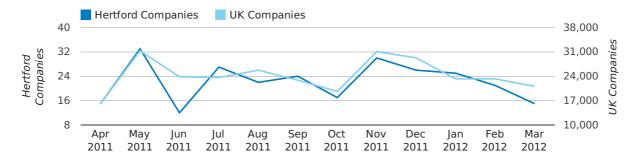
| FIRST QUARTER (JAN 2012 - MAR 2012) | HERTFORD | UK |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 2012 | 61 | 67,576 |
| 2011 | 84 | 90,986 |
| % CHANGE | -27.4% | -25.7% |
| RECORD YEAR | 2011 (84) | 2009 (108,060) |

dissolved companies by quarter



Monthly Data (Jan, Feb & Mar 2012)

dissolved companies by month



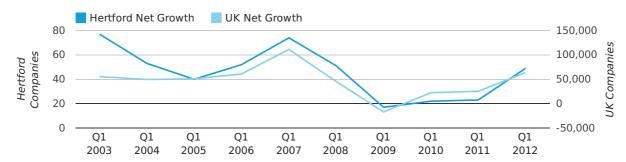
| | JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| CLOSED COMPANIES IN 2012 | 25 | 21 | 15 |
| CLOSED COMPANIES IN 2011 | 27 | 27 | 30 |
| % CHANGE | -7.4% | -22.2% | -50% |
| RECORD YEAR | 2011 (27) | 2011 (27) | 2009 (37) |

Net company growth for Hertford during the first quarter of 2012 (Jan 2012 - Mar 2012) was 49 companies.

This represents an increase of 113.0% on the same period last year.

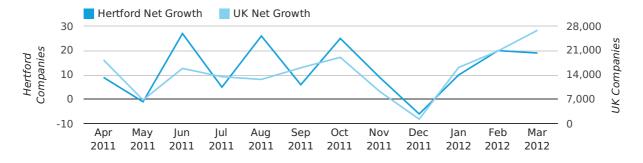
| FIRST QUARTER (JAN 2012 - MAR 2012) | HERTFORD | UK |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 2012 | 49 | 63,915 |
| 2011 | 23 | 25,405 |
| % CHANGE | 113.0% | 151.6% |
| RECORD YEAR | 2003 (77) | 2007 (111,282) |

net growth by quarter



Monthly Data (Jan, Feb & Mar 2012)

net growth by month

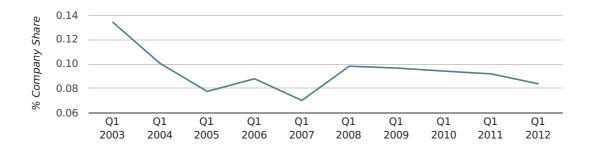


| | JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| NET GROWTH IN 2012 | 10 | 20 | 19 |
| NET GROWTH IN 2011 | 13 | 9 | 1 |
| % CHANGE | -23.1% | 122.2% | 1,800.0% |
| RECORD YEAR | 2004 (19) | 2005 (23) | 2003 (45) |

In the first quarter of 2012, Hertford formed 0.1% of all UK companies.

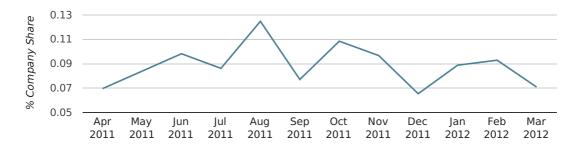
| FIRST QUARTER (JAN 2012 - MAR 2012) | HERTFORD |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| 2012 | 0.1% |
| 2011 | 0.1% |
| 2010 | 0.1% |
| 2009 | 0.1% |
| 2008 | 0.1% |
| RECORD YEAR (SINCE 1960) | 1963 (0.3%) |

company share by quarter



Monthly Data (Jan, Feb & Mar 2012)

company share by month



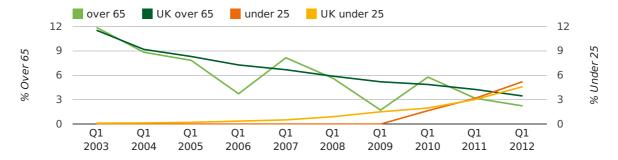
| | JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| UK FORMATION SHARE IN 2012 | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.1% |
| UK FORMATION SHARE IN 2011 | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.1% |
| % CHANGE | -25.0% | -2.5% | 2.6% |
| RECORD YEAR | 1970 (0.4%) | 1974 (0.5%) | 1960 (0.5%) |

The average age of a director in the first quarter of 2012 was 43.0.

The percentage of directors under the age of 25 was 5.2% compared to the UK figure of 4.6%.

The percentage of directors over the age of 65 was 2.2% compared to the UK figure of 3.5%.

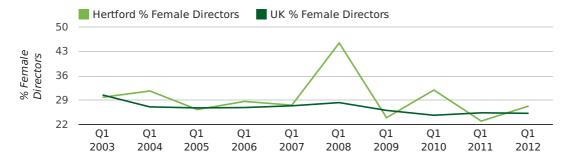
director age by quarter



The record first quarter for female directors in Hertford was in 1861 when 40.0% of all directors were female.

27.3% of all director appointments in Hertford in the first quarter of 2012 were female. This compares to a UK average of 25.3% for the same period.

director gender by quarter



Previous 12 months (Mar 2011-Mar 2012)

Excluding: LIMITED, LTD, &, UK, SERVICES, THE, (UK), AND, LTD., A, LLP, SOLUTIONS, COMPANY, OF.

| WORD | PERCENTAGE | UK WORD | UK PERCENTAGE |
|---------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| MANAGEMENT | 1.44% | CONSULTING | 5.07% |
| CONSULTING | 1.18% | MANAGEMENT | 4.74% |
| CONSULTANCY | 1.05% | CONSULTANCY | 3.30% |
| RTM | 0.92% | PROPERTY | 2.37% |
| ASSOCIATES | 0.79% | TRADING | 2.07% |
| TRANSPORT | 0.65% | DESIGN | 1.93% |
| INVESTMENTS | 0.65% | ENGINEERING | 1.86% |
| HERTFORD | 0.65% | ASSOCIATES | 1.84% |
| PROPERTY | 0.65% | CONSULTANTS | 1.79% |
| BUSINESS | 0.52% | BUSINESS | 1.73% |
| CARE | 0.52% | MEDIA | 1.72% |
| PALLETT | 0.52% | CONSTRUCTION | 1.72% |
| HAIR | 0.52% | LONDON | 1.66% |
| GREHAN | 0.52% | J | 1.54% |
| ELECTRICAL | 0.52% | INVESTMENTS | 1.51% |
| STREET | 0.52% | GLOBAL | 1.50% |
| PRODUCTIONS | 0.52% | IT | 1.40% |
| CENTRE | 0.52% | CARE | 1.34% |
| HERTFORDSHIRE | 0.52% | PROPERTIES | 1.31% |
| J | 0.52% | ELECTRICAL | 1.27% |
| М | 0.52% | М | 1.27% |
| CONSTRUCTION | 0.52% | BUILDING | 1.24% |
| R | 0.52% | ENERGY | 1.20% |
| DESIGN | 0.52% | S | 1.20% |
| CONSULTANTS | 0.39% | ENTERPRISES | 1.19% |

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Previous 36 months, excluding companies less than 12 months old

| SIC CODE | NUMBER OF COMPANIES | UK COMPANIES |
|--|---------------------|--------------|
| None Supplied | 143 | 216,665 |
| 7487 - Other business activities | 55 | 52,735 |
| 82990 - Other business support service activities not elsewhere classified | 38 | 35,233 |
| 99999 - Dormant Company | 20 | 25,084 |
| 70229 - Management consultancy activities other than financial management | 20 | 19,704 |
| 98000 - Residents property management | 17 | 3,050 |
| 7414 - Business & management consultancy | 17 | 12,113 |
| 4545 - Other building completion | 11 | 2,196 |
| 43390 - Other building completion and finishing | 11 | 3,228 |
| 9305 - Other service activities | 10 | 8,818 |
| 62090 - Other information technology service activities | 9 | 8,145 |
| 96090 - Other service activities not elsewhere classified | 9 | 13,637 |
| 68209 - Other letting and operating of own or leased real estate | 9 | 4,427 |
| 9999 - Dormant Company | 8 | 18,617 |
| 62020 - Information technology consultancy activities | 8 | 14,303 |
| 41100 - Development of building projects | 8 | 4,984 |
| 9800 - Residents Property Management | 7 | 1,397 |
| 93199 - Other sports activities | 6 | 2,011 |
| 45200 - Maintenance and repair of motor vehicles | 6 | 2,832 |
| 4525 - Other special trades construction | 6 | 1,547 |
| | | |