CASE STUDY

Morgan Sindall

Filling a Design Manager Role

A ROLE OPEN FOR A YEAR. FIVE CVS, ONE ACCEPTANCE.

Morgan Sindall, a Tier 1 water sector contractor, partnered with Murray McIntosh to fill a Design Manager vacancy within its engineering team. Based in Avonmouth and supporting Wessex Water and Welsh Water capital programmes, the role had remained unfilled for almost a year before Murray McIntosh was engaged.

Within three months, the position was successfully filled on a permanent basis.

Results

5

CVs submitted for one hard-to-fill vacancy.

1

offer accepted despite sector-wide counteroffers.

3

months to close a role that had been open for a year.

A YEAR-LONG SEARCH FOR A NICHE, SITE-BASED SKILLSET.

When location, specialism and sector demand create a recruitment challenge.

Morgan Sindall needed a Design Manager to support major clean and wastewater programmes across Wessex Water and Welsh Water. The search had already been running for close to a year when Murray McIntosh was engaged, with a combination of specialist technical requirements, location constraints and a highly competitive market limiting hiring progress.

Even when strong candidates emerged, securing a commitment proved difficult. Experienced water-sector professionals were in high demand, and counteroffers repeatedly disrupted the process. Over the course of the search, two accepted offers fell through before a permanent hire was ultimately secured.

Three months after engagement, the vacancy was filled.

A PERSISTENT SEARCH PARTNER.

Staying the course through two false starts.

Leon Smith, Principal Consultant for the water sector, took on the brief in January and submitted the first CV within days. That candidate was offered the role and accepted, before taking a counteroffer from their existing employer instead. Rather than reopening the search from scratch, Murray McIntosh went back to the market in March with a second round of CVs.

- January: Brief taken on and first CV submitted; candidate offered and accepted, then withdrew for a counteroffer.
- March: Second round of CVs submitted; a further offer was made and accepted, then also lost to a counteroffer.
- April: A third round identified a candidate who accepted the offer and joined on a permanent basis.

Two accepted offers were lost to counteroffers during the search, setbacks that could easily have brought the process to an end. Instead, Murray McIntosh continued to revisit the market, re-engage candidates and rebuild the shortlist until the role was filled. In a sector where experienced water professionals are in short supply and competition for talent is intense, that persistence proved critical.

A SUCCESSFUL HIRE AND A SUCCESSFUL CAREER MOVE.

Delivering long-term value for clients and meaningful career progression for candidates.

Beyond filling the vacancy, the placement has been a genuine success for the candidate. Moving from a Tier 2 subcontractor into a Tier 1 contractor was an important career step, and it has been rewarding to see her settle into the role and thrive.

At Murray McIntosh, that's the outcome we're always aiming for: helping organisations secure the people they need while creating opportunities for individuals to progress their careers. Whether we're supporting Tier 1 contractors or organisations in other sectors, our approach remains the same. We stay engaged, work closely with our clients through challenging markets, and remain focused on finding the right long-term fit for both employer and candidate.

THE PEOPLE YOU NEED DO EXIST.

Just let us know how we can help you

For more than a decade, Murray McIntosh has been at the forefront of water-sector recruitment, supporting water companies, tier providers, SMEs and suppliers with the skilled professionals they need to deliver.

We have an unrivalled understanding of the pressures facing the industry: tightening regulatory demands, ageing infrastructure, environmental expectations, and the intensifying workforce challenges of AMP cycles. Because our water team work exclusively in this space, we know where the talent is, how to engage it, and how to overcome the structural hiring barriers unique to the water sector. By working as an extension of our clients' teams, we help build realistic, long-term workforce strategies that address the skills shortages affecting the water sector.

As trusted specialists, and active members of AquaFed, Future Water, and the Institute of Water, we combine deep sector knowledge with a modern, data-driven approach to recruitment. Murray McIntosh is the partner the water industry relies on today, and the one shaping its workforce for tomorrow.

Get in touch



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Most recruiters know engineering.

WE KNOW WATER

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