



NI Water celebrated International Women in Engineering Day on 23 June by recognising some of the female engineers making a splash in the world of water.

Strategic areas of focus

- Powered by talent
- Safe, happy and healthy workplace
- Creating a legacy for our communities

Sustainable development goals

- 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
- 4 QUALITY EDUCATION
- 5 GENDER EQUALITY
- 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
- 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Principal threats/opportunities

- Climate change
- Geopolitical tensions
- Energy transition
- Water scarcity
- Technological disruption
- Skills gap
- Health and safety
- Reputation
- Regulatory changes
- Environmental impact

Page 84 Read more about principal threats and opportunities.

Strategic performance indicators

People	Unit of measurement	Target 2021/22	Actual 2021/22	Pass/Fail	Target 2022/23
Number of positions filled	Number	*	123	*	*
Employee promotion	%	*	10	*	*
Employee turnover	%	*	6	*	*
Health and safety incidents	Number	≤7	3	Pass	≤7

\*Targets to be set following development of new indicators.



## Powered by talent

We want to create a great place to work and ensure that NI Water is fit for the future by attracting, developing and retaining top talent. Our people strategy is focused on driving performance for our customers through building capability, ensuring we have the right people with the right skills performing their roles to the best of their ability. Our plans support the provision of a safe, happy and healthy workplace, helping to make NI Water an organisation in which we are all proud to work.

In an increasingly competitive talent market, it is important that we address the challenges presented by STEM skills shortages in the marketplace and an ageing workforce to ensure NI Water remains fit for the future.



We do this by driving individual and organisational development through:

- modernising our total reward strategy;
- attracting, developing and retaining top talent;
- building a strong pipeline of entry level talent through our prestigious Apprenticeship Academy;
- continuous professional development and a focus on learning at all career stages; and
- building current and future leadership capability at all levels.

As a result, we have a healthy picture of career development across the organisation with over 85% of all promotions in the last year filled internally. Our employer brand is strong in the marketplace and we have hired over 200 new recruits in the last two years. Whilst many organisations are experiencing the 'great resignation', our staff turnover remained consistently low at 6% in 2021/22 (of which one-third was due to retirement) and average tenure has remained high at 18 years. Our Apprenticeship Academy continues to go from strength to strength with the recruitment, on boarding and development of over 35 new apprentices in 2021/22, including the launch of NI Water's first Higher Level Apprenticeship programme.

Around 17% of our class of 2021/22 are female as we re-invent our workplace and address longstanding gender imbalance in typically male dominated areas.

Riding high on the success of our Apprenticeship Academy we will continue to ramp up year on year to seed our organisation with top entry level talent to support succession planning. In January 2022 we welcomed a further intake of 10 water and wastewater apprentices and have launched a wide reaching campaign to recruit a further 28 apprentices and higher level apprentices to join in September 2022. The apprentices will work across a range of areas to support business growth and diversification including water operations, mechanical engineering, civil engineering and cyber security.

Our entry level strategy is supported by a robust outreach strategy through which we continue to promote careers in STEM, partner with further and higher education bodies and influence early career choices. In 2022/23 this will include participating with NIE Networks in a major schools outreach project. Around 7,500 school children across Northern Ireland took part in the 4CUR future careers event in June 2022. Our involvement takes the form of the design of a 'Race to Net Zero' game to help key stage 3 children gain insights into their future career opportunities before they make their GCSE choices.

In 2022/23 we will engage an expert partner to support the delivery of a comprehensive management development framework that will develop world class management capabilities at all levels. This is a major investment in our people over PC21 and continues NI Water's journey in developing leadership skills, competencies and behaviours to create a high performance culture and role model our values.



## Providing a safe, happy and healthy workplace

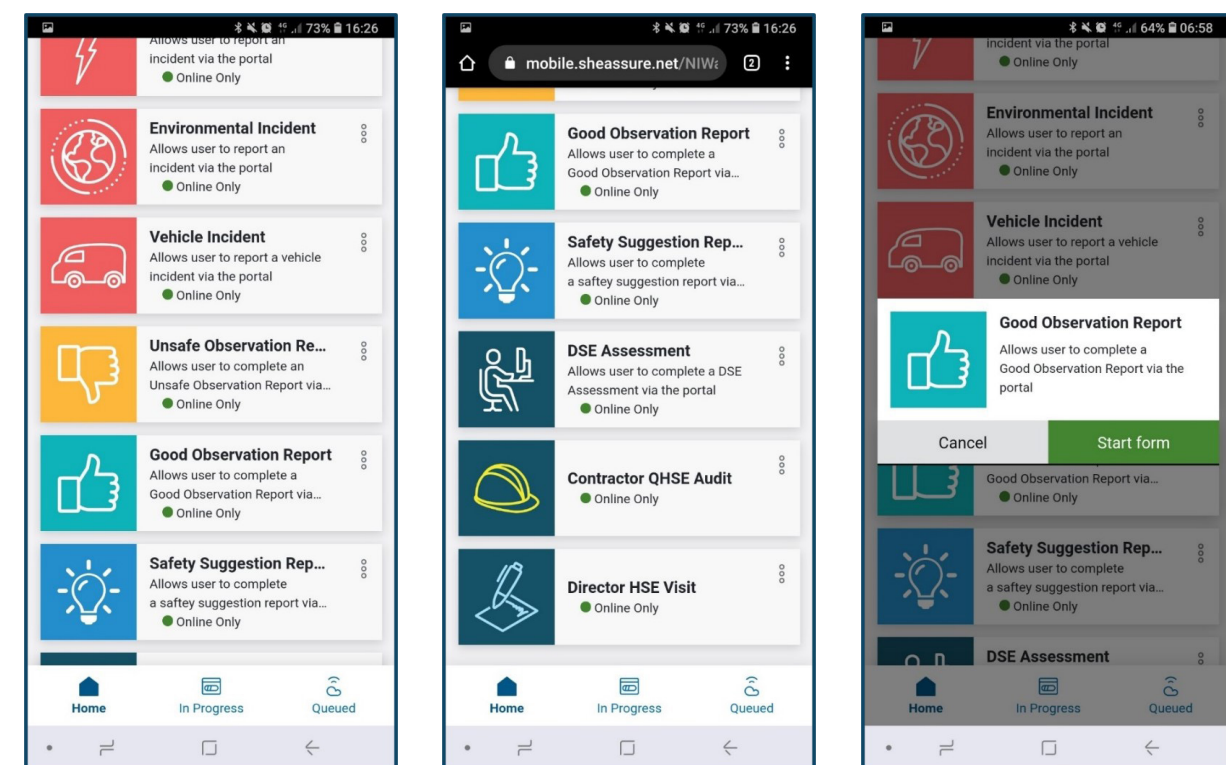
It is only with a safe, happy and healthy workforce that we can deliver exceptional standards of customer service. We do this by placing care for our people front and centre

in how we do business, looking after them through all of life's events and providing the conditions for them to perform their role to the best of their ability.

### Zero harm

Significant investment continues to be made over PC21 to both review and upgrade our province wide network of facilities and above ground buildings and related assets. Another area of focus is driver safety, which we will target through the use of 'safe driving' workshops for all staff. The Assure health and safety software enables all employees and our supply chain to report incidents, unsafe and good observations and safety

suggestions via App or Source homepage using a mobile phone, tough book, or laptop. The ability to undertake health and safety audits and spot checks is also now available via Assure. The system will give NI Water real time, accurate and meaningful data that will allow us to appropriately target and resource both our short and long-term health and safety priorities.



NI Water's Assure health and safety app.

### Prioritising health

NI Water's award-winning health and wellbeing strategy is designed with and for employees to support their physical, mental, social and financial health in the belief that prevention is better than cure. This strategy is informed by absence data, employee pulse surveys, monthly polls and employee focus groups to understand the diverse needs of our workforce and ensure wide appeal. It was recognised as an example of best practice through the achievement of two prestigious business awards in 2021 - a year in which health had never been more important.





## 'Flushed' with success at Business in the Community Awards!

NI Water is celebrating after winning the Business in the Community Awards in the 'Wellbeing at Work' category.

Sara Venning, CEO at NI Water commented

"The health, wellbeing and safety of our people is always our first priority and being recognised as a champion in this category is a highly rewarding affirmation of our commitment to their welfare. It is particularly gratifying to know that our health and wellbeing strategy and programmes have been recognised for their excellence and positive impact during an unprecedented health crisis."

NI Water's Health and Wellbeing Manager commented

"We are absolutely thrilled to have won the highly contested Wellbeing at Work Award. This award demonstrates NI Water's excellence in inspiring and supporting our employees to prioritise their health and

wellbeing and embrace positive lifestyle choices.

Our wellbeing strategy is designed with and for our employees and encompasses a vast array of programmes, activities and benefits to meet a diverse range of needs and circumstances. This supports the provision of a happy and healthy workplace, helping to make NI Water a really great place to work."



NI Water staff receiving the Business in the Community 'Wellbeing at Work' Award.

## Involving people in the decisions that affect them

We use a range of listening strategies to gather the voice of the employee and ensure that action is targeted in the right place. These include employee surveys, frontline focus groups, cultural ambassador network, monthly polls and employee workgroups.

This approach provides agile ways of staying connected with our people to understand the sentiment of our workforce. Feedback received has helped inform a variety of corporate strategies including the new hybrid working strategy.

## Celebrating and promoting diversity

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 and have significantly increased our investment to achieve our diversity and inclusion ambitions. Find out more about diversity and inclusion at page 140.



## Modernising our communication channels

Our Microsoft Teams Live broadcasts continue to be a great way to brief staff on a variety of 'hot topics' including climate change and capital investment as well as providing insights into different areas of the

business through broadcasting live from our locations and sites. Held once a quarter, these broadcasts are extremely well attended averaging 300 participants each session.

## Reinventing our workplace

To help support our transition towards hybrid working for office based staff, we launched a programme of education and support for our future hybrid workers and line managers. The programme includes a guide to hybrid work and aims to help prepare and guide staff through the next phase of change and will set us up for success in the new hybrid model.



## Making a Splash

NI Water was named Team of the Year 2021 at the Belfast Chamber Business Awards. We were recognised for the vital role our essential workers played at the frontline of the pandemic in ensuring public health protection across Northern Ireland, the clear sense of pride and duty continuously demonstrated by our employees in delivering over and above what is expected of them and overcoming challenges with an 'all hands on deck' approach. This is much welcomed external recognition for our collective efforts during a time of extreme personal and professional challenge. It shines a light on the vitally important work we do at NI Water, the many heroes and heroines we have and the phenomenal team to which we all belong.



NI Water receiving the Team of the Year award at the Belfast Chamber Business Awards 2021.



## Creating a legacy for our communities

### Helping hand

Amazingly our Cares Challenge volunteering scheme celebrates its 10 year anniversary in 2021/22 and to celebrate, we've launched an exciting new programme of events. Over 1,500 staff have volunteered in around 100 challenges to date, equating to over than 10,000 hours of volunteering to help support communities across Northern Ireland. Our colleagues have missed helping face to face in local communities during recent times and are keen to get back out and make a worthwhile contribution to the many charities who have struggled during COVID-19.

As part of the new 2021/22 programme, colleagues have already been out to help the NI Children's Hospice, Willowbridge Special School in Enniskillen and at Creggan Country Park in Derry/Londonderry.



NI Water staff celebrating 10 years of volunteering with Cares Challenge scheme at Northern Ireland Children's Hospice, Newtownabbey, County Antrim.

### A toilet can be a life saver

Who cares about toilets? We do! This is the question posed by the UN to mark World Toilet Day. It aims to inspire action to tackle the global sanitation crisis and achieve sanitation for all by 2030. NI Water supports WaterAid to show that a toilet is not just a toilet; it's a life-saver, dignity-protector and opportunity-maker. World Toilet Day is an opportunity to influence decision makers and raise awareness that there are still 1.7 billion people living without a decent toilet of their own. Living without a safe toilet threatens the health, education and livelihood of billions of people. Everyone everywhere has the right to sanitation, but progress on achieving this is very slow. NI Water is proud to lead the local WaterAid NI Committee, raising over £74k, including £34k at a virtual fundraising ball, building on the £57k raised in 2020, including £48k at the 2020 virtual ball. These funds will go a long way in helping bring clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene to health centres in Machinga and Zomba districts of Malawi, where the Deliver Life project is based. Within the four healthcare centres in this project, these funds are helping to introduce a variety of facilities such as solar-powered piped water supply systems, inclusive bathrooms and other sanitary facilities.

The local committee continues to fundraise this year with many activities including a World Water Day partnership with local schools in March 2022 and the WaterAid ball in November 2022.



WaterAid virtual fundraising ball.



The Virtual WaterAid NI Ball is helping the Deliver Life project in Malawi. Photo credit Dennis Lupenga.

### Water-whizz kids

We are really proud of our unique education programme, which includes the Waterbus mobile classroom initiative. We have educated over 218,000 'water-whizz' school kids about the value of water for health, the economy and nature.

As pupils headed back to the classroom the Education Team has been back on the road visiting schools to deliver the key messages of water efficiency, water for health and bag it and bin it. The team has also developed several new lessons to engage pupils with the wonderful world of water including a climate change escape room and the wonders of peat bogs presentation. We have supported both primary and secondary schools with the provision of 280 waterbutts to inspire water efficiency outdoors. This initiative included a popular 'brighten your butt' competition which encouraged schools to get creative and paint their new waterbutts to brighten up the school gardens.



Water-whizz pupils from St Malachy's Primary School, Armagh, County Armagh.



Brighten your Butt Winners Drumragh College, Omagh, County Tyrone.