

Willmott Dixon appoints development lead for Midlands

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[Willmott Dixon](#) has appointed property expert Marika Lawrence as its new head of land and development for the Midlands. Marika will work with Willmott Dixon's national Development Solutions team, supporting customers in designing, planning, funding and unlocking and delivering development-led schemes across the region.

With more than 15 years' experience in the property sector, and as a qualified chartered planning and development surveyor, Marika will be responsible for identifying and overseeing some of the region's exciting projects and helping customers to benefit from the organisation's combined construction and [development solutions](#) expertise.

One example of this is Willmott Dixon's appointment in December by Rugby Borough Council to deliver 100 new affordable and homes (CGI below), which includes the development team supporting the council in obtaining a £6.8m grant from Homes England under its Affordable Homes Programme 2021-26 alongside a further £2m from the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership via the government's Getting Building Fund.

This followed Torbay Council's announcement in November that Willmott Dixon would be one of two development partners to accelerate town centre growth by regenerating several sites in Torquay and Paignton.

On her appointment, Marika said:

"I'm incredibly passionate about working in this industry; the decisions we make have the power to impact on people and their lives for generations to come. As a Midlands native, I am particularly eager to play a

part in building and shaping the future of this area and helping customers to overcome the unique challenges faced by the region.

“I look forward to building on existing relationships and creating new ones within the region. Understanding what customers and stakeholders need and helping to execute a plan is an aspect of this role that is deeply fulfilling, whether it’s delivering strategic approaches to environmental and social value goals or navigating the ever-growing demands of regeneration within towns and cities.”

In her previous role at a developer, Marika was responsible for identifying land acquisition opportunities for developments and liaising with key stakeholders in the Midlands. Throughout her career, Marika has delivered successful projects across different sectors, from industrial and commercial to education and mixed-use.

Marika added:

“Willmott Dixon appealed to me because of the variety of projects it works on, especially in the public sector. It has an amazing reputation in the Midlands, and I’m eager to continue building on the relationships the team has already forged. It’s a challenging time for the industry, but we can and will continue finding solutions to deliver a built environment that’s fit for the future.”

Nick Gibb, deputy managing director for the Midlands at Willmott Dixon, added:

“The Midlands is a vibrant and diverse region, but with that comes unique challenges that our customers face when delivering projects.

“Our development solutions team play a critical role in helping customers to overcome these challenges, and Marika’s varied experience and first-hand knowledge of the region makes her a fantastic addition to the team.

“We’re thrilled that our customers will be able to benefit from Marika’s impressive property expertise and look forward to seeing the positive impact she has.”

David Atkinson, national head of development at Willmott Dixon, said:

“We’re delighted to welcome Marika to the team where she will be able to use her extensive local Midlands knowledge and experience alongside our national funding, development and project management expertise to support our customers in transforming their communities.”