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sorting the bulls from the bears

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Rio Tinto

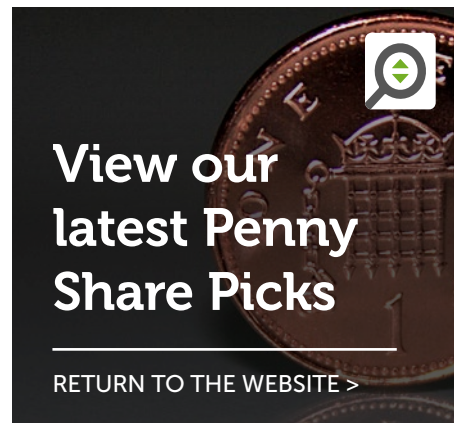
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There must be some sort of ANGLE!

Shares in the AIM-quoted liquid biopsy company **ANGLE (7.25p)** stand at very close to the all-time low and for those investors who like to take a high-degree of risk we believe that they are worth a look. Like many companies developing new medical technologies, the company has spent years in research and development, but it does seem that it is now getting closer to some sort of success, and it is odd the shares do not reflect this.

ANGLE is a world-leading liquid biopsy company which has developed its own proprietary platform, Parsortix®, which can capture and harvest rare blood cells from a blood sample. This allows for the identification of cancer cells which can be isolated, and which then allow for more effective treatment

for the patient. The group's technology is used in research, drug development and clinical oncology.

The company is now focused on collaborating with large pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies to enhance drug discovery and development as these companies are increasingly incorporating liquid biopsy into oncology trials to improve efficiency, reduce costs and enhance precision medicine approaches. The group's solutions can therefore become an integral part of drug discovery and development with the significant benefits that will accrue from this. The company has signed agreements with a number of companies including AstraZeneca and the Japanese pharmaceutical company Eisai.

The company had cash and cash equivalents of £10.4m at 31 December 2024 and believes it has sufficient funding to take it to the first quarter of 2026. Although revenues remain very low at the moment, at just £2.9m for 2024, and the company is obviously loss-making, the fact that it has established relationships with large, quality pharmaceutical companies is clearly an encouraging sign.

The share price of the company was 16.5p earlier this year and news of any further commercial agreements with potential partners could see the share price spike up again. Clearly the shares are high risk and there may be the need for additional funding at some point, but we think they deserve a **SPECULATIVE BUY** rating.



Is it time to turn to Rio!

Regular readers may recall that in March last year we recommended shares in **Rio Tinto (4148p)** as a trading buy when the share price was 4914p. Within two months the share price had soared to over 5800p for a gain of 18% for those investors who sold at that time. Since then the share price has fallen and it now stands at the lowest point since 2020 when the pandemic occurred. We therefore feel that this is another opportunity for both short term-traders and long-term holders to buy the shares.

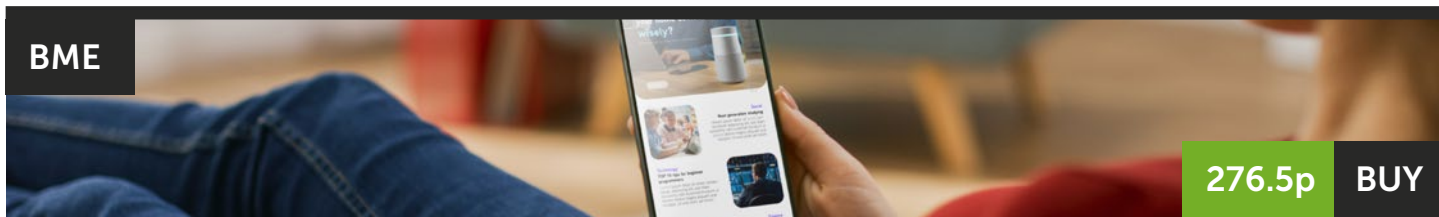
As most readers will be aware, the company is one of the largest mining companies in the world with interests in a variety of minerals including iron ore, copper, aluminium and titanium. The company has some 60,000

employees with operations in 35 countries including Australia, South Africa, Canada and the USA. The company is expanding its exposure to lithium which is an essential ingredient in lithium-ion batteries such as those used in hybrid and electric cars. It is also a key element needed for low-carbon technologies and demand for the mineral is expected to increase significantly over the next decade.

Shares in the company are very volatile as can be seen from some of the share price moves mentioned above and they have fallen by over 28% since the high of last May! The recent decline in price is due to a number of reasons. The potential imposition of tariffs by Donald Trump is a negative as this would also cause

a slowdown in world trade with an adverse impact on demand for commodities. The recent announcement that the current CEO is set to resign also took the market by surprise.

Nevertheless, it is worth pointing out that in the last year the company has paid out dividends of US\$4.02 (around 310p) per share and this puts the shares on a dividend yield of 7.5%. Consensus estimates are for the dividend to fall to US\$3.60 this year – a decline of some 10% and of course any further weakness in the US Dollar would reduce the dividend in Sterling terms. We think this is accounted for in the share price though and suggest the shares should be bought with a short-term price target of 4600p – a gain of almost 11%! **BUY**.



B&M EUROPEAN VALUE RETAIL S. A. (BME) – 276.5P

SECTOR - RETAILERS

Shares in this European retailing group have fallen back over recent weeks to stand at their lowest level since 2016, although the price was nearly as low as this in 2020 at the onset of the pandemic. At the end of 2021, the share price had risen to over 640p although in the year to 31 March 2021, adjusted earnings per share had been 43.4p. So, the shares were on a p/e ratio of 14.7x which did not leave a lot of upside. Although revenues have risen since then, adjusted pre-tax profits have fallen slightly as have adjusted earnings per share, although we believe this is more than reflected in the share price. The group has excellent growth prospects, especially in France and we would therefore expect profits and earnings per share to increase going forward. Standing on a low p/e ratio and attractive dividend yield, we believe that the shares are cheap.

Activities

B&M is a variety retailer with 777 stores in the UK operating under the 'B&M' brand, 343 stores operating under the 'Heron Foods' and 'B&M Express' brands, and 135 stores in France also operating under the 'B&M' brand as at 29 March 2025. The objective of the company is to be Europe's leading variety discount retailer, providing best-selling products at the lowest prices. The company offers a targeted range of branded convenience grocery products covering ambient food, soft drinks, confectionery and alcohol. It also sells fast-moving consumer goods such as toiletries and cleaning products. The company's offering is complementary to, rather than a substitute for, a customer's fresh grocery shop and delivers great value on the branded products that they regularly buy. The company also sells general merchandise products across a range of categories including homewares, electrical and gardening products, toys and DIY items. These products often lead to impulse purchases which help to increase the value of sales transactions.

The company has long-standing relationships with many global suppliers and this stands it in good stead ensuring consistency of supply and delivery. The group's buying teams constantly monitor consumer trends and its direct sourcing process from the Far East means that there are no exporter or UK distributor costs. This allows the company to offer products at very competitive prices. The company also focuses on best-selling items as this allows it to benefit from advantageous buying terms, whilst keeping operations simple. The company is also flexible with its allocation of floor space so that the product offering can be changed to fit in with seasonal trading patterns with more garden and outdoor living products in spring/summer and more toys and Christmas decorations in the autumn/winter.

Financial

The company has just released its results for the 52-week period to 29 March 2025 and these have revealed that revenue increased to £5.57bn (2024: £5.37bn) with the increase mainly due to the contribution from new stores. Adjusted pre-tax profits fell back to £455m (2024: £501m) with the result affected by higher interest costs and an increased depreciation charge. Earnings per share on the same basis were 34.6p (2024: 36.9p) and the dividend for the year was raised to 15.0p (2023: 14.7p). Net debt (excluding leases) at the end of the year was £781m (2024: £737m) although the group incurred capital expenditure of £111m and returned £300m to shareholders during the year.

The results reflect the challenging UK retail environment with weak consumer confidence and a very subdued garden season due to the poor weather during the year having a negative impact. The group

continued its store expansion programme during the year, opening a total of 70 stores with 45 B&M UK stores, 14 Heron Foods stores and 11 B&M France stores.

The B&M UK business increased revenues during the year by 3.8% to £4.48bn, being 80% of the group total, but this was due to store openings with like-for-like sales down 3.1%. Although gross margins at the business increased slightly, adjusted operating profit fell back slightly reflecting the increased costs of the business partly due to the increase in the National Living Wage. Heron Foods saw a slight decline of 0.6% in revenues to £546m although this follows two years of strong growth. Adjusted operating profit was down 39.1% due to the higher wage costs already mentioned and the lower revenue. B&M France revenues rose 7.8% to £542m with like-for-like sales up 2.6%. Adjusted operating profit was maintained at the same level as 2024 reflecting higher transport and distribution costs.

Outlook

Despite the fall in profitability in the latest financial year, further progress at the company looks likely. A new UK import centre is set to open this summer and the expansion of the distribution centre in France is proceeding well. The group admits that its operational delivery last year was disappointing and needs to improve and it has implemented certain initiatives to achieve this.

The group has a target of at least 1,200 B&M stores in the UK which is over 50% more than the current total although this will clearly take some years to achieve. Another 45 stores are planned to open in the current financial year. The company continues to invest in its distribution network in the UK and France with the expansion of the facility in France set to increase capacity by 40% which will support the store expansion programme in the country.

The current financial year is expected to suffer from higher wage costs as well as increased National Insurance contributions and other increased input costs. The group hopes to mitigate these through growth in sales volumes and productivity improvements. The company believes that it can increase its sales in its existing stores with a positive impact on profitability. The business in France offers years of future growth and the Heron business also has growth potential.

The share price of the company has fallen from 345p in mid-May and a return to that level would represent a gain of 25%. The new chief executive has just invested over £520,000 in shares of the company at prices around this level. We believe the shares are a **BUY**.



	Year Ending 31 March	Turnover (Ebn)	Adjusted Pre-Tax Profit (Ebn)	Adjusted Earnings Per Share (p)	P/E Ratio	Net Dividend (p)	Net Yield (%)
Share Price: 276.5p	2024	5.37	501	36.9	7.5	14.7	5.3
Market Capitalisation: £2.78bn	2025	5.57	455	34.6	8.0	15.0	5.4
2024/25 Share Price Range: 565p/254.6p	2026 (est)	5.91	460	34.6	8.0	15.5	5.6
Website: www.bandmretail.com							

Aggressive Growth Portfolio IX

It is very pleasing to be able to report another excellent performance from the Aggressive Growth Portfolio over the last month following the stellar performance seen in the previous month. The portfolio has risen in value by 9.0% and has thus significantly outperformed all of the benchmark indices as can be seen from the table below. It is pleasing to report that five of the constituents of the portfolio have risen in value by over 10% as well, with the best performer being **Journeo** which has increased by 30.2%!

As regular readers will be aware, one of the constituents of the portfolio, **Renold**, was in potential bid talks when we last went to press and this bid has now come to fruition. The company has received a cash offer worth 82p per share which has been recommended by the company. As it will take time for the bid to go through we have decided to sell in the market and have therefore disposed of our remaining holding of 9,500 shares at 80.6p. This generated net proceeds of £7,580 and a

gain of £3,551.

Following another strong rise in the value of the portfolio, we have decided to protect our profits by increasing some of our stop-loss limits once again. Thus, we have increased these on **Ramsdens Holdings**, **Journeo**, **Supreme**, **Smiths News** and **Watches of Switzerland** and these are shown in the table below.

It has been another fairly busy month for the portfolio, with announcements from **Ramsdens Holdings**, **Renold**, **Journeo**, **Tandem Group** and **Kier Group**. As usual these are covered in News Highlights or on the website.

A dividend of £50 was received from **Kier Group** during the month and following the investment into the two main features this month there is £1,992 on deposit pending investment.

Performance summary

	24 June 2025	27 May 2025	Gain/(Loss) %
Portfolio Value	£60,564	£55,584	9.0
FTSE 100 Share Index	8,758.99	8,778.05	(0.2)
FTSE All Share Index	4,763.16	4,759.12	0.1
FTSE AIM All Share Index	762.54	739.91	3.1

Security	Buying Price (p)	Total Cost (£)	Current Price (p)	Value (£)	Stop-Loss Limit (p)
1,500 Ramsdens Holdings*	190	2,878	345	5,175	300
1,750 Journeo	227.5	4,021	377.5	6,606	305
2,500 Supreme	162	4,091	198	4,950	165
2,625 Luceco	133	3,543	148.8	3,906	110
7,000 Vertu Motors	53.3	3,768	62.2	4,354	55
2,250 Tandem Group	185	4,204	180	4,050	140
2,500 Kier Group	120.4	3,055	194.8	4,870	150
7,500 Smiths News	54	4,110	57.4	4,305	48
1,075 Watches of Switzerland	356	3,884	409	4,397	325
600 Future	696.5	4,242	735	4,410	550
2,500 Stelrad Group	142	3,586	155	3,875	120
1,500 B&M European Value	276.5	4,209	276.5	4,147	220
850 Ashtead Technology	415	3,562	415	3,527	325
£1,992 Cash				1,992	
			TOTAL	£60,564	

Start date: 9 January 2024 with £50,000. Cash includes dividends received of £1,940. *after part disposal

AT.

ASHTEAD TECHNOLOGY

415p

SECTOR - AIM - OIL EQUIPMENT & SERVICES
RECOMMENDATION - BUY

Shares in **Ashtead Technology** have fallen back to the lowest level since the autumn of 2023 and we believe that this has provided a useful buying opportunity. The company has recently released an encouraging statement at its AGM, confirming that trading was in line with expectations for the first four months of the year. The share price stood at 880p just over a year ago and its decline has put the shares on a rating which we think is too low.

Ashtead Technology was established in 1985 and since then it has grown both organically and through acquisition to become a leading provider of underwater rental equipment to the global offshore energy sector. The group employs more than 650 people and services its customers from 13 facilities located around the world with operations in over 80 countries. The group's equipment is used on oil rigs and windfarms

based at sea and this includes ROV (remotely operated vehicles), cameras, winches, pumps, recovery tools such as grabs and so on. It now has over 30,000 assets of this nature.

In the year to 31 December 2024, revenues increased to £168.0m (2023: £110.5m), with adjusted pre-tax profits increasing to £43.6m (2023: £33.0m). The increase in revenues was due to a mixture of organic growth and acquisition as the company continues this growth strategy. Adjusted earnings per share increased to 45.0p (2023: 33.4p) and the company announced a dividend of 1.2p per share (2023: 1.1p). In November, the company expanded its operations with the acquisition of Seatronics and J2 Subsea for £63m in cash. These provide subsea electronics and tooling products and services to the global offshore energy market and its operations are complementary to the company's existing operations.

The company operates in a niche market in which it has considerable expertise and further growth can be expected. Despite this, the shares have drifted back for no apparent reason, and we rate them as a **BUY**.

	Year Ending 31 December	Turnover (£m)	Adjusted Pre-tax Profit (£m)	Adjusted Earnings Per Share (p)	P/E Ratio	Net Dividend (p)	Net Yield (%)
Share Price: 415p	2024	168	43.6	45.0	9.2	1.2	0.3
Market Capitalisation: £335m	2025 (est)	228	49.3	45.5	9.1	1.3	0.3
2024/25 Share Price Range: 880p/415p	2026 (est)	250	58.1	53.3	7.8	1.4	0.3
Website: www.ashtead-technology.com							

News Highlights

Anpario



415p **BUY**

As subscribers will know, we update the website with news that involves the companies that we follow, but we have highlighted what we regard as the most important news here.

Tandem Group – 180p

The sports and leisure group has announced a trading update at its AGM and this has confirmed that the company is on track to meet market expectations for the full year. Sales up to the end of May at the group were up 15% on the prior year which is clearly encouraging. The good weather experienced in the spring has helped the group's seasonally dependent products with sales in the Homes and Garden business 14% ahead of last year. The Toys and Leisure operations as well as the Golf division are both down 6% on last year, although both of these are expected to improve in the second half. The star performer though was the Bikes business with sales up an impressive 52% during the period. This has therefore outperformed the market in each of its categories of pedal, electric and junior bicycles and the second half of the year will benefit from the launch of the new HOY children's bike range, developed with Sir Chris Hoy. This is set to launch in September with dealers already placing an encouraging level of pre-orders. We continue to believe that the market is underestimating the results for 2025 and maintain our forecast of adjusted pre-tax profits of £1.5m for earnings per share of 24p. We therefore maintain our recommendation of **BUY**.

Ramsdens Holdings – 345p

The AIM listed financial services group has released its interim results covering the six months to 31 March and these have proved to be a record. Revenue rose 18% to £51.6m with pre-tax profits rising by 54% to £6.1m. Earnings per share increased by the same amount to 13.9p and the interim dividend was increased by 25% to 4.5p per share. There was a particularly strong performance from the precious metals business, where gross profit rose 53% to £7.6m and the company has also declared a special dividend of 0.5p per share. Net cash at the end of the period was £7.4m, the same as at 30 September 2024. The

second half has started well and the company therefore expects full year profits to exceed £15m. Earnings per share could therefore be around 34p. Following the strong rise in the share price there could be some profit taking despite these excellent results and so we reduce our recommendation to **HOLD**.

Journeo – 377.5p

The supplier of information and technical services to the transport sector and local authorities has revealed a number of new orders recently. These include an order worth £4.2m from Alstom SA for the supply of CCTV and passenger counting systems on CrossCountry's Voyager fleets, as well as an order worth \$2.7m to supply display systems for the New York City Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). The MTA is North America's largest transport network comprising 472 stations and 665 miles of track and customers make over 2 billion individual journeys per year. The display systems are being supplied to Outfront Media Group, an innovative US media company, with which Journeo is building a relationship. These orders are further evidence that the company continues to make good progress, although the shares have enjoyed an excellent run and so we move to **HOLD**.

Manx Financial Group – 25.5p

Manx Financial, the diversified finance group based in the Isle of Man, has revealed that it expects pre-tax profits for the year to 31 December to be in the region of £9.9m. This is a significant increase on the £7.0m reported in 2023 when earnings per share were 4.6p. Earnings per share in the last financial year could therefore be over 6p although the final figure will depend on the level of the tax charge which is likely to have increased over 2023. The results will benefit from a three month contribution from Payment Assist, which was only 50% owned until September last year when the balance of the company was acquired. With the current year benefiting from a full 12 months' contribution from the acquisition, pre-tax profits should advance once again with over £12m on the cards.

Earnings per share could rise to 8p or so and we therefore rate the shares a **BUY** with a share price target of 40p.

Anpario – 415p

The recent AGM statement from this supplier of natural animal feed additives, has confirmed that the company continues to trade in line with expectations. Sales have been strong during the first half of the year, and this has made the company more confident of achieving full year expectations for 2025. Clearly there are a number of geopolitical issues at the moment, but the company believes that the diversified nature of its business will provide some protection in the event of some negative impact. Strong performances have been seen in the USA and India although Brazil has been disappointing. Stock levels have increased this year to support the higher level of trade being seen, which has also led to a higher level of debtors - cash balances have therefore declined slightly to £9.0m at 31 May, from £10.5m at 31 December 2024. We believe that the company could make adjusted pre-tax profits of £6.6m for the year for earnings per share of 31.4p. Although the share price has moved up since we last commented on the shares in March, we retain our recommendation of **BUY**.



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