

BEN WATSON

SOFTWARE ENGINEER

CONTACT

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 London

FAVOURITE TECH

Language | Python
Database | PostgreSQL / SQLAlchemy / Alembic
Framework | FastAPI / Flask
Infra | GCP / k8s / Docker / Terraform
Monitoring | DataDog / Sentry
CI / CD | CircleCI / GitHub Actions
Other | pydantic / PubSub / Temporal
Project | Jira / Confluence / Linear

EDUCATION

University of York 2013 - 2016

Mathematics BSc (Hons)

2:1 (67%). Included Formal Languages & Automata, Abstract Algebra, Number Theory, and Cryptography.

Oxted School 2006 - 2013

A Levels | Mathematics (A*), Further Mathematics (A*), Physics (B), Chemistry AS (A)

GCSEs | 5 A*s (Mathematics, English, Physics, Chemistry, Biology), 6 As, 2 Bs

HOBBIES

Engineering

wainlog - a Lake District summit tracker with FastAPI / PostgreSQL / Google OAuth2
fagiolo - a simple meal planner with Flask
mixon - a tiny little cocktail helper with Flask

Other

Bouldering; woodwork; endless DIY, ceramics; food & drink; Italy; multi-day walking trips; winter sports

PROFILE

Ahoy. I'm a **values-driven backend engineer**, primarily working in **Python**. I particularly enjoy distilling complex problems into their simplest forms; creating great documentation and diagrams; mentoring junior engineers; and improving processes to help teams work more efficiently. Outside of work, I love making things (anything!), bouldering, and being outside.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Zoa | Software Engineer

Nov 2023 - Feb 2024

Data Platform Team

Primarily building an integration layer to connect third-party systems to Zoa's products

- Designed and implemented an integration testing pipeline for the team's services
- Championed documentation + introduced a standalone docs site in Jekyll/GitHub Actions with auto-generated docs and entity relationship diagrams
- Built a lightweight FastAPI app for engineers to onboard consumers in bulk via a UI, with a simple PostgreSQL message queue to make local testing easy
- Participated in hiring and onboarding, and created interviewing resources

Octopus Migration Team

Designed, built and scaled the majority of the tooling used to migrate Bulb's 1.7million energy accounts to Octopus' Kraken billing system in the biggest and fastest energy migration in the UK

Bulb | Software Engineer

Oct 2020 - Nov 2023

Energy Operations Team

Part of a small, multidisciplinary team automating manual processes in Python and building tooling for the Operations team of ~100

- Developed a full-stack Flask app for teams to run configurable tools to carry out bulk actions securely and robustly. Used to automate over 1 million manual tasks a month (33 million total in its lifetime) by ~200 Bulb team members
- Coached a number of junior engineers, created numerous learning materials for people wanting to break into engineering, and lead a tech show & tell session

Bulb | Energy Specialist

Feb 2018 - Oct 2020

Experience Team / Energy Operations Team

Early team member at Bulb. Worked in a customer-facing role in the Experience team, before joining the Ops team and using Python and SQL to automate manual processes as the team grew from 10 to ~80 people

International Citizen Service | Volunteer

Jan 2017 - Apr 2017

Oke Ode, Nigeria

Worked on a mix of community projects mainly focussed around education. Frequently led our team of 16 British and Nigerian volunteers.