



Humber Branch Committee

Maggie Johnson

Please tell us a little about yourself?

I'm Maggie Johnson, married to Mark and with two grown up children, both of whom pursued careers that settled them in Manchester rather than returning to Grimsby after university.

I've worked at North East Lincolnshire Council for the past 11 years, and prior to that I ran a successful business for around 15 years, which I think has really helped me to understand the business world in my current role as Inward Investment Manager in the Economy and Growth team. My role is varied and interesting, I work with local businesses who are growing, and businesses who are thinking of locating to our area, so my job is all about creating jobs and bringing investment to our area to strengthen the local economy. I'm working on some exciting projects such as the South Humber Industrial Investment Programme (SHIIP) which has won planning awards for its forward thinking mitigation sites, and I'm proud to say I had an integral part in bringing forward the first building on our Stallingborough Enterprise Zone (just across the road from the EI Humber branch at CATCH), for local entrepreneurs myenergi who are taking the world by storm with their smart home energy devices.

How did you find out about the Energy Institute membership and why should others consider joining?

I found out about the Energy Institute through David Talbot, Chair of the Humber EI. David and I have worked on a number of projects together, and he felt that it would be a good opportunity for the branch to be able to inform members on wide regeneration activities in the area, and also to provide a link to some of the other groups in the area such as the Grimsby Renewables Partnership which has members from the Offshore Wind & renewables industry.

I think the EI is different to other membership organisations locally as it offers a number of different membership options. Whether you are an individual or student looking for a community that will support your professional development through training and events, or a business wanting to network with likeminded professionals and have access to knowledge resources, there is a membership package that fits.

Why did you decide to accept and become a EI Humber branch committee member?

I think it is important that we have a joined up approach locally to our zero carbon initiatives and the Humber region has more sectors than most; our ports (Immingham is the largest port by tonnage in the UK), chemicals (50+ years of process industries), a food processing industry which supplies more than 70% of the nation's seafood, the world's largest offshore wind Operations and Maintenance centre on Grimsby Docks, and 4 miles of sandy beaches at Cleethorpes with a visitor economy that attracts more than 10m people per year. All of our sectors which will both contribute to and benefit from a cleaner future, and clean energy is at the forefront of everyone's mind. As a location we want to be trailblazers in decarbonisation and clean energy so it is important we work together to really start to make a difference.

What challenges do you think the industry will face in the future?

The Humber region is responsible for producing 15% of the UK's total carbon emissions, but also contributes £18 billion into the nation's economy. Decarbonisation through carbon capture and other initiatives to contribute to a Zero Carbon economy by 2050 is a huge challenge and will require a significant amount of work and investment.

Attracting and retaining a skilled workforce is also a challenge for the area, we are putting a lot of effort into placemaking – improving the area through initiatives such as the Town Deal, Future High Streets and Coastal Communities funding in Cleethorpes to make our towns a more attractive place to live.

How do you think the Humber branch can support its local members?

Over the past six months, which has seen us all in lockdown, working from home and not being able to put on events, the branch has been working on how best to support it's members. A series of webinars have been set up with some interesting topics such as decarbonisation which have been well received. Social media activities have been increased and I would recommend members follow the Humber branch on social media platforms where there are regular updates and news items on local projects. There will be a programme of events for the coming year and an opportunity to meet up again.

To find out more about the EI – visit <https://energyinst.org/>