



DRILLING HORIZONS 2026 AND BEYOND

DATE: 21st OCT 2026 **TIME:** 10:00 - 15:00 **VENUE:** ICE LONDON

PROGRAMME

10:00 – 10:30	Arrival, Refreshments & Networking
10:30 – 10:40	OPENING ADDRESS: BDA Chair
10:40 – 11:10	BDA T&E PRESENTATION: Driller Competency Super Sector Update
11:10 – 11:40	BDA SUSTAINABILITY PRESENTATION: Beneath the Surface: Driving Sustainability in the UK Drilling Industry
11:40 – 13:00	Networking, Lunch & Exhibition Viewing
13:00 – 13:30	UNITED UTILITIES PRESENTATION: Aligning for Success: Safety, Data, and AI in Modern Ground Investigation Frameworks
13:30 – 14:00	BDA T&S PRESENTATION: How Do We Conform to the Changing T&S Requirements Within Contracts?
14:00 – 14:40	BDA HEALTH & SAFETY PANEL DISCUSSION: Breaking the Cycle – Why Do We Keep Seeing the Same Safety Incidents?
14:40 – 14:50	CLOSING REMARKS: BDA Chair
14:50	Refreshments & Networking
15:20	Close

SESSION DETAILS

10:40 – 11:10 | T&E PRESENTATION: DRILLER COMPETENCY SUPER SECTOR UPDATE

This session will provide an overview of the current progress and strategic direction of the Driller Competency Super Sector initiative. It will outline the work completed to date, including key milestones achieved, insights gathered, and the collaborative efforts that have shaped the programme so far.

Attendees will be taken through the agreed delivery route, highlighting the framework, standards, and processes that underpin the competency model. The presentation will also explain the structured pathway toward implementation, detailing how the programme will transition from development into a fully operational and live system.

In addition, the session will focus on practical engagement - demonstrating how individuals, teams, and stakeholders can contribute to the next phase. Opportunities to get involved, provide input, and support deployment will be clearly identified, ensuring

alignment and shared ownership across the sector.

By the end of the session, participants will have a clear understanding of where the initiative stands today, what lies ahead, and how they can actively play a role in delivering a robust, future ready driller competency framework.

11:10 – 11:40 | SUSTAINABILITY PRESENTATION: BENEATH THE SURFACE: DRIVING SUSTAINABILITY IN THE UK DRILLING INDUSTRY

Sustainability within UK drilling and piling operations is no longer a future ambition; it is an operational requirement for UK drilling businesses of all sizes.

Exploring how net zero is reshaping the drilling/piling industry and how we will work together with our clients and our supply chains to support the transition to low-carbon infrastructure while also reducing our environmental footprint through improved plant, greener fuel choices, lower-emission technologies, smarter procurement, reduced waste and materials management. ►



**13:00 – 13:30 | UNITED UTILITIES
PRESENTATION: ALIGNING FOR SUCCESS:
SAFETY, DATA, AND AI IN MODERN GROUND
INVESTIGATION FRAMEWORKS**

In conjunction with other sectors across the UK the water industry has seen an exponential rise in expenditure to meet challenging such as environmental protection, asset health and carbon reduction to provide sustainable and wholesome water, all set against the uncertainty of climate change. United Utilities are at the forefront of this investment with AMP8 set to be 400% larger than the previous 5 year funding period. To address these challenges, UU has established framework contracts with the supply chain fit to take us through the next decade. One such framework is the Ground Investigation Framework which refreshes a partnership between Client and Contractors that has been established for over 35 years. This session looks to address some of the current and future issues that face the GI industry from a client's perspective, identifying some of the current challenges and future opportunities to ensure we are fit, agile, cost efficient and most importantly safe.

**13:30 – 14:00 | T&S PRESENTATION: HOW
DO WE CONFORM TO THE CHANGING
TECHNICAL & STANDARDS REQUIREMENTS
WITHIN CONTRACTS?**

As the drilling and ground investigation sector continues to work in increasingly complex below-ground environments, the accurate identification, verification and management of buried services remains a critical technical and safety priority.

This session will explore the importance of PAS128 in supporting a more consistent, structured and reliable approach to underground utility detection, verification and location. It will also consider recent developments linked to Network Rail's updated buried services standard, NR/L2/OHS/1030, and the future role of the National Underground Asset Register (NUAR) in improving access to underground asset data.

Led by Lee Healey, Chair of the BDA Technical & Standards Sub-Committee, the presentation will look at how better information, clearer standards and improved planning can help reduce risk before intrusive works begin. It will also highlight the importance of understanding survey hierarchy, data confidence, competence, responsibilities and best practice when planning and delivering ground investigation activities.

The session may also include input from a stakeholder already embracing PAS128 and the use of underground asset data, helping delegates understand how these

developments are being applied in practice. By the end of the session, attendees will have a clearer understanding of how PAS128, updated client requirements and NUAR are shaping the future of safe, informed and compliant intrusive works across the sector.

**14:00 – 14:40 | HEALTH & SAFETY PANEL
DISCUSSION: BREAKING THE CYCLE –
WHY DO WE KEEP SEEING THE SAME
SAFETY INCIDENTS?**

As part of the BDA Health & Safety Sub-Committee contribution, this panel session will bring together key voices from across the drilling and ground investigation sector to explore one of the industry's most persistent challenges: why do the same types of incidents continue to occur, and what needs to change to prevent them?

Chaired by Kostas Tsiminis, the session will feature perspectives from across the project lifecycle, including a client representative and a contractor from within the BDA membership.

The discussion will move beyond compliance and procedures to focus on real behavioral, cultural and commercial drivers that influence safety performance on site.

Key themes will include:

- Why recurring incidents still happen despite established standards and guidance
- The gap between procedures and on-site practice
- The role of clients, contractors and supply chain behaviours in shaping safety outcomes
- How we move from reactive to proactive safety culture
- Practical steps the industry can take to drive meaningful change

The session will be interactive throughout, with dedicated opportunities for audience questions and discussion.

This discussion aims to challenge current thinking, share honest insights, and identify tangible actions to improve safety performance across the drilling industry. ■

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