



CASE STUDY

Alex Holland - Morgan Sindall Construction



- Graduate of Loughborough University in Architectural Engineering and Design Management
- Been in the industry for 10 years
- Passionate about inspiring the younger generation to pursue careers and leadership roles in construction.

**MORGAN
SINDALL**
CONSTRUCTION

"I am so excited to be involved with this initiative, to help inspire and empower young women in Wales to see the exciting opportunities that exist in construction. By sharing visibility of real career paths and leadership stories, I hope to show that this industry is open, innovative, and full of potential for women to thrive and lead."

Alex Holland – From Graduate to Senior Design Manager

Alex joined Morgan Sindall straight from university, entering the construction industry with very little prior knowledge of what it entailed. What drew Alex in was the vocational, hands-on nature of the sector and the creative problem-solving it offered. While at school, Alex enjoyed creative subjects but did not want to pursue a traditional art-based career. Discovering design management as a discipline provided the perfect balance between creativity, practicality and structure, sparking a genuine interest that ultimately shaped Alex's career path.

"I knew nothing about the industry to begin with, but learning what design management was really intrigued me."

Entering the Industry: The Graduate Scheme Experience

The Morgan Sindall Graduate Scheme played a pivotal role in Alex's early development. The scheme offered structured guidance, continuous training and the opportunity to work on live projects within the local region. This balance of support and autonomy allowed Alex to build confidence while learning on the job.

During these formative years, Alex developed a strong understanding of how the construction industry operates, how Morgan Sindall functions as a business, and the critical role design management plays within a wider project team. Exposure to real projects and multidisciplinary teams helped Alex grasp not only the technical aspects of the role, but also the importance of collaboration, communication and accountability.

Career Progression and Development

Over the course of nine years, Alex progressed from Graduate to Senior Design Manager. While Alex is quick to point out that the time passed quickly rather than feeling like rapid progression, this journey was underpinned by a consistent commitment to learning, curiosity and engagement.

In addition, the wider Cardiff office environment, described as knowledgeable and supportive, played a key role in shaping Alex's growth. Participation in Morgan Sindall's Stepping into Management programme further supported Alex's transition into senior and line management responsibilities, developing both professional capability and personal leadership skills.

“No question is a bad question — we have to keep learning and developing.”

The Role of a Design Manager

In simple terms, Alex describes the role as managing the design. Day to day, this involves coordinating a wide range of stakeholders including architects, structural, civil and MEP engineers, as well as specialist design subcontractors. The aim is to ensure that all disciplines work cohesively to produce a coordinated, buildable and high-quality design.

A significant part of the role takes place during pre-construction, where Alex works closely with clients to ensure the design reflects their needs and aspirations. Once projects move on site, the focus shifts to buildability, sequencing and resolving design details in line with the RIBA stages.

Once projects move on site, the focus shifts to buildability, sequencing and resolving design details.



Impact and Reward

For Alex, the most rewarding moment of any project is handover day. Seeing end users — particularly schoolchildren and teachers — experience a new building for the first time is a powerful reminder of the real-world impact of construction.

“Seeing people move into their new building and be truly blown away makes it all worth it.”

Culture, Wellbeing and Support

Morgan Sindall's commitment to people is central to Alex's experience. As an Investors in People Platinum organisation, the business places a strong emphasis on wellbeing, development and trust. The decentralised structure allows regional teams, including the Cardiff office, to develop in ways that suit their people, with open discussions around progression and no unnecessary barriers to growth.



Advice to Students and Early Career Professionals

Alex's message to young women considering a graduate scheme or apprenticeship in construction is simple: **do it.**

Looking Ahead

Rather than one standout moment, Alex feels proud of the career built so far — the projects delivered, the teams worked with and the positive social impact of the schemes completed.

“I'm proud of the career I've built and the impact the projects have on people's lives.”