

Time for change

A little shy of three decades ago I fell into the world of energy by accident – it was either that or the press office of a very famous hairdresser (those who know me well will agree that wasn't for me). So I took the plunge to find out what a professional body did and learn about energy. That journey began in March 1993 at the Institute of Energy, when I arrived in a rather stuffy office covered in oak panelled walls with green leather inlay on the meeting tables.

I cut my teeth on events and marketing, wrote bids for new projects to generate services and revenue, delivered energy efficiency training which took me as far afield as Zimbabwe, became a speaker for the UK government's Energy Efficiency Good Practice Programme (along with some well-known Fellows who know who they are) and travelled the UK, ultimately becoming a chief executive at the age of 27.

I led that organisation for almost four years until my next CEO challenge beckoned. This was for a larger professional body – the Institute of Petroleum. Arriving there in 2002, I was given a simple objective – 'sink or swim, and you have six months'. What lay behind that simple instruction was to create and deliver a new future for the organisation I had just arrived at.

Simple, I thought – let's bring the two worlds I had occupied in the past decade together for a better future – but only if almost everyone invested in both also thought this a good idea and in the public interest. So, on 1 July 2003, the Energy Institute was born, incorporated with a new Royal Charter and an overwhelming mandate from the membership of both organisations to make it successful.

The EI has been working in some form on its mission for 107 years now, delivering knowledge, skills and good practice to those who can help create a more secure, affordable and sustainable energy system. From the most eminent and experienced in their field to the new and hungry asking why and challenging our thinking, the EI's richness and value has stood the test of time and will continue to do so because all these voices count.

It has been on its own journey



As she bids a fond farewell to the organisation she helped to create, Energy Institute CEO Louise Kingham OBE FEI shares some reflections.

from a UK body to one with members in 100 countries – where our good practice guidance is downloaded somewhere in the world every 18 minutes and our convening power is unique, impartial and always based on evidence.

But now, after 22 years at the helm, I'm about to move on to a new challenge. In the spirit of looking back to look forward, I share some reflections with you.

Always ask a professional

There is a symbiotic relationship between the EI and its members. The Institute is nothing without them and I like to think they are more because of the Institute. Members' day jobs keep the electrons and molecules flowing, supporting our way of life in ever smarter ways, and then they transfer that knowledge through their membership and volunteering their expertise across all that we do.

The largest of this volunteer community supports our good practice endeavour. Energy can involve hazardous situations and ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of our people and protection of the environment are paramount. The EI has

spent decades, in fact much of its existence, championing and originating industry good practice which helps to ensure our energy workforce returns home safely to their families. This work quite literally saves lives.

Be it guidance to avoid contamination of aviation fuel, specifications and test methods to guide labs or the Toolbox app to keep workers safe in front-line operations with guidance at their fingertips, it all matters. And, with constant effort, we raise the bar of operational excellence in the energy sector.

Devastatingly though, accidents do happen – think Buncefield, Fukushima and Deepwater Horizon. The key is to learn from them and share those lessons widely so that they might never be experienced again. I have witnessed our members in action, mobilised to do just that and been proud that the EI has played its part.

Women should be seen and heard

But it wasn't all welcoming and supportive from the outset – being a woman in a man's world, worse still not an engineer in an engineer's world!

I'm pleased to say one early piece of advice I received back in 1993 – and that I've studiously ignored ever since – was that I would 'be seen and not heard' in service of the organisation. Contrast that with the far wiser and cleverer man who saw something in me and took a big personal risk just six years later to appoint me CEO and let me shine so others, including me, could see that something too.

For some years I just thought: 'Well, this is the world of work, it is how it is.' It took me too long to cotton on that, actually, this wasn't right and we needed to speak up so women's voices, and those of other minorities, could be more widely heard in the workplace. After all, there is plenty of evidence which says businesses are far better for it.

The EI has one of the most diverse and inclusive staff teams and trustee boards of any professional engineering-based institute. The EI is also proud to host the POWERful Women initiative, for which I have been a board member and ambassador, promoting and supporting the progression of women across

'With constant effort, the EI raises the bar of operational excellence in the energy sector.'

the energy sector. It now has a network of several thousand women looking for their next opportunity to progress their careers all the way to the energy sector's board rooms. We have made progress, but there is still much to do and it is beholden on all of us as leaders to do more to accelerate change.

Our sector needs to embrace ALL of the talent we need in a fully inclusive way – increasing participation from all under-represented communities in our workplaces for better outcomes. I am particularly proud over the past three years to have worked alongside leading CEOs in the Energy Leaders' Coalition that understand this and want to make it happen.

There's a long way to go, but when I sit in meeting rooms (be they largely virtual for now) I am in much more diverse company among my peers than I was only five years ago. And, thankfully, it looks dramatically different to when I received that early advice and was so often, for many years afterwards, the only woman in the room.

Our expertise needs to be in the thick of it

The twists and turns of policy shifts I've seen along the way have been both exciting and frustrating. They have convinced me of the importance of getting energy professionals in there, head above the parapet, bringing evidence and expertise to bear for the best outcomes.

There have been great successes, of course, such as the

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unsung one in offshore wind for the UK and solar globally, but equally a school report which says 'must try harder, much harder' on energy efficiency everywhere.

EI Fellows have been contributing to growing the knowledge and evidence base for making vital decisions with lasting impacts on our energy system. From offering their expertise at private ministerial meetings to serving as members of the UK's Climate Change Committee and similar advisory bodies elsewhere in the world, our Fellows quietly and unassumingly share their insight for public good. I even recall hearing an account of market reforms to the UK electricity system being designed by two Fellows over supper on a napkin!

This is why our annual *Energy Barometer* has such an important role, and it's why I show up to help induct new entrant civil servants with the EI's intensive introduction to the fundamentals of the energy system.

Remember there's one world and one energy

Energy is fundamentally one thing – meeting humanity's needs, on one planet, in a global market. That's why merging the EI's precursor organisations mattered, coming as it did just as people were talking about energy companies, not oil and gas companies, and ministers were starting to gear up to create policies for a low carbon economy.

We were in the zeitgeist, a microcosm of our industry, keeping up with and trying to

prepare for changes happening across its sectors. The Climate Change Act in the UK and then the Paris Agreement sealed it. It's why I have been determined to make the EI, through its magazines, IP Week and other key activities, the place to come to get the widest possible lens on the interconnected world of energy.

And now, as its time for a change, it's why I am proud to be moving to BP, a progressive company that is integrating the energy solutions of the future, without which global society's needs won't be met. I would not have moved for any other reason.

Sign off

I entered the world of energy almost three decades ago, wishing at the time that more people would feel able and willing to better understand, manage and value energy. It underpins human progress to date but also the great challenge humanity faces in curbing its impacts on the natural world of which we are temporary guardians. Today has never been a more exciting and important time to be on this journey to deliver a low carbon energy system that can put the world in better balance.

As a Fellow myself and your CEO, I have been honoured and proud to have played my part in shaping the EI's journey so far. The EI is well placed and hungry to do more – which is fortunate, because there is much to do and time is of the essence. ●

An enduring message

Institute merger

View from the top – Louise Kingham on the new Energy Institute

We all know that the Institute of Energy is in an advanced stage of a merger with the Institute of Petroleum (IP) – but what exactly will be the role and function of the new organisation, the Energy Institute?

The proposed merger of the InstE and the IP to form the new Energy Institute is no longer a proposal. But can you say just when the new organisation will come into being, and when members will become members of the EI? The merger prospectus contained a timetable that planned for creation of the EI in June. The legal reaction of the EI as a Royal Charter body will

merge different outlooks. It is about providing a forum to help different groups to understand each other and learn from each other.

The InstE was, for the majority of its history, the Institute of Fuel, a supply-side driven organisation. Its strength in recent years was to encourage demand-side (energy efficiency) interest around to develop alongside supply

Strong Institutes understand their members' interests and provide activities to address these, but at the same time they look beyond their professional groups to understand the contribution that the organisation can make to wider society. That is why the nature or status of Institutes is unique, because of their ultimate remit to provide public benefit. The IP and InstE already

topics. We will continue to canvass members' opinions on our events activities as we do now and, if members recommend changes to the calendar, we will be able to review these.

How will the merger affect the InstE's licensed membership of the Engineering Council (UK)?



Louise Kingham first joined the InstE in 1993 as part of

The focus of the Energy Institute is not so different now as it was back in 2003, when I first wrote about the newly formed Institute in the July issue of *Energy World*, *Petroleum Review's* sister publication.

In the magazine I wrote: 'Looking to the balance of activities at any time is a reflection on society's current and future energy needs. Oil and gas are major energy resources society requires today and for the foreseeable future. In 30 years' time the world's requirements and access to resources may be different and we are already seeing growing interest among members in renewables, particularly wind and solar energy, and the application of fuel cell technologies. Equally, the views of energy professionals would vary significantly if asked today what the energy system will look like in 2050. The EI's role is to help members explore all the fuel and energy options and possible solutions to society's requirements now and in the future.' ●