

# People

Providing a great place to work



NI Water's Apprenticeship Academy graduates

## Strategic areas of focus



## Sustainable development goals



## Principal threats/opportunities

PT1 PT2 PT3 PT4 PT5 PT6 PT7 PT8 PO1 PO2 PO4

Page 72 Read more about strategic threats and opportunities.

## Strategic performance indicators

People	Unit of measurement	Target 2020/21	Actual 2020/21	Pass/Fail	Target 2021/22
Employee engagement score	%	65	70*	Pass	65
Reduction in health and safety incidents	Number	7	5	Pass	7

\* Based on average completion rate for three COVID-19 pulse surveys



**Strategic areas of focus**

**Powered by talent**

Attracting, developing, retaining and partnering with the best talent is fundamental to the success of our business and therefore we are committed to making NI Water a great place to work.

A diverse workforce is good for business, providing different perspectives, encouraging innovation, and fostering a more collaborative working culture. As a traditionally male dominated industry, we recognise the importance of attracting more female applicants into the industry.

In an increasingly competitive talent market, it is important that we address the challenges presented by an ageing workforce and loss of knowledge to ensure there is a future supply of skills coming into our organisation.

In 2020/21 we launched a new Emerging Leaders programme, developing 44 aspiring leaders to fulfil their leadership potential and a new Apprenticeship Academy through which we hired 30 new water apprentices. 13% of our apprenticeship intake are female, enhancing the proportion of females within our industrial workforce. The apprentices will complete a four year combined water and wastewater apprenticeship.

Our 2021/22 plans include the development of an immersive management development programme for all middle managers; a significant programme of work to define and develop our corporate values into everyday behaviours and actions for which we will hold ourselves accountable; modernising our total reward strategy; and the development of a hybrid working for office based staff as we re-invent our workplace.



Read more about our work on diversity and inclusion at page 127.



NI Water apprentice, Erin, who was motivated to apply for an apprenticeship while studying the water quality of Lough Neagh at university



**Strategic areas of focus**

**Happy, safe and healthy people**

We recognise the importance of our people in delivering the water that we all rely on to thrive and that's why we are committed to looking after them by eliminating all harm. We are aiming to ensure our business has happier, healthier and safer employees by focusing on training, processes and procedures and developing a more positive health and safety culture.

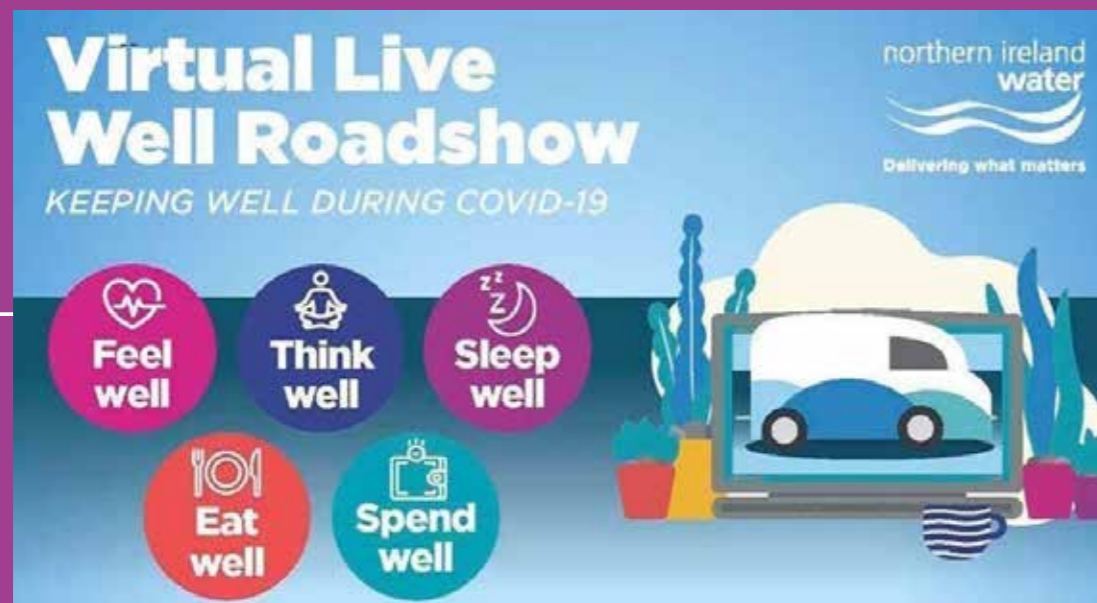
Our award winning health and wellbeing strategy helps staff 'live well' through a range of initiatives to support mental, physical, financial and social health such as our Live Well Roadshow, Winter Wellness Programme and new Spring Forward Programme. Example activities included virtual gym sessions, advice on improving sleeping habits and how to manage personal finances.

We introduced pulse surveys over 2020/21 as a quick and agile way of staying connected with all our people and to understand the sentiment of our workforce throughout the pandemic. Three pulse surveys were issued throughout the year and have been highly effective in identifying clear areas of strength and further focus. Feedback received has been used to inform our ongoing COVID-19 response.

We held our third Microsoft Teams Live broadcast in March 2021. Over 300 colleagues participated in the session. A number of Executive Directors spoke on various topics including how we're continuing to 'deliver what matters' while dealing with COVID-19, stepping up to manage operational challenges, our plans for hybrid working arrangements post COVID-19, highlights over PC15 and plans for PC21.

In 2020/21 we introduced a new health and safety software system called 'Assure', which makes it much easier for all our employees and contractors to report incidents, hazard observations and safety suggestions. Reports can be made via laptop, tough book and mobile phone. Enabling everyone to make it easier to report safety concerns will allow us to more accurately assess key areas of improvement that we need to focus on. Employees can also easily add photos, video and audio files to their records using their mobile phones.

In 2021/22 we intend to go live with both the audit and risk modules on our Assure system. The audit module will help NI Water identify key health and safety trends across all of our sites and activities.



**Creating a legacy for our communities**

**Giving back**

We had to put our fantastic Cares Challenge/Little Ripples programmes temporarily on hold over 2020/21. A number of colleagues got involved in digital volunteering, helping local community charities host short virtual training sessions on a digital topic. This included anything from helping an individual set up a Zoom call, to online shopping tips for families. Our volunteers helped the more vulnerable in our communities to feel more connected and confident in a daunting digital age.

We were able to recommence some of our usual volunteering activities. Our people helped Marie Cure deliver essential items to their teams across Northern Ireland. We also supported the Simon Community to deliver Christmas hampers. A number of initiatives are planned for 2021/22 to support charities such as Tiny Life, Simon Community and Age NI, with a view to resuming our full

volunteering activities when government advice allows.



One of our digital volunteers

**WaterAid**

We are really proud to be helping WaterAid in achieving its goal - working towards a world where everyone, everywhere has clean water and decent sanitation. Our partnership with WaterAid continued over 2020/21 by hosting the first virtual fundraising ball in the UK, which raised over £47,000. This will go a long way in helping bring safe water, sanitation and toilets to many people in our link country projects in Malawi.



**Water-whizz kids**

We are really proud of our unique education programme, which includes the Waterbus mobile classroom initiative. We have educated over 200,000 'water-whizz' school kids about the value of water for health, the economy and nature. We had to adapt our approach over 2020/21 due to COVID-19. We developed a home-schooling pack, in place of face to face learning on our Waterbus, and produced a number of lessons to support over 270 virtual school visits.



NI Water's on-line education presentations