

## Top stories from EGi

### Akers leaves LandSec

Richard Akers is to leave Land Securities after nearly 20 years at the REIT. He will leave on 31 March 2014. Akers joined LandSec in 1995 and has been on the board since 2005. Two new roles have been created: managing director, retail portfolio, which will be filled by Scott Parsons; and managing director, London portfolio, which will be filled by Colette O'Shea.

### More porridge for fraudster

Fraudster Saghir Ahmed Afzal has been sentenced to a further 10 years in prison after failing to pay back £29.3m obtained via a property scam. He was sentenced in June 2011 to 13 years for his part in a £49m mortgage fraud between 2004 and 2006. He was ordered to pay the confiscation within six months or incur a default sentence.

### West End man tucks in to role

Ex-BNP Paribas Real Estate director Keith Harris is joining West End agency Tuckerman. As a director, Harris will lead Tuckerman's acquisition activities. The move follows his shock departure from BNP PRE in September after 35 years at the company.

### CBRE seeks new Brum HQ

CBRE is searching for a new Midlands headquarters in Birmingham. The agent has shortlisted 55 Temple Row, 158 Edmund Street, Two Colmore Square, Colmore Plaza and Two Snowhill for around 13,000 sq ft. It would be the largest agent relocation in Birmingham since Jones Lang LaSalle took 16,000 sq ft at 45 Church Street in 2008.

### Government in Bloom

Seven government agencies are to consolidate their offices into 21 Bloomsbury Street, WC1, in a move it is claimed will save taxpayers £60m. Sport England and the Horserace Betting Levy Board are among the agencies that will occupy the building. The deal reduces the government's property footprint by 110,000 sq ft.

### ANNABEL DIXON

The Homes & Communities Agency this week launched a search for agents for its prized £100m advisory framework.

The HCA will invite up to 25 applicants to tender and expects to appoint between 10 and 15 advisers to the four-year framework, which will generate up to £100m of agency work.

The panel will advise the HCA and central government departments, their agencies and non-departmental public bodies including the London Legacy Development Corporation, the department for Business, Innovation & Skills and the Ministry of Defence.

Agents will be expected to provide a range of services, including consultancy, estate

management, investment, valuation, and project management advice.

The current HCA panel is made up of Knight Frank, DTZ, Jones Lang LaSalle, Savills, Deloitte Real Estate, CBRE, GVA, Lambert Smith Hampton, Gerald Eve, Colliers International, Montagu Evans and Thomas Lister.

In April, the Government Procurement Service appointed 10 agents to its £120m Estates Professional Service Framework, with places going to regional agents Sanderson Weatherall, Alder King, Ryden, Harris Lamb and Budworth Hardcastle, while Knight Frank, Colliers International, BNP Paribas Real Estate and Deloitte all lost their places.

One agent said: "It will be interesting to see whether the HCA goes down the same route as the GPS and favours bids from smaller regional players."

The HCA's tender notice said the contract may be suitable for small to medium-sized firms, but added: "The contract will be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender."

Expressions of interest are due by 17 January.

*Estates Gazette* revealed last month that the HCA was working with Manchester council on a 3,000-home private rented sector scheme as well councils in Lancashire to unlock 11 sites for 17,000 homes.

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### AULD REEKIE CHECKS OUT FOR WHITBREAD

Whitbread has chosen Artisan Real Estate Investors' £150m Caltongate scheme in Edinburgh for its first Hub

by Premier Inn budget hotel outside London. Contracts have been exchanged for both a 131-bedroom Hub hotel and a traditional format 127-bedroom Premier Inn on the site in the Scottish capital's

historic old town. Artisan lodged a planning application in August for the 640,000 sq ft mixed-use first phase of its Caltongate scheme. A decision on the project is due at the end of January.

## South Bank is an easy sell for advertisers

Media and advertising companies are flocking to the West End and north London to Dorrington's Crane Building on the South Bank, SE1.

The UK arm of advertising firm Cheil Worldwide is believed to have gone under offer for the ground to third floors of the 48,200 sq ft property.

Advised by CBRE, it is paying circa £50 per sq ft for the 28,000 sq ft of space. It will relo-

cate from 9,000 sq ft at 21 Caledonian Road, N1.

Media and advertising company GroupM has taken the 5,400 sq ft fifth floor, moving from slightly smaller offices at 124 Theobalds Road, WC1.

The 5,400 sq ft sixth floor has been let to Rethink, which will move from nearby offices. Both deals are at £52.50 per sq ft, and mean just 7,200 sq ft remains available at the

Lavington Street property.

Cushman & Wakefield analysed 154 transactions covering 6m sq ft in the year to 31 October and found that 52% of occupiers had moved some or all of their operations out of their existing submarket.

James Andrew International advised GroupM; Matthews & Goodman acted for Rethink. CBRE and H2SO are letting agents on the Crane Building.