



Anyone else suffering flashbacks?

Only one month into the new year and the pace is already frightening, as is some of the activity I've seen within the market place.

Given the recent Brexit stalemate and general chaos, both political and macro-economic outlooks are increasingly unstable. House price growth has slowed to almost nothing and the London region has seen significant price falls in the high-end residential market.

From a wider perspective, UK growth forecasts are the lowest they've been for a decade and Europe as a whole looks bleak as Germany enters a technical recession. Within the UK financial services sector, we've also seen the first signs of struggling funders; one going into administration and several others stating publicly that they are now closed to new business.

With this backdrop in mind, it is rather surprising that the financial services landscape has been littered with articles announcing pricing reductions or the pushing out of lending criteria limits. Undoubtedly, the root cause of this is that new business transaction levels that have declined as investors

continue to put plans on hold awaiting the outcome of Brexit, with presently more funders than there is business to service. At times, I think I'm having flashbacks to 2007 when funders were putting their long term sustainable future at risk for short term volumes. Is it good for clients? Well in the short term, **Yes!** but as we saw in the aftermath of 2007, the long term answer is probably **No**. This is because funders at some point in the future will have to address the credit quality and pricing of their books and it'll be the customers that get caught in the cross fire.

Given Cambridge & Counties Bank's customer focused approach, we will continue to take the long term sustainable view around our value added proposition that we know we can deliver to our clients and introducers both now and long into the future.

Simon Lindley
Chief Development Officer



Property Finance



A Real Achievement

We recently achieved a landmark milestone of £100m in loan deals with our long standing brokers Real Property Finance.

Real Property, based in Sheffield and one of Yorkshires leading property finance brokers, have had a long and successful relationship with Cambridge & Counties Bank since our launch in 2012. They were named Residential Broker of the Year at our 2018 Broker Awards ceremony - the fifth year in a row they've picked up the accolade.

Andy Churchill of Real Property Finance Ltd said: "We have strong relationships with a number of banks, and bespoke funders, but the one with Cambridge & Counties Bank has been particularly successful. From the start there has always been a great synergy between the bank and ourselves as we both place the client at the centre of business and pride ourselves on delivering what we say."



Meet the Team

This issue, we catch up with our Senior Relationship Manager for Property Finance in the South East Region, Sue Higginson.

When are you happiest?

Nearly all the time — I am rarely unhappy.

What's your biggest pet peeve?

Indecisive people.

Where have you had the best meal of your life so far?

In a bay in Croatia at the end of October. The choice was "Meat" or "Fish" and thankfully I chose "Fish" which consisted of hand caught scallops, lobster, mullet and shrimp — to this day I am convinced the "Meat" option was the dog that barked at us as we moored up!

What's your favourite outdoor activity?

Sailing.

Name three things that you couldn't live without.

Diet Coke, Diet Coke, and Diet Coke — I've tried!

What's the best gift you ever received?

Life! Cheesy I know but if you have ever been close to someone who has nearly lost their's you will understand.

First album you purchased?

That's a loaded question... If I claim to ever owning an album you will all know that I'm over 21!

Ideal holiday?

You've probably guessed by now but this would certainly involve a yacht, my family, friends, sunshine and plenty of Gin & Tonic.

What would you call your autobiography?

"Zannadid" A play on the noun Zanadoo which means anything and everything and my 'pet' name at home.

How did you get into Real Estate?

If the truth be known I actually wanted to be an archaeologist, but my Dad's business got hit by a recession just as I was about to head off to Uni and I became a reluctant banker instead. I've never looked back and he has great pleasure in reminding me that if that hadn't happened I would still be scabbling around in muddy pits for a living!

Best piece of advice you've ever had?

"If in doubt let it out!"

Asset Finance



On a Roll

We helped an existing borrower who wanted to make an immediate purchase for Hamm Rollers to secure and win a new contract.

The proposal came to the Bank via a broker who was able to send through all necessary documents for us to facilitate the deal. From us noting the immediate payment requirement and seeing sight of the contract, we were able to not only make a decision but also put a credit line in place to assist the clients in further business purchases.

Two Transits

A local company came to Cambridge & Counties Bank to help them purchase a pair of Ford Transit vehicles required to help maintain their business.

The vans were offered to the company at heavily discounted rates and were being purchased to replace older vehicles that were costing more to maintain. Our Business Development team were able to go out to inspect the assets and approve the credit with the supplier invoice received a day after approval.



Classic Car Finance

Fast and Flexible

We recently helped a new customer purchase an Aston Martin Vantage V600 on a 2-year interest only purchase finance deal borrowing £360,000.

The customer needed to make a quick decision due to pressure from their dealership. They also needed flexibility as they were due to come into a large sum of money during the period of the loan. Given the simplicity of the clients financial situation, we were able to approve the deal within 24 hours and have the funds ready for when the customer needed them.



Happy Birthday to Me!

A milestone birthday meant one of our customers treated themselves to an iconic classic car — a 1960's Shelby Mustang GT500!

We happily approved the loan for the customer who purchased the car from Mainland Europe. Once imported, the car was inspected at a convenient place for the customer and we were happy to release the funds shortly afterwards.





£1bn Lending Milestone

We saw our balance sheet top £1 billion for the first time in 2018.

The growth we saw last year was driven by lending to our core client base of real estate investors, property developers and SMEs, primarily through brokers and intermediaries.

Simon Lindley, our Chief Development Officer said: *"The bank has developed a strong, unique and customer focused business model which has generated real momentum in our selected product lines and target markets. The successful launch of classic cars highlights the client demand that exists in niche sectors and the importance of continuing our investment in our broker relationships."*



Christmas Quiz Winner

In our December 2018 newsletter, we ran what has now become our annual Christmas quiz, sending it to all our Brokers and Business Partners with the chance to win an Apple iPad!

We had an influx of responses as always and we hope the quiz got you in the spirit of Christmas. The questions were tough, however there can only be one winner, we are pleased to announce that Dean Pedley, Regional Director of Kind Commercial in Birmingham was the lucky one.

Congratulations Dean and thank you all for taking part!



Neil Reddington, Regional Director for West Midlands with Dean Pedley of Kind Commercial.

Collect for Christmas

In December 2018, we collected 'Starter Packs' for Leicestershire Cares, to help support those within the Leicester community affected by homelessness during the cold winter months.

Together, we were able to collect 24 'starter packs' in total including essentials such as crockery, cleaning products and bedding to be used by those affected, making their hostel and refuge accommodations more comfortable to live in during the festive period.