



People & Culture Week

This year saw the launch of our first-ever People & Culture Week, bringing colleagues across our sites together to celebrate what matters most to our business – our people.

Throughout the week, employees took part in a variety of activities focused on career development, employee benefits, culture and values, diversity and inclusion, and celebrating key milestones. From interactive games and quizzes to webinars, discussions, and site celebrations, the week highlighted the many opportunities available to support our people both professionally and personally.

A particular highlight was celebrating 50 years of Dunbia, giving colleagues the opportunity to reflect on the people, memories, and achievements that have shaped our journey. Meanwhile, Dawn Meats colleagues also came together to remember and honour former team members through a rose-planting ceremony, creating a lasting tribute to those who have been part of our story.

Thank you to everyone who got involved and helped make our inaugural People & Culture Week such a success.





Learning & Development

Leadership and management development has continued to move forward at pace, from supporting individual development planning through to engaging at executive and board level.



UCD

Coaching sessions with our UCD cohort have been a real standout, with excellent feedback highlighting the quality of challenge, reflection and overall impact. Alongside this, we've continued shaping our wider development programmes, bringing together structured learning and greater commercial exposure to support well-rounded capability across the business.

During a UCD event held in May at Harper Adams University, we had the opportunity to hear from a range of insightful speakers, including our own Sally Hill and Brian Hyland, who shared valuable perspectives on Food Safety and Quality (FSQ) and animal welfare. The following day, colleagues took part in a live lamb carcass breakdown led by Paddie Ward, providing a practical, hands-on insight into costings, specifications, and the processes involved in delivering high-quality products to our customers.



Graduate Accelerator Programme

Dawn Meats once again partnered with Waterford Chamber to deliver the Graduate Accelerator Programme, bringing together graduates and placement students from across Ireland – over 30 of our own participated. Running from January to June, the programme combined interactive workshops, guest speakers, and collaborative activities to develop key skills in communication, resilience, leadership, and career development. Participants particularly valued the practical learning opportunities, networking with peers, and insights from experienced professionals, making the programme another great success in supporting our early career talent.

Toyota Effective Maintenance in Action Programme

A number of our Maintenance Managers took part in Toyota's Effective Maintenance in Action programme in Deeside, UK, during May. The programme provided valuable insights into how world-class maintenance practices are built through standardisation, problem solving, and continuous improvement. Key themes included making abnormalities visible, strengthening routine maintenance activities, encouraging operator ownership of equipment, and developing capability through coaching and skills development. The experience offered practical learning and best-practice examples to help drive maintenance excellence across our sites.

South East Regional Skills Forum

Dawn Meats recently participated in a South East Regional Skills Forum workshop at SETU Waterford, exploring how businesses can prepare their people for the workplace of the future. During the panel discussion, Sylvia Gaudino joined industry representatives from Jabil Healthcare and Weltec to share insights on developing the skills, agility, and mindset needed for future success.

Across our business, we continue to invest in learning and development. During May, colleagues at our Kilbeggan and Slane sites completed a range of training initiatives designed to strengthen skills, support continuous improvement, and drive operational excellence.

Skills to Advance ILM People Management Programme

In May, Dawn Meats launched a new Skills to Advance ILM People Management pilot programme, designed to support current and aspiring people managers. Delivered in partnership with Skills to Advance, the programme leads to a Level 5 ILM qualification through a series of stackable learning units covering topics such as management, leadership, time management, innovation, change, and conflict resolution. The first cohort, consisting of 13 colleagues, began the programme in Athlone, marking an exciting step in the continued development of our people and future leaders.



Tasty Careers

We've delivered Tasty Careers training to help colleagues build confidence, skills and capability through engaging, accessible sessions, supported by the National Skills Academy for Food & Drink. As part of our strong partnership with them, our Group L&D team also contributed to the Tasty Careers Schools Challenge, where Morgan Owens represented us as a judge. The challenge saw schools create healthy, fun snack ideas, helping to engage the future workforce and showcase the opportunities available within the industry.

Values

We've also been designing and carried out workshops that reinforce our values, standards and leadership expectations, while continuing to work closely with HR teams, site leaders and external partners to keep everything aligned to business priorities. One of the biggest highlights has been bringing our values into sharper focus, including the launch of the new Values Awards. This is already creating a great opportunity for colleagues across Dawn Meats and Dunbia to recognise each other for the behaviours and standards we want to see every day.

Congratulations to all our Q1 Values Awards Winners!





Health & Safety

At Dawn Meats Group, we aim for zero accidents and ill health and the RIDDOR 500 Award recognises a site's performances when they exceed 500 consecutive days without a RIDDOR report being made. Sadly, sometimes accidents do happen in the high-risk industry we operate in despite our best efforts and when they meet a particular criterion, they have to be reported to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) for data analysis and further investigation.

What is RIDDOR?

RIDDOR stands for the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences and is a legal standard for reporting serious accidents, incidents and illnesses to the (HSE). When sites achieve 500+ days without making a report they receive the accolade of the 'RIDDOR 500' Trophy and a site certificate to recognise all the hard work by the site teams to ensure our colleagues go home safe and well each day.

Prior to the Trophy being awarded last year, sites such as Halesowen and Cumbria have exceeded 500 RIDDOR days and more recently Sawley and West Devon. Sawley celebrated by giving every colleague a free burger for lunch in recognition of the award and West Devon gave each colleague a pasty.

A big thank you to all our valued staff whose efforts and continued hard work make these achievements possible!

You can help your site be the next one to achieve the award by:

- Reporting hazards and near misses
- Working safely within your training and not taking unnecessary risks
- Wearing all PPE provided to protect yourself from injury
- Reporting any health & safety concerns to your manager, supervisor or Health & Safety Manager/Officer





PROFILES



Name:
Karen Binstead
Position:
Group HR Assistant
Site:
Group HR

Could you share a little about who you are?

I joined Dunbia in 2018 within Group HR and currently work as a Human Resources Business Partner, with a particular focus on graduate recruitment. What I enjoy most about my role is the opportunity to learn more about the meat industry while working with such a diverse and talented group of people across the business. Supporting the recruitment of graduates across our 13 sites is especially rewarding – guiding them through onboarding, helping them settle into the organisation, and watching them grow in confidence as they begin to shape their careers. Seeing graduates develop into future leaders at Dunbia is something I find incredibly fulfilling.

Can you share a significant achievement or project you are particularly proud of?

One project I'm particularly proud of is the introduction of our Grad Week event. This initiative brings new graduates together as a cohort, giving them the opportunity to collaborate, build key skills, learn about the business, and form strong professional networks. It's designed to inspire and equip them for long-term success, and it has become an important part of the graduate journey at Dunbia. I'm also proud to have been part of the journey that led to Dunbia receiving the 'Employer of the Year' award this year – an achievement that reflects the collective effort and commitment across the business.

What inspired your career path, and what keeps you motivated day to day?

My passion for HR and recruitment comes from a desire to help people succeed while contributing to strong business performance. Identifying talented individuals who can add value to the organisation and supporting them in reaching their potential is what motivates me most.

What skills or qualities help you succeed in your role?

Strong communication and listening skills are essential, alongside effective time management and problem-solving abilities. I also believe adaptability and the confidence to use initiative are key to navigating the fast-paced and ever-changing nature of recruitment and HR.

Who has been your biggest mentor or influence in your professional journey?

Early in my career, a line manager at Tesco played a significant role in shaping my path. They provided me with valuable training, support, and encouragement, helping to build my confidence and inspiring me to pursue a long-term career in HR. Since joining Dunbia, my colleague Nadia Staniforth has been a key influence. She has provided continuous guidance, training, and support, and we share similar goals in attracting and developing top graduate talent. Our positive working relationship has been instrumental in helping me grow in my role.

How do you balance work and life?

Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my family – especially since recently becoming a grandmother, which has been incredibly special. I also enjoy going to the gym, walking our cocker spaniel, and travelling to explore different countries.

Share a fun fact your colleagues might not know about you

I spent part of my childhood living in the Bahamas and moved back to the UK when I was nine years old.

What are your career goals for the next few years?

I'm committed to continuing to strengthen and develop Dunbia's Brighter Futures Graduate Programme, ensuring it offers a meaningful and rewarding career pathway. Our dedication to excellence is at the heart of the success of the business. I also aim to support succession planning within the business by attracting and nurturing both internal and external talent, ensuring all candidates receive the training and support they need to succeed.

How do you see the industry evolving, and what are you excited about for the future?

I'm excited about the continued growth of Dunbia's employer brand and its strong position as an 'Employer of the Year.' The business offers a wide range of opportunities, supported by innovative initiatives, acquisitions, and training programmes. As the industry evolves, it's important that we continue to promote the diverse career opportunities available in the meat and food sector, ensuring we attract and develop the talent needed to support the business's ongoing growth.

What advice would you give to someone starting in your field?

Be passionate about working in HR and recruitment and always prioritise supporting and listening to people. Patience is important, especially when recruitment becomes challenging due to competition or skills shortages. Take pride in placing individuals into roles where they can thrive – it brings a great sense of professional satisfaction to see people succeed.

From your perspective, what is one of the biggest challenges when recruiting graduates, and how can we overcome it?

One of the biggest challenges is changing perceptions of the industry, which can sometimes be seen as outdated. In reality, there are exciting and diverse career opportunities available. To overcome this, it's essential to continue strengthening our employer brand and marketing strategies – highlighting career pathways, training opportunities, and the dynamic, diverse nature of the workforce.

How can we best support graduates in settling into the business and feeling confident in their roles early on?

Providing structured onboarding is key, alongside clear communication and ongoing support. Dedicated mentorship, soft skills development, and confidence-building initiatives all help graduates transition into their roles. Regular feedback, clear career pathways, and continuous guidance ensure graduates feel supported and empowered to reach their full potential.



Charity & Community



Sawley

In April, colleagues came together to support Nightsafe, donating almost £200 worth of groceries. With Nightsafe operating on a weekly budget of just £45 to provide meals for young people at their day centre, these additional food and cleaning supplies made a meaningful difference. In recognition of the ongoing support provided across a range of events, Damian Evans (HR Officer) and Andrew Rimmer (Health & Safety Manager) were awarded Nightsafe Charity Ambassador certificates.

Building on this momentum, in May a team of Dunbia Sawley colleagues took part in the Beaverbrook's Fun Run in Blackpool aid of Nightsafe, raising a further £100.

At the end of April, staff at Sawley celebrated British Beef Week which coincided with St Georges Day celebrations onsite. The canteen was decorated and classic beef meals served in the canteen. There was also a quiz for staff, with everyone enjoying this engagement event.



Grannagh & Eastmans

A huge thank you to everyone at our Grannagh and Eastmans sites who supported the bake and cake sale on Wednesday 27 May. Thanks to the fantastic effort of our bakers, buyers and supporters, an incredible €1241 was raised for the Solas Cancer Support Centre Waterford. There was plenty of activity behind the scenes on Tuesday evening as colleagues prepared a wide selection of homemade treats for the sale. A special mention goes to Michal Umrian, who impressed everyone with a memorable snake cake for the occasion.

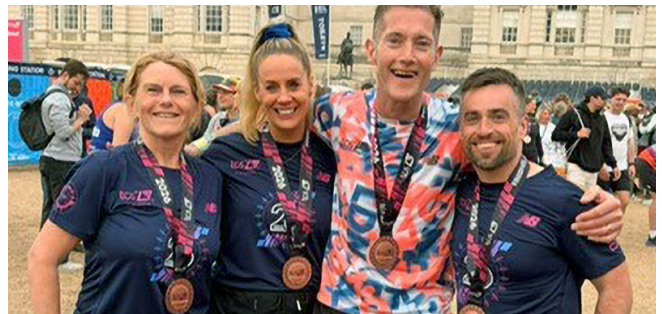


The Solas Abseil Team 2026 are also delighted with the support shown so far on their iDonate page. If you would still like to contribute, you can support the team here: <https://www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/dawnmeatsabseil12>



West Devon

West Devon recently donated to the Madewell Community Interest Company which supports adults and children with additional needs, mental health challenges, and those who struggle in traditional education settings, including school refusers.



Preston

Joanne Weir completed the London & Seville Marathons, raising £2541.00 which made all those months of training worthwhile!



Jaspers

Megan Tucker (from the Jaspers' Procurement Team) held a 'Big Breakfast' with Launceston Young Farmers Club in support of the Plymouth & District Leukaemia fund and Penhaligon's Friends. She also ran the London Landmarks half marathon in aid of the Anthony Nolan Trust which we are very proud of.

Kim Upcott (Jaspers' Lairage Supervisor) is part of the Cornwall Women's Rugby Team. They made history on 6th June 2026 by securing their first ever match and victory at the renowned Twickenham Stadium, winning the Gill Burns Division 2 Trophy. They defeated Durham 46-27. Kim was one of the try scorers for the match.

During the heatwave we had an ice cream van on site at Jaspers which everyone enjoyed!





Charity & Community ...continued



Treburley

Donated beef to Plymouth City College to support their Ten Tors Jubilee Challenge for pupils with additional needs. This is the second year Treburley have supported this event to develop local young people's skills and resilience.

Treburley also supported Menheniot Cherry Fayre which is an annual event that encourages local people (including Treburley and WD staff) to enjoy a community day out.

Kildare

Dawn Meats Kildare were proud to support the FTD brothers who have completed their 32nd and final marathon challenge across Ireland for dementia research. The brothers began the challenge on 27 April in Co Antrim and crossed the finish line in Merrion Square in Dublin just before 2.30pm to huge cheers and support from family and friends.



PROFILES



Name: **Sean Heaney**
Position: **Commercial Graduate**
Site: **Kildare**

Could you share a little about who you are?

I joined Dawn Meats in June 2024 as a Commercial Graduate and now work as the Head Site Planner for Lamb at our Kildare site. Following the centralisation of lamb boning operations in Kildare, I lead production planning for the lamb business, working closely with the Lamb General Manager and cross-functional teams including procurement, operations, and logistics. My role focuses on ensuring production is aligned with commercial requirements and that the right products are in the right place at the right time. What I enjoy most is the analytical side of planning – using data to make informed decisions and recommendations that have a real impact on the business.

Can you share a significant achievement or project you are particularly proud of?

A project that I am proud of was getting to redesign our production plans for the Lamb in Kildare, working hand in hand with our operations leaders to ensure it translated into the results we wanted, making it easier for our operations team to execute our shared goals.

How do you stay motivated and productive at work?

One way I stay motivated and productive at work is maintaining short, medium and long-term goals. As part of Dawn, we get to create our own S.M.A.R.T.S. goals with the help of our Commercial managers to aid in our overall development and where they feel we can upskill or further develop our strengths.

What skills or qualities do you think are essential for success in your role?

The skills I think are essential for success in my role (some of which I've had to improve on myself) would be an analytical mindset, attention to detail and the willingness to fail until you succeed.

What inspired you to pursue your current career path?

The graduate programme provided a great opportunity to me after college to further develop on what I had studied in college in the real world. I studied International Business and Languages and really wanted to pursue a career in which I was able to use my language (French) after putting in so much effort to learn the language. My role has provided me with an outlet to

put all of that time and effort into something that garners real world results.

Who has been your biggest mentor or influence in your professional life?

My biggest mentor in my professional life has been Lorcan Burke our Commercial Manager in Kildare. He has put a lot of faith in me as shown in my projects and is a fantastic display handling huge responsibility while keeping a level head, even just to watch.

How do you balance your work and personal life?

I balance my work and personal life by keeping a very fulfilling life outside of work. I live in Dublin and commute to work every day, and that inter-county commute aids in keeping a degree of separation between work and personal life.

What are your hobbies or interests outside of work?

My hobbies outside of work would be an active participation in a chess club in Dublin, developing my own personal business with my close friend and practicing Muay Thai.

What are you passionate about?

I'm very passionate about young men's mental health and young men having positive and healthy role models to look up to, I love dogs too!

What are your career goals for the next few years?

My career goals in the next few years are to continue to develop

under my current managers and hopefully move into a group level role in planning.

What advice would you give to someone starting in your field?

The advice I would give to any new graduate, particularly any graduate with little to no Farming/ Agricultural background like me, would be to come in with an open mind, a positive outlook and a willingness to push yourself beyond what you think is possible. You will demonstrate to yourself that you are a lot stronger mentally than you believe.

Are there any upcoming projects or initiatives you are looking forward to?

One project I'm looking forward to is to being able to train our new Kildare graduates in the Lamb side of the business so that they can eventually grow into planning or sales executives and hopefully reach greater heights than myself in half the time it took me.

Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?

The Commercial/Sales graduate programme is honestly such an amazing way to understand how all of the various functions of a global conglomerate corporation work. If I ever leave the to further pursue my own business or go down a different career path, I will be forever grateful for the skills and business understandings I have learnt from doing this programme.



Celebrating Success

Well done to all who have completed training programmes over the last quarter, your hard work has paid off!

Abbie Phillipson

Level 3 HR Support Apprenticeship

Cathal O'Meara

2-Year Logistics Associate Apprenticeship

Erik Krisko

IT Graduate Programme

Sophie O'Neill

Train the Trainer

Cora Hogan

Train the Trainer

Maraiza Costa

Level 6 Training & Development Programme

Oleksandra Junistka

Level 6 Training & Development Programme

Rosackhy Castro

Level 6 Training & Development Programme

PROFILES



Name:
Maria King

Position:
Group Accountant

Site:
Grannagh

Could you share a little about who you are?

I'm a Group Accountant and have been with the company since November 2015, when I joined as a Financial Accountant on a 12-month contract in Dunbia Dungannon. Over the years, I've progressed into a varied role that includes managing the annual audit and financial reporting process, supporting management accounts, overseeing grant claims, and assisting with tax and finance projects. In 2021, after returning from my second maternity leave, I moved from the Dungannon site to the Group Finance team in Waterford, although I now work remotely from Belfast. What I enjoy most is the variety of the role – no two days are the same, I'm constantly learning, and there's always plenty of craic with the team.

Can you share a significant achievement or project you are particularly proud of?

I am proud of my involvement in the business acquisitions over the years. I was excited to be part of the Dawn Meats & Dunbia merger in 2017 and most recently the Kildare Chilling and Alliance acquisitions. It is always good to see the company

grow and expand and get to know new people and ways of working. I like to boast that I work with people at the other end of the world!

What skills or qualities do you think are essential for success in your role?

Apart from the obvious ones specific to Accounting, I think being a good communicator is important so as I can get the best out of my working relationships.

What inspired you to pursue your current career path?

Honestly, I have no idea, but when I was 16, I wrote in my career plan that I wanted to be a 'Chartered Accountant'. I clearly didn't know how to spell Chartered at that stage, but I was sure I wanted to do it. Also, I am one of 8 kids, maybe Accountancy was the only job left, everyone else had taken the other ideas.

Who has been your biggest mentor or influence in your professional life?

This one may get me in big trouble because there are a few people who might expect to see their name here, but I would have to say that my Audit Manager Cheryl

Kieran in my training firm, Goldblatt McGuigan, stands out. She was a slave driver, but it set me up for my future roles. She also happens to be one of my best friends to this day. (And Pat and Fintan of course!)

What are your hobbies or interests outside of work?

Running, CrossFit, Pilates and coaching Nursery Academy and u6.5s at my Gaelic club Carryduff GAC. In June 2024 I set up a WhatsApp Group with 4 mums from one my wee boys' classes. We called it Mums on the Run. There are now 20 mums in the Group. I ran Belfast Half Marathon in September 2025 at 39 – never too late! In May 2026 we entered 3 relay teams in Belfast City Marathon and raised £7,500 for MS Research NI. Thank you to Dawn Meats Group for a very generous donation and to all my work colleagues who supported the cause which is very close to my heart as my sister, Roisin, bravely battles MS.

Can you share a fun fact about yourself that your colleagues might not know?

I grew up on a farm in Fermanagh and used to run around herding cattle and sheep and turning turf in the bog.

What are you passionate about?

Being a great Mummy, Wife, Daughter, Sister and Friend.

What are your career goals for the next few years?

Over the next few years, I would like to build on my leadership skills, become more involved in

mentoring younger professionals and get involved in more business strategy. Luckily for me, I think Dawn Meats will afford me the opportunity to continue to grow alongside the business.

What advice would you give to someone starting in your field?

Keep the head down, work hard in your 20s when your energy levels are at their peak (trust me they are). Strike while the iron is hot, finish out all your Accountancy exams, don't leave them hanging in the balance, get them locked in on your CV now. It will be worth it when you want to go for a step up and to earn better money for yourself and your family.

Are there any upcoming projects or initiatives you are looking forward to?

I am looking forward to seeing how the Alliance acquisition evolves over the coming months and years. I am also intrigued to see how the ERP project pans out – I'm routing for Fintan to get it over the line in one piece.

Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?

As someone who has seen my beautiful sister medically retired through ill health at 40, I would like to share what gets me through a tough day at work or a sluggish Monday morning: If you are fortunate enough to be well enough to get up and go to work or log on from your home office every day you are so blessed. Be grateful, be kind and stay connected with your colleagues.



Mental Health Awareness Month

To mark Mental Health Awareness Month, Sawley hosted a range of events and activities to promote wellbeing, including awareness campaigns, daily communications, and information sessions for employees.

The site also launched its new Mental Health Committee, bringing together Mental Health First Aiders to develop new initiatives and support colleagues. A key highlight was a series of addiction awareness sessions delivered by Patrick Musgrove, which attracted more than 80 attendees and received excellent feedback from participants.

PROFILES



Name:
Dylan Driscoll

Position:
Health and Safety Officer

Site:
Llanybydder

Could you share a little about who you are?

I first joined the business in 1997, taking on a summer job while studying engineering at college. At the time, I never imagined I would still be here 28 years later. In my early years, I worked across many departments throughout the factory before settling into a butcher role in the boning hall, where I spent 15 years. In 2012, I became the Primal Deboning Manager, a position I held for the next 12 years. In 2024, I moved into my current role as the site Health & Safety Officer. My extensive production background gives me a strong understanding of the practical challenges on the floor and helps me approach safety from a realistic, informed perspective. What I enjoy most about my job is the opportunity to work with people from all across the site.

Can you share a significant achievement or project you are particularly proud of?

In 2012, a new boning hall was installed at Llanybydder, providing detailed yield data for every item produced from each carcass. With this new level of insight, my team and I redesigned key aspects of the production process, leading to significant improvements in yield and substantial financial gains for the business.

What inspired your career path, and what keeps you motivated day to day?

You could say I fell into this career path, as it wasn't what I originally planned. I enjoyed working with the team at Llanybydder and naturally found myself getting involved in planning and problem solving. So, when the opportunity to join the management team came up, it felt like the right next step. What keeps me motivated is driving continuous improvement across the site and taking advantage of the professional development opportunities the company provides.

What skills or qualities help you succeed in your role?

Strong interpersonal skills are essential, along with the ability to communicate effectively with colleagues at all levels of the organisation. It's equally important to be adaptable and willing to learn, whether that involves new procedures, updated equipment, or ongoing professional development.

How do you balance work and life?

Work-life balance has always been good for me at Dunbia, and I believe getting that balance right is really important. Outside of work, my time is mostly spent with my family – I have four sons and two daughters, so there's always plenty going on. When I do get some time to myself, I enjoy mountain biking and rock climbing.

Share a fun fact your colleagues might not know about you.

My first job in the agricultural sector was working in my grandfather's woollen mill, where I helped weave rugs and blankets in the school holidays. We even supplied products to Robert Redford's shops in the USA. See the picture of me approx. 14 years old.



What advice would you give to someone starting in your field?

I would advise anyone starting in this field to take every opportunity to gain new experience or learn something new – whether that's hands on exposure or a recognised training qualification. Don't be afraid to step outside your comfort zone; that's often where the most valuable growth happens.

What are your career goals for the next few years?

Although I enjoy my work within the H&S department, my long-term ambition is to progress into a senior role within the operations team.

How do you see the industry evolving, and what are you excited about for the future?

We're already seeing the industry evolve rapidly, with technology, automation and AI beginning to play a much larger role. Consumer preferences and purchasing decisions are also shifting. Sustainability and carbon reduction are becoming increasingly important. I'm excited about the future, as the evolving nature of the industry brings new opportunities for improvement and growth. Dawn Meats and Dunbia have a strong track record of innovation and adapting to market changes, which makes me optimistic about what lies ahead.

Are there any upcoming projects or initiatives you are looking forward to?

I'm attending a Six Sigma Black Belt training course at Harper Adams at the end of the month. I'm looking forward to the learning it will offer and to putting the new skills and knowledge into practice when I return to site.

From a health and safety perspective, what does a strong safety culture look like to you, and how do you bring this to life in your day-to-day work?

A strong health and safety culture is about far more than following procedures or ticking boxes. It's about creating an environment where safety comes first in everything we do - where the leadership team visibly champions safe practices and employees actively participate. Bringing this culture to life is a key part of my role as Health and Safety Officer.