

FULFILLING A REGIONAL TRAINING NEED

Petans is planning to deliver new offshore training courses from its expanded site in Norfolk.

Petans is a Norwich-based organisation specialising in professional safety and survival training. The company has been a trusted partner of the energy sector since 1975, with an objective to provide training for everyone employed by – or servicing – the sector.

“We are a registered charity, originally set up by the industry for the industry, and we continue that philosophy today,” said business manager Andie Marshall.

“We are here to ensure that we can train the sector’s workforce, to ensure this valuable asset remains in the East of England. To do so, we must continue to adapt.”

RIISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Last year, the East of England lost its only provision of OPITO “Rigger” and “Banksman and Slinger” training, which are required for many offshore workers.

Petans has not delivered this training before, but it promised to investigate following requests from clients.

“A project of this size requires considerable investment and planning,” said Andie. “There are numerous stakeholders to involve, and we must demonstrate that we are investing the charity’s money in a sustainable manner that supports our charitable objectives.

“However, we knew that by not helping, delegates would have to travel a minimum of 250 miles to receive this training, with the



added cost of overnight stays,” she added.

“The overall benefit of providing this training in the region was very clear – and an integral part of the business case.”

During the planning stages, it became clear that Petans would need to make some infrastructure changes to its site to provide a practical training space. The OPITO Banksman and Slinger course includes both theoretical and practical elements, the latter requiring a crane on site.

“We are next to Norwich Airport (NAL), and therefore the implications of having a crane on site requires safeguarding approval,” said Andie. “We engaged with the team at NAL, and they were supportive from the start and completely understood why we wanted to increase the scope of our training.”

Petans assigned an area of its existing car park for the practical elements of the Banksman and Slinger training, which meant it lost approximately 35 parking spaces.

“To ensure we didn’t have a capacity issue, we engaged with local company KDG Surfacing, who have built a new staff car park and tarmacked the old gravel car park to create a training area and delegate parking area,” said Andie. “This work is complete, and course preparation is ongoing.”



FIT FOR PURPOSE

Petan’s new training courses will be designed to meet OPITO standards and other legislative requirements. The standards provide governance around training staff, contact hours, equipment and general facilities.

“As an OPITO-approved centre, we have the infrastructure in place already, but there is still a lot of work to do before we can put these courses forward to the awarding body for approval,” said Andie.

“Our aim is to have approval in place so

we can start delivering courses by late spring or early summer.”

Petans is planning to deliver the following new courses:

- Rigger Initial Training (previously stage 1) 9088
- Rigger Competence Assessment (previously stage 3) 9099
- Rigger Competence Reassessment (previously stage 4) 9199
- Banksman and Slinger Initial Training (previously stage 1) 9067
- Banksman and Slinger Competence Assessment (previously stage 3) 9068
- Banksman and Slinger Competence Reassessment (previously stage 4) 9069

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Petans recognises that its ability to serve the region’s training needs is vital not only for its own survival, but also to support the energy sector.

“Throughout our history, we have adapted to the changing needs of the sector,” said Andie. “Although it is not possible to deliver all training, and we must be led by demand, we hope that our willingness to step away

from our traditional delivery and implement these much-needed courses demonstrates a commitment to the sector and our valued clients.

“As our clients diversify and embrace new challenges, we must do the same, and we hope this will encourage the sector to think about the training requirements needed for new technologies,” she added.

“We already work closely with the nuclear and renewables sector – and hope to support whatever comes next.” ●

For more information, please email info@petans.co.uk, call 01603 891 255 or visit petans.co.uk



Above: Banksman slinger training is a requirement for anyone operating a crane offshore. Image: Getty

Opposite page: Petans is preparing its site to deliver new training courses this year. Images: Amanda Hook /

Alexander Collett
Left: Andie Marshall, business manager at Petans. Image: Petans