



Recruitment Services

How Lovell saved £140k in recruitment costs with IRIS Recruitment Services

LOVELL

Customer Story



Lovell is a leading UK housing developer that recruits over 300 roles annually across a diverse, decentralised structure. Like many organisations operating in a competitive market, Lovell faced significant recruitment challenges – including high first-year attrition, inconsistent recruitment practices across regions, and heavy reliance on costly recruitment agencies.

To address these issues and drive greater consistency and cost-efficiency, Lovell partnered with IRIS Recruitment Services, using the Managed Campaigns. The results have been transformative – with over £140,000 in agency savings since January 2025, a notable reduction in first-year turnover, and a closer, collaborative relationship with IRIS that continues to deliver strategic value.

Highlights

- £140K+ saved in recruitment agency fees since January 2025
- First-year attrition reduced by nearly 50%
- Managed Campaigns delivering higher-quality, longer-lasting hires





Embedding IRIS Recruitment Services into a decentralised organisation

When Clare Smithson, Head of HR, joined Lovell, she inherited a fragmented recruitment process. While Blue Octopus (now IRIS Recruitment Services) had already been introduced, it hadn't been fully embedded or consistently used across Lovell's regional teams. Each region followed its own recruitment approach, often bypassing the central platform in favour of familiar agencies.

"We were spending a huge amount on agencies," Clare explains. ***"And for me, the cost of failure was a huge concern. Too many people were joining and leaving within twelve months – and often, they were the ones hired through agencies."***

Even basic functionality had gone underused, including ensuring vacancies appeared correctly on the careers site. Clare quickly recognised the untapped potential of the IRIS Recruitment Services platform – and with support from Kelly, their dedicated Customer Success Manager, she began reintroducing the system with a renewed focus on consistency, quality, and cost-efficiency.





The impact of Managed Campaigns

At the heart of Lovell's success has been its use of Managed Campaigns, which offer end-to-end recruitment support, from advert creation and posting to candidate sourcing and engagement. The campaigns have played a key role in reducing agency dependence while significantly improving candidate quality and retention.

"I've personally had a lot of success using Managed Campaigns," says Clare. "And yes – those we've hired through IRIS Recruitment Services do tend to stay longer."

With over £140,000 saved in agency fees since the beginning of 2025, the financial impact has been significant. But Clare emphasises that it's not just about cost.

"The quality candidates are out there. And while we still need agencies for very niche roles, the difference is we can now be selective instead of relying on agencies by default."

Lovell's turnover rate has dropped by 10% for first-year hires – a remarkable improvement in just 18 months.



Partnering for success

A key factor behind Lovell's success has been the close, collaborative partnership with IRIS Recruitment Services. Kelly, Lovell's Customer Success Manager, has played a pivotal role in driving adoption and supporting strategic decisions.

"I see her as part of my wider team. We all get on like a house on fire," Clare shares. "She goes above and beyond, whether that's helping us dig into the data and showing the value that the system can bring or running demos for my team. I think having someone with her depth of knowledge, not just about the system, but also the wider industry, makes her a real asset to IRIS."

Their biweekly calls have become a valued space for collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and continuous improvement. Recently, Claire Smith has joined the team as Lovell's dedicated Client Talent Acquisition contact, overseeing the day-to-day delivery of recruitment campaigns.

"Lovell has been a fantastic customer to work with over the years, and I really value our partnership. I always look forward to our biweekly calls – they're really beneficial. We bounce ideas off each other, share best practices, and it's lovely to feel like an extension of their team!" Kelly adds. "With Claire Smith now leading on recruitment delivery, we're already seeing relationships continue to strengthen. Her expertise ensures the high-quality candidate experience we're striving for – and will help Lovell maintain those impressive agency savings."

A strategic shift in recruitment – with IRIS at the centre



As Lovell continues to refine its recruitment practices, including potential plans to bring in an in-house recruiter, the HR team remains confident in their direction and the tools they're using.

“We’re not there yet, but we’re getting there. And Kelly’s been a huge part of the shift in momentum. More regions, more managers are now choosing to use IRIS Recruitment Services – rather than being told to.”

With the recent upgrade to the Platinum package, Lovell will unlock even more functionality, including enhanced integration with selected agencies for niche roles.

“We’re not naive – agencies still have a role to play. But now, with IRIS Recruitment Services in place, we can manage them on our terms – not the other way around.”





From fragmented to future-ready

The combination of significant cost savings, improved employee retention, and strong strategic support has made IRIS Recruitment Services an integral part of Lovell's success – and its future.

“IRIS Recruitment Services has helped us move from fragmented recruitment to a more consistent, cost-effective model,” Clare says. “And with Kelly’s support – and Claire now on board – we’re only just scratching the surface of what’s possible.”



To find out more about
IRIS Recruitment Services, visit

www.iris.co.uk/products/iris-recruitment-services



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Recruitment Services