

Board of directors



Sir David Higgins
Chair

Responsibilities: Leadership of the board, setting its agenda and ensuring its effectiveness on all aspects of its role.

Qualifications: BEng Civil Engineering, Diploma Securities Institute of Australia, Fellow of the Institute of Civil Engineers and the Royal Academy of Engineering.

Appointment to the board: May 2019; appointed as Chair in January 2020.

Skills and experience: Sir David has spent his career overseeing high-profile infrastructure projects, including: the delivery of the Sydney Olympic Village and Aquatics centre; Bluewater Shopping Centre, Kent; and the delivery of the 2012 London Olympic Infrastructure Project.

Career experience: Sir David was previously chief executive of: Network Rail Limited; The Olympic Delivery Authority; and English Partnerships. He has held non-executive roles as chair of both High Speed Two Limited and Sirius Minerals plc, and as a non-executive director at the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

Current directorships/business interests: Sir David is a non-executive director of Sydney Airport Limited and a board member for Gatwick Airport Limited, along with being a member of the Council at the London School of Economics. He is Chair of United Utilities Water Limited.

Independence: Sir David met the 2018 UK Corporate Governance Code's independence criteria (provision 10) on his appointment as a non-executive director and chair designate.

Specific contribution to the company's long-term success: Sir David has extensive knowledge of managing major infrastructure projects and working with regulators. As Chair of the nomination committee, he is responsible for ensuring the succession plans for the board and senior management identify the right skill sets to face the challenges of the business.



Louise Beardmore
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Responsibilities: Manage the group's business and implement the strategies and policies approved by the board.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Business Management, Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, Vice-President of the Institute of Customer Service.

Appointment to the board: May 2022.

Skills and experience: Louise has a wealth of experience leading utility and infrastructure businesses both in the UK and internationally. She has a strong track record in driving transformational change and service improvements for the benefit of customers, stakeholders and the environment.

Career experience: Louise joined United Utilities on its graduate programme and has comprehensive experience of the company and the North West region we serve. She was appointed as customer service and people director in 2016, prior to which she held a number of senior positions, leading teams in business transformation, water operations, electricity and telecoms in the UK and overseas. She completed the corporate director programme at Harvard Business School in 2022.

Current directorships/business interests: Louise is Chief Executive Officer of United Utilities Water Limited and a non-executive director of Water Plus, a joint venture with Severn Trent serving business customers. She is a non-executive director of Water UK and a non-executive director of the UK Engage for Success Foundation, named on the Northern Power Women's 'Power List' and a member of the 30% Club.

Specific contribution to the company's long-term success: Louise's strategic vision and constant customer focus will continue to build on the group's significant performance and delivery for customers, communities and the environment.



Phil Aspin
Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Responsibilities: Manage the group's financial affairs and risk management and internal control systems, contribute to the management of the group's business and implement the strategy and policies approved by the board.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Mathematics, Chartered Accountant (ACA), Fellow of the Association of Corporate Treasurers (FCT).

Appointment to the board: July 2020.

Skills and experience: Phil has extensive experience of financial and corporate reporting, having qualified as a chartered accountant with KPMG and more latterly through his previous role as group controller. He has a comprehensive knowledge of capital markets and corporate finance underpinned through his earlier role as group treasurer and his FCT qualification, and has a strong understanding of the economic regulatory environment.

Career experience: Phil has over 25 years' experience working for United Utilities. Prior to his appointment as CFO in July 2020, he was group controller with responsibility for the group's financial reporting and, prior to that, he was group treasurer with responsibility for funding and financial risk management. He has been a member of EFRAG TEG and chaired the EFRAG Rate Regulated Activities Working Group.

Current directorships/business interests: Phil was appointed as a member of the UK Accounting Standards Endorsement Board in March 2021. He is chair of the 100 Group pensions committee and a member of the 100 Group main committee. He is Chief Financial Officer of United Utilities Water Limited and a non-executive director of Water Plus, a joint venture with Severn Trent serving business customers.

Specific contribution to the company's long-term success: Phil has driven forward the financial performance of the group and delivered the group's competitive advantage in financial risk management and excellence in corporate reporting.



Alison Goligher
Senior independent non-executive director

Responsibilities: Responsible, in addition to her role as an independent non-executive director, for discussing any concerns with shareholders that cannot be resolved through the normal channels of communication with the Chair or Chief Executive Officer. She is the current designated non-executive director for workforce engagement and chair of the compliance committee.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Mathematical Physics, MEng Petroleum Engineering.

Appointment to the board: August 2016.

Skills and experience: Alison has strong technical and capital project management skills, having been involved in large projects and the production side of Royal Dutch Shell's business. Her experience of engineering and industrial sectors provides the board with additional insight into delivering United Utilities' capital investment programme.

Career experience: Royal Dutch Shell (2006 to 2015), where Alison's most recent executive role was Executive Vice President Upstream International Unconventionals. Prior to that, she spent 17 years with Schlumberger, an international supplier of technology, integrated project management and information solutions to the oil and gas industry. She is a former non-executive director at Meggitt PLC and chair of Silixa Ltd.

Current directorships/business interests: Alison is a non-executive director of Technip Energies NV. She is an independent non-executive director of United Utilities Water Limited.

Specific contribution to the company's long-term success: Alison's understanding of the operational challenges of large capital projects and the benefits of deploying technology provides valuable insight into addressing the longer-term strategic risks faced by the business. Her role as the designated non-executive director for workforce engagement provides the board with a better understanding of the views of colleagues and greater clarity on the culture of the company.



Liam Butterworth
Independent non-executive director

Responsibilities: To constructively challenge the executive directors and monitor the delivery of strategy within the risk and control framework set by the board and to lead the board's agenda on ESG matters.

Qualifications: MBA Business Administration and Management, CIM Marketing, HND Mechanical Production Engineering.

Appointment to the board: January 2022.

Skills and experience: As a serving CEO, Liam brings strong engineering and industrial technology experience to the board, with a track record of managing performance and enhancing corporate culture.

Career experience: Liam is an experienced leader in the automotive industry. He started his career in 1986 at Lucas Industries as an apprentice toolmaker before moving into sales and marketing. He joined FCI Automotive in 2000 in France, where he lived for 18 years. From 2008, Liam was CEO of FCI Automotive and led the sale of the business to Delphi Automotive plc in 2012, which he then joined as Senior Vice President and the President of its Powertrain Division. He subsequently became group CEO of Delphi Technologies plc in December 2017 when he led its demerger from Aptiv plc (formerly Delphi Automotive) and admission to the New York Stock Exchange. In 2018, he became CEO of GKN Automotive before its demerger from Melrose Industries plc and became CEO of Dowlais Group plc on its listing on the London Stock Exchange in April 2023.

Current directorships/business interests: Liam is CEO of Dowlais Group plc. He is an independent non-executive director of United Utilities Water Limited.

Specific contribution to the company's long-term success: Liam's operational experience contributes to the board's continuing focus on improving the performance of the business.

Board role

- Chair
- Executive director
- Senior independent non-executive director
- Independent non-executive director

Committee membership

- Nomination committee
- ESG committee
- Treasury committee
- Remuneration committee
- Audit committee
- Compliance committee
- Chair of the committee

Board of directors



Kath Cates
Independent non-executive director

Responsibilities: To constructively challenge the executive directors and monitor the delivery of strategy within the risk and control framework set by the board and to lead the board’s activities concerning directors’ remuneration.

Qualifications: Solicitor of England and Wales.

Appointment to the board: September 2020.

Skills and experience: Kath has spent most of her career working in a regulated environment in the financial services industry with responsibilities including risk, legal and compliance, and operations. Since 2014, she has focused on her non-executive roles, chairing all the main board committees and undertaking the role of senior independent director.

Career experience: Kath was chief operating officer at Standard Chartered plc, before which she held a number of roles at UBS Limited over a 22-year period, prior to which, she qualified as a solicitor. She is a former non-executive director at Brewin Dolphin Holdings plc and RSA Insurance Group plc, where she chaired the remuneration committee.

Current directorships/business interests: Kath is a non-executive director at Columbia Threadneedle Investments where she chairs the TPEN audit committee. She is the senior independent director of TP ICAP Group plc and chairs the board at Brown Shipley. She is an independent non-executive director of United Utilities Water Limited.

Specific contribution to the company’s long-term success: Kath’s extensive board experience of regulated sectors enables her to contribute to board governance and risk management at United Utilities. As an experienced remuneration committee chair, she is focused on ensuring performance-related pay is linked to stretching delivery for customers and other stakeholders, and implementing robust pay governance mechanisms.



Clare Hayward
Independent non-executive director

Responsibilities: To constructively challenge the executive directors and monitor the delivery of strategy within the risk and control framework set by the board.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Agricultural Marketing, MBA, DBA (h.c.).

Appointment to the board: April 2024.

Skills and experience: Clare’s background is in strategy consulting having spent most of her career working with national and international blue-chip clients, co-founding two global consultancy businesses and having bought and sold a number of businesses globally.

Career experience: Clare was a co-founder of Cirrus, a leadership and talent consultancy, sold to Accenture in 2021. Prior to this, in 1993, she co-founded Academe developing it into a global leadership development consultancy. Alongside her executive responsibilities, she has held several community interest non-executive roles, including that of the Peaks and Plains Housing Trust, Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and was chair of The NP11 working across the North of England with the devolved and non-mayoral regions and as a business representative for Transport for the North.

Current directorships/business interests: Through her work with the LEPs, the public and private sectors, Clare has developed strong links with local and central government where her focus is to drive prosperity and improve the lives of those living in the North of England. She is an independent non-executive director of United Utilities Water Limited.

Specific contribution to the company’s long-term success: Clare’s strong affinity with the North West and interest in supporting the economic growth of our region will be an asset to the board in ensuring the company’s purpose and strategic priorities are fulfilled.



Michael Lewis
Independent non-executive director

Responsibilities: To constructively challenge the executive directors and monitor the delivery of strategy within the risk and control framework set by the board.

Qualifications: BEng (Hons) Engineering Technology, MSc Pollution and Environmental Control, MA Environmental Law, Fellow of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (FIMechE).

Appointment to the board: May 2023.

Skills and experience: Michael has spent his career in customer-facing regulated utilities and has considerable experience of working with both environmental and economic regulators. He has managed a wide range of capital investment projects aimed at improving the customer experience, and driving environmental sustainability has been a key focus throughout his career.

Career experience: Michael started his career at Wessex Water plc, prior to joining PowerGen plc, which was subsequently acquired by E.ON SE. In 2007 he joined the management board of E.ON Climate and Renewables being appointed as CEO in 2015. He was appointed as CEO of E.ON UK in 2017, where he led the company’s transformation into a leading supplier of zero carbon energy solutions, stepping down from the role in June 2023. He is a former non-executive director of Equinor ASA.

Current directorships/business interests: Michael is CEO of Uniper SE, one of Europe’s leading power generation and gas supply companies, and a Member of Council for the Natural Environment Research Council. He is an independent non-executive director of United Utilities Water Limited.

Specific contribution to the company’s long-term success: Michael’s extensive experience in regulated customer-facing utilities and his focus on sustainability will help the board deliver its AMP8 ambitions by 2050.



Doug Webb
Independent non-executive director

Responsibilities: To constructively challenge the executive directors and monitor the delivery of strategy within the risk and control framework set by the board and to lead the audit and treasury committees.

Qualifications: MA Geography and Management Science, Chartered Accountant (FCA).

Appointment to the board: September 2020.

Skills and experience: Doug has extensive career experience in finance, risk management and internal control from qualifying as a chartered accountant with Price Waterhouse, his executive roles as CFO of major listed companies and, more recently, through his non-executive positions and focus on audit committee activities.

Career experience: Doug was chief financial officer at Meggitt PLC from 2013 to 2018 and, prior to that, he was chief financial officer at the London Stock Exchange Group plc and QinetiQ Group plc. He is a former non-executive director and audit committee chair at SEGRO plc and the Manufacturing Technology Group Ltd, and a former senior independent non-executive director and audit committee chair at BMT Group Ltd.

Current directorships/business interests: Doug currently serves as a non-executive director and audit committee chair at Johnson Matthey plc. He is an independent non-executive director of United Utilities Water Limited.

Specific contribution to the company’s long-term success: Doug applies his financial capabilities and his technical knowledge and experience covering audit and treasury matters in his role as chair of both the audit and the treasury committees to strengthen the board’s financial expertise.



Ian El-Mokadem
Independent non-executive director

Responsibilities: To constructively challenge the executive directors and monitor the delivery of strategy within the risk and control framework set by the board.

Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Economics and Statistics, MBA.

Appointment to the board: with effect from 1 June 2025.

Skills and experience: Ian is an experienced CEO, having spent his career in international, industrial and services businesses along with extensive experience of operating in regulated sectors.

Career experience: Ian recently retired as CEO of AIM listed RWS Holdings plc, a global market leader in the provision of technology enabled language, content and intellectual property services to clients across a range of industries including technology, life sciences, legal and financial services, a position held since 2021. Previous roles include CEO of V. Group and Exova Group plc and Group Managing Director, UK and Ireland of Compass Group plc. During his early career, Ian spent eight years with Centrica plc, including launching and then leading the group’s telecoms business, prior to that in strategy consulting with Andersen Consulting (now Accenture).

Current directorships/business interests: Ian joined the board of Diploma PLC as a non-executive director in January 2025 serving as a member of the nomination and audit committees. He was appointed as a non-executive director of Serco Group plc in 2017, where he chairs the risk committee and is a member of both the nomination and audit committees. He is a director of Roegate Consulting Limited. He is an independent non-executive director of United Utilities Water Limited.

Specific contribution to the company’s long-term success: Ian’s leadership experience of successfully transforming businesses and embracing technology to improve customer services and his knowledge of regulated environments and delivering essential public services will be invaluable as we deliver our ambitious £13 billion investment plan for the North West.

Board role

- Chair
- Executive director
- Senior independent non-executive director
- Independent non-executive director

Committee membership

- N Nomination committee
- E ESG committee
- T Treasury committee
- R Remuneration committee
- A Audit committee
- C Compliance committee
- Chair of the committee

Changes to the board during the year
Clare Hayward joined the board on 16 April 2024 and Ian El-Mokadem will join the board on 1 June 2025. Paulette Rowe stepped down from the board on 19 July 2024.