

Continuous growth since flotation

2004 interim highlights

for the six months ended 30 June 2004

2003

2004

Growth

Turnover*

£4,283.4 million

£4,480.4 million

£4,480.4 million

+4.6%

Total operating profit
before amortisation of intangible assets**

£122.5 million

£137.4 million

£137.4 million

+12.2%

Profit before tax
before amortisation of intangible assets**

£95.8 million

£115.5 million

£115.5 million

+20.6%

Diluted earnings per share
before amortisation of intangible assets**

19.1 pence

21.8 pence

21.8 pence

+14.1%

Diluted earnings per share

17.0 pence

19.6 pence

19.6 pence

+15.3%

Interim dividend per share

5.70 pence

6.25 pence

6.25 pence

+9.6%

* Turnover growth rate is based on 2003 published interim figures adjusted for the accounting policy change made at the end of 2003 following the amendment to the accounting standard FRS 5.

** Figures are calculated before amortisation of intangible assets of £7.7 million (2003: £7.4 million) since the Directors consider that this gives a useful additional indication of underlying performance.