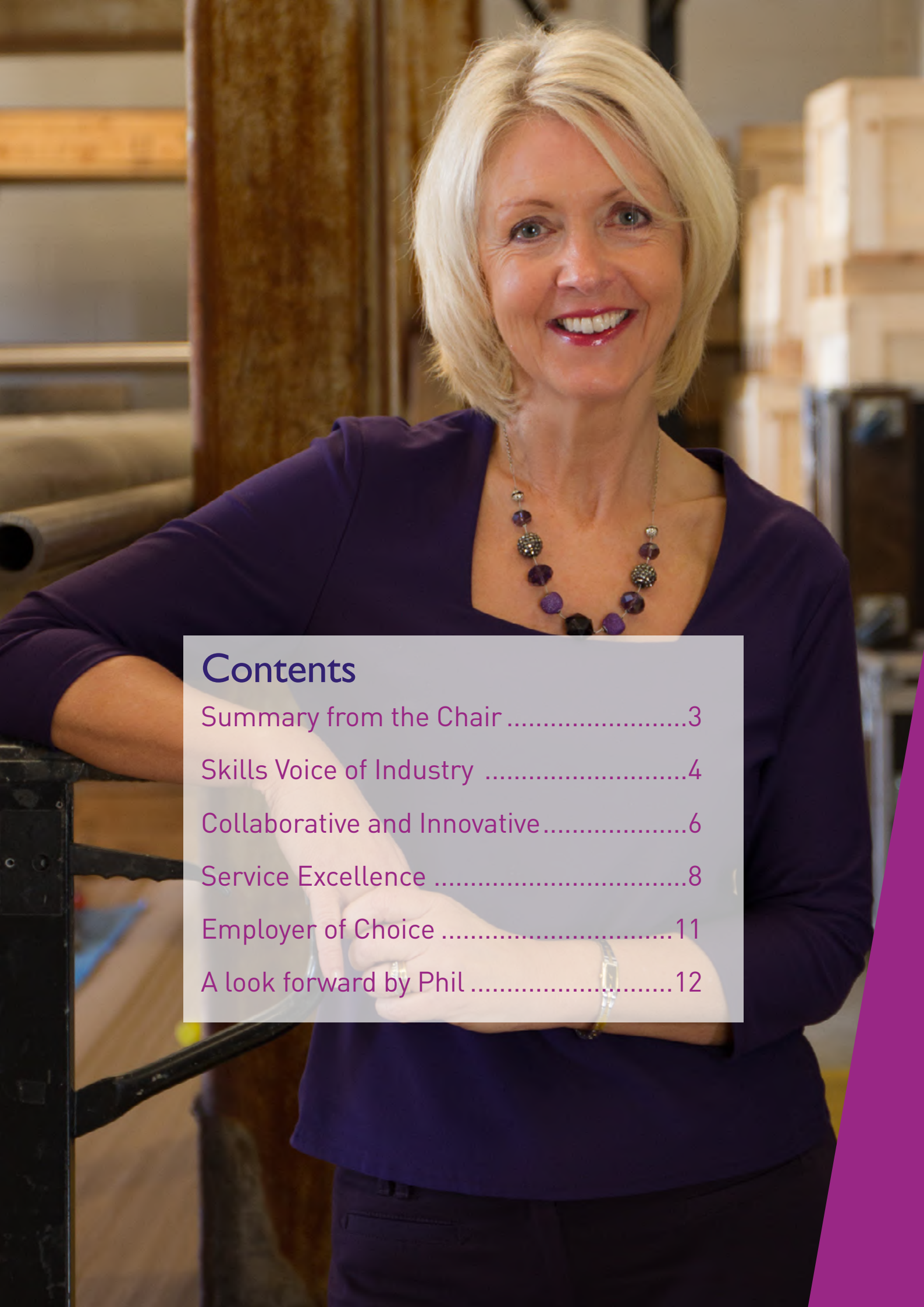


# COLLABORATION IN ACTION

## Annual Overview 2022





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# SUMMARY FROM THE CHAIR

The energy and utility industries have once again risen to the multiple challenges of the past year, whilst ensuring business as usual.

As I sit in my office and reflect over the past year, I cannot help but be utterly impressed at the performance of the energy and utility industries.

The resilience, creativity, and sheer endeavour to carry on and find new ways of working while keeping staff and customers safe is nothing short of admirable. Homes and businesses continued to have power, gas, water, and waste services so they too could continue to deliver their products and services.

For Energy & Utility Skills this has meant another busy year working with our members on the Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy 2020 – 2025; keeping members engaged and providing the vital networking opportunities which are so clearly valued through online media instead of face-to-face meetings.

We have strengthened our relationship with some of the key Government departments and agencies, like the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education (IfATE), which has resulted in our development of hydrogen standards for domestic installations and the establishment of an Energy and Utilities Employer Advisory Panel with IfATE which provides the opportunity to shape and secure the skills needs for the sector.

Our Energy & Utilities Independent Assessment Service has continued its compliance as an Ofqual recognised awarding organisation for its end point assessments, after achieving initial recognition in February 2021.

In this review of our work in 2021/22, we have provided only a snapshot of all that has been achieved by convening policy makers, regulators, regulated businesses, and their supply chain. Energy & Utility Skills has continued to work with the energy and utility industries delivering credible results, which no doubt is reflected in the Utility Week Awards nomination as 'Utility Partner of the Year' for the fourth year running.

On behalf of my Board and the whole team, we extend our sincere thanks to everyone who has worked with us to deliver yet another impactful and successful year.

**Jan Ward**  
Non Executive Chair  
Energy & Utility Skills





# SKILLS VOICE OF INDUSTRY

## Skills Strategy

Significant progress has been made in each of the six workstreams of the Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy since it was published in 2020. The first year of the strategy was [covered in a document released in June 2021, called “A Year in Focus”](#).

Examples of our work towards the goals of the Skills Strategy can be seen in the rest of this document, and on the [news section of our website](#).

## BEIS Hydrogen contract

As part of a consortium appointed by BEIS, Energy & Utility Skills and IGEM are leading the work to deliver a vital piece of the Government’s UK hydrogen strategy, developing the installation standards and training specifications to safely enable the repurposing of existing natural gas systems for use with 100% hydrogen in domestic and non-domestic premises.

Oliver Lancaster, Chief Executive of IGEM, said: “The Institution has been at the heart of energy transitions, with lessons learned through our history and the conversion from towns gas to natural gas now being applied in the challenging transition to decarbonise our future and the conversion to green gas.”

## Green Jobs Taskforce

We have engaged with the Green Jobs Taskforce, helping inform development of the Net Zero Strategy and [pave the way for future collaboration via the Green Jobs Delivery Group](#).

The Green Jobs Taskforce report has been published and includes recommendations that support the aims of this Strategy, including coordination of policies and training pathways to support ‘a diverse, inclusive and net zero aligned workforce’.

Michael Lewis, Chief Executive of E.ON UK, will be co-chairing the Green Jobs Delivery Taskforce in his role as Chair of the Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership (EUSP).

## Work with IfATE

In response to employer feedback on the Gas Network Operative apprenticeship, Energy & Utility Skills surveyed employers and submitted a proposal to IfATE amending the requirements for the practical observation portion of the assessment, making the assessment more manageable and a match for the requirements of the role. The proposal was approved and the apprenticeship revised in March 2022.

Energy & Utility Skills has also supported IfATE and employers on the review and update of the Water Process Technician apprenticeship, now awaiting funding band approval, and on the Power Network Craftsperson apprenticeship, with the occupational proposal due to be submitted in May.

In April 2022 IfATE, supported by Energy & Utility Skills, launched the Energy and Utilities Employer Advisory Panel. IfATE understand the critical services the gas, power, waste management and recycling and water industries provide.

The Energy and Utilities Employer Advisory Panel will ensure that the current and future skills needs of these industries are captured and reflected in technical qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Presenting awards at Institute of Water President's Dinner 2021

At what was the first Institute of Water event since the start of lockdown, Phil Beach, CEO of Energy & Utility Skills, presented four of the awards at the President's Dinner 2021.

These awards included Water Industry Skills Champion of the Year (won by Aleck Bruce of Northumbrian Water); Water Industry Skills Employer of the Year (Severn Trent Water); Water Industry Training Organisation of the Year (Develop Training); and the Award for Outstanding Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion in the Water Industry (Thames Water).



Severn Trent Water – Water Industry Skills Employer of the Year Winners at the Institute of Water President's Dinner 2021

## BBC 50:50 The Equality Project

Early in the year, as part of the [BBC 50:50 Equality Project](#) and as a supporting partner of Ofgem and EnergyUK, we looked into how closer collaboration can facilitate positive change for gender representation and cultural change in the workplace.

## National Grid Hydrogen Project

Energy & Utility Skills will be starting work on National Grid's Hydrogen Skills and Competencies Project, which seeks to address gaps in the skills and competencies of gas engineers in the potential movement towards hydrogen.

Over the next five years, National Grid has an ambitious work plan to prove the capability of hydrogen in the current assets and to begin online trials.

**“We're delighted to be working with National Grid and the Gas Distribution Networks on this collaborative project that will ensure consistency of training and assessment standards for the deployment of hydrogen.”**

**Stephen Barrett**  
Director of Strategic Accounts  
Energy & Utility Skills

## Tomorrow's Engineers Code

By becoming a supporter of the [Tomorrow's Engineers Code](#), we are collaborating with a wide range of organisations to inspire young people from diverse backgrounds to pursue careers in engineering.

## Welsh Apprenticeship Frameworks

We have been contracted by the Welsh government to [help shape the new pathways for the Welsh Apprenticeship Frameworks](#) within occupational pathways relating to Energy Management, Gas Operations, Water Industry Operations, and Smart Metering (Dual Fuel).

This has so far included a period of consultation with key stakeholders to ensure the new frameworks will be relevant, high-quality, and fit-for-purpose.

**“In committing to that sharing and collaboration, members of The Code community are stepping up to the plate and driving the change we need to inspire the next generation and build an effective and diverse, representative future workforce.”**

**Dr Hilary Leever**  
Chief Executive of EngineeringUK which manages The Code



## Smart metering

With the endorsement of the Smart Metering Network Group, Energy & Utility Skills has employed a foresighting process to define the competency requirements of the Electric Vehicle Chargepoint installer role for smart meter installers.

# COLLABORATIVE AND INNOVATIVE

## Inclusion Commitment

The Inclusion Commitment [won the 'Inclusion Programme of the Year' award at the Engineering Talent Awards in September 2021.](#)

With the addition of Uniper in July 2021, we now have [50 signatories to the Inclusion Commitment](#), demonstrating strong support across the industry.

“Together we can make a positive change to our industry and Uniper in the UK have started their journey by implementing a five-year vision for diversity and inclusion.”

**Angela Mitchell**  
Uniper UK Ltd Board Member and  
UK HR Manager

## Virtual and smart cards

This year, Energy & Utilities Skills Register (EUSR) took a step closer to a plastic-free future, [replacing our existing plastic registration cards model with a virtual alternative.](#)

The virtual cards work via a smartphone. In the understanding that not all EUSR registered individuals will necessarily have a smartphone, a physical version called a smart card is also available.

## Apprenticeships and Technical Education Advisory Group (ATEAG)

In 2021/22, ATEAG engaged closely with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) and the Department for Education (DfE) to ensure that sector employers' views were related directly to senior stakeholders and policy-makers.

During the 2021/22 year, ATEAG provided the conduit for analyses of a stream of Government policies on skills, energy and industry that will impact the sector in the years and decades to come, plus regular updates on the reform of the sector's technical apprenticeships.



As a result of this close working, ATEAG members will now inform IfATE's Employer Advisory Board and be at the heart of the process which will oversee the design and quality of new qualifications and standards.

This places energy and utility sector employers in the vanguard of the reform of skills and technical education.

## Energy & Utilities Jobs

Energy & Utilities Jobs (EUJ) is a sector attraction project to help raise awareness for the energy and utility sector.

EUJ is the place for roles in the energy and utility sector, featuring over 700 jobs every month covering everything from apprenticeships to professional roles.



## Bringing employers and providers together in Northern Ireland

Energy & Utility Skills has been working with Northern Ireland members in the power, gas and water industries, along with key executive and relevant collaborative groups such as the Skills Advisory Forum, the Skills Strategy Advisory Group (which was involved in feeding into the Northern Ireland Skills Strategy, still to be formally published), and the Sectoral Partnership.

We have also continued to support and engage with the Department for Agriculture, Environment, and Rural Affairs on regulations across devolved nations.

We contributed to the Northern Ireland Executive's Skills Strategy consultation, highlighting the key role of the energy and utility industries, and we continue to have a positive relationship with the Northern Ireland Executive's Department for the Economy which has responsibility for the spend and budgeting in skills.

## Inclusion Measurement Framework

In February, [we released the results of the 2021 sector-wide Inclusion Measurement Framework](#), which included for the first time the personal reflections of industry CEOs on leading inclusion and their own experience of diversity.

The full results and analysis of the data are [available on our website](#). We also held a discussion of the results as part of a webinar – [you can watch the recording here](#).

In 2021, we launched our new look website, complete with employer profiles and a section showcasing sector stories for apprenticeships, engineering, ex-military, graduates, and professionals.

Advertising of jobs was made available outside of membership to companies operating in the energy and utility sector through pay per job.

During the last 12 months, EUJ has continued to deliver the Industry priorities set by the delivery board.

These include:

- ▶ 48.4% of website visitors being female
- ▶ Talent pool growing by 3,540 registrations to 9,984 candidates at the end of 2021
- ▶ Delivery of 2.17m opportunities for people to see content on the sector
- ▶ 27.1% of talent pool applications from individuals identifying as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic

2022 will see stretch targets to reach the hard to find to candidates to help fill members' roles.

## Energy & Utility Skills Partnership CEO Council

Under the leadership of Michael Lewis, Chief Executive of E.O.N, the CEO Council has made serious inroads in the areas of skills reform and the Government's Green Industrial Revolution.

A meeting with Minister Greg Hands resulted in an agreement that Energy & Utility Skills should be part of the cross-government delivery body with the Green Jobs Task Force, providing us with significant opportunities to secure our skills needs.

Speaking at the EUSP CEO Council meeting in December, IfATE's CEO Jennifer Coupland announced an arrangement with Energy & Utility Skills which will see the establishment of an Energy and Utilities Employer Advisory Panel, ensuring current and future industry skills needs are reflected in qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Procurement Skills Accord

The Procurement Skills Accord (PSA) is an initiative to promote investment in training and skills development throughout the whole supply chain.

2021/22 was another successful year for the PSA with 50 companies signed up to the initiative, covering an aggregate technical and engineering workforce of more than 46,000 people.

Despite the on-going difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, 15% of this workforce received a significant training intervention during 2021 – a record high for PSA signatories! Also at a record high was the proportion of signatories that actually achieved the award, which stands at 80%.



## Improvements to Plant for Utilities (PLUS)

A new Plant for Utilities (PLUS) Training Standard was launched, allowing Approved PLUS Providers to produce their own plant instructor programmes or have existing programmes approved by Energy & Utility Skills under the PLUS scheme.

The material handler and backhoe loader standards have also been through a process of review with industry and relaunched.

## Responding to the Grenfell report

In the light of findings from Phase 2 of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, representatives from gas distribution networks including Cadent, Northern Gas Network, Southern Gas Networks, and Wales & West Utilities asked for the Network Construction Operations (NCO) qualification and scheme to be updated so that it would remain fit-for-purpose.

Working with City & Guilds, we amended two different units – in particular, the unit concerning risers – to ensure it met with the requirements outlined by the report.

# SERVICE EXCELLENCE

## Utility Excavations redevelopment

After a six-month in-depth review in collaboration with training providers and industry stakeholders, [the Utility Excavations scheme was updated and launched](#) in October 2021.

Improvements were made to standardisation across the scheme, as well as consolidating some categories of training into a single programme and creating a single standard for all three support systems – steel, timber, and proprietary.

## First admissions to the SHEA Drains and Sewers scheme

In partnership with the National Association of Drainage Contractors (NADC) and the Construction Skills Certification Scheme, this year saw the development of the SHEA Drains and Sewers scheme by Energy & Utility Skills.

The scheme is designed to be used by anyone in the drainage sector, from front line operators through to supervisors and managers, and will eventually be adopted as a compulsory qualification for all NADC members.

The SHEA Drains and Sewers scheme was launched in March 2021.

## More schemes and standards approved for CITB funding

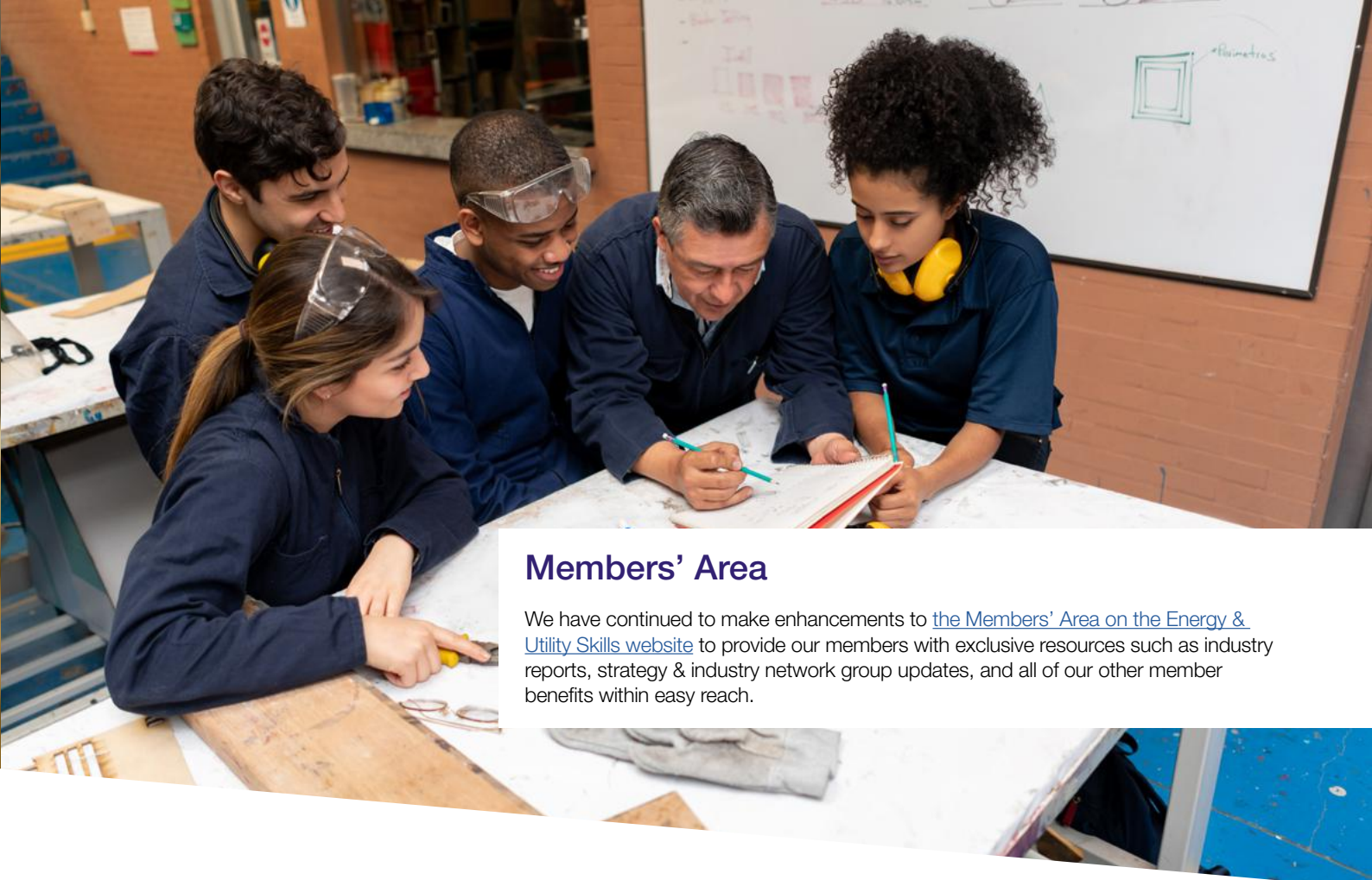
Energy & Utility Skills is approved as a Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) third-party awarding body. We have worked in partnership with CITB since 2019 to offer schemes and standards that are approved for CITB short duration course funding. Despite the restrictions imposed as a result of COVID-19, the offering of schemes and standards available for funding was extended in 2021 to include:

- ▶ Plant for Utilities Scheme (PLUS)
- ▶ Utility Excavations
- ▶ Impact Moling
- ▶ Excavator Banks person

**“It is a huge step forward that there is now an industry-specific SHEA course which is accessible to all contractors regardless of shape or size. I urge everyone who works on the front line in our industry to undergo this vital training. When I joined NADC one of the major attractions was to help work towards common standards across the industry, as already exist in other parts of the utility sector.”**

**Julian Wynn**  
Chairman of the Management Board of NADC and Director of Water Drainage Management at FM Conway





## Members' Area

We have continued to make enhancements to [the Members' Area on the Energy & Utility Skills website](#) to provide our members with exclusive resources such as industry reports, strategy & industry network group updates, and all of our other member benefits within easy reach.

## End Point Assessment resource updates on the EUIAS website

During 2021/22, EUIAS published End Point Assessment (EPA) Specifications for eleven apprenticeships, including Engineering Construction Pipefitter and Water Network Operative.

These resources, along with many others, are available from the [Energy & Utilities Independent Assessment Service website](#).

These publications provide extensive amplification and guidance of apprenticeship standards, clear grading guidance so customers can understand how to achieve success, and guidance on preparing for the end-point assessment.

We also introduced Technical Interview guidance for Maintenance and Operations Engineering Technician (MOET) apprentices designed to support them during the Interview itself.

## MOET Provider Group

To complement the employers panel that EUIAS runs for the gas, power and water apprenticeships, the MOET Provider Group has been established as a service to customers using the MOET apprenticeship.

This group is open to all existing and potential customers for this standard and focuses on issues such as the design of practical observation tasks and the best ways to help prepare apprentices for end-point assessment.

## Practical task review service

Many end point assessments include the observation of a practical task.

To support employers and providers we have introduced a free review service whereby an EUIAS technical expert will review the proposed practical task and feedback on its suitability as an assessment method.

## Boosted Service Delivery Team

We have been working to boost our EUIAS Service Delivery Team over the past year. At the end of 2021/22, we have five Service Delivery Coordinators under the leadership of a newly appointed Service Delivery Manager and Operations Manager.

Our proud boast is that EUIAS provides a personalised user experience, with every customer being assigned their own named coordinator who will guide them through their EPA journey.

## Introducing ACE360

EUIAS is introducing ACE360, a new end-to-end EPA management system.

This service is free to our customers and will significantly enhance the end point assessment process, as well as enabling better engagement with the EUIAS Service Delivery Team.







# EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

## Investors in People Gold

In November 2021, Energy & Utility Skills received the Investors in People Gold Accreditation for the second time in a row.

This achievement, which is received by only 17% of Investors in People-accredited organisations, recognises our commitment to making our organisation a great place to work, and that all of our employees have pushed towards making this commitment a reality.

## Utility Week Awards

For the fourth year in a row, we have been shortlisted for Utility Partner of the Year at the Utility Week Awards.

## Pandemic response

Throughout the pandemic, we continued to work with our members and customers virtually and set up new networking forums to enable them to discuss and share best practice and experiences as they adjusted to working with Covid restrictions.

Now that government restrictions are lifted, we can look back on the positive changes we have made to the ways we work. This includes a greater use and acceptance of virtual meetings; flexible working between office and home as standard practice; and the use of video to ensure that communication with all our members and customers is maintained.

We have also recruited new team members to ensure that we maintain our high standards of service delivery across EUSR, EUIAS and membership.

Members and customers have indicated that virtual meetings are very efficient and would like to maintain these going forward interspersed with the occasional face-to-face meeting.

## Employers Domestic Abuse Covenant

In October, Energy & Utility Skills signed up to the [Employers Domestic Abuse Covenant](#), which is a pledge by businesses to support women affected by abuse to enter or re-enter the workplace.

As part of our commitment to this covenant, Louise Parry, Director of People & Organisational Development, is now our Workspace, Safespace contact for colleagues facing domestic abuse.









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