



# Innovation, Excellence and Sustainable Development

1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Aptus Utilities



CHARGE YOUR  
ELECTRIC VEHICLE  
HERE

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# About Us

Aptus Utilities Limited (Aptus) was founded in 2010, with an ambition to provide a multi-utility solution that streamlines building processes for construction companies and that places customer experience and integrity at its core.

Our approach is to combine multi-utility solutions with total project management. Total project management involves each scheme being led by a dedicated project manager, providing one point of contact which aids communication with the developer. Aptus takes charge of all aspects, liaising with local authorities, network operators and third parties to implement end-to-end utility connections. Knowing that the utilities are in safe hands frees the developer to focus wholly on the completion.

Our business model has proven effective, acting as a catalyst to others within the Utilities industry and we continue to build on these foundations to drive growth.

## Aptus Head Office & UK Operational Depots

### CUMBRIA & SCOTLAND

Ullswater House  
North Lakes Business Park  
Penrith  
CA11 0JG

### NORTH WEST

Unit G3 Leyland Business Park  
Centurion Way  
Leyland  
PR25 3GR

### NORTH WEST (Head Office)

Aptus House  
Units 19-20 Barrs Fold Road  
Wingates Industrial Estate  
Bolton  
BL5 3XP

### NORTH EAST

Unit 16a  
Follingsby Park  
Gateshead  
Tyne and Wear  
NE10 8YG

### YORKSHIRE

Mildred Sylvester Way  
Normanton  
Wakefield  
WF6 1TA

### MIDLANDS

Unit 11  
Smiths Close  
Zone 3  
Burntwood Business Park  
Staffordshire  
WS7 3FT



# About this Report

This is our second Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Report and builds on the achievements of our first year's reporting. We recognise the importance of adhering to responsible ESG policies and practices and we know how important ESG management and reporting are for our industry and our business. We strive to promote sustainability through environmentally considerate practices and we take measures to ensure a safe and healthy working environment. In line with this, we have worked with the specialist consultancy, Sustainable Advantage, on a Net Zero plan, details of which are included in this Report.

We hope you enjoy this Report and learn more about how Aptus Utilities is having a positive impact on its people, community, environment and marketplace.





## A Message from our Managing Director

Welcome to our second annual Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Impact Report. Aptus recognises that our business has an impact on the environment and is realistic about those aspects of that impact we can control and those where we can exert some influence. As a business, we strive to promote sustainability through environmentally considerate practices and take measures to ensure a safe and healthy working environment. This Report details what we are doing to reduce that impact and the positive contributions we make to our people and the communities in which we work.

Aptus is proud to be a caring employer in all the communities where we have offices, and, as well as competitive remuneration, we also have a complete benefits package for our colleagues.

We are passionate about training the future workforce through apprenticeships and our Aptus Academy has had continued success, with over 30 joining this internal pathway in 2022 to increase their skills, helping to ensure the longevity of the company.

ESG is fully integrated into our business strategy, and we recognise there are many opportunities to further enhance our performance in the years ahead. We look forward to reporting to you on our future progress.

The report and data included cover the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Kerford'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue circular stamp or watermark.

Lisa Kerford,  
Managing Director, Aptus

# Our ESG Highlights in 2022–2023

## Environment

- 🍃 Journey to Net Zero! – We calculated our carbon footprint – Scope 1, 2 and material Scope 3, establishing a baseline year for calculating our carbon footprint
- 🍃 The ‘Aptus Green Team’ was created, committed to identifying and implementing ‘green solutions’
- 🍃 Energy champions were appointed across all sites and held Energy Awareness Briefings for all employees
- 🍃 Behavioural Change Training programmes were put in place to support our Energy Consumption Reduction Plan<sup>1</sup>
- 🍃 Our Environmental campaigns discussed energy costs and provided help and advice on how to reduce energy usage at home
- 🍃 2,411 trees planted with the Woodland Trust – one for every month one of our vehicles was on the road
- 🍃 25% – increased recycling from offices and stores

<sup>1</sup> To be introduced during FY24

<sup>2</sup> Compared with FY22

<sup>3</sup> Amounts will be recorded and reported in next year’s report

## Social

### Health and Safety

- 🔗 ROSPA gold award received 4th consecutive year
- 🔗 15% reduction in utility strikes<sup>2</sup>

### Female representation

- 🔗 20% of our workforce are women (a 6% increase during FY23, from 58/300 to 66/322)
- 🔗 14% of Group Board roles are held by women
- 🔗 43% of Executive Team roles were held by women
- 🔗 29% of our apprentice intake were women
- 🔗 36% of those on individual learning plans are women

### Training

- 🔗 Launched our new Aptus Academy for skills improvement
- 🔗 21 apprentices retained
- 🔗 Continued our investment in our award-winning multi-utility apprenticeship programme (£500,000 to date by FY23)
- 🔗 Implemented E-Learning module for all new starters focusing on the company driver handbook, policies and procedures

## Pay fairness

- 🔗 29.5% mean pay gap in FY23, narrowing from 35% in FY21
- 🔗 30.3% median pay gap in FY23, narrowing from 41% in FY21
- 🔗 Real Living Wage-accredited

## Health and wellbeing

- 🔗 Created a well-being policy including digital 24/7 GP service and access to gym discounts and a benefit hub
- 🔗 62% increase in Mental Health First Aiders (34 vs 21 in FY22)
- 🔗 46% engagement with employee surveys

## Community engagement

- 🔗 Added a ‘Cash for kids’ clothes recycling bank at the front of our Aptus HQ
- 🔗 Started recycling PPE with Recycling Lives<sup>3</sup>

## Governance

- ⚙️ Certified to ISO 9001, 14001, 45001, CHAS, SMAS and Construction Line
- ⚙️ Certified to industry standards GIRS, NERS AND WIRS

# Our Core Values

Our core values are what our success is built upon.

- The dedication of our team and creating an inclusive and rewarding environment leads to a confident workforce and helps uphold the integrity of the company, with reliable and honest staff, leading to low staff turnover and quality work
- Clients then recognise us as a company with a 'can-do' attitude, providing services which are value for money
- Our commitment to deliver the optimum customer service is possible because of ongoing rigorous processes of evaluation and review which inform every aspect of the business, at every level
- Our high standards never slip
- These are the principles that have shaped the company as it has grown from one employee to over 350, and as we continue to build each day



# Our ESG commitments



## 1. People

We believe a successful business is built on its people and for us, this means creating an inclusive and respectful environment for our employees. We are committed to ensuring the health, safety, wellbeing and professional development of our people, and through this, we create a motivated, dynamic and responsible workforce.



## 2. Community

Our purpose is to bring social, economic and environmental benefits to the communities in which we work, which we achieve through making charitable donations and our participation in voluntary schemes and activities.



## 3. Environment

We aim to operate as an environmentally sustainable business and continually strive to work resourcefully, and with minimum disruption to our surroundings. We do this by decreasing waste to landfill, reducing CO2 emissions, seeking energy-efficient solutions and working with customers to improve local environmental quality and protect natural heritage.



## 4. Marketplace






Working together with our employees, clients and suppliers we are committed to sharing goals and objectives ensuring that we operate sustainably and responsibly, whilst offering a competitive and quality service. Working with all our key stakeholders to achieve this means that the appropriate social, regulatory and environmental risks and opportunities are embedded into our strategic decision-making and planning process. By deploying a management system certified to ISO9001:2008 we guarantee to meet the quality standards expected by our clients.

# United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals

We operate our business with integrity, balancing economic considerations whilst championing social and environmental stewardship. This is consistent with our Core Values, and in practice means operating with robust governance and effective, meaningful ESG practices. We maintain a disciplined focus on embedding our Core Values and ESG practices into all activities. Our purpose is to provide quality and cost-effective services in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner.

The United Nation's (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a sound framework for identifying how we can play a more active role in the sustainable development of the UK and the world more broadly. The SDGs also help frame how we use our operating model, resources and skillsets.

We have selected five SDGs with the highest materiality to our business model. These SDGs are those that we can most contribute to, and that are supported by our Core Values. We have described our actions alongside each goal to illustrate our contribution.

| UN SDG  | Targets and indicator  | Our contribution  | Our Commitment   |
|---|--|---|--|
|  <b>UNSDG 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</b>                          | <p><b>Target 5.1:</b> End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere</p> <p><b>Target 5.5:</b> Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</p>  | <p>We are committed to providing an inclusive working environment for all. Our various programmes and campaigns encourage women to enter the multi-utility sector and our Managing Director Lisa Kerford is an ambassador for women leading in traditionally male-led organisations</p> | <p>We aim to increase our female workforce and the intake percentage of women as apprentices, specifically relating to construction</p>  |
|  <b>UN SDG 6 – Ensure the availability and management of water and sanitation for all</b>          | <p><b>Target 6.3:</b> By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing the release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally</p> <p><b>Target 6.4:</b> By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity</p> | <p>By designing, testing and fitting water connections throughout the UK, we contribute to the provision of clean water and sanitation</p>  | <p>We have firm targets around zero pollution incidents and enforcement notices while continuing to contribute to the provision of clean water and sanitation</p>  |
|  <b>UN SDG 7 – Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all</b>    | <p><b>Target 7.1:</b> By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services</p> <p><b>Target 7.2:</b> By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix</p> <p><b>Target 7.3:</b> By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency</p>   | <p>We provide comprehensive electricity infrastructure installation, including securing and installing substations, EV charging points and street lighting. We are ideally positioned to help the UK economy transition to low-carbon, affordable energy</p>                            | <p>We will support our clients through any legislation changes relating to the move away from gas and a move towards electric. We aim to increase the number of EV charging points installed throughout the year</p>   |
|  <b>UN SDG 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</b> | <p><b>Target 11.1:</b> By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums</p> <p><b>Target 11.6:</b> By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management</p>  | <p>Through our installation services, in particular EV charging points and air source heat pumps, we are contributing to making cities and communities more resilient and sustainable</p>   | <p>We aim to increase the number of EV charging points installed throughout the year and to increase the number of developments using air-source heat pumps as an energy source</p>  |
|  <b>UN SDG 13 – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</b>                  | <p><b>Target 13.1:</b> Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries</p>   | <p>To reduce our energy usage, the 'Aptus Green Team' ESG Committee focuses on raising awareness, creating behavioural change programmes and identifying and implementing 'green' solutions</p>   | <p>We have committed to becoming Carbon Neutral (Scope 1 and 2) by 2027 and will be setting a path to Net Zero in 2024. We have targets around reducing fuel usage, planting a tree for every vehicle on the road, per month, and working with suppliers to reduce the environmental impact of our material deliveries</p> |



# Environment



# Environment

The protection of our environment is a priority at Aptus. Every business has varying levels of “significant” environmental impact and, in our industry, these include, but are not limited to, biodiversity loss, habitat destruction and deforestation at all stages – planning, land acquisition, permitting, development, operations and site remediation.<sup>4</sup> Our philosophy is to focus on those environmental impacts which are significant to our company and, as a result, we are currently concentrating on fuel, energy usage and excavated materials.

<sup>4</sup> SASB Standards, 'Engineering & Construction Services'

## Our Goals

- 🔄 Engage with our landlords and move our contracts for electricity to high-quality green tariffs
- 🔄 Work with suppliers to reduce the environmental impact of our material deliveries
- 🔄 Improving our tablet devices used onsite to be able to submit drawings to site electronically, preventing printing and also transportation of drawings from office to site
- 🔄 Transitioning to a fully paperless workforce by moving more work streams (e.g. street lighting and jointing) onto tablet devices in order to reduce paperwork
- 🔄 Request ESG data from key suppliers
- 🔄 10% increase in recycling from all regions
- 🔄 Begin our journey to Net Zero (see below)

Our work with our clients is a reflection of the global push for more sustainable working practices. We are seeing an increasing number of electric vehicle charging point projects and an increase in the number of developments moving from gas to electric heating options. Further investment in renewable energy generation and green infrastructure is on the horizon and this will continue to shape the work we are doing. As a business, we are undertaking many initiatives to become more environmentally considerate and are continually searching for areas where improvements can be made, from our relationships with suppliers to our project management process and the building materials we select.

## Our ESG Committee

This year we established The 'Aptus Green Team' which holds quarterly meetings with energy usage being a standing item on the agenda. The Committee consists of four members of management who are committed to identifying and implementing 'green' solutions.

As an example of the initiatives from the Aptus Green Team, an energy awareness briefing was held for all employees in June 2022 and behavioural change training programmes have been put in place to support our Energy Consumption Reduction Plan which will be coming in 2023-24. The Committee has also distributed leaflets discussing the energy cost increase and providing help and advice on how to reduce energy usage at home, with the view that behavioural changes would take place within the workplace as well.

## Journey to Net Zero

This year, with the help of specialist consultancy Sustainable Advantage, we have calculated our carbon emissions for the financial year 2022-23. These calculations will allow us to set a baseline from which to measure our year-on-year reductions as we target being Net Zero by 2046. We are committed to ensuring that we play our part in working alongside other UK organisations to achieve the UK Government's Net Zero target of at least a 100% reduction in the net UK carbon emissions by 2050 (based on 1990 levels) for our UK operations including our head office in Bolton and offices in Yorkshire, the Midlands, Cumbria and Gateshead.

Carbon emissions consist of Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions.

- **Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from sources that we own or control and are associated with fuel combustion. This includes natural gas usage in our buildings, as well as petrol and diesel used in company vehicles**
- **Scope 2 emissions cover indirect emissions from the generation of electricity, which comes from our building usage**
- **Scope 3 emissions consist of all other indirect emissions that occur in our value chain and are made up of 15 separate categories of both upstream and downstream emissions**

# Emission reduction targets

As a result of the work completed this year, we are targeting a:

**17%**

Reduction in our Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2030

**91%**

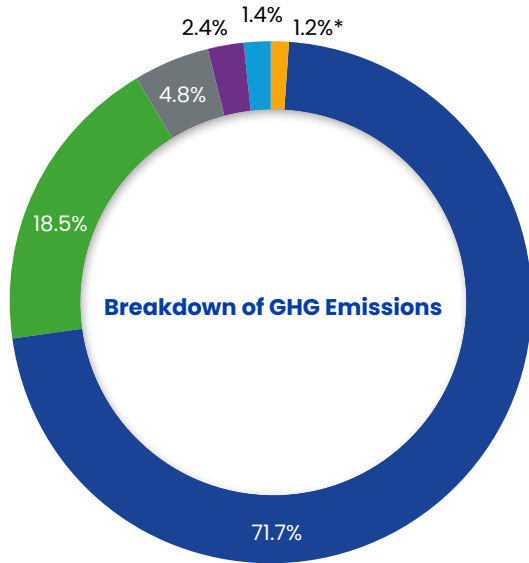
91% overall reduction in all Green House Gas (GHG) emissions across Scopes 1, 2 and 3 by 2046

**2046**

Net Zero by 2046 – four years ahead of the Government’s 2050 target

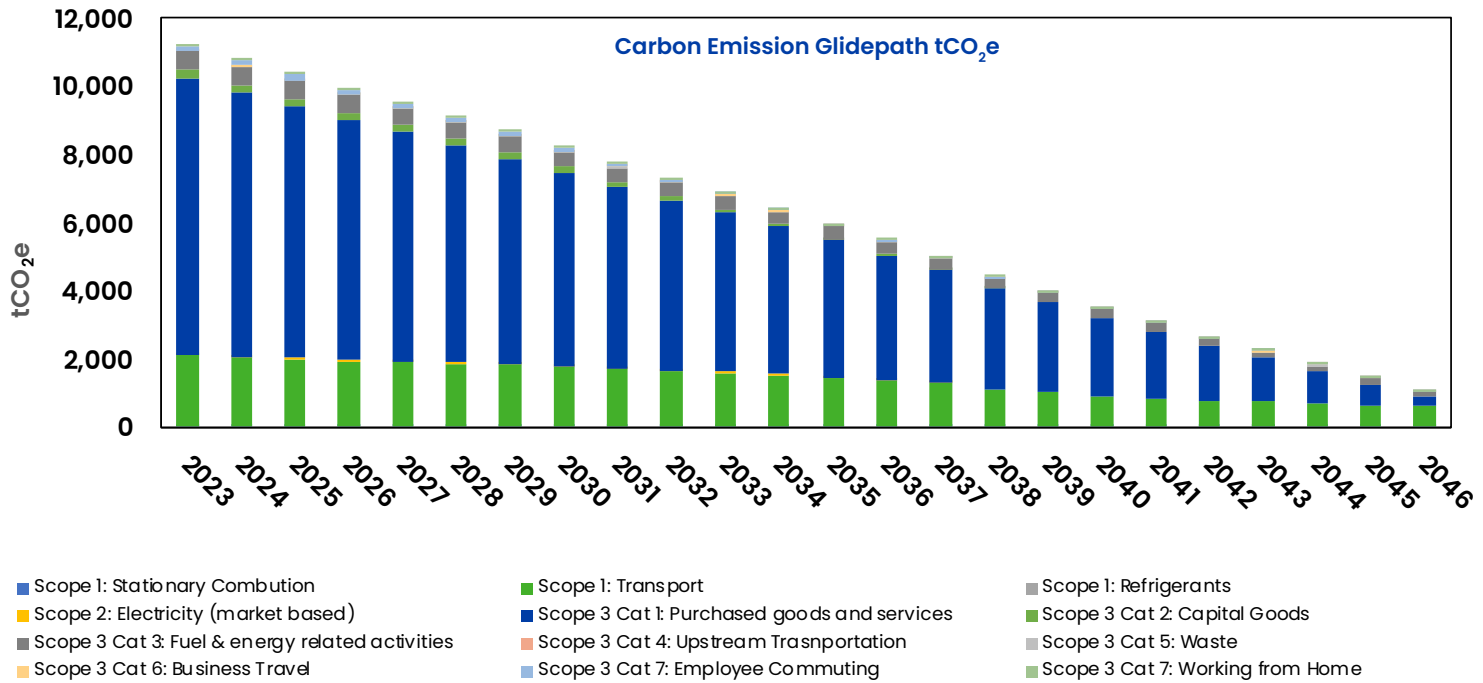
To continue our progress toward achieving Net Zero, we have mapped out and planned several positive actions to achieve the following carbon reduction targets:

- ✔ **8%** absolute reduction in emissions by 2025 from 2023 baseline levels
- ✔ **27%** absolute reduction in emissions by 2030 from 2023 baseline levels
- ✔ **47%** absolute reduction in emissions by 2035 from 2023 baseline levels
- ✔ **69%** absolute reduction in emissions by 2040 from 2023 baseline levels
- ✔ **87%** absolute reduction in emissions by 2045 from 2023 baseline levels
- ✔ **91%** absolute reduction in emissions by 2046 from 2023 baseline levels



- Purchased Goods & services 71.7%\*
- Transport 18.5%
- Fuel & energy related activities 4.8%
- Capital Goods 2.4%
- Employee commuting 1.4%
- Other\* Purchased electricity, Employees working from home, Business travel, Stationary Combustion and Waste 1.2%\*

\* The numbers in this Report are the result of engagement with independent consultancy Sustainable Advantage which has undertaken an independent calculation of our emissions footprint for use in our Net Zero strategy. These numbers differ in some instances from those published in Aptus' Energy and Carbon Report on page 8 of its Annual Report 2022-23 because of differences in methodologies and, in some cases, conversion factors.



# Reducing our emissions

Our controllable emissions include:

- **Scope 1 - onsite gas emissions and our owned and leased company vehicles**
- **Scope 2 - purchased electricity and electric vehicles**
- **Scope 3 - (partial) - employee business travel and commuting**

In common with many companies, the majority of our emissions are in our supply chain, and so although we have little direct control over them, we have also addressed them, below.



Here is what we intend to do between now and 2030:

|                                    | Description               | FY23 Total tCO <sub>2</sub> e | FY23 GHG Footprint % make up |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Scope 1</b>                     |                           |                               |                              |
| <b>Stationary combustion (Gas)</b> | Gas consumed              | 16.91                         | 0.2%                         |
| <b>Transportation</b>              | Owned and leased vehicles | 2,082.04                      | 18.5%                        |

## Scope 1: Stationary Combustion

**Total gas consumption 92,619 kWh = 16.91 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

We have six sites, of which only our Head Office, Aptus House in Bolton, uses gas. To reduce the emissions from this site we will:

- **Progressively replace brown gas with renewable gas**
- **Ensure that minimal heating is necessary by fully insulating the building including double-glazing all windows**
- **Replace gas boilers with electric heating systems/ heat pumps**

## Scope 1: Transportation

As a result of increasing success in winning business, our transport requirements have risen and so have our related emissions.

|  | FY21        | FY22                 | FY23                 |
|--|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Turnover</b>                                | £44,073,694 | £61,431,350          | £73,253,000          |
| <b>Fuel consumption (Kwh)</b>                  | 6,863,415   | 7,619,378            | 7,944,115            |
| <b>tCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>                        | 1,879       | 1,864                | 2,082                |
| <b>tCO<sub>2</sub> per vehicle (intensity)</b> | -           | 10.08 (185 vehicles) | 10.06 (207 vehicles) |

## Reducing our emissions continued

We recognise that our 200-strong fleet has an environmental impact and we are determined to reduce this impact. Our Net Zero journey will require electrification, but these commercial vehicles are vans and trucks that cover large distances to serve our client base and our vehicles are also required to carry weight and tow machines. We regularly check hybrid and EV van ranges, but, at present, they are insufficient to meet our needs. However, our fleet also includes cars which is the right place to start in our fleet transition. We have added four electric vehicles to our fleet this year and installed an EV charging station at our head office. We have also undertaken an employee commuter survey to learn more about the travelling of our employees to and from work and will use this for future plans around electrification.

All company vehicles, whether leased or owned, are fitted with telematics and this allows us to leverage data around driver behaviour, vehicle activity and other metrics to improve fuel efficiency, review maintenance plans, ensure road safety and optimise routes. Making small changes to driving style can have a large impact on emissions so we organise regular toolbox talks and safety briefings on key topics such as defensive driving, vehicle maintenance, vehicle safety and winter driving. Robust safety measures and environmental stewardship often go hand in hand, and we have found that the safety campaigns around good driving have also contributed to reducing emissions.

We recognised the need to support newly qualified drivers to gain confidence driving larger vehicles. Since 2021 we have had New Driver Assessments for young drivers and implemented post-accident training for all Aptus fault vehicle accidents who have acknowledged the benefits and confidence this additional training has given them. The assessments are an opportunity to educate our new drivers on how important driver style and behaviour are to reduce unnecessary fuel consumption.

Our in-house transport department ensures all vehicles are maintained and roadworthy, and electronic daily vehicle checks are completed for all company vehicles. Our rigorous systems around fleet management and promoting good driver behaviour and road safety awareness enhance the efficiency of our vehicles and help to keep our workforce safe, as well as protect the communities in which we work.

As a result of all these initiatives, and the installation of a fuel bowser at all six of our locations, allowing our drivers to fuel without making unnecessary trips to filling stations, we have reduced unnecessary mileage and achieved efficiencies. Our fleet in the last year rose by 12% from 185 vehicles to 207, with our fuel consumption rising by 14.3% and corresponding carbon emissions by 10.5%. We know there is further work to do and to indicate our determination, we plant a tree with the Woodland Trust for each month each one of our vehicles is on the road.



“In FY22 that equated to **2,118 vehicles** and so we planted **2,118 trees**. In FY23 this rose to **2,411 trees** planted with the Woodland Trust.”

Credit: James Reader / WTML

# Reducing our emissions continued

## We will:

- Move diesel vehicles to electric vehicles (EV) on renewal
- Where moving to EV vehicles is not practical, move to hybrids, providing the vehicles are suitable for the work being carried out
- Provide driver training on how to drive more efficiently to reduce emissions
- Install telematics where feasible to gather granular data on driver performance to issue further guidance and training
- Where possible charge EVs on-site with renewable electricity so emissions are moving to zero

|   | Description  | FY23 Total tCO <sub>2</sub> e | FY23 GHG Footprint % make up |
|---|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Scope 2</b>                                  |  |                               |                              |
| <b>Electricity (location based)<sup>6</sup></b> | Purchased electricity, for own use (grid average)      | 57.33                         | 0.5%                         |
| <b>Electricity (market based)<sup>7</sup></b>   | Purchased electricity, for own use (specific contract) | 57.33                         | N/A                          |

## Scope 2: Electricity

**Total electricity consumption 276,873 kWh = 57.3 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

In 2022–23 we all saw the effect of soaring energy prices and a cost-of-living crisis. These challenges highlight both the importance of transitioning to a more sustainable energy supply and give additional impetus to our efforts to switch to renewable energy sources.

We will continue to work with our suppliers and, as the contracts come up for renewal, transition over to high-quality green tariffs.

<sup>6</sup> Location based represents emissions from electricity consumption based on grid average emissions

<sup>7</sup> Market based represents emissions from electricity consumption based on specific energy contracts





# Reducing our emissions continued

## Scope 3: Indirect emissions

Scope 3 emissions range from those that we do have control over such as employee commuting and business travel through to the vast majority of our emissions which lie within Scope 3, Category 1 – Purchase Goods and Services. These emissions which are in our supply chain are ones over which we have less control. We use many products that are derived from petrochemicals and which are specified for us by the appropriate utility network operator. This limits our discretion to substitute with products that may have a lower carbon footprint. We also have a limited supply chain due to the number of suppliers who are accredited to manufacture and provide materials that are to the required specifications.

To try and reduce these emissions, we will use our purchasing power and choice of suppliers to encourage the correct carbon-reducing behaviour within our supply chain. Most reductions will come naturally from suppliers reducing their own Scope 1 and 2 emissions. As well as engaging with our supply chain over sustainability, it is also essential that we maintain strict control over product design and lifecycle management. We recognise that the incorporation of ESG considerations into the products and services provided by us includes, but is not limited to, managing the lifecycle impacts of those products and services including use-phase resource intensity, and other

environmental and social externalities that may occur during their use or at the end of their lives.<sup>8</sup> We engage with suppliers on these ESG issues, and we will continue to ensure that there is an adherence to our policies not only around ESG but also Modern Slavery and Bribery and Corruption to ensure we manage risks surrounding the ethical conduct of business.

### We will....

- **Engage with tier 1 suppliers to first understand their carbon footprint (Scopes 1 and 2) by sending out carbon surveys**
- **Be selective about working with sophisticated carbon suppliers (where possible), and additionally, support suppliers to reduce their emissions**
- **Work with suppliers to collaboratively set carbon emissions reduction targets (as recommended by the Science Based Targets initiative)**
- **Request Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs) for products purchased and choose lower-emission products**

<sup>8</sup> SASB Standards, 'Engineering & Construction Services'



Most reductions will come naturally from suppliers **reducing their own Scope 1 and 2 emissions.**

## Reducing our emissions continued

|   | Description  | FY23 Total tCO <sub>2</sub> e | FY23 GHG Footprint % make up |
|---|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Scope 3</b>  |  |                               |                              |
| <b>Category 1:<br/>Purchase goods and services</b>        | Goods and services   | 8,062.79                      | 71.7%                        |
| <b>Category 2:<br/>Capital goods</b>                      | Capital goods  | 268.61                        | 2.4%                         |
| <b>Category 3:<br/>Fuel and energy related activities</b> | WTT <sup>9</sup> & T&D losses <sup>10</sup> from electricity, stationary combustion of fuels and transport | 535.34                        | 4.8%                         |
| <b>Category 4:<br/>Upstream transportation</b>            | Transport between tier 1 suppliers or paid transport for goods (upstream & downstream) WTW                 | 0.00                          | 0.0%                         |
| <b>Category 5:<br/>Waste generated in operations</b>      | Waste  | 3.01                          | 0.0%                         |
| <b>Category 6:<br/>Business travel</b>                    | Land and air travel and hotel stays for business purposes WTW <sup>11</sup>                                | 27.20                         | 0.2%                         |
| <b>Category 7:<br/>Employee commuting</b>                 | Employees commuting to and back from work WTW  | 161.00                        | 1.4%                         |
| <b>Category 7:<br/>Employee homeworking</b>               | Employees working from home  | 35.71                         | 0.3%                         |

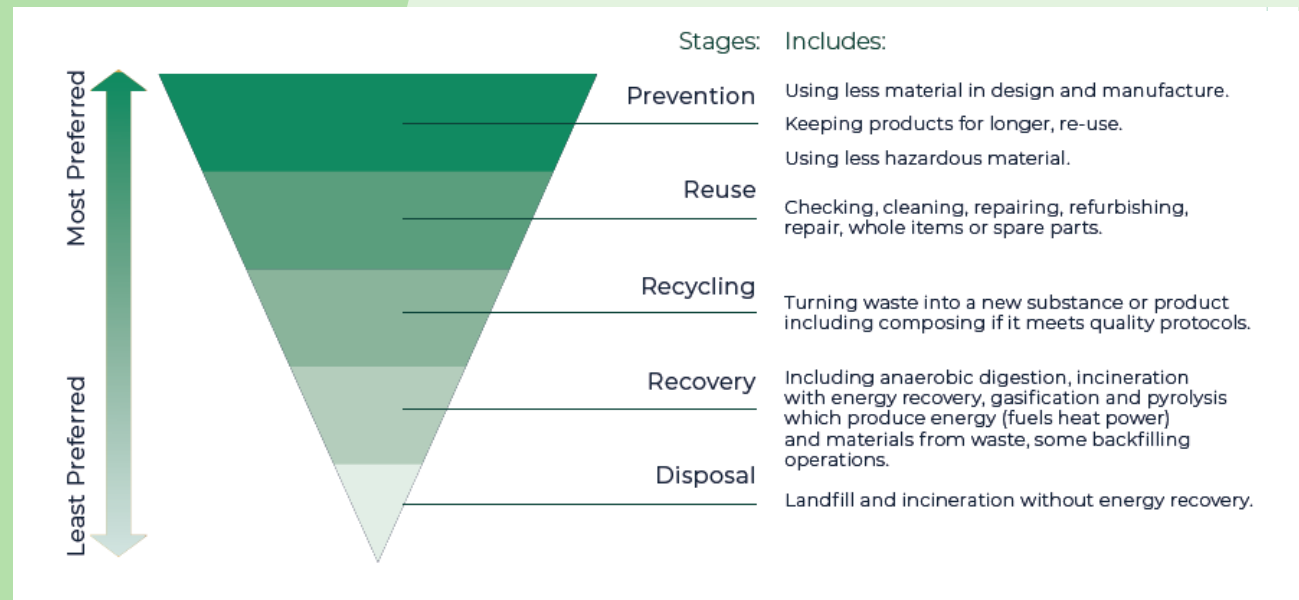
- 9 WTT - Well-to-tank emissions. Emissions associated with the extraction, refinement and transport of fuels before consumption
- 10 T&D losses - Transmission and distribution losses. Emissions associated with the energy lost during the transmission of electricity through the network
- 11 WTW - Well-to-wheel emissions. Includes emissions associated with the extraction, refinement, transport, and consumption of fuels

# Waste

We have been following the reduce, reuse, recycle model for several years – seeking to break the linear model to extract, use and dispose.

We have been working for many years to achieve waste reduction, and are proud of the many incremental measures we have taken to achieve zero waste to landfill. These include improved signage on bins to help with internal waste management awareness, improved communication about the different waste streams and providing waste awareness training as part of our employees' induction and briefings throughout the year. Finally, we are continuing to work with suppliers to reduce the environmental impact of material deliveries.

## Waste hierarchy



We are proud of the many incremental measures we have taken to achieve **zero waste** to landfill.

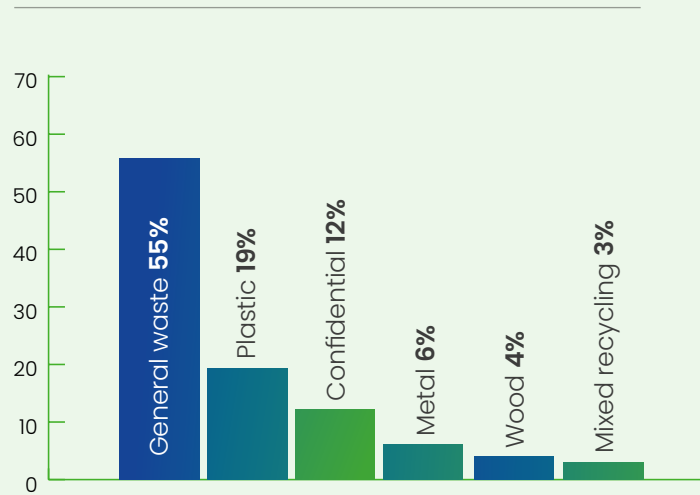
# Waste continued

As well as zero waste to landfill, we have a high recycling rate (40%) and have realised efficiencies in material sourcing and material usage to reduce waste overall. Our achievements have been realised over many years of commitment to responsible waste management:

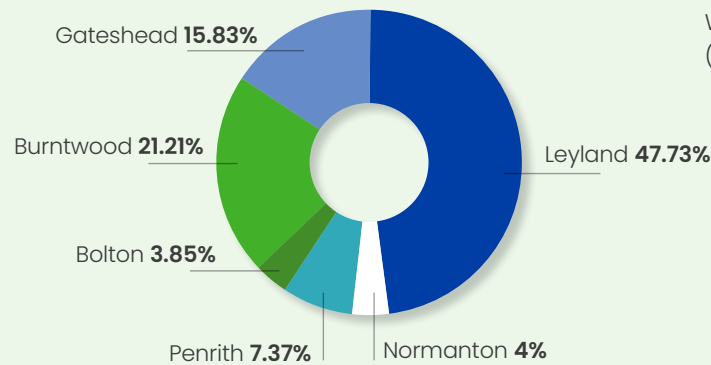
- **2017: improved segregation of waste streams in offices**
- **2020: various departments in our offices went paperless**
- **2021: enhanced plastic recycling scheme where our plastic is recycled to be used in future plastics**
- **2022: replaced standard skips at depots with compactor skips, where waste is compacted to optimise the volume to be transported.**

We have continued to work with our waste provider to improve our reuse and recycle rates, with increased monthly monitoring allowing us to realise further opportunities in our waste management programme.

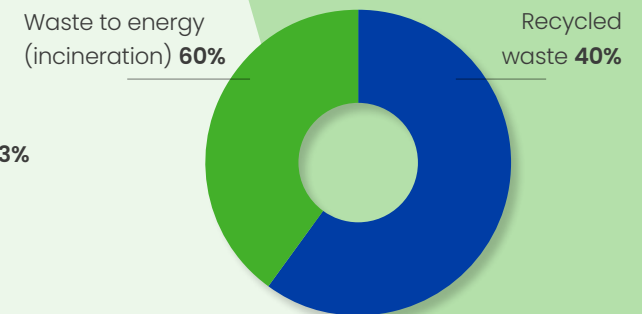
Annual waste produced by waste stream



Percentage of waste produced by Aptus site



Waste Disposal and Treatment



We have increased **monthly monitoring** allowing us to realise further opportunities in our waste management programme.

## Case Study:

# EV charging

We were contracted by the UK's largest independent forecourt operator, Motor Fuel Group (MFG), to install the infrastructure and new substation at the Shell forecourt in Rusholme, allowing MFG to add six ultra-rapid 150kW chargers to their portfolio. The chargers can add a 100-mile range in around 10 minutes, offering a reliable source of clean fuel that meets the daily transportation needs of motorists.

MFG has committed to invest £400m in ultra-rapid chargers by 2030. As a trusted partner, we look forward to building on our successful relationship with MFG by supporting the delivery of their ambitious dual-fuel strategy and assisting them in meeting rising consumer demand for the EV option.



 Social



## Social

At Aptus we understand that to provide our clients with the best service, we need to look after our people and the communities we serve. Our business is made up of talented people and we strive to provide good working conditions, pay, benefits and personal growth and development opportunities. Looking after our workforce and customers is paramount and this extends to the environment and communities where we operate and that often means going above and beyond the work we are contracted to do to have a positive impact.

**330**  
employees

## Our Goals

- 🎯 Recycling PPE with Recycling Lives
- 🎯 Reduce internal non-conformances by 10% (based on 22/23)
- 🎯 Improve NET promoter score by 10% (based on 22/23)
- 🎯 Reduce client complaints by 5% (based on 22/23)
- 🎯 Reduce member of public complaints by 10% (based on 22/23)
- 🎯 Increase the number of mental health first-aiders by 15%
- 🎯 10% reduction in utility strikes compared with FY23
- 🎯 10% reduction in vehicle damages compared with FY23
- 🎯 Implement an E-Learning module for all new starters focusing on the company driver handbook, policies and procedures
- 🎯 Implement annual E-Learning modules for all Aptus drivers focusing on driver behaviour and vehicle checks

## Awards

We have been recognised by some of the most prestigious award bodies in the UK for our working practices:

- **Fourth consecutive ROSPA GOLD award**
- **Insider Northwest Young Professionals Awards 2022**
- **Shortlisted for the Manchester Evening News Business Awards in the (£40m-£100m turnover category)**



# Health & Safety

At Aptus, we aim to deliver a quality product safely and without risk to human health or the environment. Our operations are conducted within stringent frameworks for Health, Safety, Quality and the Environment (HSQE), ensuring we work responsibly, safely and with due consideration for our surroundings at all times. Responsibilities centre on ensuring our colleagues have access to the information, guidance, toolbox library training and equipment that will keep themselves and their teams safe. The HSQE department conducts rigorous monitoring and reporting of health and safety, carries out site inspections and investigates all hazards and near misses to ensure continual improvement.

All operational departments have dedicated Safety Committees to improve engagement with our HSQE programme and initiatives, and new ideas and suggestions are proactively used to improve our HSQE processes, procedures and performance. Since 2020, our comprehensive Health and Safety Strategy Plan has transformed the way we access and use our health, safety and environment data, improving our data collection processes and, ultimately, our strategic decision-making. We share our health and safety learnings across our business, both among our colleagues and contractor partners, and each year have a safety stand-down which is an opportunity to reinforce everyone's role in our HSQE programme. We invite our sub-contractors to this, but we recognise

that the issues faced by sub-contractors are often different to those who are directly employed, therefore in 2021 we introduced additional mini stand-down type events for sub-contractors only. These proved to be very successful, with a number of them bringing health and safety initiatives forward to the business.

We take our responsibilities around occupational health extremely seriously, and we aim to reduce the rate of occupational illnesses as far as reasonably practicable. Health surveillance is carried out by qualified occupational health nurses. Occupational nurses assess lung function, hearing, skin and hand-arm vibration (HAVS). Occupational dermatologists are used to assist with skin conditions when required and we actively monitor our medium-to-high-risk operatives who are exposed to the possibility of contracting Hand-Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) through an individual HAVS watch system which records their exposure reading, with the HSQE department reviewing the data and intervening when required.

# ISO 45001 employer







# Learning and development

## Aptus Academy

It's reported that as many as a quarter of a million additional workers may be needed in construction by 2026, and in the energy and utilities sector the number is even higher as a result of the rapid energy transition. In response, after lots of hard work and preparation, in October 2022 we launched the Aptus Academy, with our first workshop taking place in November. The Academy aims to inspire our people to gain further qualifications, skills and experience so that they can fulfil their potential. All those working towards a formal qualification or who are on a training plan have been invited to join, including anyone who is on an apprenticeship programme, undertaking further training or studying for a qualification.

It provides a setting for participants to enhance their career progression, allowing members to take part in workshops, group activities, roundtable discussions and feedback sessions. There are also regular presentations from expert speakers on topics including well-being, finance and communication. In 2022-23 our first cohort of 31 joined the Academy, each at a different stage of their careers with us and including our multi-utility and business administration apprentices as well as colleagues from our gas, water, electric, streetlighting and finance teams. We look forward to celebrating their achievements when they reach significant milestones in their learning with some 'Celebration of Success' events.



We're passionate about nurturing an **engaged workforce** and giving access to the **best training opportunities** which will in turn **benefit our customers.**



# Apprenticeships

It has been an exciting year as we expanded our apprenticeship programme. Since the two-year scheme launched in 2015, it ran on a biennial calendar, but due to the high demand for our services and our continuing successful expansion, we were delighted to be able to offer eight places for apprentices in the Midlands, Yorkshire and the North West of England in 2022. The programme was launched to address the industry's skills crisis by growing our own talent, and was developed with Manchester-based Utility & Construction Training (UCT), taking place in UCT's state-of-the-art facilities in Manchester, and on-the-job training onsite with our experienced multi-utility teams. It takes school and college leavers through to an NVQ Level 2 Gas Network Operative qualification, an essential Street Works qualification to meet the requirements of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSW), covering water qualifications, water hygiene, health and safety and other key areas within multi-utility services.

The scheme has been extremely successful and, combined with our office apprenticeship offerings, we have had over 70 people undertake apprenticeship training with us, with 13 currently working towards an apprenticeship. We recently celebrated five of our apprentices passing their course with some of the highest marks in the UK, each securing a distinction.

Our award-winning apprenticeships provide a fantastic route into a career with our growing and ambitious company. The new team members will play a key role in helping us to achieve our growth ambitions by ensuring we have the skilled workforce to meet demand.

## Case Study: Apprentice

In 2022, apprentice Calum was one of three internal applicants to successfully gain promotion to a trainee project manager role, which supports the delivery of our contracts and operations across Lancashire. Calum joined Aptus in 2021, initially in a position within the CAD (Computer-Aided Design) team.

"The week is structured to ensure targets are met and projects remain on schedule. The role is very active and requires a lot of travel. I have a broad range of responsibilities, from dealing with our operatives and subcontractors and ensuring they have all the materials, equipment and permits needed for them to carry out the work, to programme meetings with the senior team and liaising with site managers and clients. And that's just the start! The job is challenging but interesting, and I like being kept on my toes. I'll never stop being a 'trainee' as you keep learning and developing your knowledge and skills every day."

"I have an extremely experienced team around me who continue to support my development in the role, and working so closely with more experienced colleagues, I'm able to get a good insight into their roles and the opportunities for career progression at Aptus."

## Case study: 5% Club

In addition, in September 2022 we committed to the 5% Club, an official charter which means that we have committed to having at least 5% of our people in earn-and-learn positions within five years. This could be apprentices, students or graduates who might be completing a training scheme. The objective of the Club is to raise the employment and career outlook for young people. We're proud that our business is exceeding the 5% target and are committed to training our people throughout their careers with us. We are currently going through the Employer Audit process and await confirmation of our accreditation status.

**More than 10 per cent** of our workforce are already in apprenticeships and further training or studying for higher qualifications.



# Health & Wellbeing

Chief among our ESG Commitments is the health, safety and wellbeing of our people. Our wellbeing strategy aligns with national and international days of relevance to wellbeing, and this year we communicated on the themes around the Sleep Wellbeing Campaign (February 2022), 5 Ways to Wellbeing (June 2022), Grief After Bereavement or Loss (July 2022), World Suicide Prevention Day (September 2022) and World Mental Health Week (October 2022). For this last Week, the theme was loneliness, and as part of our regular outreach, we looked at how social media can impact mental health. Each issue of the Aptus quarterly Connections Magazine includes a mental health moment.

In addition, our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provides support in several areas, including a private healthcare plan, counselling service, live chat, webinars, podcasts, specialist support around weight loss, quitting smoking and sleeping habits, general life support advice and health check calculators.

Our annual employee engagement survey seeks to identify the success of our well-being initiatives. We take action based on the results of the survey, honing various initiatives or introducing new focus topics.

Our 'Know Your Numbers' campaign in partnership with Acorn Occupational Health offered **all colleagues a free 15-minute health assessment**, measuring blood pressure, blood sugar and blood cholesterol.



## Building Mental Health Charter

We have signed the Building Mental Health Charter, giving access to mental health support and providing awareness and training to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health. We also have an extensive health and wellbeing calendar of events, raising awareness in areas such as finance, stress management, sleep and supporting others with their mental health.

## Aptus Family Fun Day

Each year we have the annual Aptus Family Fun Day which brings our colleagues together in a relaxed, fun, friendly environment that reinforces our message – we work to live, not live to work. Celebrating achievements and milestones is a key contributor to promoting positive mental health in the workplace, and we recently celebrated Aptus' 12th anniversary with cakes and biscuits at all our offices and depots.



# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I)

Aptus Utilities is a committed Equal Opportunities Employer, and we are proud of the career opportunities that we provide to colleagues of all backgrounds. We are committed to promoting DE&I throughout the business and ensuring all of our colleagues feel respected and included. With 330 colleagues in April 2023, we recruit and pay based on job role and ability, regardless of gender. As a leading employer in the multi-utility industry, we ensure that our core values are embedded into our culture, across all regions and departments. We can play a large role in shaping a more inclusive future for people and businesses in the utility industry and believe that diversity adds value to our business model. A workforce that reflects the local community in both cultural and life experiences enhances creativity, productivity and innovation.

Our Equality and Diversity Policy describes our commitment to achieving an inclusive, equitable and diverse working environment, where people are free to express who they are. The Board has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that discrimination does not occur and that there is an effective policy in place which is regularly monitored.

We treat all colleagues, job applicants, members of the public and recipients of services fairly and equitably. In practice, that means treating everyone as individuals

regardless of their age, gender, if they are transgender, race, disability status, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or whether pregnant or not.

Our demographic profile is understood within the organisation. Multi-utility services remain largely male-dominated, and we realise that we have work to do to achieve a better gender balance. We have embedded flexibility in the way colleagues can structure their work, embracing the hybrid working model. We are also taking action to mitigate structural bias by rethinking policies, processes and culture and ensuring our brand is attractive to a diverse audience.

We are bringing stakeholders with us on our DE&I journey. We encourage our supply chain partners to share our commitment to diversity and inclusion, and colleagues are trained on equality and diversity and standards of expected behaviour.

Looking ahead, our focus will be to make inclusion and equity even more central to our business and decision-making.

We are committed to promoting DE&I throughout the business and ensuring all of our colleagues feel **respected and included.**



# Supply Chain

We are beginning the process of engaging with our supply chain not only because it is where the majority of our carbon emissions are located but also because of the operational and reputational risks involved in such issues as modern slavery, bribery and corruption. We recognise that the first stage of identifying supply chain risks is the collection, benchmarking and monitoring of supply chain ESG information.

## Products / Services supplied

- Gas, Water and Electric fittings and pipe
- Gas and Water fittings and pipe
- Electric cable and fittings
- Electric Substations / switchgears
- Electric LV and HV cable

We **build long-term supplier relationships** at operational, commercial and financial levels and **work closely** with them to **continually improve our performance** in relation to social, ethical and environmental issues.

Our key suppliers account for over 70% of our material purchases and are either multinational organisations or regional businesses. We currently have an informal process for supplier review but hold formal meetings to discuss supply, pricing and future developments. Any issues with product quality are raised immediately.

We value our suppliers because they enable us to provide the best products and services to our client base. We build long-term supplier relationships at operational, commercial and financial levels and work closely with them to continually improve our performance in relation to social, ethical and environmental issues.

We **value** our suppliers because they enable us to provide the **best products and services** to our client base.



# Community Engagement

Working with developers in the heart of busy neighbourhoods, whether on a new housing development or being involved in urban regeneration, we are committed to getting involved in activities where we can make a difference. This takes shape in several ways, from holding bake-off competitions and sponsored sporting events and poker nights to raise funds for charity, to our donate-a-day scheme and initiatives like our school road safety campaign. We want to make a positive impact in the communities in which we live and operate and so we are committed to getting involved in activities in which we can make a difference. We have a wide range of community and charitable initiatives and we employ several ex-servicemen and are keen supporters of the Royal British Legion. Each year we fundraise to support the annual Poppy Appeal, donating through the purchase of poppies and “lorry poppies” for our fleet.



## Case study: Road Safety Week

Our School Road Safety Campaign takes place each November to coincide with Road Safety Week – which is organised by BRAKE Charity to bring communities together in campaigning for safe roads for everyone. Our campaign now reaches primary schools across the whole of the North and Midlands.

We have provided more than 4,000 hi-vis vests to schoolchildren, from nursery school age up to 11-year-olds. The vests bear the slogan, “Bright Sparks Get Seen in The Dark” to encourage children to wear their vests when walking to and from school. Our presentation alerts children to potential hazards when interacting with traffic, particularly around building sites and busy areas. We discuss the Green Cross Code which can assist in crossing the road safely.

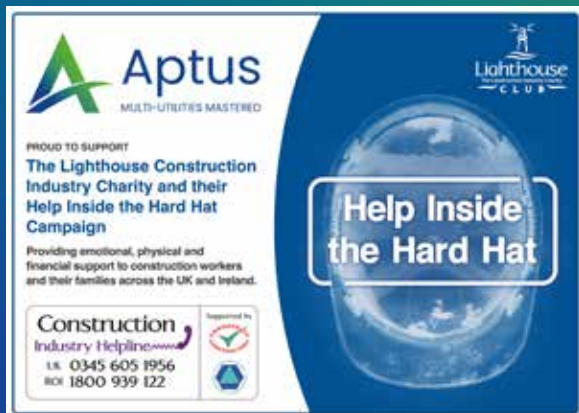
In 2022, HSQE manager Delicia Maxwell and trainee HSQE advisor Jack Berry held workshops in primary

schools in Cumbria and Yorkshire where they talked to children about the extra dangers to look out for in winter and reminded them of the green cross code. The children also designed their own ‘safe roads’ using a range of props.



## Case study: Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity

The Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity is the only charity that provides emotional, physical and financial wellbeing support to construction workers and their families. It exists to improve the welfare and wellbeing of the workforce and reduce suicides in our industry. Its vision is that no construction worker or their families should be alone in crisis. The charity's 24/7 helpline, a free downloadable app and a text service as well as a website ensure that workers in need can contact the charity, which offers both support and training in mental health first aid. This year we donated £1,000 to support the work of the Lighthouse Construction Industry.



## Case study: Cash for Kids

Aptus hosts a Cash for Kids clothes recycling bank at the front of Aptus House Head Office in Bolton. Cash for Kids is a UK charity which works to improve the lives of disadvantaged children and young people across the UK who are affected by poverty, illness, neglect or have additional needs. It works with grass-roots organisations that directly support families in need. In 2022 it raised £20.4 million across the UK, supporting nearly 490,000 children.

Aptus supported the Cash for Kids #WearShareCare campaign by encouraging colleagues to donate unwanted clothing and other items to be reused or recycled by the charity and helped prevent 15 bags of clothing from going to landfill. Recycling helps to reduce waste sent to landfill and, for every tonne collected, Cash for Kids receives £250 to help them continue supporting disadvantaged children and their families.



## Case study: Recycling lives

Recycling Lives is a recycling company which focuses on extracting high-value resources from waste. It also supports former service personnel, ex-offenders and disadvantaged people to build better lives by providing support, training and employment opportunities within the company. At Aptus, we collect our employees' uniforms, workwear and PPE and send them to Recycling Lives. The company then removes from the garment any corporate logos or identification (and securely destroys them) with the remaining material either processed into a new product or used to create energy. Recycling Lives recycles garments into:

- **Relief blankets** – used to support people affected by events such as natural disasters
- **Insulation** – mainly used in the automotive sectors to shield heat and sound
- **Plastic pellets** – used to create various new products via injection moulding
- **Garden/hanging basket liners** – used to prevent the growth of weeds and line flowerpots
- **A soil substrate** – a substrate used in place of soil in grass roofs to reduce weight

Safety boots / footwear that are not yet at end-of-life are recovered by the company to be given a new lease of life overseas in developing countries. Only a very small amount of waste is sent to create energy and under no circumstance is anything sent to landfill. We started to send our PPE to Recycling Lives in March 2023 and will report next year on the volume of PPE which has been recycled.

# Aptus Utilities

## Governance





## Governance

We recognise that strong governance is essential to sustainable business operations. We aim to conduct our business according to the highest ethical and legal standards.

## Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting the ESG activities are the responsibility of all business functions, with ESG governance provided by our ESG committee which determines how Aptus Utilities should embed these processes into day-to-day activities as well as ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. The People Director chairs the ESG quarterly meetings which also includes other senior management leaders to discuss these matters. We report on our ESG actions in several ways:

- **Weekly Board summary**
- **Monthly Board reports**
- **Quarterly Target and Objective updates**
- **Accounts summary**
- **Sustainable Advantage tracker**
- **Sustainable Advantage annual review**

## Our Goals

- ④ Internal audit on our Corporate Criminal Offence Policy, the Business Continuity Plan and Disaster Recovery
- ④ Develop an enhanced list of ESG risks with a focus on climate-related risks and opportunities including supply chain

We aim to conduct our business according to the **highest ethical and legal standards.**

## Our Board of Directors

We are a wholly owned subsidiary of Neptune 123 Limited (“N123”) and have two levels of management:

- **Day-to-day operations are managed by our Executive Directors in line with the strategy and direction set by N123 and in line with the delegated authorities issued by N123. The group meets fortnightly for an operational board meeting, and as and when required for other matters**
- **The N123 Board (the Board) comprises two Executive Directors (our Managing Director and Group Finance Director), two Directors appointed by N123’s largest shareholder (Westbridge), two Non-Executive Directors (former owners of the business) and a Non-Executive Chair. The Board comprises one female and six male members.**

The Board oversees our strategic planning and execution, risk management and responsible business practices with the assistance of two subcommittees (Audit and Remuneration). The Board meets 12 times a year and approves an annual budget and one-year strategy in February of each year. This forms the main set of targets against which the business and progress are assessed. The Chair is responsible for ensuring the efficient operation of the Board and its meetings.

Good governance starts with independent and engaged Directors who have a strong sense of integrity and respect for differing viewpoints. We are proud of our

diverse Board who possess the requisite judgment, background and skills to strengthen and enhance the performance of our business.

As of 31 March 2023:

- **Our Board had one female and six male members**
- **We had three male and two female Executive Directors, a significantly higher proportion than the industry average**

## Business Risk and Opportunities

Our Business Risk and Opportunities register uses a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) matrix to analyse the risks and opportunities to our business, and includes several HSQE areas including People, Environment and Waste and Climate Change.

Our ESG policies include Whistleblowing, GDPR Data Protection, Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery Statement, Business Continuity and our Disaster Recovery Plan Slavery Statement.

Good governance starts with **independent and engaged** Directors who have a strong sense of **integrity and respect** for differing viewpoints.

# Our Certifications

We offer best practice by complying with all industry standards and achieving certification of accrediting bodies. We belong to several industry organisations to further support the development of colleagues and the overall performance of our company.

As we have continued to grow as a business, we reached the thresholds for mandatory reporting in areas including gender pay gap and section 172 within our annual financial statement. We see such regulations and our various certifications as achieving two objectives: meeting the mandatory qualifications required for the effective running of our organisation (such as Lloyds Register) and enhancing the delivery of our products and services. These include International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) standards 9001, 14001 and 45001, and membership of Construction Line, CHAS and SMAS.

We recognise the importance of certified processes and procedures. Maintaining these is essential to our commitment to high standards across every area of our business.

## Mandatory Certifications

We have been recognised by some of the most prestigious award bodies in the UK for our working practices:

### Lloyds Registration including:

- National Electricity Registration Scheme (NERS)
- Gas Industry Registration Scheme (GIRS)
- Water Industry Registration Scheme (WIRS)
- Multi Utility Recognition Status (MURS)



## Additional Certifications

- ISO 9001, 14001, 45001
- CHAS
- Construction Line (Silver Membership)
- Safety Management Advisory Services (SMAS)
- Gas Safe
- Ofgem Approved Meter Installers (OAMI)
- National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC)
- Corporate Membership of Institution of Lighting Professionals (ICL)





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