

the pipeline



Issue 1 | November 2023



“We have recruited over 270 staff to open vacancies with Asset Operations”

Introduction - Niall Gleeson, CEO Uisce Éireann

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the Pipeline, a newsletter for Water Services Staff updating you as we progress the transformation of the water sector.

Uisce Éireann has assumed responsibility for the delivery of water services across the majority of the country. Our focus has been on continuity of service and the stability of operations throughout this process and we recognise this could not have happened without the dedication and commitment of staff in water services across the country, continuing to do the same valuable job you do every day, before and after transfer.

Health & Safety is top of mind and it is our shared goal that our activities or assets shall not cause harm to anyone. The decisions we make every day can have an impact in areas outside our own and it's that personal responsibility for all our actions that embeds a strong culture of safety. We all have a crucial role to play and there is further information inside on reporting a hazard and accessing our Hazcon app.

Your Integration and Management Team (IMT) is now in place and working closely with Uisce Éireann Regional Operation Management Teams to manage work across water services. Read inside our interview with Wexford County Council Senior Engineer Fionnuala Callery to get an overview on her work with the IMT and vision for the future. Please get in touch if you have suggestions for other staff members you'd like to hear from.

We are making every effort to recruit critical roles to ensure that water services for our communities continues with minimal impact and teams are fully supported. We have recruited over 270 staff to open vacancies within Asset Operations. We recognise that significantly more work is needed in the coming months to support water services teams across the country. Our first priority however is retaining as many staff as possible in water services. We absolutely want and need everyone currently working in water services, and there is a role for all staff in Uisce Éireann. We have further details on future HR One-to-One meetings, and we also want to ensure you can ask operational queries or just chat to someone about what it is like to work in Uisce Éireann. We have included details in this newsletter of our Point of Contact Programme that will allow you to do just that. We also invite you to attend a Meet & Greet Day at one of our Uisce Éireann offices. To begin with, we are inviting all office-based staff to see our offices and facilities and meet with Uisce Éireann colleagues. Similar engagements for all other colleagues will be arranged in the coming weeks and further meetings will be organised in each Local Authority to support staff making a decision on staying in water services.

So a personal thanks from me for the huge amount of work you have undertaken so far.

Niall Gleeson
CEO Uisce Éireann.

Progressing Open Vacancies across Uisce Éireann

We are taking a strategic approach to the filling of vacancies and are listening to your concerns and worries in relation to workload and other challenges that arise where vacancies are an issue.

This year so far we have had over 270 offers accepted in Asset Operations in Uisce Éireann. Over 450 people have been successful for our panels, which are actively being aligned to vacancies across the country. Our recruitment campaign is active and we ask you to keep an eye on open vacancies and also share with anyone you think might be interested in applying for roles in Uisce Éireann.

A “Vacancies Working Group” comes together weekly to discuss and progress the vacancies in water services from each of the four regions. The group consists of a cross functional collaboration of members from the Asset Operations teams in each of the four regions, together with staff from HR, Recruitment Support, Contingency Planning, Health & Safety, and other business functions where required. This work will continue through 2023 and into 2024.



Reporting a **HAZCON**

All our employees have a duty to report a hazard through our Hazcon system which is used for both reporting and tracking any safety observation or issue to disclose.

This process allows us to analyse issues and put in place appropriate controls to eliminate reoccurrence. A hazard is defined as anything with the potential to cause harm, for example, a trailing cable in the office, a blocked emergency route or a faulty piece of equipment.

Employees who use a mobile phone for water services activity will have access to the Hazcon App which allows instantaneous recording of safety issues or observations, whether in the office or out in the field. You can also report a hazard or near miss on the Uisce Éireann Safety Hub.



Open Day at Uisce Éireann Offices

Uisce Éireann is opening its offices to all water services staff interested in finding out more about how we work in Uisce Éireann and what our office facilities are like for indoor staff.

For further information on the planned open day for your region contact your Line Manager / Richard ÓhEadhra on roheadhra@water.ie.

On the day you will receive a tour of the offices, an overview on some of our working policies and an opportunity to meet with our indoor based teams.

teamtalk

Wexford County Council's Fionnuala Callery talks to us about her work on the Integration and Management Team and her vision for the future of Uisce Éireann.

My name is Fionnuala Callery, and I work for Wexford County Council as Acting Senior Engineer and, I am also the I&MT water Lead for Wexford.

I started my career as a graduate Engineer here in Wexford County Council and worked on the CIS project which was mapping the water and wastewater networks. It was a great start to my career and gave me a great opportunity to learn all about water and the networks and meet the crews on the ground and to create lasting relationships, people who I work with even today.

I then left the council and went working in a contracting company and I did that for a few years. After that, I went working for a consultancy for a while, became an (RE) Resident Engineer and came back working for Wexford County Council in 2012. I was the Resident Engineer on the Bunclody water supply scheme, and I've worked in Wexford County Council water services ever since as an Executive Engineer, Changer Manager, Senior Executive Engineer and now Acting Senior Engineer for the past few years.

Water services is very varied, every day is different. We work on the day to day operational and emergency management, but we also have a capital team here in Wexford and a rural water office as well which is run out of here in County Hall.

The I&MT is an important function in the transition between the Local Authorities and Uisce Éireann that is now assuming full responsibility for water services in Ireland. We're working to ensure a smooth transition from the Local Authority management of water services to the Uisce Éireann management. I suppose you could say we are the link between the current set up in the Local Authority and the future set up in Uisce Éireann.

"Staff are very dedicated, it's about providing a local service to people in your community, fixing bursts on mains that are serving your community or unblocking the sewers or providing new infrastructure so that your town can grow."



In Wexford, the Integration and Management Team is myself and my colleague who was in Wexford County Council previously but has recently moved to a role within Uisce Éireann. There is good continuity there for staff to know that the service will continue to run tomorrow as it does today and that is important.

Working in water services, some would say it's a vocation. Staff are very dedicated, it's about providing a local service to people in your community, fixing bursts on mains that are serving your community or unblocking the sewers or providing new infrastructure so that your town can grow. It is really a local service and that's why staff give the dedication that they do and why they love the job they do. A colleague of mine said to me today, "You wouldn't do this work unless you loved it", and that can be true.

For us here in Wexford, there has been an effort to communicate to staff about the transition and it has been a big challenge. People always feel they don't know what's going on, or there isn't enough information being shared, so we have tried to communicate the stages of the transition to our colleagues. We have had some staff meetings to try and keep people informed.

There has been a huge amount of data gathering going on and is still going on today (day of transfer to Uisce Éireann September 6th). That has taken up a lot of time, but we are just getting to the end of that now so its good to be getting to the end of that process because there are a lot of connections from other parts of the council into water services which needs to be understood and managed through the transition.

But I suppose the transition hasn't just been in the last couple of months or the last year. In the council here, we have been working towards this for several years now and we're finally getting to the next stage, so its good to see that day has finally come.

The investment in our water services now is huge and its important for a growing economy like Ireland that it continues, not only in capital investment but in the operational side too. We can become a strong and resilient economy into the future and provide the housing infrastructure that's needed along with the water services infrastructure that needs to happen alongside that to provide for growth into the future.

Looking ahead to what type of organisation Uisce Éireann will be in five- or ten-years' time, I suppose it will be a stronger organisation. The resources Uisce Éireann has, matched with the experience of the Local Authority sector, is going to create a strong and resilient work force.



"The resources Uisce Éireann has, matched with the experience of the Local Authority sector, is going to create a strong and resilient work force."

I would like to see that recognition for the water services staff, for the frontline work that they do. I know this is recognised in their communities where they do the day-to-day work, where they deal with bursts and outages or boil water notices, or trying to get the sewers unblocked, important work. I think there is a way to go in showing the importance of water service work and hopefully that will be realised over the next few years.

Non Pay Benefits of Joining Uisce Éireann

Core Benefit



- Pension scheme
- Annual leave - 2.5 company days
- Sick pay scheme
- Income protection/ Death in service
- Educational assistance
- Learning & Development courses
- Paid marriage/ civil partnership leave
- Enhanced maternity pay
- Paid paternity leave
- Compassionate leave
- Other statutory leaves

Financial Wellbeing



- Employees Credit Union
- Tax Saver Ticket
- Home computer purchase discount
- Microsoft Home Programme scheme
- AXA Insurance group scheme
- Christmas saving facility
- Onsite banking: Bank of Ireland
- Professional subscription

Physical Wellbeing



- Cycle To Work scheme
- Flu vaccinations
- Group health scheme: VHI, Irish Life, LAYA
- Eye care provision
- Digital doctor service

Emotional Wellbeing



- Hybrid working
- Sports & Social
- People Awards
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Mental Health First Aiders
- Time to Talk programme
- Wellbeing initiatives

Wi-fi access, printers and scanners

Wi-Fi Networks are being rolled out in Local Authority locations by the Technology Enablement team and Local Authority IT departments.

We are currently working with regional operational teams to determine a list of priority sites that need to be fitted out first. In addition, phones and laptops are being rolled out to staff who require this equipment for their daily activities. For any IT related issues, you can contact our dedicated IT support platform – Service Now. Service Now can be contacted by phone **0818 80 40 40** or by logging a ticket online at **ServiceNow**.

Interested in further information on joining Uisce Éireann?

Our HR team has held one-to-one meetings around the country with good engagement with Water Services Staff in each Local Authority.

Work is ongoing to match all roles in water services today to what will be their enduring role in the Uisce Éireann future organisation structure if they decide to transfer. There is a role for everyone and many people will continue to do the same role they are at present and some others will have the opportunity to join new teams or specialise in a particular area.

We will be following up with all those who have expressed an interest in joining Uisce Éireann to confirm their future role and team structure as part of the next steps in issuing contracts.

If you are interested in having a HR One-to-One meeting you can register online at www.water.ie/framework or by emailing lastaffqueries@water.ie. We will publicise details in advance for HR One-to-Ones in your Local Authority and if you have already registered, but not yet been given a date, we will be in touch with details for your appointment.

We are establishing a number of Points of Contact for water services staff to follow up directly with Uisce Éireann staff members on operational queries or to chat to someone local about what it's like to work for Uisce Éireann.

Our HR team will follow up with all those registered for a HR One-to-One to put interested staff in touch with one of our Points of Contacts.



HR One to One meetings

All staff have the option to submit a request for further information on transferring to Uisce Éireann.

This will allow us to confirm the full schedule of face-to-face meetings across the country. You can register by logging onto www.water.ie/framework or calling us on (01) 237 2966.

Alternatively, you can download the PDF form online, fill out the details and email to Lastaffqueries@water.ie.

Update on Acting and Temporary Roles

Uisce Éireann will regularise any Water Services Staff member on a fixed term contract.

For any Water Services Staff member who has continued in an acting role since the publication of the Framework in June 2022, Uisce Éireann will regularise you on your acting grade. The above is subject to transitioning to Uisce Éireann employment.

Contact us

Please note that we are always available to chat to you and answer any question you may have in relation to any of the information above.

You can call us on (01) 237 2966. Alternatively, you can email your query to Lastaffqueries@water.ie.

Feel free to check our dedicated website at www.water.ie/framework where you can find more information on the Uisce Éireann Transformation programme.