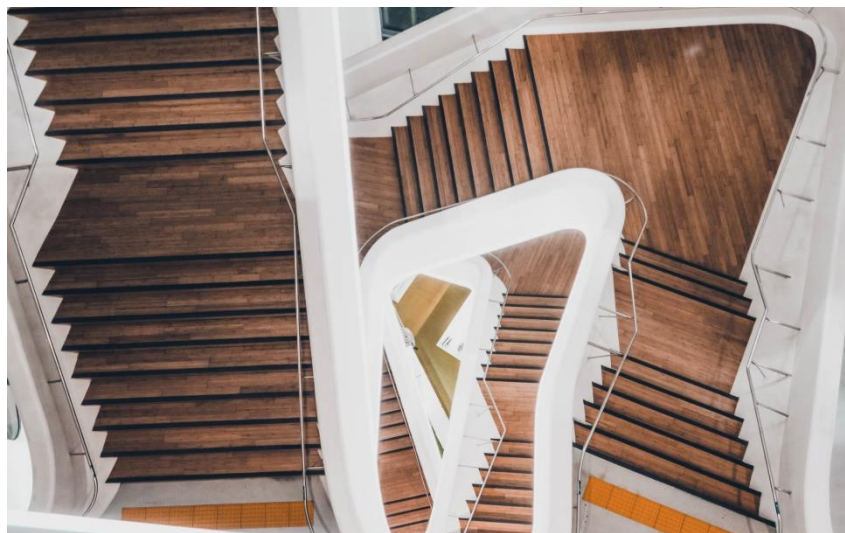


Climbing the MDA career ladder

This month has seen recognition for four members of staff who've gone the extra mile to fly the MDA flag over the past year. Read more about their roles, work history, and the advice they give to fellow members of the construction industry who are keen to progress in their careers.



Whilst many people view the end of summer with sadness, it's the time of year when countless companies announce well-deserved promotions for their hard-working employees – and here at MDA Consulting, we relish the opportunity to show our colleagues how much we appreciate them! View our current opportunities [here](#).

Richard Hall – Director

Richard is based in our London office and has worked with MDA Consulting since 1998, in three instalments, totalling 13 years. He spent his time away overseas, predominantly in the Middle East. Richard graduated from the University of Portsmouth with a Construction Management degree in 1998. He has just been promoted to Director.



What is your specialism at MDA?

Core specialism is QS, but also act as PM and EA. Also have experience in commercial management, claims and valuation.

What is a typical day in the office like for you?

A mixed bag involving office work, site visits and meetings elsewhere. There is no typical day as such; it is a very varied career.

Do you expect your role to change much following your promotion?

Day to day the same work on projects but more of an involvement in management of the company I would expect.

What is your favourite part of working at MDA?

I like the size and direction of the company, and the environment is not too corporate, i.e. you are not just a number. You are left to manage yourself and your projects in your own way (within reason) and the support is there as and when you need. It's a friendly and relaxed working environment.

If your colleagues had to use four words to describe you, what would they be?

You'll have to ask them, but the answers may not be for print!

What advice would you give to someone looking to climb the career ladder?

Get your head down, step out of your comfort zone - there is always a first time that you do something, it gets easier thereafter. Show yourself to be dedicated, adaptable to change and willing to take on responsibility.

Kester Mein - Director

Kester is based in our London office and has worked with MDA Consulting for almost 23 years. He graduated from the University of Greenwich in 2001 with a degree in Quantity Surveying, Contract Law, Measurement and Economics.



What is your specialism at MDA?

Quantity Surveying and Monitoring Surveying across a wide range of projects and sectors.

What is a typical day in the office like for you?

Arrive at 8:30, grab an hour catching up on emails, then catch up with my team on any issues they may have. From 10:00 until lunchtime, I am usually busy writing monitoring reports. I will grab a sandwich then push on with the growing workload in the afternoon. Near the end of the day I will organise the following day, ready for any site visits or meetings. I like to be organised!

Do you expect your role to change much following your promotion?

Not really to be honest. I have been running a team for 2 years now - but the responsibility on fee earning has gone up a notch or two!

What is your favourite part of working at MDA?

Meeting new people and seeing projects develop to a conclusion.

If your colleagues had to use four words to describe you, what would they be?

Hardworking, honest, happy and harassed!

What advice would you give to someone looking to climb the career ladder?

Work hard, stay keen, and always be willing to learn.

Chris Lester - Director

Chris is based in our Bristol office and has been working with the MDA team for 10 months. Chris gained his MSc in Real Estate and Management at Birmingham City University in 2005.



What is your specialism at MDA?

Fund monitoring, as well as restructuring and recovery; the latter being a Director with MDA – LC Mann Ltd.

What is a typical day in the office like for you?

I spend a fair amount of time on the road travelling to and from sites, as well as spending time on site carrying out monthly drawdowns. Typically, I'm only in the office 60-70% of the time, but the Bristol team have a good relationship and there are good personalities, so the days go fairly quickly.

What is your favourite part of working at MDA?

Working as part of a team again, which has the appetite to grow and be a success in the region – particularly after spending a while working primarily on my own. Also enjoy the transparency, openness of the management, ensuring the employees know what is going on throughout the company – makes you feel bigger part of the company.

If your colleagues had to use four words to describe you, what would they be?

You'd have to ask the team, hardworking, detail man and funny (I hope)!

What advice would you give to someone looking to climb the career ladder?

Don't be afraid to take on more responsibility and more work than you believe you can handle – stress is the fertiliser of success, be confident and try to get to know as many people as you can within your own sector / industry.

Lettice Swan - Associate

Lettice is based in our London office but visits the Brighton and Bristol offices twice a month. She has worked with MDA Consulting for almost two years, which she says are “the best two years” of her career. Lettice gained a BSc in Psychology at The University of Manchester in 2011.



What is your specialism at MDA?

I am responsible for looking at new business opportunities. Unfortunately, this involves a lot of wining and dining and attending networking events! I jest, as for me it is the perfect job because I love meeting new people (which I know for many is their worst nightmare). My end goal is of course to bring in new projects with new clients, however a lot of my role encompasses keeping current clients happy, generally flying the MDA flag, and raising our profile.

What is a typical day in the office like for you?

When I am in the office, my day tends to be admin focussed; following up on meetings I’ve had, chasing leads, setting future meetings up, and organising events. I tend to be out and about most of the time, meeting with potential clients, architects, contractors and other industry professionals. I attend a lot of evening drinks events in order to network and meet new contacts, as well as daytime conferences and seminars which I attend to broaden my knowledge of the industry and to keep up with construction trends. September for me consisted of: the MDA Consulting Directors Conference in Bath, a networking lunch in Bristol, a Women In Social Housing golf day, sailing for the Little Britain Challenge Cup, a few days in Liverpool for a retail conference, and over 20 B2B meetings!

Do you expect your role to change much following your promotion?

I’m not sure it will change too much as I was pretty much carrying it out day to day anyway. No doubt as time progresses things will change and my role will develop organically. I think for me it will be perception from those outside of MDA Consulting which will be the biggest change.

What is your favourite part of working at MDA Consulting?

I think my description of my day-to-day role might give you some insight into why I love my job! But it is definitely more than that too. I love working for MDA Consulting, the people and ethos are great and it's brilliant to have your voice heard and to be able to make positive changes within a business.

If your colleagues had to use four words to describe you, what would they be?

Steve Jones is our Managing Director and he says multiple times a day, "The Great Lettice Swan!", so I'll use his words exactly!

What advice would you give to someone looking to climb the career ladder?

Show willing and interest in progression, be a team player, set your sights high, work hard, and be a diligent member of staff.