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electrotechnical industry

# cabletalk

APRIL/MAY 2023 | £4.50

 SELECT



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Members get to grips with solar PV technology as we launch training pilot to help boost renewable skills

→ **Joining forces on the hot topics**  
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**Support for the toughest times**  
Where to get help when you're struggling with your mental health

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# Contents

**APRIL/MAY 2023**

## Regulars

- 05 OPINION
- 06 NEWS
- 56 PROZONE
- 62 DIARY

## Features

- 20 Embracing equality at SELECT Member Alltec Construction
- 22 SNIPEF joins us for heat pump focus at the 2023 Toolbox Talks
- 24 Make sure you're ready for health and safety law changes
- 26 Update from the International Construction Industry Forum
- 28 Apprentice Sean Bermingham on his electrical training journey
- 31 Where to turn for help if you're struggling with mental health
- 34 Discover the new campaign to boost quality in construction

**"INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT LETS US SHARE VITAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE"**  
**// PAGE 26**



## NEW SOLAR TRAINING COURSE IS A SUCCESS

### Technical

- 36 What you need to know about the use of RCBOs in the workplace

### Training

- 42 Keep track of your learning and skills with our new CPD scheme

### Industry Insight

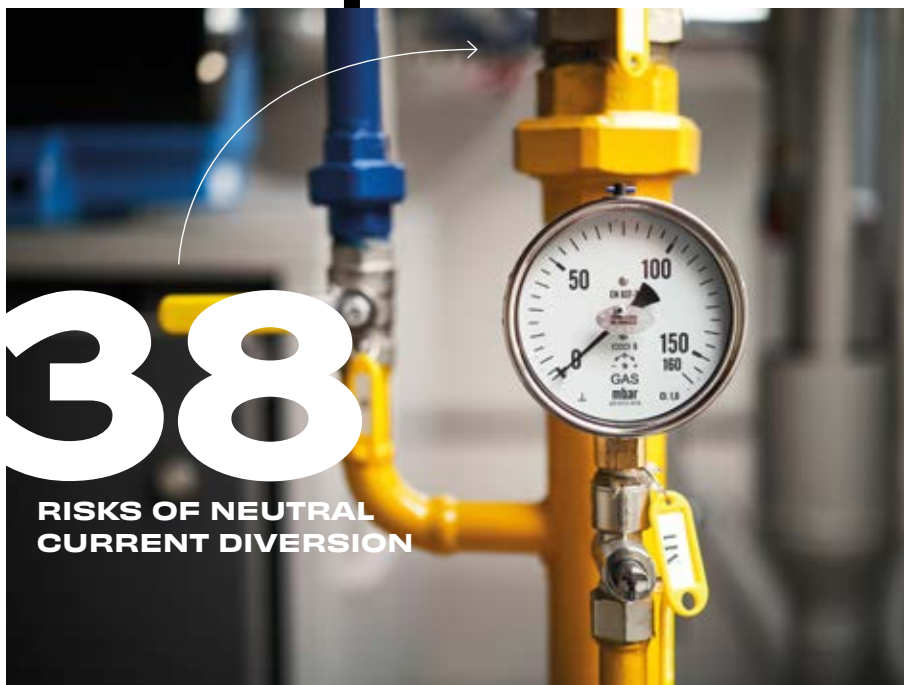
- 44 Expert advice on how to make a success of succession planning
- 46 What contract clauses covering exceptional events mean for you
- 47 Len Bunton on taking effective action over payment problems
- 48 Why private health insurance could help your company land a high-flyer
- 50 The business benefits of innovation and learning to think differently

### SECTT Update

- 52 Looking to the future during Scottish Apprenticeship Week

### SJIB Bulletin

- 54 Essential reminder for ECS Manager's Card applications



# 38

**RISKS OF NEUTRAL CURRENT DIVERSION**



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 **SELECT**



# Renewable technology: Full speed ahead with installations?

**F**OLLOWING several false starts, it does appear that we are moving towards acceptance that in the future we will all have to install some form of renewable technology products in our homes.

For centuries, we've used carbon-rich fuels – wood, coal, gas, etc – as the principal way of keeping warm, but a seismic change is on the cards as we begin to use renewable technologies such as air and ground source heat pumps, solar PV and electrical energy storage systems amongst others – all of which will mean potential extra business for SELECT Members.

Increases in energy costs coupled with impending regulatory changes around the installation of gas boilers has meant that interest in installing renewable products has never been higher for home and business owners across Scotland. But there are many issues still to be determined.

How well prepared is the electrical industry for this work, not only in terms of installation training but also on matters such as design?

How many electrical businesses will wish to become lead contractors, arranging for some aspects of installations to be undertaken by roofers, builders and plumbers amongst others? Or will many want to undertake the electrical connection work associated with these modern technologies?

There are also answers required around the infrastructure and greater demand which will be placed on the electrical supply network. It is apparent that it is already being stretched and there doesn't appear to be a quick fix.

Concerns have also been raised about the impact of the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS). Set up more than 15 years ago, MCS was designed to set standards for installers and products in this “new” industry. But is it really working?

SELECT will be soon issuing a survey to Members to find out their views on

a number of these questions, because as a member organisation we want to listen and react to what our Member businesses tell us. What **IS** clear is that SELECT will take steps to support those Members who see a future in renewable installations.

Finally – and as if any more evidence on the climate emergency was required

– a recent UN report on climate change, dubbed a ‘Survival Guide for Humanity’, states that clean energy and technology can be exploited to avoid the growing climate disaster. It also lays out how rapid cuts to fossil fuels can avert

the worst effects of climate change.

So even at the highest global levels, people understand how important electricians are! ■

**“AS A MEMBER ORGANISATION WE WANT TO LISTEN AND REACT TO WHAT OUR MEMBER BUSINESSES TELL US”**



➔ New renewable tech training for Members: **Pages 14-19**

**WORDS**  
**ALAN WILSON**  
Managing Director, SELECT

# News

+ PAGE 8 /  
Flexel helps busy Branch  
Updates turn up the heat  
on infrared myths

+ PAGE 9 /  
Members, staff and families  
on course for a summer of  
sunshine and fun events

+ PAGE 10 /  
Rising Star apprentice  
honoured for his hard work  
and dedication to learning

+ PAGE 12 /  
Cashflow survey shows a real  
appetite for change in industry  
attitudes to payment

## Extra cash comes with a warning

Lobbying pays off as additional funding is provided... but SELECT says future shortfalls must be prevented

**S**ELECT has welcomed additional funding for electrical apprentices and adult trainees following a plea to government – but says support must continue to prevent future shortfalls of talent.

After an urgent appeal by the association to then Deputy First Minister John Swinney, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) announced in March that it would meet the cost of an outstanding 87 apprentice and 68 adult trainee places for 2022/23.

But while there is relief for those recruited in 2022, SELECT says it is “worrying” that extra places won’t be funded in 2023 and beyond – and insists the Scottish Government must support the sector by providing full funding for those seeking to be apprentice electricians.

Managing Director Alan Wilson said: “We welcome SDS’s movement on providing additional places for last year’s intake but funding for the class of 2023 is essential if we are to upskill our workforce effectively and achieve Scotland’s net zero ambitions.

“Along with other construction bodies, SELECT has been consistently lobbying the Scottish Government and a host of politicians for support for the Modern Apprenticeship scheme and, although our campaigning has paid off for 2022/23, we must ensure that any worrying shortfalls in the future are prevented.

“Without apprentices and adult trainees coming through the ranks and being comprehensively trained, there simply won’t be an electrical industry in the future, with all the implications that would have for our wider society.”

The additional funding followed an appeal by SELECT in December to Mr Swinney, who was the Deputy First Minister and

Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery, asking him to allocate extra money to “vital” training as part of the nation’s transition to a net zero future.

The appeal came after SDS announced a cap on additional apprentice places in October 2022, shortly after the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT) had confirmed a record intake of 960 learners for 2022/23 – some 300 more than its contracted number.

In previous years, SDS had found additional places, but in December it said it had no more funding, meaning an initial shortfall of 157 places at a cost to SECTT of £1.3 million.

Anne Galbraith, Chief Executive of SECTT, which manages high-quality training on behalf of the

Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB), said she was relieved that additional part-funding had now been allocated – but also warned that problems would continue if action wasn’t taken.

She said: “This issue is ongoing as SDS recently advised SECTT that it will apply another rollover contract of 660 places in 2023/24. This mirrors the 2022/23 contract, with no guarantees that any extra places will be made available, yet we already have indications that

we will need more than 900 places.

“Lobbying on this matter is ongoing at the highest levels in Scottish Government and we hope that some form of dispensation may be provided, allowing us to offer additional places. However, until this is confirmed, we will have to limit our numbers to this contracted number.”

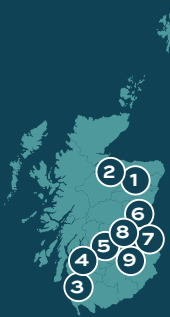
Fiona Harper, Director of Employment & Skills at SELECT and The Secretary of the SJIB, added: “SELECT Members and other interested parties can help bring this situation to the attention of decision-makers by contacting their local MSP, explaining how this decision will impact hugely on the government’s net zero ambitions.”

**“WITHOUT APPRENTICES AND ADULT TRAINEES COMING THROUGH THE RANKS AND BEING COMPREHENSIVELY TRAINED, THERE SIMPLY WON’T BE AN ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY IN THE FUTURE”**



↑ Alan Wilson





## 9 FIRMS HAVE BECOME SELECT MEMBERS SINCE 1 FEBRUARY 2023

1. SKService Gas & Electrical, Huntly
2. Mark Jones, Forres
3. NHM Electrical Services Ltd, Maybole
4. Electrical Finesse Ltd, Greenock
5. Thomas Renicks Electrical Services Ltd, Coatbridge
6. IT Group Electrical Services Ltd, Dundee
7. N Martin Electrical, Anstruther
8. G Stewart Electrical, Bridge of Earn
9. A D Electrical, Peebles

## LEGRAND IS THE 25TH BIG NAME TO JOIN SCHEME

SELECT is celebrating a significant milestone after welcoming the 25th market-leading organisation to its growing Associate Membership scheme.

Manufacturer Legrand UK & Ireland has become the latest big name to join the partnership, which continues to flourish after being launched last year.

Iain Mason, Director of Membership & Communications, said: "We are delighted that a company of Legrand's heritage and reputation has become our 25th Associate Member.

"We hope they will now enjoy a successful partnership, promoting their services and getting to know Members across Scotland.

"Our Associate Membership scheme has proved extremely successful, allowing us to build stronger relationships with some of the industry's

biggest names, and in turn giving them the opportunity to ally themselves with an established and successful trade body."

As a UK manufacturer since 1980, Legrand UK & Ireland has

four specialist business units – Working and Living Spaces, Cable Management, Critical Power and Digital Infrastructures.

The company is part of the Legrand Group, the global specialist in electrical and digital infrastructures, which has a presence in nearly 90 countries and a workforce of more than 38,000 employees.

Neil Baldwin, Head of Sales – Wholesale for Working and Living Spaces at Legrand, said: "We are proud to be associated with SELECT, which shares many of our values, as well as our dedication to skills, quality and technical expertise."

Legrand follow fellow manufacturers Hispec and V-Tac, who became SELECT's first new Associates of 2023 in January.



↑ The first Professionals' Day in Glasgow was a great success

# Professionals roll up for day at the Wheel

SELECT will host its second Professionals' Day later this year, aimed at decision-makers from across the wider construction industry.

Architects, surveyors, specifiers and construction project managers will be among those invited to the Falkirk Wheel on 20 September for an insight into the latest developments in solar PV and battery storage.

This year's event will be co-hosted with SNIPEF, whose experts will also offer exclusive heat pump guidance for installers and specifiers. Information on innovation and products will again be supplied courtesy of exhibitions by SELECT Associate Members.

Specifier & Client Relations Manager Yvonne Wilson said: "We are looking forward to teaming up with SNIPEF for this second Professionals' Day, which is designed to help the sector share ideas and gain invaluable knowledge.

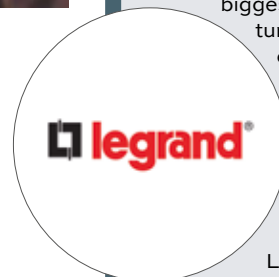
"Once again, our experts will

equip professionals from the wider construction industry with invaluable technical insights that will help inform their decision-making."

The inaugural Professionals' Day in Glasgow last September was a resounding success, with professionals coming together to share ideas and gain a deeper insight into everything from electrical installations to certification and building regulations.



↑ This year's event will be held at the Falkirk Wheel, a true engineering marvel



# Turning up heat on infrared myth

Branch Updates held at colleges across the country gave Members the latest SELECT news... and also included a fascinating technical talk which helped debunk some misconceptions about heating systems

A **TOUR** of workshops and training facilities was one of the highlights of our first Branch Updates of 2023, which were held across four weeks in March.

Debunking the myths around infrared heating was also on the agenda, with Craig Herriott of Associate Member Flexel delivering a technical talk at the meetings, which were held at colleges across Scotland.

Updates on SELECT activity were also delivered by the Directors of Function and the Presidential Team, with Training Officers providing the latest news from the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT).

Each Branch Update also included an AGM, during which branch officers and committee representatives were elected. The only change saw Sean Harkins and Alan Watt become Vice-Chair and 3rd Representative respectively in the Glasgow and West of Scotland Branch.

President Alistair Grant said: "I would like to thank Flexel for speaking at these events and also thank all Members for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend."



Branch  
UPDATE



↑ Members get together at the Dumfries and Galloway meeting



↑ Workshop tour for Members during the Update in Inverness



↑ The meeting in Inverness was a chance to catch up with industry colleagues

↓ Flexel's Craig Herriott gave the technical presentation



## AGM SET FOR JUNE

The 2023 SELECT AGM will be held at the Doubletree Edinburgh Queensferry on Thursday 1 June and will include a technical presentation as well as updates from across the association.

SELECT's annual report will also be released ahead of the AGM and will be available to download as before, listing the association's milestones and achievements over the last 12 months.

For further information about attending the AGM, please email [memberservices@select.org.uk](mailto:memberservices@select.org.uk)

## SELECT SUPPORTS CQIC CHARTER FOR A SUSTAINABLE QUALITY CULTURE

SELECT has reaffirmed its commitment to quality in the construction sector by signing up to the Construction Quality Improvement Collaborative (CQIC) Charter, which seeks to promote good practice to deliver improved performance.

The campaign aims to improve construction quality to meet the technical requirements involved in achieving net zero, delivering

compliance to building standards, creating safer buildings, enabling improved productivity and sustainable profitability for businesses, and enhancing the reputation and image of the industry.

Alan Wilson, Managing Director of SELECT, said: "We are pleased to commit to CQIC's Construction Quality Charter since we believe it encapsulates the

aims and objectives which we also share.

"Since inception, SELECT has been at the forefront of improving quality standards in all areas, so we welcome the introduction of the CQIC Charter and trust it will be supported by all businesses and organisations in Scotland's construction sector.

"To paraphrase CQIC's own mission statement,

we endorse the belief that to create a sustainable quality culture, everyone within the construction sector must be involved and be willing to commit to positive change."

→ Creating a sustainable quality culture: Pages 34 & 35





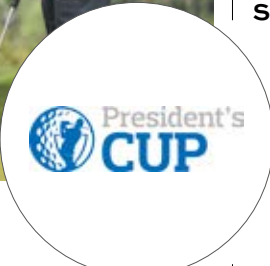
# Members on course for a great summer of fun

**M**EMBERS are being invited to get in the swing for our ever-popular social events this summer.

As well as our Member Drop-Ins, Toolbox Talks and AGM on 1 June, SELECT will also be hosting the following get-togethers this year:



↓ Golfers from all over the country will compete for the President's Cup



**MONDAY  
31 JULY:  
PRESIDENT'S CUP,  
DUNBLANE NEW GOLF CLUB**  
Golfers from across Scotland will again gather in Perthshire to compete for the famous silver trophy and socialise with colleagues.

The event starts with soup and rolls before golfers tee off in a four-ball format. After a few hours on the course, it's then back to the clubhouse for prize-giving and high tea.

Places are always limited – so strike while the iron is hot and make sure you book your spot early!



↑ The annual jamboree at The Walled Garden will offer fun for all the family

## SATURDAY 12 AUGUST: SUMMER CARNIVAL, THE WALLED GARDEN

SELECT's headquarters will once again be the setting for our annual jamboree, with Members and staff spending a day in the sunshine to raise funds for the Electrical Industries Charity.

Staff, Members and their families will enjoy a day of face painting, entertainment and games at The Walled Garden in Midlothian, with plenty of prizes to be won too.

Events, Marketing & Communications Coordinator Linda Rolfe said: "These events are popular so please save the date and get in touch to find out how you can take part – it would be great to see you!"

➔ To find out more and reserve a place, go to the Events section at [www.select.org.uk](http://www.select.org.uk) or email [memberservices@select.org.uk](mailto:memberservices@select.org.uk)

## HYDROGEN FOR HOMES ON THE LACF AGENDA

The second SELECT Local Authority & Client Forum (LACF) of 2023 met online on Wednesday 22 March and was chaired by Andy Graham from Fife Council.

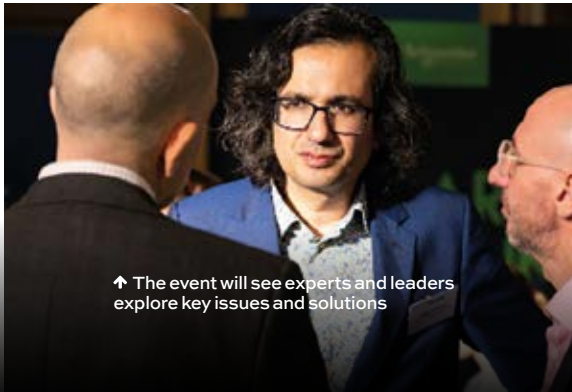
Ian Dawson of Fife Council provided a brief update on the H100 project being trialled in Fife. This joint initiative with Scottish Gas Networks is the world's first green hydrogen-to-homes network, delivering heating and cooking facilities to around 300 homes.

Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) also delivered a short presentation on their new Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) Portal, which can be used by installers to see if the network within a postcode area is suitable for renewables to be connected safely. SPEN also provided details of their new Strategic Optimisers, who will engage with local authorities on future projects.

General discussions were held on best practice and technical issues around stairwell supplies, forced access processes and EICR compliance.

Training Development Adviser Stuart McKelvie, Specifier & Client Relations Manager Yvonne Wilson and Andy Graham also revealed how they have recently reviewed and updated the EICR guidance specifically for social housing, which has now been reissued to the forum.

The next LACF meeting will held on Thursday 8 June at The Walled Garden, with a full presentation on the H100 project being planned.



↑ The event will see experts and leaders explore key issues and solutions

## CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS SAFER SOLUTIONS

Electrical Safety First will be holding its first Scottish Electrical Product Safety Conference on Wednesday 17 May 2023 at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre.

The free event will see experts and leaders from across the industry explore key issues and

solutions and gain insight into what goes into creating safer electrical products and is perfect for everyone in the electrical product chain.

➔ To find out more and book, visit the conference page at [www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)

## 50% DISCOUNT TO JOIN BUSINESS CLUB

SELECT Members are being offered a special 50% discount on membership of a peer-to-peer business club which aims to help firms grow and prosper.

The Positive Action Club (PAC) is a fast-growing network that provides support for business leaders when they need it most.

Hosted by an experienced facilitator, each monthly forum brings together six business leaders who define any issues they may be facing. Using supportive questioning, other participants then help them broaden their understanding, with the facilitator developing a personal action plan.

PAC leader Paul McDevitt said: "With a 20-year track record, PAC creates a safe, non-judgemental environment based on openness and trust. PAC offers you support to resolve real business issues – exactly what every business leader needs."

More than 60 business leaders have benefited from the PAC experience, which also includes access to one-to-one business coaching.

Paul added: "This combination of formal group sessions and one-to-one coaching creates an incredibly powerful process which ensures better decision-making and better results."

SELECT Members are eligible for 50% off their first monthly subscription. To find out more, or for an informal no-obligation chat, email Paul at [paul@positiveactionclub.com](mailto:paul@positiveactionclub.com) or call 0330 133 6270. You can also visit the PAC website at [www.positiveactionclub.com](http://www.positiveactionclub.com)

➔ Paul's succession planning advice: [Pages 44&45](#)

**PositiveActionClub**  
The Support Business Leaders Need

## HOW TO BANK ON FASTER PAYMENT

The Scottish Building Contracts Committee (SBCC) has published the 2022 Project Bank Account Documentation, which takes you through the whole process to help you get paid quicker.

Consultant Len Bunton said: "One interesting provision is that a table is included that shows what a sub-contractor applied for and what he was paid. This transparency is very welcome down the supply chain."

➔ The document is available from [www.scottishbuildingcontracts.com](http://www.scottishbuildingcontracts.com)

# Hard work pays off for Rising Star apprentice

First-year trainee Griffin rewarded for dedication and "always asking the right questions" as Valley Group and SELECT team up again to help nurture the next generation of industry talent



↑ SELECT's Diane with apprentice Griffin at the presentation

**M**EMBERSHIP Representative Diane Hales joined Member company Valley Group for a special presentation in the build-up to Scottish Apprenticeship Week.

Diane represented SELECT at the Glasgow-based firm on 21 February as first-year apprentice Griffin Nelson received the company's Rising Star award for his hard work and effort.

Working as a labourer with Valley Group in preparation for his electrical apprenticeship placement starting, Griffin was praised as "a real asset" who consistently works hard on every assignment, always asking questions and working diligently.

Valley Group MD Sean Harkin said: "Griffin is a standout first-year apprentice who has the right work ethic and attention to detail. We're proud to have him on board and I'm sure he'll become a first-class electrician."

Griffin was nominated by his manager Steven Logan for the in-house award, which saw him given a

brand new tool kit from AIB Electrical Wholesale Distributors.

AIB MD Andy Burt said: "It's an honour to be associated with the next generation of talent in our industry and it was a pleasure to hand out kits to the top apprentices at Valley Group.

"As an industry we should be inspired by the way that Valley and SELECT work to produce the next generation of excellent tradespeople."

Founded in 2014, Valley Group has a niche specialism in mechanical and electrical services and also carries out multi-trade refurbishment projects, compliance, fire and security, building fabric work and energy efficiency.

Its clients include local and central government, retail, education and healthcare.

Sean added: "We are extremely proud of our apprenticeship programme. With two new first-year students on board this year and two newly qualified, we're incredibly proud of the high standard of workmanship and enthusiasm."

➔ Sean shines in apprentice video: [Pages 28 & 29](#)

➔ SECTT apprentice activity: [Pages 52 & 53](#)



## UPDATE No14: JAN-MAR 2023

MEMBERSHIP & COMMUNICATIONS



TRAINING



TECHNICAL



EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS



### STATS ON SHOW

SELECT has released its first infographic of quarterly statistics for 2023, showing the activity carried out by the association in the initial three months of the year.

Covering the period January to March, the first update of the year shows SELECT's many achievements in technical, training, membership, communications, employment and skills.



↑ Apprentices shared what they love about the job as well as what's not so great

### SPIDER SENSE

Cold mornings, early starts and spiders are among the worst things about electrical work, according to youngsters interviewed for a special SELECT video for Scottish Apprenticeship Week.

Filmed by Training Officers from the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT), apprentices were asked to list the best and most challenging thing about their training journey, with the results shared on social media during the event from 6-10 March.

Among the best things were "earning while learning", "the variety of work", and "leaving a good finish on a job".

Apprentices were also asked to sum up their training in a few words, with the responses including "rewarding", "satisfying" and "life-changing".

Iain Mason, Director of Membership & Communications, said: "It was a great snapshot of what real apprentices think about work and learning."



### WATCH THE VIDEO

Scan the code to watch the video or go to [bit.ly/SAW23-VID](https://bit.ly/SAW23-VID)



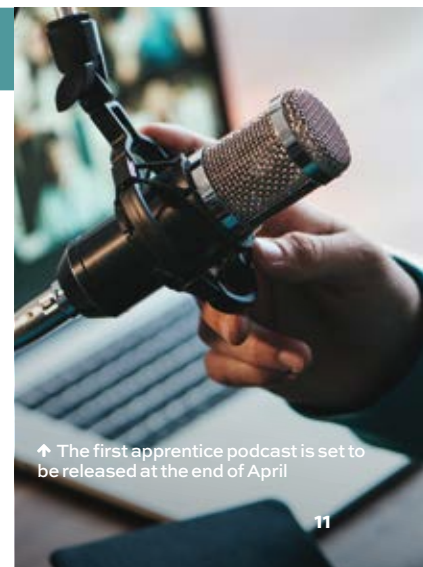
## Trainees are taking to the airwaves in new podcast

As *cabletalk* was going to press, SELECT was busy working with the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT) to create a new series of apprentice podcasts.

Aimed at encouraging more learners into the industry, the episodes will feature real-life apprentices speaking about their experiences to Barrie McKay, Training & Development Manager at SECTT.

Iain Mason, Director of Membership & Communications, said: "We're really excited to be putting these episodes together and are looking forward to some great input from apprentices across the country."

The first podcast will be released at the end of April, with more to follow in the coming months. Further details will be announced on social media and the SELECT website.



↑ The first apprentice podcast is set to be released at the end of April



## TRIBUTES TO PAT FEENEY, STALWART OF SELECT

SELECT was saddened to learn of the death of Pat Feeney, a Past President who passed away on 10 February aged 91.

Pat was President of SELECT between 1988 and 1991 and became an Honorary Member in 1997.

His daughter Debbie said: "The association meant a great deal to Dad and he was delighted to be the first recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of all the hard work he put in during his Presidency."

Pat's funeral took place on 24 February in Kilwinning. A full tribute will appear in the next issue of *cabletalk*.



Pat Feeney

# Cashflow survey shows appetite for real change

Positive response reignites debate about financial frustrations and underlines need for a new approach across supply chains

**T**HE Construction Industry Collective Voice (CICV) has praised the industry for embracing its drive to improve payments and cashflow – and says the positive response to its recent campaign demonstrates that there is a real appetite for change across the sector.

The unique collective – of which SELECT is a key member – says the response from the industry to its recent payment survey, Best Practice Guide (BPG)



↑ The response to the Best Practice Guide has been "phenomenal"

and webinar has been "phenomenal" and has led to a flurry of follow-up activity that has reignited the debate about financial frustrations.

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↑ The campaign also included a comprehensive industry survey

Industry consultant and *cabletalk* columnist Len Bunton, who is Chair of the CICV Pipeline and Commercial sub-group, said: “The industry response to the CICV’s recent campaign has been nothing short of phenomenal and shows that people are fully engaged with changing the way we do things.

“The questions and comments we received at the recent CICV webinar on improving payments and cashflow in construction really demonstrated that people are serious about ripping up the status quo and making things fairer for the whole supply chain.

“The challenge now is converting this groundswell of support into real and

meaningful change – and the whole industry needs to be on board to make that happen.”

Len recently discussed the BPG and industry issues on the popular Construction Cashflow Podcast with Stu Davidson and also appeared on the *Clive Holland Show* on Fix Radio on 7 March.

He added: “We need to now build on this great start and keep the momentum going, sharing the BPG, asking questions and insisting that the industry puts in place real and practical change.

“Nothing will change if we don’t make it happen, so it’s up to everyone in our industry to commit to a real conversation about how we pay each other, from the top to the bottom of the supply chain.”

👉 Len’s column: [Page 47](#)

## FIND THE ANSWERS

Download the BPG at [bit.ly/CICV-BPG](http://bit.ly/CICV-BPG) and the results of the CICV cashflow and payments survey at [bit.ly/CICV-survey](http://bit.ly/CICV-survey). The webinar is available to watch again at [bit.ly/cash-web-cicv](http://bit.ly/cash-web-cicv)

## CHARLIE TAKES OVER LEADING ROLE AT EDA

Charlie Lacey became the EDA’s 93rd President on 9 March and will lead the Association for the next two years. The Stearn Electric Managing Director joined the EDA Board in July 2018, and has served as Vice President since December 2019. He takes over from CEF’s Chris Ashworth.

Charlie said: “As President, I plan to continue to encourage EDA businesses to engage with all areas of our work and we will continue to strengthen relationships with industry bodies and relevant trade associations.”



↓ Charlie Lacey



# Smart. Safe. Secure.

The NEW eVoom EV Charger is compact and smart, suitable for charging all electric and hybrid plug-in vehicles in residential single dwellings.

Designed for quick installation and ease-of-use, this charger is reliable and secure. With an array of smart features, it provides up to a 7.4kW power rating, which is faster and safer than a 3-pin plug.



**Simple**  
Easy Installation



**Smart**  
Software updates available via Wi-Fi



**Reliable**  
A full 5 year parts and labour warranty



**Safe**  
Built-in safety features to ensure the charging environment is safe and secure



**PEN Protection**  
Provides loss of earth protection, eliminating the time, cost and disruption for an earth rod to be installed



**RFID**  
It can be operated via the RFID card, making it easy to switch the charger on and off and restricts access to approved users only

[evolo.uk](http://evolo.uk)





# We're part of a growing solar system

WORDS  
JENNY CRYANS  
Training Manager



In response to Member demand, SELECT recently piloted two new training courses in solar PV and electrical energy storage systems, in partnership with GTEC Training. We went to the first of these sessions in Aberdeen to see how Members got to grips with the technology and discover how its installation is playing an increasingly important role for contractors

**S**OLAR photovoltaic (PV) and electrical energy storage systems (EESS) are increasingly becoming part of the modern electrician's world, and SELECT has been keen to provide suitable installation training for some time.

Judging by feedback, Members are also seeing a rising demand from customers for the installation of such systems, so we were happy to partner with industry experts GTEC Training to deliver suitable training exclusively for Members.

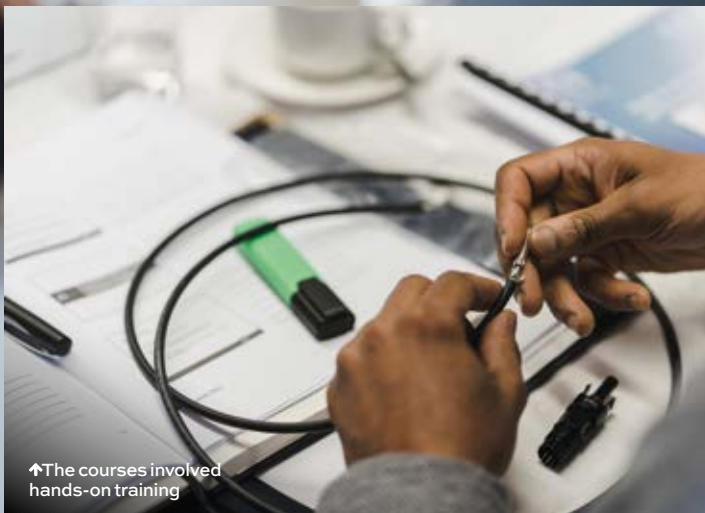
The result is two pilot training courses – three days covering solar PV installation and two days covering EESS installation – the first of which was rolled out in March, with places limited to 12 people per course. Both pilots were fully subscribed shortly after being made available, which just goes to show the demand that exists.

The first pilot PV course was held at the Craighaar Hotel in Aberdeen from 27-29 March with the EESS session held in the same venue on 30-31 March. On the opening





**"THE COURSE WAS  
VERY INFORMATIVE,  
THERE WAS A LOT  
OF INFORMATION TO  
TAKE IN AND IT WAS ALL  
VERY INTERESTING"**



↑The courses involved hands-on training



↑Technical Adviser Neil Sim chats with instructor Griff Thomas

day of the first session, the 12 SELECT Members who attended were given an introduction to the technology and an overview of its electrical requirements. They then got hands-on with the units themselves as they were talked through the installation process. Members then covered remote locations, back-up energy storage, energy efficiency and business opportunities.

Fraser Forbes from Elgin-based Member company FA Construction Ltd said: "The course was very informative, there was a lot of information to take in and it was all very interesting."

Richard Strathdee from fellow Member firm Richard Strathdee Ltd, based in Aberlour, was also impressed by the first day. He said: "So far the course has provided good knowledge on all aspects of installing solar PV and I've learned things that I wasn't expecting."

Euan Duff from Stenson (Laurencekirk) Ltd was another Member who really enjoyed the opening day of learning. He said afterwards: "It was a real eye-opener and there was plenty of information to absorb. The trainer was very knowledgeable and extremely patient with the delegates."

GTEC instructor Griff Thomas was also extremely pleased with how the first day went, telling me: "The course went really well, with a great range of candidates who are obviously keen to get out and start fitting low carbon generation."

"A lot of these contractors work for customers in remote locations, where using energy storage as back-up will be invaluable and help them become more energy independent."

"These courses will also provide more business opportunities for the contractors themselves as



↓ Fraser Forbes

they learn how to work with renewables faster and more efficiently, bringing better value to their operation."

From a personal point of view, it was great to see the courses finally being rolled out. We've spent a long time searching for the right solution for Members and judging by the feedback, GTEC certainly seem to have ticked all the right boxes so far.

The second batch of the pilot courses will be delivered in the SELECT Training Centre at The Walled Garden, with solar PV training from 24-26 April and the EESS session on 27-28 April.

Further solar PV sessions will be held in Glasgow

**"IT WAS A REAL EYE-OPENER AND THERE WAS PLENTY OF INFORMATION TO ABSORB. THE TRAINER WAS VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE AND EXTREMELY PATIENT WITH THE DELEGATES"**

on 15-17 May and Dumfries on 5-7 June, with EESS modules being run in Glasgow on 18-19 May and Dumfries on 8-9 June. Venues for both were still to be confirmed as *cabletalk* went to press.

After these initial courses, we hope to roll out further GTEC training courses in the coming months if there is sufficient demand.

We would like to hear from Members who would be interested in either training in solar PV or EESS or both, so have outlined the format and requirements below to help you see what's involved.



↓ Richard Strathdee

**SOLAR PV INSTALLATION**

This three-day session is aimed at experienced domestic and commercial electricians who wish to include solar PV in their offering.

Completion of the course will provide you with Level 3 certification, increasing your credibility and giving you the competitive edge, as well as



↑ SELECT's Neil Sim (right) joined Members on the first day of the course



↑ Griff explains the new technology to Members on the new training course

↑ Griff Thomas





↑ The pilot programme was a big hit with Members

↑ The courses introduced solar PV and battery storage systems



↑ Fraser Forbes concentrates during the training session in Aberdeen



↑ Euan Duff really enjoyed finding out more about renewable solutions



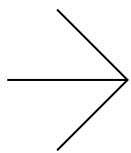
↑ Attendees got experience of working with the solar panels

↑ The new training courses were hailed a great success by delegates

## 🔌 Solar PV training at a glance

PRE-COURSE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS	SELECT EQUIVALENT	MATERIALS TO BRING TO COURSE
Level 3 (or equivalent) Electrotechnical S/ NVQ Qualification	Proof of apprenticeship or up-to-date grade card	Requirements for Electrical Installations (18th Edition Wiring Regulations) BS 7671:2018+A2:2022, AKA 'the brown book'
Current Requirements for Electrical Installations BS 7671:2018 (18th Edition) Qualification	SELECT Requirements for Electrical Installations to BS 7671:2018 Qualification ( <b>Course 218</b> ). Must be dated from July 2018 onwards	
Level 3 (or equivalent) Qualification in Initial Verification and Certification of Electrical Installations	Either SELECT Initial Verification ( <b>course 209</b> ) or Inspection & Testing (including periodic inspection), <b>course 214</b>	





showing your customers that you're trained to the highest standards.

The course will give you detailed explanations and practical examples of the applicable regulations and guidance, and will cover the following topics:

- Background to market and grant funding routes, including the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS)
- Regulations and standards
- Health and safety considerations
- AC and DC theory
- PV cell types and benefits
- PV external and internal site survey requirements
- Solar PV circuit design
- PV system design and integration
- Setting to work and commissioning
- Solar PV servicing and fault finding.

During the training, you'll have chance to work with two different types of fully functioning modules and inverters, including roof mounting kits, as well as live equipment.

The course entails both classroom and practical

## ⬇ EESS Training At A Glance

PRE-COURSE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS	SELECT EQUIVALENT	MATERIALS TO BRING TO COURSE
Current Requirements for Electrical Installations BS 7671:2018 (18th Edition) Qualification	SELECT Requirements for Electrical Installations to BS 7671:2018 Qualification ( <b>course 218</b> ). Must be dated from July 2018 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IET Code of Practice for Electrical Energy Storage Systems (2nd Edition)</li> <li>• Requirements for Electrical Installations (18th Edition Wiring Regulations)</li> <li>• BS 7671:2018+A2:2022, AKA 'the brown book'</li> <li>• Guidance Note 3 – Inspection and Testing (9th Edition)</li> <li>• On Site Guide (18th Edition Wiring Regulations)</li> <li>• BS 7671:2018+A2:2022, AKA 'the brown book'</li> </ul>
Ideally a Level 3 (or equivalent) Electrical Qualification	Proof of apprenticeship or up-to-date grade card	

**"DURING THE TRAINING, YOU'LL HAVE THE CHANCE TO WORK WITH TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF FULLY FUNCTIONING MODULES AND INVERTERS, INCLUDING ROOF MOUNTING KITS, AS WELL AS LIVE EQUIPMENT"**

training, with a practical observed assignment, theoretical and multiple-choice assessment at the end of the final day. The assessments are open book and use the applicable standards and regulations.

Although the course doesn't give you MCS accreditation, it does enable you to meet the MCS training entry requirements. It's available for SELECT Members only and costs £660 + VAT per person.

### EESS INSTALLATION

This two-day module covers the installation of dedicated EESS in accordance with the IET Code of Practice and will provide theoretical and practical knowledge, enabling you to apply the relevant regulations and guidance.

Research and development in recent years has seen battery technology greatly improve, leading to wider use in domestic settings. You'll therefore learn how to size and safely install an EESS to meet a customer's needs and help them make savings on their energy bills.

By the end of the course, you will:

- Know the key requirements for installation of EESS



⬇ Members made the most of the chance to meet up and learn new skills

## UPCOMING COURSES

- **Solar PV installation**  
15-17 May, Glasgow  
5-7 June, Dumfries
- **EESS installation**  
18-19 May, Glasgow  
8-9 June, Dumfries

Venues to be confirmed. For details, email [training@select.org.uk](mailto:training@select.org.uk) or call 0131 445 5577



↑ The course was a chance to get hands-on with the latest kit



↑ Members got to grips with the technology during the sessions



↑ Richard Strathdee puts his new skills to the test



↑ Solar PV could play a major role in how we power homes and businesses

Images: © www.conorgault.co.uk



GTEC Training is a leading provider of renewable training in the UK, with all courses certified by LCL Awards. GTEC specialises in the provision of electrical, renewable, DEA, OFTEC and training along with specifically tailored training programmes, as well as offering IT solutions and many other bespoke services in the building service industry. Find out more at [www.gtec.co.uk](http://www.gtec.co.uk)

## ANY QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about these new courses or any other SELECT Training matters, please email [training@select.org.uk](mailto:training@select.org.uk) or call the team on 0131 445 5577.

- Know and identify equipment, arrangements and operating modes
- Understand the preparation of design and installation
- Be able to prepare for installation
- Be able to install EESS
- Understand requirements for initial verification and handover
- Be able to conduct initial verification and handover.

The course entails both classroom and practical training, with an assessment that consists of both a practical and online/theory component. It's available for SELECT Members only and costs £495 + VAT per person. ■



## FAQS ABOUT MCS

The issue of MCS continues to be a topic of conversation and controversy among Members, so the following may help:

- The Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) certifies low-carbon products and installations used to produce electricity and heat from renewable sources.
- You **DON'T** need MCS if you are merely installing or connecting solar PV or EESS, unless that work is funded via the Energy Saving Trust (EST).
- SELECT has met with the CEO of the Scottish Government's Building Standards Division who has advised that there are currently no requirements to apply for a building warrant if you are only installing any of the above technologies on their own. This is unlikely to change.
- However, if a warrant is sought – e.g. for a new build site and solar PV and EESS is contained in the work – the warrant will encompass this work.
- The EST, which is managing the grants and loans for the installation of such products, are asking for contractors to be MCS approved. This would appear to be the only definitive requirement of MCS membership.
- Some Members have been asked by certain local authority verifiers to produce evidence that they are MCS approved to obtain a Completion Certificate. We have met with Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS) who have agreed to review the guidance they issue to their members about certification.
- This is still to be finalised, but we hope it may assist resolve some of the questions raised about MCS certification, especially for Approved Certifiers of Construction.
- In the coming months, SELECT will be investigating what work connected to solar PV and EESS Members undertake or plan to undertake, i.e. do they just connect the products or are they the lead contractor? This will allow us the opportunity to consider our next steps regarding MCS certification.



# Sarah shows how to break the barriers

Determined Sarah Driscoll recently passed her ACA to become the Qualified Supervisor for SELECT Member firm Alltec Construction Ltd – so we asked her to share her experiences of being a woman in a traditionally male-dominated environment

**WORDS**  
**IAIN MASON**  
Director of  
Membership &  
Communications

**S**ARAH Driscoll says it's encouraging to see other women following her up the electrical career ladder – and believes the barriers are breaking down with every step.

After passing her Advanced Competency Assessment (ACA) in January, the 28-year-old is now Electrical Manager and Qualified Supervisor (QS) for SELECT Member firm Alltec Construction Ltd.

Sarah oversees the day-to-day running of the electrical side of the business and says that although it's becoming more commonplace, she is still very much aware of being a woman in the electrical industry.



↑ Sarah Driscoll

**"I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A HANDS-ON PERSON, ALWAYS BEEN QUITE OUTDOORSY, ALWAYS BEEN A BIT MORE PRACTICAL IN WHAT I LIKE TO DO, SO I KNEW SOMETHING LIKE BEING AN ELECTRICIAN WOULD SUIT ME PROFESSIONALLY"**

She revealed: "As a female, I feel like you have to prove yourself that wee bit more and have to do a bit more to try to gain respect.

"Every so often I do go on the tools with the guys and it gives them an opportunity to see me working.

"When you walk on to site, a lot of guys who haven't worked with women before don't know how to speak to you or how to act because it's not their norm. Sometimes they think, 'Oh you just work in an office.

It's an easy life – you just sit behind a computer.'

"But the good thing is that when they do start



speaking to you, they realise, 'Oh, actually she's just a normal person' and start treating you as one of the guys. And then when they see me actually on the tools and working, they also start to realise, 'Actually, she **IS** one of us and she can muck in as well!'"

Away from the office, Sarah has also been keen to break down the typical stereotype of an electrician – and says she's seen for herself that more women are coming into the industry.

She told us: "When you speak to people about being a female electrician, they're like, 'Oh, that's rare.' But actually when I started my apprenticeship, there was another girl in my college class at the same time, plus there was a female in the year above me,



↓ Sarah enjoys getting stuck in on the tools



one in the year below me and another below that who was coming through too.

“The company with whom I did my apprenticeship also had mostly women working with them so I was always surrounded by females and didn’t find it that uncommon.”

Like many of those contemporaries, Sarah also revealed that she knew she wanted to do something with her hands from an early age and enjoys the variety of her chosen career.

She said: “I’ve always been a hands-on person, always been quite outdoorsy, always been a bit more practical in what I like to do, so I knew something like being an electrician would suit me professionally.

“I like the fact that it’s different types of work all the time, from domestic, industrial-commercial and inspection and testing to maintenance, fire alarms, door entry and data.

“Being an electrician just leads to so many things, so you can be doing a wide variety of tasks every day and every day is different.

“I do enjoy doing a full install from start to finish though, so you get to do it from wiring and fitting out to testing and see the finished project.”

After passing her ACA, Sarah says she’s proud to be the QS for Glenrothes-based Alltec, which specialises in house building, construction, facilities management, interior design and space planning and interior fit-out and refurbishment.

Established in 2003 as a small electrical contractor in Dunfermline, the firm expanded into other construction trades and now employs more than 50 staff across a range of professions.



↑ Being part of a team is something that Sarah enjoys

### QUICK FACTS

**ALITEC CONSTRUCTION LTD**

**BRANCH:**  
Tayside

**PHONE:**  
01592 771 854

**WEBSITE:**  
allteconstruction.co.uk



### WATCH SARAH'S VIDEO

Sarah spoke to SELECT about her career journey in a special video for International Women's Day on 8 March, which this year had the theme #EmbracingEquity. Scan the code to watch the video or go to [bit.ly/I-W-D-23](https://bit.ly/I-W-D-23)



Sarah said: “I’d always wanted to go for my Approved status and do something a wee bit more – it was just a step up. Getting to this point has been one of the things I’ve wanted and as Electrical Manager I’m more office-based and run all the electrical side and all the guys here. I’d always wanted to work towards becoming more office-based, dealing with clients and quoting for things, so this is more of what I wanted to do.”

After ACA, Sarah says she isn’t sure about her next step up the electrical career ladder.

She told us: “I haven’t massively thought about what’s next but at the moment it’s good and I really enjoy my work. It’s also good knowing that you worked hard and managed to achieve something that isn’t currently so common for women – but it **IS** coming.” ■

**“BEING AN ELECTRICIAN JUST LEADS TO SO MANY THINGS, SO YOU CAN BE DOING A WIDE VARIETY OF TASKS EVERY DAY AND EVERY DAY IS DIFFERENT”**





# Where you can meet our experts

Our team will be visiting 12 locations across Scotland. This handy map will help you find the one nearest to you.

**Wed 21 June**  
Caladh Inn,  
Stornoway



**Tue 13 June**  
The Pickaquooy Centre,  
Kirkwall, Orkney



**Tue 6 June**  
Drumossie Hotel,  
Inverness

**Wed 7 June**  
Pittodrie Stadium,  
Aberdeen



**Wed 24 May**  
Falkirk Stadium,  
Falkirk

**Wed 10 May**  
The Apex Hotel,  
Dundee

**Thu 11 May**  
Hampden Park,  
Glasgow

**Tue 2 May**  
Murrayfield Stadium,  
Edinburgh

**Wed 17 May**  
Rugby Park,  
Kilmarnock

**Wed 3 May**  
Macdonald Cardrona  
Hotel, Peebles

**Tue 16 May**  
Easterbrook Hall,  
Dumfries



**PLUMBING** and heating professionals will be joining us at this year's Toolbox Talks

to add their voice to our technical discussion around air source heat pumps (ASHPs).

Members of the Scotland and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation (SNIPEF) have been invited to attend our annual roadshows as special guests to provide an insight into the hot topic of renewables technology.

A technical update on electrical energy storage systems (EESS) will also be on the agenda at our ever-popular events, which kick off in just a few weeks' time.

And SELECT Members who attend this year's roadshows will also receive our new certificate of continuing personal development (CPD), launched to help firms and individual operatives keep track of how they are developing their skills.

Bob Cairney, Director of Technical Services, said: "We're looking forward to welcoming representatives from SNIPEF to this year's Toolbox Talks to help everyone gain a better understanding of how our two disciplines will work together on ASHPs.

"Electricians and plumbers will



↑ This year's events are sure to be popular



# Join the special guests at our 2023 hot spots

- SNIPEF members to add to heat pump discussions at Toolbox Talks
- Delegates will receive new SELECT CPD certificates for attending
- Places are already going fast so book **NOW** for your nearest venue!



**BOOK YOUR PLACE NOW**

For further details, scan the code above, email [memberservices@select.org.uk](mailto:memberservices@select.org.uk), call us on **0131 445 5577** or go to 'Events' at [www.select.org.uk](http://www.select.org.uk)

## WORDS LINDA ROLFE

Events, Marketing & Communications Coordinator



both play an important role in the installation of such technology, so it makes sense to bring both trades together, listen to the requirements and challenges on both sides and build a greater understanding of what is required from each.

“The role of the electrical contractor in installing ASHPs is a subject that is becoming increasingly topical, and with SNIPEF’s contribution, we’re keen to explain to Members how the landscape could look in the coming years.”

Our invaluable **FREE** update sessions will once again be touring 12 venues across Scotland in May and June, kicking off at Murrayfield in Edinburgh on 2 May.

As always, our experts will be on hand to discuss the burning issues via two presentations:

- **Presentation 1:** Electrical requirements for ASHPs, outlining how contractors can get involved and what to consider when installing the technology.
- **Presentation 2:** The technical implications of EESS in domestic and commercial environments.

Members will have the chance to ask questions and discuss topical matters face-to-face with our Technical Advisers, with other SELECT staff on hand to answer other queries.

Bob added: “After the success of last year’s events, this will be another good opportunity to meet with Members in person and



explore the technology that is becoming increasingly significant in our industry.”

Representatives from the Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB) and Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT) will be attending selected shows, along with the team behind our SELECTcerts service.

Our popular Beat the Buzzer game will also be back for 2023, raising money for the Electrical Industries Charity (EIC), plus there will be more prize draws and an interactive quiz.

Exhibitors from a range of leading manufacturers and service providers, including Associate Members Aico, Electrium, Luceco, Megger, Scolmore and TIS will also be in attendance.

Events kick off at 9.30am with coffee and rolls, with lunch provided at the end of each session and goodie bags that will include the day’s presentations.

And of course, Toolbox Talks are free to attend for all SELECT Members. So check the map for this year’s dates and venues and sign up **NOW** – it’s already getting busy! ■



CPD helps build skills for today and tomorrow: **Pages 42 & 43**



# Get ready to embrace change

Existing health and safety regulations could disappear from UK law on 31 December if the current draft of the Retained EU Law Bill is approved. So what exactly might change? And what could the impact be on health and safety requirements for SELECT Members? Our Associate Member is here with the answers...

WORDS  
**ANDY HARPER**  
Technical Support  
Manager, Building  
Safety Group



**A**s you may be aware, the proposed Retained EU Law (REUL) Bill will enable the UK Government to amend, repeal and replace retained European Union (EU) law via Parliament.

If passed, all UK secondary legislation derived from EU law and retained direct EU legislation, such as EU regulations, will 'sunset' or automatically fall away on 31 December this year.

In health and safety terms, that means a significant number of occupational health and safety regulations, leaving in force just the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA).

Ministers may decide to extend this date to 23 June 2026 and indeed, the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) and others have been pressing for an extension until 2030 to enable due scrutiny, consultation, engagement and transparent process. They also want to exclude certain legislation from the Bill and have called for standards and protections not to reduce.

However, for this to happen, an active decision will need to be taken by the end of 2023 or else the regulations will disappear.

## WHICH HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS WILL BE AFFECTED?

If the Bill is adopted in its current form, it is expected



↑ It's important to be aware of potential changes to health and safety laws

that most health and safety regulations will fall away on 31 December 2023 because they are EU-derived.

This includes the 'six-pack' and framework requirements around health and safety which SELECT Members will be very familiar with, i.e.:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, including risk assessment and 'Competent Person' requirements
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992, amended 2022.

Other regulations affected would be those that set specific obligations for particular activities, for example the Construction (Design

With thanks to  
IOSH Magazine

**"THE DISAPPEARANCE OF HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS HAS THE POTENTIAL TO RESULT IN MAJOR CHANGES TO HOW HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGISLATION WORKS IN THE UK, IN PARTICULAR AROUND HSE ENFORCEMENT"**

and Management) Regulations 2015, the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002.

Some regulations go further than the HSWA by providing for regimes such as requirements to prepare a safety report for assessment by competent authorities under the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015, or obtain a licence, e.g. for work with asbestos. These would also be affected.

### **DOES THIS MEAN THAT BUSINESSES WILL NO LONGER HAVE ANY HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGAL DUTIES?**

No. Legal requirements that are not derived from EU law and primary legislation won't be 'sunsetting'.

The HSWA will therefore remain in place and organisations will continue to have a legal duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees and others affected by their business undertaking.

The powers of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), including the issue of improvement and prohibition notices and requests for information, also won't change, with duties set out in the HSWA.

However, as health and safety regulations tend to provide an additional layer of detail in the UK about how businesses can fulfil their duties under HSWA, that detail would no longer be law and is likely to move into guidance.

The disappearance of health and safety regulations has the potential to result in major changes to how health and safety legislation works in the UK, in particular around HSE enforcement.

In the short term, it may create uncertainty for businesses on how to meet their obligations under HSWA because well-established and understood regimes for compliance will fall away.

However, it seems likely that the HSE will encourage the status quo – i.e. pointing to regulatory principles that would disappear in law but would remain in HSE guidance.

## **SIGN UP TO BSG HUB**

Being a SELECT Member automatically qualifies you for a wealth of FREE advice and practical resources from The Building Safety Group worth £750, including:

- 250+ templates, policies and documents on the easy-to-use Hub app
- 100+ videos and toolbox talks offering a huge range of guidance
- Access to a health and safety technical support hotline.

Signing up is quick and easy – all you need is your membership number. To find out more and get started, scan the QR code or go to [www.bsgltd.co.uk](http://www.bsgltd.co.uk)



In some areas it may provide SELECT Member businesses with the opportunity to develop a more tailored approach to looking at risk, e.g. in the area of ergonomics and display screen equipment, where the current regulations are highly prescriptive and don't work well in the new hybrid working environment.

### **SO WHAT'S NEXT?**

As *cabletalk* went to press, the Bill was at the Lords Committee stage, after which it will be re-published with any agreed amendments. From there, the Bill will go to the Lords Report stage to receive further scrutiny and will require a third reading before the Lords.

A number of amendments have been proposed so far, including an extension of the deadline for sunsetting to 2028. It is therefore likely that the Bill will ping-pong between the Lords and the Commons until an agreement is reached and we will likely know more about its potential impact on health and safety law as we move into the summer.

While there is still this ongoing uncertainty, we would suggest that SELECT Members should start working through scenarios and thinking about their health and safety requirements and future planning.

Signing up to the free BSG Hub and having access to an extensive range of risk assessments, COSHH assessments, method statements and other resources is a good place to start! ■





# We can do so much by sharing ideas

SELECT’s Alan Wilson was in the chair when the Scottish Government hosted its first International Construction Leadership Forum meeting in March. Bringing together Scottish stakeholders, government teams and representatives from across Europe, the online session covered a wealth of topics as industry experts shared ideas and information. Here are five key takeaways...

**WORDS**  
**ALAN WILSON**  
Managing Director  
SELECT



**I** WAS honoured to chair the inaugural meeting of the International Construction Leadership Forum (CLF) and we certainly covered a lot of ground in the few hours we spent online!

Modernising the sector, best practice, emerging trends and industry issues both at home and across international markets were all hot topics, along with Scotland’s new Construction Accord.

Although there is distance between us geographically, it soon became clear that we share many of these same challenges, so here are the main

**“ONE OF THE MOST ENLIGHTENING MOMENTS WAS THE REALISATION THAT WE SHARE A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES ACROSS EUROPE”**

**THE PANELISTS**  
**SCOTLAND**

- Morag Angus, Scottish Government
- Ron Fraser, Construction Scotland
- Stephen Good, Built Environment – Smarter Transformation (BE-ST)
- John McKinney, Construction Industry Collective Voice (CICV)
- Sharon Miller, Scottish Government
- Alan Wilson, SELECT and CICV

discussion points from our international get-together.

**SCOTLAND CAN LEARN FROM DENMARK’S DATA MAPPING**

John McKinney outlined the challenge of Scotland meeting its net zero targets without aggregated data on housing stock. He said such a database would allow organisations to make stronger cases for government investment in green schemes and would simplify and accelerate initiatives such as heat pump and solar PV installation.

We learned that Denmark’s Energy Agency has delivered a database that maps the whole of the country’s existing housing sector, including data on housing types and heating systems. This provides an understanding of current stock and the information to design a roadmap to decarbonisation.

**WHAT’S BEST, CARROT OR STICK?**

The question of how to modernise the sector and reach net zero carbon was raised repeatedly, with the ‘carrot and stick’ analogy used by several speakers.

Julie Beauflis from EuropeOn said she believes that legislation – AKA the stick – is a powerful tool to encourage re-industrialisation and energy saving, but also conceded that we need to complement mandatory changes with funding or rewards – i.e. the carrot – to incentivise change.

However, GCP Europe’s Oliver Jung





↓ The journey to net zero will require innovation and joined-up thinking



© Marixu/Shutterstock

felt that the carrot is more effective at persuading people to make greener choices, giving the example of boilers that need replacing. He said that if an installer doesn't have a financial incentive to install a greener option then they won't, so we need to establish models that make the green solution a "no-brainer" for both installers and homeowners.

### INNOVATION IS KEY

Christian Beck said innovation was vital on the journey to net zero, giving the example of his firm's development of a nail made of European beechwood, which reduces emissions by 70% compared to traditional steel nails.

He is now engaged in a joint project with Historic Environment Scotland and BE-ST looking at the retrofit of Dunoon Burgh Halls using mass timber and replacing steel fixings with the wooden nails.

Christian added that we all need to become missionaries, engaging as many people as possible and empowering them to look for innovative solutions, which will also enable new technologies to gain ground.

### THE FUTURE IS A COMMON CHALLENGE

One of the most enlightening moments was the realisation that we share a number of challenges across Europe, namely enabling a just transition and addressing the skills gap.

We heard how in the Netherlands the government has committed to building 900,000 affordable and sustainable social houses. However, Jan Osenberg also highlighted the lack of skilled workers across the continent to roll out solar solutions, in particular electricians.

To address these challenges in Scotland, we heard how the CLF has established its Transformation Group to listen to the industry about its needs, encourage diversity and inclusion and support a just transition.

### THE ACCORD IS JUST THE STARTING BLOCK

The discussion heard that the Scottish Construction Accord, which was launched last October, was inspired by a similar initiative in New Zealand and that Holland has an equivalent agreement called the Klimaataakkoord.

Ron Fraser also made it clear that although the Accord has enabled the public sector, industry and government to engage in more dialogue

and collaboration than ever before, it is only the beginning. He said the Accord is the starting block for change, not the end, and all stakeholders need to remain committed to working together to see concrete changes materialise.

### IN CONCLUSION

The first International CLF meeting was undoubtedly a success and it is hoped that this will now be a bi-annual event. Collaborating in this way with our European counterparts will help us to share knowledge and learn from others' successes and how they have overcome their own challenges.

From a personal point of view, it's clear that no matter where we live or trade, we share common issues in the race to decarbonise our built environment and we can't address them effectively by staying cocooned in our own individual silos.

International engagement allows us to exchange vital knowledge and experience – and also reminds us that Scotland also has plenty of expertise and knowledge to share. ■

↓ Building affordable and sustainable homes is a priority



### THE PANELISTS EUROPE

- Julie Beauflis, EuropeOn
- Christian Beck, Beck-Fastening,
- Oliver Jung, GCP Europe
- Jan Osenberg, SolarPower Europe
- Emile Qunajel, Fieldlab SPARK SCC

➔ New initiative focuses on quality: Pages 34 & 35

# Firm delivers our industry's future stars

As part of the celebrations for Scottish Apprenticeship Week, SELECT visited Member company Ross-shire Engineering Ltd, where we spoke to electrical apprentice Sean Bermingham about his fantastic FICA results – and how the firm is helping other trainees unlock their potential



↑ Sean worked hard to get a fantastic FICA score

**WORDS**  
**IAIN MASON**  
Director of  
Membership &  
Communications

**T**HE theme of this year's Scottish Apprentice Week was 'unlocking potential' – and Sean Bermingham is certainly doing that.

Although coming relatively late to the industry, the 32-year-old has made up for lost time and recently achieved a near-perfect score in his Final Integrated Competence Assessment (FICA), notching an impressive 100% for Sections A to E and 90% for Section F.

Sean is now pursuing his passion for all things electrical at SELECT Member

**"AN ELECTRICIAN IS AN ELECTRICIAN BUT WHAT WE DO ISN'T A STANDARD PRODUCT, SO WE TRAIN APPRENTICES UP TO MEET OUR BUSINESS NEEDS"**

company Ross-Shire Engineering (RSE) Ltd and taking his first steps on what he hopes will be a rewarding electrical career journey.

He told us: "I never really decided exactly what I wanted to do when I left school and just had a couple of jobs. I then ended up in a different part of the business at RSE, got an insight into the electrical stuff and took an interest from there.

"The electrical industry is rapidly growing and is something the whole world relies on, so the variety of work and career pathways just interested me – you can go in a lot of different directions with an electrical trade under your belt."

After overcoming the culture shock of going back to the classroom at Inverness College, Sean smashed his FICA in January 2023 – with a little help from the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT).

He revealed: "College was a bit of a shock to begin with after not being in school for so long, but it was well structured and had a good mix of practical learning and classroom learning.

"SECTT also provided loads of support throughout my apprenticeship, with loads of presentations and documents containing all the information you need to pass your exam.

"After doing the FICA I was very nervous while I waited for the results to come in for about a week. I kind of knew I'd done well enough to pass it, but I was very happy when it came through."

SECTT Scottish Apprenticeship Week round-up: Pages 52-53





↑ Sean Bermingham

**QUICK FACTS**

**ROSS-SHIRE ENGINEERING (RSE) LTD**

**BRANCH:**  
Inverness and North of Scotland

**PHONE:**  
01463 870 049

**WEBSITE:**  
ross-eng.com



**“THE ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY IS RAPIDLY GROWING AND IS SOMETHING THE WHOLE WORLD RELIES ON, SO THE VARIETY OF WORK AND CAREER PATHWAYS JUST INTERESTED ME”**

After gaining the knowledge and skills required to progress his career, Sean has now made the leap from electrical apprentice to electrical design engineer thanks to RSE.

He added: “As we were finishing our apprenticeships, we were offered the chance to make the switch into electrical design and become an engineer, with RSE offering to support the chance of further education via an HNC or degree. It was just a sort of trial to begin with to see if we liked it and, if not, we could have gone back to working on the tools.”

It’s just one of the advantages of working for a forward-thinking company like RSE, which – among other things – delivers power distribution control systems to the water industry.

Based in Inverness, the company has more than three decades of experience in water treatment technologies, with apprentices a key part of the business, as Electrical Operations Manager Lloyd Scott explained.

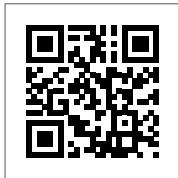
He told SELECT: “As a business, we need apprentices to fulfill our needs, as what we do is quite niche and isn’t run of the mill. An electrician is an electrician but what we do isn’t a standard product, so we train



Lloyd Scott

**WATCH THE VIDEO**

Sean and Lloyd spoke to SELECT in a special video for Scottish Apprenticeship Week, which ran from 6-10 March with the theme ‘unlocking potential’. Scan the code to watch the video or go to [bit.ly/saw-vid](http://bit.ly/saw-vid)



apprentices up to meet our business needs.

“Since I took over my role, we’ve probably put about 48 or 49 apprentices through from start to finish.

“Young people are keen to learn, willing to put the hours in and work hard. But over and above that, it maintains the industry because if we don’t have young people coming through, the industry is going to die off.”

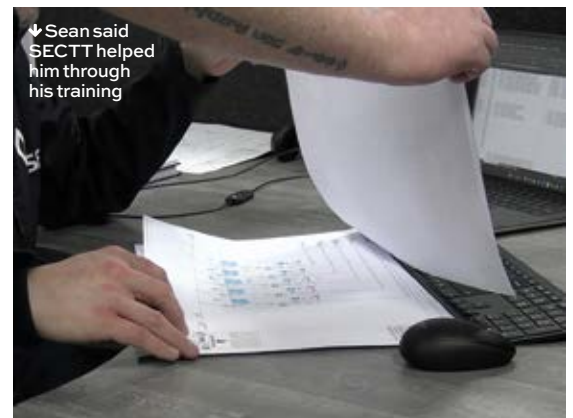
The RSE colleagues also had a simple message for anyone considering an electrical apprenticeship.

Sean said: “You’re earning and learning at the same time, so I’d definitely recommend it to anyone of any age and would’ve liked to have done it when I was a bit younger.

“It’s definitely a good career to get into and there’s loads of different pathways you can go down – everything revolves around electricity so you’re never going to be stuck for work.”

And Lloyd added: “After four years of serving your apprenticeship and successfully passing your trade test, the world’s your oyster.

“I also couldn’t encourage a business enough because if you want to survive, you need to keep the young blood coming through.” ■



↓ Sean said SECTT helped him through his training



All certification is compliant with BS 7671:2018+A2:2022



Full suite of EIC, EIC Single Signature, Minor Works & EICR resources



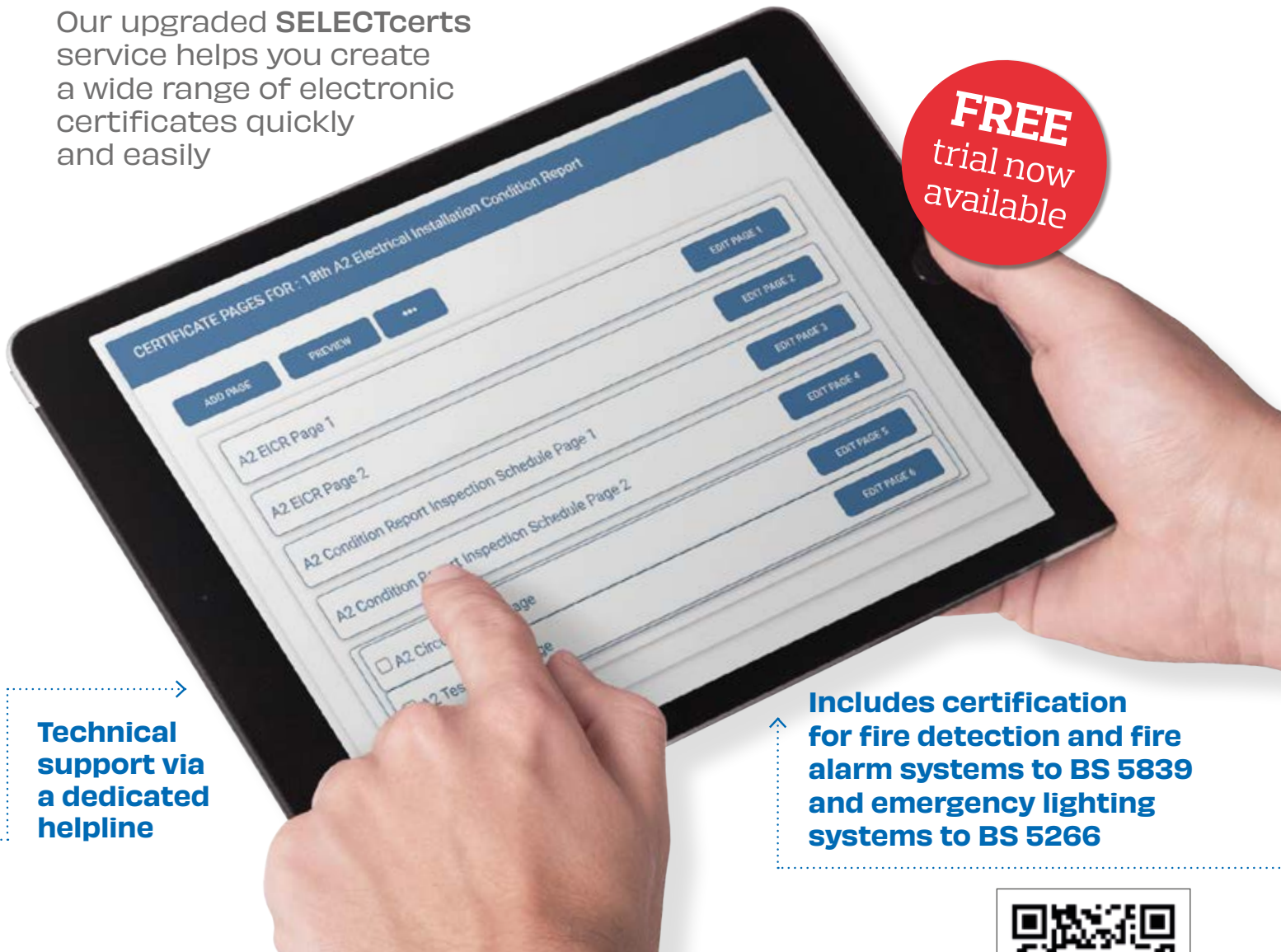
Access to Certificate of Construction for approved bodies/ACCs



Works with any internet enabled device

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**FREE**  
trial now  
available

Technical support via a dedicated helpline

Includes certification for fire detection and fire alarm systems to BS 5839 and emergency lighting systems to BS 5266

SCAN THE CODE OR GO TO [SELECTCERTS.CO.UK](https://SELECTCERTS.CO.UK)







Depression and suicide are still all too common in the construction industry, with the traditional macho culture preventing people from seeking help. With Mental Health Awareness Week just around the corner, we outline the wealth of support that's available and explain what businesses can do to help staff who may be struggling

# Support networks to keep in mind

WORDS  
**ERIKA FERGUSON**  
Employment &  
Skills Adviser



**T**HE past few years have been particularly challenging for us all, but the construction sector in particular still faces an unwelcome problem with mental health and suicide.

Male construction workers are three times more likely to take their own lives compared to other sectors, according to a 2017 report by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Suicide in Scotland is also three times more common in men than women, according to a report from Samaritans Scotland released last year based on 2021 ONS statistics, with people living in the country's most deprived areas being more than three times more likely to take their own life too.

The reasons for suicide are many and complex, with financial pressures, heavy workloads, unrealistic deadlines and poor communication all contributing to high levels of stress at work, combined with rising bills at home.

Adding to these factors is the macho culture in construction, which is a real issue when more than 87% of today's workforce is still male.

**"IT'S VITAL TO TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT HOW YOU'RE FEELING AS BOTTLING THINGS UP ONLY MAKES THEM WORSE"**



With men, there's still a stigma attached to talking about feelings and mental health problems, with the fear of being seen as weak, but it's vital to talk to someone about how you're feeling because bottling things up only makes them worse.

However, there **IS** a wealth of advice and support out there, with experienced and sympathetic professionals who can provide welcome light when things seem darkest.



**WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP**

• **The Electrical Industries Charity** is a great place to start. As the dedicated charity for the electrical industry, it offers a helpline on **0800 652 1618** which can support you between the hours of 8am-8pm Monday to Friday, and 8am-1pm on Saturdays. In addition, it can help with issues such as financial support, counselling, psychiatric assessments, private rehab and legal support. Find out more at [www.electricalcharity.org](http://www.electricalcharity.org)

• **Samaritans** offers a listening service and emotional support to anyone about any issue, with a special focus on suicidal feelings. They're open all day, every day, so you can call the helpline for free on **116 123**, email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) or visit their website at [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org) for more information.

• **Papyrus** is a confidential support and advice service

**"MALE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS ARE THREE TIMES MORE LIKELY TO TAKE THEIR OWN LIVES COMPARED TO OTHER SECTORS, ACCORDING TO A 2017 REPORT BY THE OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS"**

**SUPPORT THROUGH TIMES OF LOSS**

Sudden loss is one of life's biggest shocks and has a huge impact on wellbeing, with families and friends left to deal with grief and distress. The Electrical Industries Charity (EIC) has launched the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to help those struggling to deal with such challenges.

This support network ensures that employees and their immediate family have a shoulder to lean on by offering vital support including bereavement counselling, legal advice, financial assistance and grants. The EAP service is available to anyone who currently works, or has worked, in:

- Electrical contracting and facilities management
- Electrical and electronic manufacturing, wholesale, distribution and retail
- Electrical and mechanical engineering
- The lighting industry
- Generation, distribution, and supply of electrical power, including nuclear and renewable energy.

To find out more, or if you need support, email [support@electricalcharity.org](mailto:support@electricalcharity.org) or call **0800 652 1618**.

for those under the age of 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide. The helpline number is **0800 068 4141** and you can also text **07786 209 697**, email [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org) or go to [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

• **Maytree** is an organisation that offers telephone support to over 18s in suicidal crisis. You can contact them 24/7 on **020 7263 7070** and leave a message if there is no one to answer your call. For more information go to [www.maytree.org.uk](http://www.maytree.org.uk) or email [maytree@maytree.org.uk](mailto:maytree@maytree.org.uk)

• **My Black Dog** is a charity run by volunteers who all have personal experience of dealing with suicide, self-harm, depression and mental illness. You can chat online to a volunteer Monday-Friday at 5-10pm, Saturday at 10am-3pm and on Sunday at 10am-3pm and 7-10pm by going to their website at [www.myblackdog.co](http://www.myblackdog.co)

• If you'd rather not speak on the phone, you can contact SHOUT via text on **85258** with the word 'SHOUT'.

• **CALM** offers help, information and advice on issues such as abuse, bullying, mental health, relationships, suicide and self-harm. The CALM helpline is open every day from 5pm-12am (midnight) on **0800 58 58 58**. You can webchat with them via their website, and find out more about them at [thecalmzone.net](http://thecalmzone.net)

↓ There is a wealth of information and support online for anyone in crisis

**WEEK-LONG FOCUS ON EASING ANXIETY**

Focusing on anxiety, this year's Mental Health Awareness Week runs from 15-21 May.

The initiative will aim to increase people's awareness and understanding of the issue and provide information on how to

prevent it becoming a problem. Find out more and get involved at [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

In addition, September is National Suicide Prevention Month, with 10 September being World Suicide Prevention Day. Find out more at [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)







↓ There is still stigma surrounding men attempting to talk about their feelings

• **Hub of Hope** is a directory of local mental health services in the UK. They have a range of factsheets and information about different mental health diagnoses and lists of specific support services for each condition. You can visit their website at [www.hubofhope.co.uk](http://www.hubofhope.co.uk)

• **Dads Matter UK** is a free service that provides support for dads worried about or suffering from depression, anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorder. They have a directory of counselling and support services as well as self-assessment tools to find the most suitable support for you. Find out more at [www.dadsmatteruk.org](http://www.dadsmatteruk.org)

### BUSINESSES HAVE A PART TO PLAY TOO

As well as having an impact on a worker's physical and mental health, high stress levels over a long period of time can have a detrimental impact on productivity, so it makes sense for employers to keep an eye on staff and ensure they're OK.

An increasing number of businesses are adopting mental health policies, with 53% of SMEs seeing an improvement in provision of worker wellbeing and mental health support since COVID-19 restrictions eased, according to a Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) survey in 2022.

Organised national days like Time to Talk are often an excellent opportunity for businesses to evaluate where the culture is at with openness while promoting the idea of talking to colleagues within the wider workforce. Find out more about the event at [www.timetotalkday.co.uk](http://www.timetotalkday.co.uk)

**"COMPANIES SHOULD ALSO START TO LOOK AT WAYS TO EMBED COMPANY POLICIES FOR MENTAL HEALTH INTO THEIR EVERYDAY WORKING LIFE"**

### HANDY GUIDE TO WHERE TO GET HELP



Members can download a free brochure that provides details of leading charities and support networks that offer help and guidance for mental health issues.

Compiled by the Construction Industry Collective Voice (CICV), of which SELECT is a leading member, the open source document can be found at [www.cicvforum.co.uk/downloads](http://www.cicvforum.co.uk/downloads)

If you require further printed copies for your own business or employees, please contact SELECT on 0131 445 557 or email [memberservices@select.org.uk](mailto:memberservices@select.org.uk)

Taking part in initiatives like Movember can also help raise awareness of men's physical and mental health issues – find out more at [uk.movember.com](http://uk.movember.com) about how you can get involved.

Companies should also start to look at ways to embed company policies for mental health into their everyday working life.

Although this can be difficult when deadlines and profit loom large, implementing wellbeing targets into your projects will ensure the mental health of your workforce is not left behind. ■



### FINDING LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

SELECT Associate Member simPRO has joined forces with the Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity – AKA the Lighthouse Club – to support workers' welfare and wellbeing

in the construction industry.

The software provider will now champion the Lighthouse Club at various industry events, promoting the charity internally through a day of fundraising and sponsoring various charity campaigns.

These include their 'Make it Visible' tours across the UK and

Ireland, which are designed to provide information to frontline workers about crucial support services provided by the charity.

The Lighthouse Club operates a free and confidential helpline for the construction industry – you can call it any day on **0345 605 1956** and to find out more, visit [www.lighthouseclub.org](http://www.lighthouseclub.org)

# Creating a sustainable quality culture

A bold new campaign aims to deliver good practice in construction by involving a wide range of groups that will bring their expertise to the table to deliver better – and more sustainable – ways of working

**WORDS**  
**IAN KENT**

Co-Chair, Construction Quality Improvement Collaborative



**T**HE Construction Quality Improvement Collaborative (CQIC) is a new sector-wide campaign for improving construction quality across Scotland.

This initiative will support sustainable quality culture approaches and behaviours – both key aims of the Transformation Action Plan of the Scottish Construction Accord, which was launched last October.

As outlined in previous issues of *cabletalk*, the Accord establishes a dynamic collaboration for the Scottish public sector and the construction industry to work together more effectively to meet the infrastructure delivery challenges we face as a country.

The Accord will also support and enhance the industry’s positive contribution to Scotland’s economy, society and environment and will deliver the change and action necessary to achieve these aims and ambitions.

The CQIC seeks to promote good practice to deliver improved performance and takes a holistic approach involving clients, consultants, designers, contractors and the supply chain, who must all contribute to the delivery of the expected construction quality.

**STEPS ON THE QUALITY JOURNEY**

To support the sector on this quality journey, CQIC will gather, signpost and draw from knowledge in practice, research and innovation and will highlight developments in data and digital technology and related quality initiatives by others.

The CQIC will also support and promote development of enabling guidance, processes and tools, and will connect with linked activities being developed by other working groups under the auspices of the Accord, such as those looking at procurement, skills and the workforce, all of which are inextricably linked to construction quality.

The collaborative plans to build connections



↑ The launch of the CQIC in February (left to right): Colin Campbell (Scottish Futures Trust), Cliff Smith (Get It Right Initiative), Nick Ribbons (Zero Waste Scotland), Ian Kent (Morgan Sindall and Co-Chair of CQIC), Ivan McKee MSP (then Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise and Chair of the Construction Leadership Forum), Tamsie Thomson (Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland), Ron Fraser (Construction Scotland), Peter Reekie (Scottish Futures Trust and Co-chair of Scottish Construction Accord Transformation Group) and Colin Proctor (Scottish Futures Trust and Co-chair of CQIC)



**"ANOTHER IMPACT OF A SUSTAINABLE QUALITY CULTURE WILL BE THE IMPROVED IMAGE AND REPUTATION OF THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR, WHICH WILL BE OF BENEFIT TO THE CURRENT AND THE FUTURE WORKFORCE OF THIS VITAL INDUSTRY"**

with other groups and organisations that are involved in improving construction delivery work and to engage with infrastructure programmes as well as projects being taken forward by others. CQIC wants to collaborate with any organisation that shares the vision for our industry where quality is central to all decision-making.

It is envisaged that "creating a sustainable quality culture" (the mission of the CQIC campaign) will be enabled largely through peer support. By linking with existing groupings and collectives, CQIC plans to create new engagement platforms to develop and encourage even more collaboration.

The CQIC will also seek to provide a source of support for the development of related Scottish Government policy and guidance.

**A STRONG SUPPORT NETWORK**

CQIC has been developed over the last three years and is supported by a working group involving:

- Scottish Government
- Construction Scotland
- Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland
- Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
- Scottish Building Federation
- Scottish Futures Trust
- Local authority representatives
- An NHS representative
- Other representative bodies.

At its heart, the CQIC has a Construction Quality Charter. Every organisation that commits to this charter, whether it be from the public or private sector, is undertaking to embed the improvement of construction quality across their business activities to help achieve a sustainable quality culture.

By inviting organisations across the sector, including clients, contractors, designers, other consultants and trade and professional bodies, to support the goal of embedding a quality culture at every stage of the construction process, the goal of creating a sustainable quality culture moves even closer.

The 'getting it right first time' approach makes sense financially, environmentally and, importantly, from a safety perspective and is vital if Scotland is going to deliver on its target for achieving net zero.

Another impact of a sustainable quality culture will be the improved image and reputation of the construction sector, which will be of benefit to the current and future workforce of this vital industry.

The campaign website [www.cqic.org.uk](http://www.cqic.org.uk) is the main platform for engagement with stakeholders and is where organisations can make their commitment to the Construction Quality Charter.

We would encourage all Members of SELECT to commit and get involved as key ambassadors in the construction quality improvement journey. Anyone that wants to find out more about the CQIC, or can provide support or input to the initiative, can get in touch through the Contact section of the website. ■

➔ Find out more about the CQIC at [www.cqic.org.uk](http://www.cqic.org.uk) – Member companies can also commit to the Construction Quality Charter and become involved as an ambassador.



**THE EXPERT VIEW**

**WORDS**  
**LEN BUNTON**  
Industry expert & cabletalk columnist



In the adjudications I have acted in, quality issues feature almost all of the time.

The issues relate to a range of problems, including:

- Deductions for non-compliant workmanship
- Deductions for failures to carry out snagging during the contract or after practical completion
- Delays caused by re-work
- Damages claimed by the contractor as a result of delays while non-complaint work is rectified.

Put simply, the industry needs to improve quality across the board and the supply chain.

That is why I am greatly encouraged by the launch of the Construction Quality Improvement Collaborative and the Construction Quality Charter which lies at its heart.

Along with other work being carried out elsewhere in the industry, this is an opportunity to change the quality culture for the better and make such disputes a thing of the past.

➔ Len's column: **Page 47**

# Technical

## MORE INFORMATION

For further information on our technical support and advice, please call 0131 445 9218 or email [technicalhelp@select.org.uk](mailto:technicalhelp@select.org.uk)



# Protecting people in the workplace

Amendment 2 of BS 7671:2018 introduced some essential revisions about the use of residual current circuit breakers with over-current protection (RCBO) in the workplace. Our Associate Member explores the main points

WORDS  
**DAVID ENEFER**  
Product Manager,  
Circuit Protection  
Systems



**electrium**

**I**n the workplace, keeping the power on is an important factor as business services must not be interrupted by unwanted power outages.

However, personal safety is also paramount, which is why residual current circuit breakers with over-current protection (RCBOs) should be used when there is also a requirement for 30mA protection for the users of the installation.

### PROTECTING USERS TO AMENDMENT 2 REQUIREMENTS

Regulation 411.3.3 of the IET Wiring Regulations was revised by Amendment 2. This regulation now requires additional protection by means of a 30mA device for users of socket outlets not rated higher than 32A in all locations where they are liable to be used by persons of capability BA1, BA2 or BA3.

The terms BA1, BA2 or BA3 probably need some further

explanation. Appendix 5 of the Wiring Regulations includes a list of external influences and under the sub-heading of 'Utilisation' BA refers to the capability of persons as follows:

- BA1 is described as an ordinary person, i.e. a person who is neither a skilled person nor an instructed person
- BA2 as children
- BA3 as disabled.



### NO EXCEPTIONS PERMITTED

Therefore, in all locations where socket outlets not rated higher than 32A are liable to be used by ordinary persons, disabled persons or children, additional protection by use of a 30mA device is mandatory. No exceptions are permitted.

### PROVIDING PROTECTION AND MAINTAINING POWER CONTINUITY

Providing additional protection and maintaining power continuity is actually easy. Each socket circuit should be protected by an individual Type A 30mA RCBO. This will meet the requirements of Regulation 411.3.3 and the requirements of the business because it will eradicate unwanted tripping and guarantee that every healthy circuit remains in service.



↓ Personal safety in the workplace is just as important as keeping the power on



### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS ALSO APPLY

Catering for the demands on an electrical installation in a modern environment – for example a workplace, school or university – means taking account of the connected equipment and portable devices.

These will have a significant impact upon the design of the installation and will no doubt bring direct current (DC) influences and protective earth (PE) currents into consideration for the designer and installer.

Regulation 531.3.2 requires protective conductor currents – standing earth leakage not due to a fault – to be limited to 9mA for a 30mA device to help to avoid unwanted tripping but that can't be achieved if several circuits are protected by one device.

Designers will not only have to take account of PE currents when dividing the installation into the necessary number of circuits. There are also the requirements of Chapter 31 and Regulations 314.1 to consider.

Regulation 314.1 requires the installation to be divided into the necessary number of circuits to:

- **AVOID** danger and minimize inconvenience in the event of a single fault
- **TAKE** account of hazards

that may arise from the failure of a single circuit

- **REDUCE** the possibility of unwanted tripping of residual current devices (RCDs)
- **FACILITATE** safe inspection, testing and maintenance.

Wherever additional protection by a 30mA device is required, each circuit should be served by an individual Type A RCBO in order to meet the requirements of BS 7671 including Amendment 2. ■

**"CATERING FOR THE DEMANDS ON AN ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION IN A MODERN ENVIRONMENT – FOR EXAMPLE A WORKPLACE, SCHOOL OR UNIVERSITY – MEANS TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE CONNECTED EQUIPMENT AND PORTABLE DEVICES"**

# A focus on explosive situations

WORDS  
BOB CAIRNEY

Director of Technical Services



SELECT has added to its voice to a debate on neutral current diversion in which experts warned that a lack of education and action could lead to a rise in explosions and fires. So what are the risks? And why are a number of industry insiders so concerned?

**I** WAS recently asked to contribute to an article on the dangers of neutral current diversion (NCD) and thought Members might benefit from an update.

The resulting piece in *E&T* magazine flagged up concerns from a number of industry experts who claim that not enough is being done to address the problem in the UK.

As you may know, NCD can occur on the electricity network when the combined protective earthing and neutral (PEN) conductor fails in the supply to an installation.

The neutral current of any connected loads within connected installations return to the source of the supply by being diverted through a circuit that can be completed via the exposed metalwork that may exist in buildings which includes gas, water and oil pipes. This can lead to a significant build-up of heat on the pipework and could result in either a fire or, in the worst case, a gas explosion.

PEN conductors are particularly susceptible to damage, corrosion and general wear and tear across an ageing protective multiple earthing (PME) network – and given the huge projected load growth on the network, experts say that such incidents are expected to continue to rise.

Last year, it was revealed that reports of broken PEN conductors in the UK had increased by more than eight times over the past 18 years,

from 57 in 2003 to 474 in 2021.

A single broken PEN incident may affect in the region of 50 properties – meaning tens of thousands of properties could be affected each year in the UK.

Due to this risk, there have been calls for the Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) and the government to publicly recognise the dangers of NCD so that potentially life-saving work can be carried out on the electricity network.

Experts also say the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) must acknowledge the risk of fire and gas explosions so a programme of testing can be implemented and life-saving upgrades made to the grid.

## GORDON LEADS THE CRUSADE

The trade body for DNOs, the Energy Networks Association (ENA), says that there has been a “comparatively small number” of incidents

This article has been adapted from an exclusive piece by Conor McGlone in *E&T* on 23 February which can be found at [eandt.theiet.org](http://eandt.theiet.org)

**E&T** ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

↓ It's important that equipment is properly maintained







↑ Correct testing methods can help keep people and properties safe

through the metallic gas service pipe entering the property, and Gordon said it was fortunate the resident was at home at the time.

The former senior engineer recalled: “There were 72 houses fed through a cable that ran between two substations without a neutral, meaning the entire neutral current of 72 houses was going through that one gas pipe.”

At the time,

SPEN produced a safety alert which said it was “working together with the ENA to agree an appropriate process for highlighting and responding to incidents of this type and the agreed process will be communicated in due course”.

But Gordon said there was nothing to indicate the problem, adding: “There was not one single flickering light bulb in the 72 houses. If that had happened during the night, the cupboard would have caught fire, the gas would have exploded and it would have been blamed on a gas leak.”

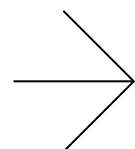
Gordon also claimed that while the cause of the majority of gas explosions is currently recorded as a gas leak, this is only because the ignition point is so badly destroyed that the real cause can’t be proved.

He said: “Make no mistake about it, NCDs can and almost certainly are causing gas explosions across the country.

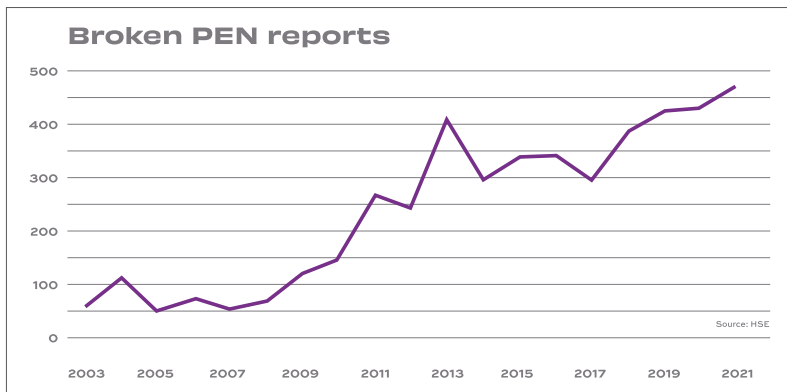
“Gas meters are not designed to carry electricity and if there is a high resistance with a high current, it generates a lot of heat.”

Gordon insists that NCDs are so prevalent on gas pipes that the gas industry attaches jump leads between pipes before changing them because they generate sparks.

He added: “Every time I see a gas explosion I would at least like the HSE to have some decent understanding of what they’re looking at so when they’re doing their investigations they can rule – or rule out – NCD.”



© Paul Meenan



Source: HSE

associated with PEN conductors. However, former Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) employee Gordon Mackenzie says this is because testing is not being carried out routinely to measure NCD and he claims that DNOs “need to acknowledge the problem”.

Gordon says he tried to draw attention to the dangers of NCD during the 38 years he worked at SPEN and he has continued to do so since retiring in 2021.

He claims he first became aware of a potential public safety issue in 2014 when he was alerted to an incident in a property in Galashiels in which a resident’s coat had fallen on to the property’s gas meter and had caught fire.

Readings taken at the scene detected 35A of current flowing

↑ The number of reported incidents has increased

**“MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT, NCDs CAN AND ALMOST CERTAINLY ARE CAUSING GAS EXPLOSIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY”**

**FOCUSING ON THE PROBLEM**

In Scotland, SPEN released

a training video on NCDs in April 2021, after which several Scottish local authorities started to check for NCD on their properties.

This led to a number of possible problems being highlighted and reported back to SPEN. However, at that stage SPEN didn't have a procedure in place to deal with these reports, and in many instances their own operatives lacked the knowledge to deal with the problems.

Initially, a significant number of NCD incidents – in the hundreds – were being reported, but a general lack of awareness of the issue across the industry has seen the numbers drop off.

The video has now been taken down from YouTube and SPEN has since organised at least two industry workshops to explain the process to local authority technical staff. The issue is also being

**"IT IS SOMETHING WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO LIVE WITH TO A CERTAIN EXTENT AS THE NETWORKS GET OLDER BUT WE DON'T WANT TO CARRY OUT WORK IN PEOPLE'S HOMES OR BUSINESSES WHERE WE EXACERBATE THE CONDITIONS"**



© John Selway/Shutterstock

highlighted to electricians through industry update training courses.

Other bodies are also trying to raise awareness, with the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) publishing a standardised way of testing for NCD in its *Guidance Note 3* last year. A safety video in which SELECT and the IET collaborated in 2022 is also imminent.

Paul Meenan, Asset Manager (M&E) at train operator C2C, which serves parts of London and Essex, is also trying to raise awareness of the dangers of NCD.

C2C issued a safety alert in 2020 to its supply chain after excessive unknown transient energy

**An increased awareness of safety issues**

In 2019, West Lothian Council published a safety alert in which it stated that over the past few years it had received “a number of reports from gas suppliers of live pipework when they had been replacing gas meters”.

After mistakenly requesting that suppliers use voltage pens to check for NCDs, the council said updated draft

guidance for council staff and sub-contractors had now been prepared. This included adding regular checks for NCDs as part of annual gas service and five-yearly electrical inspection programmes.

It said it would circulate this to all staff concerned as soon as final advice and information had been received from SPEN via the Local Authority and Client Forum (LACF), the body established by SELECT to promote a shared approach to excellence in electrical standards.

A council spokesperson said: “NCD is a rare but potentially dangerous issue that can affect any property. We have continued to keep awareness of NCD high



↑ Damaged equipment can lead to potentially dangerous incidents





↑ Incidents can have dire consequences

levels were measured flowing into the low voltage earthing system. The alert – which was also issued to Network Rail and the DNO UK Power Networks – said the readings indicated NCD was present, and put extra safety measures in place.

Paul now claims NCDs “are a problem on the railways at the moment” and part of his job is to find solutions.

He said: “It is something we are going to have to live with to a certain extent as the networks get older but we don’t want to carry out work in people’s homes or businesses where we exacerbate the conditions. This is where we need the DNOs to come to the table and acknowledge the problem.”

Paul is also chairman for the subcommittee of the Electrical Safety Roundtable (ESR), which covers electrical safety in the workplace. The ESR is now due to publish a code of practice, “to educate people on different scenarios where [NCD] could happen, so electricians are better informed as how to work with it, around it and how identify it”.

#### RED FLAGS BEING RAISED

Documents seen by *E&T* show that the HSE has been alerted to the of dangers NCD on more than one occasion.

In one piece of correspondence, Steve Critchlow, Principal Gas Engineer at the HSE, said checks for NCDs would not be carried out routinely after gas explosions and only if he had reason to suspect an electrical current had contributed to the explosion.

Gordon claims the HSE does not want to acknowledge the extent of the problem as it wants to avoid “a nationwide panic”.

In turn, Paul says the DNOs also don’t want to acknowledge the phenomenon as this would involve added costs.

**“I ALSO THINK THEY HAVEN'T GOT THE BANDWIDTH TO MANAGE THE NETWORK. IT IS EASIER TO BE REACTIVE THAN PREVENTATIVE”**

He said: “The contracts DNO have mean they must make repairs when there is a failure and invest in monitoring but they do take a large profit from their funding allocations – and they are a private, for-profit business.

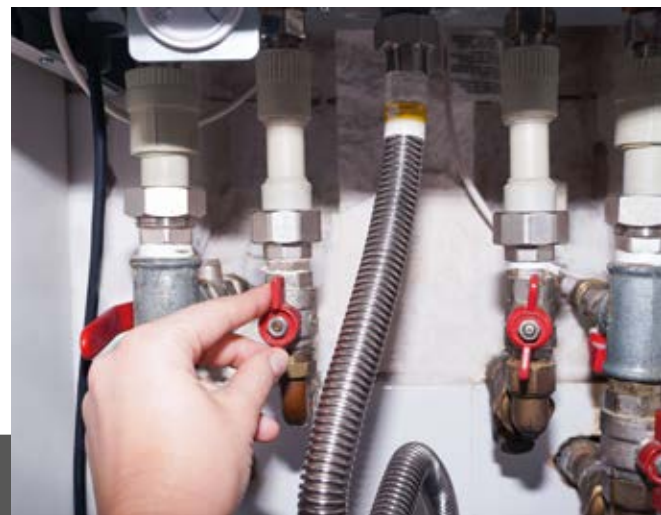
“I also think they haven’t got the bandwidth to manage the network. It is easier to be reactive than preventative.”

A spokesperson for ENA said: “DNOs place the safety of their network and customers as their top priority as they strive to meet the highest safety standards.

“As with any piece of infrastructure exposed to the weather or hazards like falling trees, a small number of malfunctions occur. Any incident is resolved as quickly as possible and managed within their overall approach to risk management.

“In the next investment cycle, DNOs will invest £235 million specifically in safety measures to continue to protect their teams and the general public.”

SPEN and the HSE did not respond to requests for comment from *E&T*. ■



among our staff and subcontractors since then and have had two further incidents in the last four years, both of which were identified, recorded and reported to Scottish Power for investigation.

“Regular discussions on the issue have taken place between Scottish Power and representatives from councils across Scotland via the LACF.”

The LACF also became involved when a power surge cut electricity to more than 200 homes in Tillicoultry, Clackmannanshire, at Christmas 2020, blowing fuses and damaging electrical appliances.

Following the incident, SPEN asked

LACF members for assistance in testing for, and reporting, any deterioration of aluminium cable heads in properties that might lead to NCD.

Sandy Mackintosh, Electrical Project Manager at Clackmannanshire Council, told *cabletalk* in February 2021: “We had an emergency meeting with our service leaders and organised toolbox talks with all our plumbing and gas engineers to explain the issues, and how the use of continuity clips would help them work safely.

“We even arranged for them to undergo training at Scottish Power’s training centre.

“When the reports came through of the power surge in Tillicoultry I knew what had happened and what to do.”

Out of 5,000 Clackmannanshire Council homes, Sandy’s team identified around 2,000 that had aluminium TN-C-S cables supplies and have now implemented a programme of upgrades to their electrical boards which includes for surge protection.



THE LATEST IN-PERSON AND E-LEARNING COURSES TO BOOST YOUR SKILLS AND KEEP YOUR KNOWLEDGE UP TO DATE

# Training

## MORE INFORMATION

To inquire about SELECT's range of training courses, please call 0131 445 5577 or email [training@select.org.uk](mailto:training@select.org.uk)

# CPD helps build skills for today and tomorrow

To help Member firms and individual operatives keep track of how they are developing their skills, SELECT is rolling out a new continuing professional development scheme for training courses and other association events

WORDS  
**JENNY CRYANS**  
Training Manager



In response to recent Member demand, we're pleased to be launching our new continuing professional development (CPD) scheme as part of our ongoing commitment to skills.

This initiative will mean that individual Members will be awarded CPD 'hours' for training courses and other relevant events, such as seminars, webinars and in-house sessions.

To launch the scheme and get Members started, we've now updated our training course certificates to include these CPD hours.

This revised paperwork will now be issued for anyone attending a SELECT training course such as Emergency Lighting

(course number 221), Safe Isolation (217) and In-Service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment (207).

CPD hours can be made up of:

- Reading relevant course materials, i.e. prior study
- Completion of an online course
- Attending a training course
- Completion of assessments.

We will also be issuing a separate CPD certificate for any non-assessed courses or seminars that Members may undertake.

These could include things like our Emergency Lighting Seminar or if a Member company asks for an in-house Amendment 2 toolbox talk. As outlined on pages 22&23, they will also be issued to anyone who attends the SELECT Toolbox Talks themselves.

Members can either be sent their printed

certificate or a PDF version can be emailed out to help you keep an electronic record of how many CPD hours have been logged.

We're also looking at introducing an electronic system of our own that will keep a record of individual Members' CPD hours.

## WHAT IS CPD?

CPD is a combination of approaches, ideas and techniques that help manage learning and growth.

Employees practise CPD to become better at their job and contribute to the progression of the organisation they work for. How effective or fast that progression is depends greatly on how often employers encourage employees to learn and engage in CPD.

**"WITHOUT CPD, EMPLOYEES CAN STRUGGLE TO KEEP UP WITH AN EVER-CHANGING SECTOR – PARTICULARLY IN SOMETHING AS ADVANCED AND FAST-MOVING AS THE ELECTROTECHNICAL INDUSTRY"**



Visiting  
The Walled  
Garden for a  
training course?

Watch our video  
beforehand at  
[bit.ly/twg-visit-23](http://bit.ly/twg-visit-23)

If you have any questions about CPD or other SELECT Training matters, please email [training@select.org.uk](mailto:training@select.org.uk) or call the team on 0131 445 5577.



CPD can help your employees keep their skills and knowledge up to date and prepare them for greater responsibilities. It can also boost confidence, strengthen professional credibility and help them become more creative in tackling new challenges by:

- Carrying out learning activities on a regular basis
- Carrying out different kinds of learning activities
- Carrying out activities that can improve your business and benefit customers.

**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF CPD?**

By ensuring that learning and development is embedded in company culture, employers can play a key role in CPD. Encouraging staff to undertake regular CPD can in turn lead to many benefits for employers, including:

- Ensuring high standards throughout your business
- Contributing positively to your organisation’s growth and success
- Enabling a culture of learning and promoting a healthy working relationship with employees
- Boosting employee productivity and building a more efficient and motivated workforce
- Improving employee retention as employees feel more valued and loyal

- Enabling employers to embrace change and react to shifts within the industry.

Without CPD, employees can struggle to keep up with an ever-changing sector – particularly in something as advanced and fast-moving as the electrotechnical industry.

This is especially true if your business involves compliance, where regulations and official advice are constantly being added or updated. It is also a great way to keep employees engaged and passionate about their work. The benefits of CPD for employees include:

- Keeps qualifications up to date, helping learners gain relevant skills on the job
- Plugs any gaps in knowledge and enables employees to adapt to a fast-moving world
- Helps to improve productivity at work and the ability to learn and improve
- Enables employees to demonstrate ambition, aptitude and willingness to learn new skills
- Keeps employees focused on a pathway to career progression, leading to job security and achieving success at work.

CPD is therefore beneficial and essential for both employers and employees and is instrumental in building a happy and knowledgeable workforce. Further down the line, it can also help enhance a business’s reputation among customers. ■



**“CPD IS A COMBINATION OF APPROACHES, IDEAS AND TECHNIQUES THAT HELP MANAGE LEARNING AND GROWTH”**

## SQA Customised Awards

Our SCQF Credit Rated courses are slightly different, with delegates awarded credit points instead of CPD hours.

Two credits means that a programme is expected to take an average of about 20 hours and three

credits about 30 hours. Again, this includes both classroom time and home-study time etc.

COURSE NAME:	LEVEL:	CREDIT POINTS:
SQA [SELECT] Customised Award in Design and Verification of Electrical Installations to BS 7671 (208)	7	3
SQA [SELECT] Customised Award in Initial Verification of Electrical Installations to BS 7671 (209)	7	2
SQA [SELECT] Customised Award in Inspection and Testing of Electrical Installations to BS 7671 (including Periodic Inspection & Testing) (214)	7	3
SQA [SELECT] Customised Award in Requirements for Electrical Installations to BS 7671 (218)	7	2
SQA [SELECT] Customised Award in The Electrotechnical Site Safety Assessment (TESSA) (222)	6	1

# Industry insight

## How to make a success of succession

Our industry expert outlines the many benefits of succession planning – and why the modern electrical business shouldn't leave it to chance when it comes to handing over the reins

WORDS  
**PAUL McDEVITT**  
Managing Director,  
McDevitt & Co



**I**n my 20-plus years in the construction industry, I've seen many successful businesses come unstuck through their failure to properly plan for the succession of key personnel.

Even those who have developed their succession plans are often thrown into disarray when the unexpected happens, such as a rising star deciding their future lies elsewhere or a key player stepping aside because of ill health.

I'm not suggesting that it's possible to plan for

**every** eventuality, but the laissez-faire approach to succession planning that many businesses take is really asking for trouble.

A proper succession plan, effectively communicated to all the key players, will go a significant way to helping any business cope with unexpected staff shocks.

### WHAT IS SUCCESSION PLANNING?

Succession planning is the process of identifying and developing employees within an organisation and/or

identifying external candidates who have the potential to take on leadership roles in the future.

Effective succession planning is essential for the long-term success and viability of any business, as it ensures that there's a pipeline of capable and well-prepared individuals ready to step into key positions of authority when the need arises. The benefits of such planning are many, and include:

- **Smooth transition of leadership** – when a

↓ Employees will feel valued if they are part of their firm's long-term strategy





key employee leaves the organisation or retires and there is a well-defined succession plan in place, the transition of leadership is less disruptive to the organisation and there is less chance of a power vacuum being created. This allows the business to continue operating seamlessly, without any loss of productivity or impact on staff morale.

- **Retention of top talent** – when employees see that there is a clear path for career advancement within the organisation, they're more likely to stay with the company long-term. This helps businesses reduce turnover and the costs associated with recruiting and training new employees. In my experience, not seeing a clear pathway is one of the main reasons talent leaves a business.
- **Improved employee engagement and morale** – employees who are part of a succession plan are likely to feel more engaged and motivated. Knowing that their employer is invested in their development and has a plan for their future can boost employee morale and loyalty, leading to increased productivity, improved quality of work and higher levels of customer satisfaction.
- **Reduced recruitment costs** – a well-defined succession plan reduces the need for external recruitment, saving on costs such as advertising, agency fees and interview expenses. Internal promotions also tend to result in faster onboarding

Paul McDevitt is Managing Director of McDevitt & Co, an experienced business consultancy that helps to inspire people, improve productivity and increase profits in the construction industry. Find out more and contact him at [www.mcdevitt.co](http://www.mcdevitt.co)

**"EFFECTIVE SUCCESSION PLANNING IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE LONG-TERM SUCCESS AND VIABILITY OF ANY BUSINESS"**



and training times, as the employee is already familiar with the company culture and processes.

- **Continuity of company culture and values** – by developing employees from within the organisation, new leaders are likely to already share the same values and beliefs as their predecessors. This helps to maintain the company's culture and values, which is an important factor in attracting and retaining customers and suppliers.
- **Better decision-making** – as employees are developed and trained for leadership roles, they're given the opportunity to gain experience and exposure to different aspects of the business, helping them develop a broader perspective and deeper understanding of the organisation. This results in better decision-making as the leaders have a more holistic understanding of the business and can make better informed decisions.
- **Improved business performance** – by developing

and promoting employees from within, businesses can ensure that they have a strong leadership team with the right values, skillset and experience necessary to drive growth and success and increase revenues, profitability and market share.

#### IN CONCLUSION

Successful succession planning is an essential process for the long-term success of any business.

Investing in such planning now can help your business build a strong pipeline of capable and well-prepared leaders who are ready to take on key positions when you need them to step up.

Failure to properly plan in advance for this succession can lead to dips in business performance, staff exodus and, in some cases, business failure.

As a business leader, you need to be planning your own succession plan and that of your key players **NOW**. Failure to do so puts your operation at needless risk. ■

# Force majeure in construction contracts – the basics

Our expert looks at what a clause that covers exceptional events means for your business

## WHAT IS ‘FORCE MAJEURE’?

In construction contracts, a force majeure clause is one which can relieve a party of its obligations following a force majeure event. Commonly referred to as “acts of God”, force majeure events are unforeseeable, exceptional or outwith the control of contracting parties. Examples include acts of war, civil unrest and pandemic/epidemic events such as the recent COVID-19 outbreak. The term force majeure has no recognised legal meaning in Scots law so the term ought to be expressly defined in any construction contract which seeks to include a force majeure clause.

## EFFECT OF A FORCE MAJEURE CLAUSE

Depending on the terms of a contract, a force majeure clause can have a variety of different effects. This can include relieving parties of required performance, entitlement to extensions of time or even the right for a party to terminate the contract.

## SEEKING TO RELY UPON A FORCE MAJEURE CLAUSE

If a party wishes to seek to enforce the terms of a force majeure clause within a construction contract, that party should ensure that it can:

- Demonstrate that the specific force

WORDS  
**LINDSAY STARK**  
Solicitor



MACROBERTS  
LLP

Lindsay Stark is a solicitor in MacRoberts’ Construction Law Department. MacRoberts advises on all elements of construction contracts and disputes

majeure event is the direct cause of any failure to undertake their contractual obligations and that the event is entirely outwith their control, and

- Demonstrate that they have taken reasonable steps in which to mitigate their losses as a result of the force majeure event.

## WHAT TO DO NEXT?

Generally, a party wishing to rely upon a force majeure clause must notify the other party to the contract of their incapability to carry out their obligations under a construction contract. The terms of the contract may expressly state the notification procedure that should be followed to prevent any future issues concerning loss of entitlement arising. Many construction contracts will also contain time limit (or time bar) and specific delivery requirements in terms of notices which give deadlines that should be strictly followed in terms of notification. Failure to meet deadlines may result in loss of entitlement to claim. ■

**“DEPENDING ON THE TERMS OF A CONTRACT, A FORCE MAJEURE CLAUSE CAN HAVE A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT EFFECTS”**



**LEGAL  
HELPLINE  
0141 303 1111**

As a Member of SELECT, you have access to the Legal Helpline operated by MacRoberts LLP. This helpline covers advice and assistance on commercial, contractual and employment matters under Scots law which concern your business.



# Payment problems? Take direct action!

Cashflow difficulties are becoming more of an issue, but picking up the phone and actually talking to reluctant payers rather than firing off endless emails can often work wonders in resolving financial disputes

WORDS  
**LEN BUNTON**  
FRICS FCIArb,  
HON FRIAS  
Contract Expert



**"CHASE YOUR CASH – IT'S YOUR MONEY AND SHOULD BE IN YOUR BANK!"**



**I**T'S been an incredible start to 2023, with so many things happening that it's now time to draw breath!

Firstly, the number of businesses seeking assistance with cashflow and payment issues is growing all the time, with the amounts in dispute in my experience ranging from £20,000 to over £1 million.

Why is this happening? Well, I think it's a sign of the impact of the pandemic and price increases, with many organisations having to slow payments to their supply chain as they battle up the line with their own clients to be paid.

So what's the best approach to get a resolution? Well, mine is to try opening communication and getting in touch to see if the non-payer will engage. There's no point sending hostile emails as they'll just be ignored or a game of email tennis will ensue that goes nowhere. Suspending the performance of your obligations is also a powerful step that more contractors should take.

The recent payment survey by the Construction Industry Collective Voice (CICV) certainly brought home some realities. Many contractors are still not getting paid the full value of their applications for payment and others are seeing deductions for contra charges.

To help with such issues, I'd urge you to read and implement the recommendations in the CICV Best Practice Guide. This is aimed at helping you improve the way you manage the financial side of your contracts, so get your engineers, commercial manager and QS involved **NOW!**

On the subject of payment, SELECT Managing Director Alan Wilson and I recently met two Scottish Government officials to discuss ways of improving payment. We had a good discussion, during which we drove home the need for transparency and for public and private sector employers to take a greater interest in what money is going to the supply chain and when.

And finally, there's been some progress on the Construction Accord, but it's a slow burner. In the meantime, my final message is: Chase your cash – it's **YOUR** money and should be in **YOUR** bank! ■

## WHY WE ALL MUST FOCUS ON QUALITY

On pages 34 and 35 you'll see an article on the Construction Quality Improvement Charter, to which I'd encourage you to sign up. The industry's track record on quality is poor, which has a significant knock-on effect with payment, so it's now up to **EVERYONE** to respond and get things right first time.



## REMEMBER!

Download the BPG at [bit.ly/CICV-BPG](http://bit.ly/CICV-BPG) and the CICV payments survey at [bit.ly/CICV-survey](http://bit.ly/CICV-survey). The recent CICV cashflow webinar is also available to watch again at [bit.ly/cash-web-cicv](http://bit.ly/cash-web-cicv)

## BEST PRACTICE A REAL PRIORITY

The CICV Best Practice Guide was high on the agenda recently when I hosted in-house training sessions with the HF Group.

Contract conditions and tender procedures were also discussed at the workshops in Glasgow and Edinburgh. It was encouraging to see so many professionals engaging with the session and acknowledging the importance of best practice.

A positive omen for the future!

Workshops with HF Group professionals produced some very positive feedback



01

# Offering healthy rewards

## QUICKER ACCESS TO MEDICAL TREATMENT

Getting help, treatment and support for health concerns as early as possible is vital. With PMI, employees are usually treated quicker than they would be through the NHS, helping your staff get back on their feet and back to work faster.

02

## THE CHOICE OF WHEN AND WHERE MEDICAL SPECIALISTS TREAT YOU

Generally, with NHS treatment, patients have little say over who they are treated by, when and where. With PMI, your employees usually have greater choice about when and where they are treated.

03

## MORE WAYS TO ACCESS QUALITY HEALTHCARE

The ECIS PMI scheme includes additional services which go beyond access to hospital treatment. For example, the Babylon Digital GP service provides access to a GP 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and appointments are generally available within two hours. In addition, the Employee Assistance Programme is a free, confidential telephone service which supports your employees with issues that may be impacting their wellbeing and work performance.

**"AS A MEMBER OF THE SELECT SCHEME, YOU CAN ACCESS MEDICAL ADVICE AND TREATMENT QUICKLY AND EASILY WITHOUT THE HASSLE OF LENGTHY WAIT TIMES"**

With a wide range of benefits now available, today's operatives expect nothing less than the best when choosing a new employer. Private medical insurance is one perk that can tip the balance in your favour when looking to recruit a high-flyer...

**WORDS VICKI LESLIE**  
Client Relationship Manager, EC Insurance Services



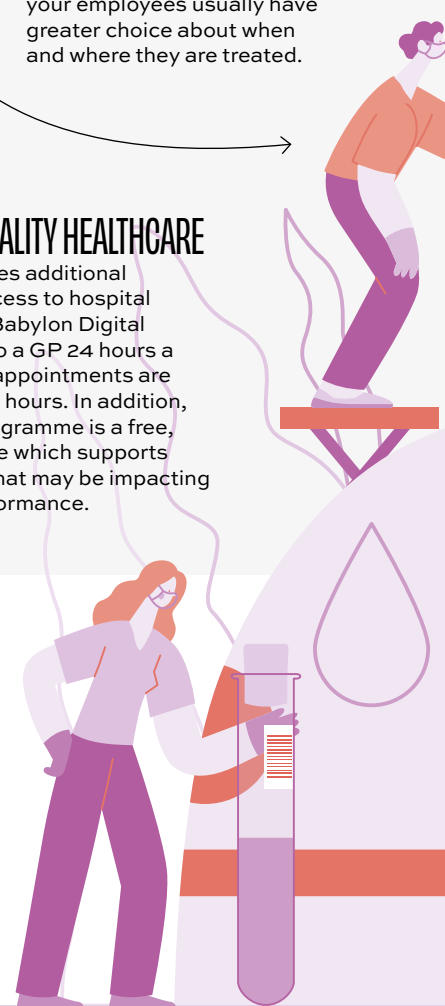
**I**n a sector where talent is king, employers are constantly vying for the attention of skilled operatives. So how do you ensure that your company stands out from the crowd and attracts the crème de la crème of talent?

It all starts with offering competitive compensation and benefits that make your employees feel valued and appreciated. Private medical insurance (PMI) is one such perk that can help your business stand out and attract and retain the best people.

The SELECT PMI scheme is an exclusive scheme for SELECT Members that's only available through ECIS, a chartered insurance broker and SELECT Associate Member with a wealth of experience in the health and wellbeing market.

Since its launch in 1980, the scheme's range of benefits has supported thousands of staff and helped keep them healthy when they became unwell.

On these pages we've highlighted just five ways it could benefit your business and make it more attractive to a potential employee.





# 04

## PREMIUM STABILITY

ECIS can help protect policyholders from significant year-on-year increases driven by high-value individual claims. ECIS achieves this by pooling members into a single scheme. As a result, ECIS scheme members have benefited from years of premium stability relative to the wider market, helping to ensure that the cost of providing this valuable benefit remains sustainable.

## EMPLOYERS CAN ADD FAMILY MEMBERS TO THE SCHEME

Having peace of mind that their loved ones are looked after can help with your employees' productivity and morale. Family members get the same excellent healthcare benefits and the reassurance that they can access services such as the Babylon Digital GP.

## DON'T WAIT FOR WELLBEING

Early intervention is essential in healthcare and we all know time is of the essence when it comes to our health; the last thing you want is to be stuck waiting weeks or even months for medical treatment.

Early detection and treatment of health conditions can lead to better health outcomes, including a faster and more complete recovery. It can also help prevent a condition's progression, leading to better long-term health outcomes.

Unfortunately, the NHS is currently facing high demand, which can make accessing healthcare frustrating and time-consuming. As a member of the SELECT scheme, you can access medical advice and treatment quickly and easily without lengthy waiting times.

With PMI cover through the SELECT scheme administered by ECIS, your team can access reduced hospital waiting times, increased medical resources, and a wider range of specialist treatments. That means they can get the care they need and return to work quicker than ever.

But that's not all – as a SELECT Member, you don't even need to see a GP for some areas such as problems with muscles, bones and joints. You can access Bupa's Direct Access Services and get straight to a specialist, helping to get the care needed faster than ever before.

With PMI cover, your team can feel confident knowing their health is in good hands. And as a result, they'll be more productive, engaged, and motivated in their work. So why wait? Join the SELECT PMI scheme administered by ECIS and give your team the gift of good health. ■

## HOW ECIS CAN HELP

Whether you have an existing scheme or are new to employee benefits, we're here to help you find the right cover for your business. To find out more about what ECIS can do for you, visit [ecins.co.uk](http://ecins.co.uk), call 0330 221 0241 or email [ecis@ecins.co.uk](mailto:ecis@ecins.co.uk)



# 05

In this special guest column, our Associate Member puts innovation under the microscope and explains why reactive change is no substitute for thinking and acting differently

# Making the right connections – in a truly new way

WORDS  
RYAN DEMPSEY  
CEO, TCW



**A**LBERT Einstein once said: “You can’t solve a problem on the same level it was created; you have to rise above it to the next level.” There is a significant difference between going against the grain and trying something new because of a positive belief that it will change things for the better, as opposed to acting only because something’s happened and you **HAVE** to.

When we look at the sectors we work in, one of the major issues is the sheer amount of standards, legislation, guidance and codes of practice we’re bound by. And when a group of people also do something a certain way, we feel obliged to follow that too.

So how do we break out of these restrictions and start thinking – and acting – differently to improve the way we see, do and use things?

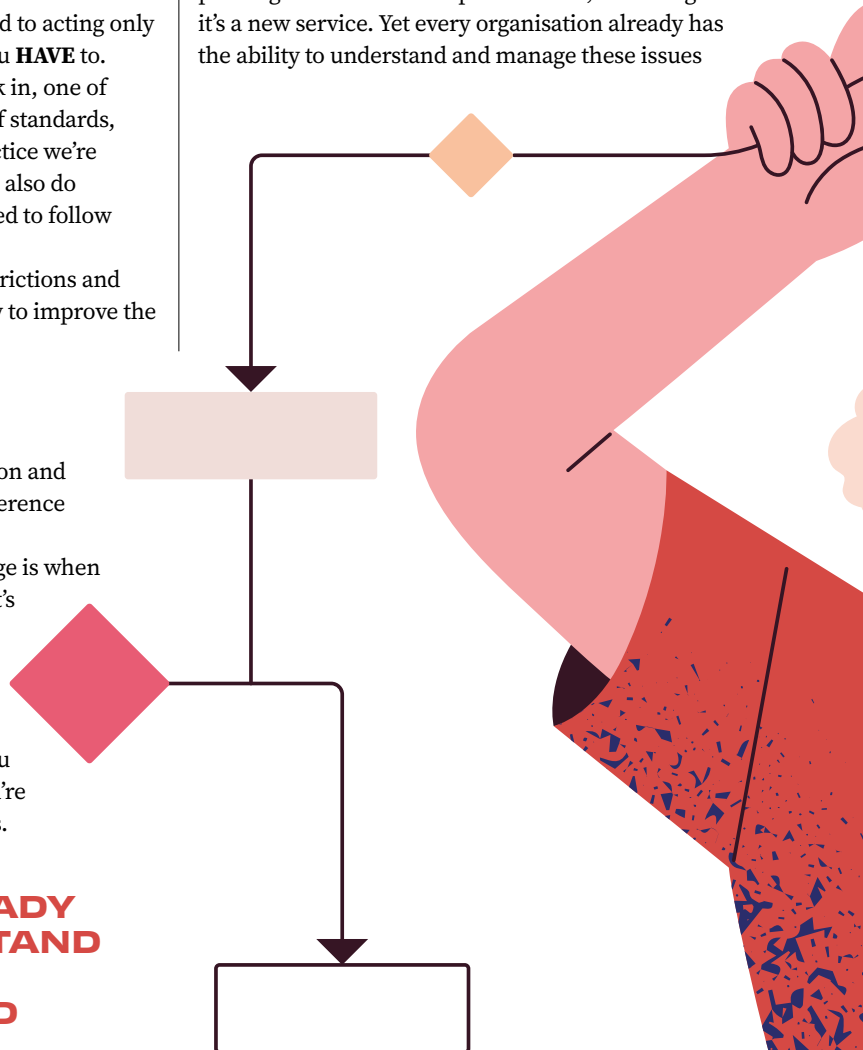
## THE RESTRICTIONS OF REACTIVE CHANGE

Two things change the world, innovation and reactive change, so let’s look at the difference between them.

As the name suggests, reactive change is when people work to address something that’s already happened. However, there are many issues with this. The main one is that it’s a knee-jerk reaction, created from minimal understanding just to try to be first out the door. So you might claim to be an innovator but you’re not – you’re just more agile than others.

In my opinion, the best example of this is the role of building safety manager. I see many organisations now employing multiple people to manage compliance of buildings, yet it’s something that should be done as a matter of course, without the need for a specific job.

Another topical example is companies currently pushing modules for damp and mould, assuming it’s a new service. Yet every organisation already has the ability to understand and manage these issues



**"EVERY ORGANISATION ALREADY HAS THE ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND AND MANAGE THESE ISSUES THROUGH EXISTING DATA AND COMMUNICATIONS"**



through existing data and communications. The same thing happened with fire doors a few years ago, with everyone pushing for something new and innovative – yet BS 8214:2016 already gave perfectly adequate maintainability requirements.

With all these examples, the answer was already there, so why the eagerness to look for so-called ‘innovation’ that was anything but?

### THE PATH TO INSPIRATION

When it comes to true innovation I’ve learnt that people say one of two things – “I wish I’d thought of that” or “surely that’s not possible”.

When we innovate, we use our knowledge and experience to create something and improve a known issue because it’s the right thing to do.

When we consider true innovation, it’s really hard because almost everything is born from something else – but that’s perfectly fine. If we make a process better in a way that makes people safer or saves more lives, then we succeed in the innovative mindset.

And that’s exactly what true innovation is – a mindset, knowing that today’s issues and pains can be improved by doing something differently. It’s not

## FROM INFO TO INSIGHT

As well as being an Associate Member of SELECT, TCW is an innovative technology company whose software enables 100% of data in 100% of documents to be checked and analysed, highlighting issues and turning information into insight. Find out more at [www.tcwin.co.uk](http://www.tcwin.co.uk)



always easy to see what this ‘different’ is, but there are people out there who **DO** see things another way. Speaking from experience,

converting an idea into something you can see or hold is so painful and hard that most people just can’t be bothered or don’t know where to turn.

That’s why I long for a time when true innovation is recognised by people who aren’t just looking for a quick and easy route to ‘new’.



### THE TEST OF TRUE INNOVATION

If you used the above logic to draw up a two-column list of new initiatives in our sector and labelled them ‘Innovation’ and ‘Reactive Change’, you’d drop very few into the first column.

I very rarely see what I call an innovative product. Don’t get me wrong, I do see lots of amazing products and services, but the ones that should be held up as innovation icons seem to struggle because the market is diluted with false promises.

Take something close to my heart – software. Anything is possible with software, so the answer you’ll always hear is: “Yes, we can do that.” You might think that’s innovation – but the hard bit is the development process, i.e. actually building it and fulfilling that promise.

What these so-called innovators don’t tell you is that they’ll need you – or someone else – to hand-hold them to the point of delivery, which might not even happen.

So if you’re looking for true innovation and want to weed out the dishonest marketing and army of over-promisers out there, you should be asking: “Can your product do something completely different – and do it **NOW?**”

If the answer’s yes, you’ve got yourself an innovator. ■



# SECTT Update

## Investing in the industry of the future

SECTT once again played a leading role in this year's Scottish Apprenticeship Week, helping MSP Sue Webber meet the electrical talent of tomorrow at a local SELECT Member company

equipping its learners with vital skills for the future.

During the visit to the SELECT Member firm on 10 March, she met apprentices Mac Forrester, Callum Wilson and Sean Slorach, who shared their work experiences and told her how much they enjoyed their jobs.

Ms Webber, who is the Conservative MSP for the Lothian region, said: "I was delighted to visit M&E specialists Livingston as part of Scottish Apprenticeship Week 2023. Speaking to the

↓ Left to right:  
SECTT's Anne Galbraith, apprentice Mac Forrester, John Robertson of Skills Development Scotland, apprentice Callum Wilson, Livingston Training Coordinator Laura McMahon, Sue Webber MSP, apprentice Sean Slorach and Livingston Operations Director Andy Russell

**W**ITH the theme of this year's Scottish Apprenticeship Week being 'unlocking potential', it was

fitting that SECTT visited a company that believes in always going the extra mile to help apprentices flourish.

The Trust arranged for Sue Webber MSP to tour Livingston Building Services as part of the annual event, where she learned first-hand how the company is

**2,784**

electrical apprentices and adult trainees currently in training in Scotland





apprentices has given me a real insight into the invaluable opportunity these positions present to them. Earning while they learn and gaining formal qualifications will accelerate their development and create a springboard for their careers.

“It was also great to take part in a roundtable discussion about the importance of these apprenticeships and how Livingston is investing in our future workforce.”

### LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Ms Webber heard how Livingston’s ethos of promoting from within has also served the business well, with excellent staff retention meaning that more than 25% of staff have been with the business for at least 10 years.

Andy Russell, Operations Director at Livingston, revealed: “Apprenticeships are vital and these young people are the future of the business.

“At Livingston, we have a good reputation within the industry for training and development and we want to maintain that and build on it as apprentices are key to success.

“When all is said and done, our apprentices carry the future of our business in their hands. Properly

**“IT WAS INSPIRING TO HEAR THE THREE APPRENTICES TALK ABOUT THE JOBS THEY WERE WORKING ON AND THE EXCELLENT VARIETY OF WORK THEY GET TO EXPERIENCE”**

**↑ ABOUT SECTT**  
SECTT manages high-quality training on behalf of the SJIB. To find out more about SECTT and its work, call 0131 445 5659, email [admin@sectt.org.uk](mailto:admin@sectt.org.uk) or visit [www.sectt.org.uk](http://www.sectt.org.uk)



managed, the modern apprenticeship allows them to get the vital skills, knowledge and experience they need and I’d have no hesitation in recommending it.”

During the visit, Andy also stressed the importance of having a good working relationship with SECTT – and said the support they receive from its staff is invaluable.

He said: “Apprentices really have to knuckle down and focus, so I keep close to them to make sure they’re getting the correct training and developing in line with their development plan.

“If they’re struggling, we give them support to get things moving in the right direction.

“The support from SECTT is equally important and our relationship is fantastic – a lot of our management team have come through the apprenticeship programme and know many of the people at SECTT from being in the industry.

“They’re great and if there are ever any issues you just need to contact them for advice and support.”

### A PIPELINE OF TALENT

The visit was facilitated by SECTT CEO Anne Galbraith, who said she continues to be impressed by the quality of learners developed by the company.

She told *cabletalk*: “I’ve worked with Livingston for many years and it never fails to recruit, support and train apprentices to a very high standard.

“It was inspiring to hear the three apprentices talk about the jobs they were working on and the excellent variety of work they get to experience.

“It was also lovely to hear that they all really enjoyed what they were doing, with each apprentice expressing satisfaction with both their on-site training and college programme.

“Livingston’s work spans a wide range of public and private sectors, and this pipeline of talent will help it continue to work within high-profile buildings for some of the UK’s leading organisations.”

SECTT also arranged for politicians to visit other electrical companies across Scotland, including SVM Port Services at Cairnryan, which welcomed Finlay Carson, Conservative MSP for Galloway and West Dumfries. It also helped to facilitate a visit by SNP MSP Clare Adamson to CS Electrical Ltd in her constituency of Motherwell and Wishaw.

Anne added: “I was delighted to organise these visits on behalf of the Scottish Government through Skills Development Scotland, which helped recognise the high-quality training we manage on behalf of the Scottish Joint Industry Board.” ■

960

**electrical apprentices and adult trainees enrolled across Scotland for 2022-2023 intake**

# SJIB Bulletin

## Safety first to help secure your card

In this edition of *cabletalk*, we'd like to issue a reminder to anyone who's completing an initial application for an ECS Manager's Card.

Initial applications for such a card have a Level 4 (or above) health and safety qualification requirement.

This means individuals should have completed one of the following courses:

- Construction Skills (CITB) Site Supervisor Safety Training Scheme
- IOSH Safety, Health and Environmental for Construction Site Managers
- CITB Site Management Safety Training Scheme
- CCNSG Safety Passport – Supervising/Leading a



Team safety course

- IOSH Safety for Directors
- NEBOSH Diploma in Occupational Safety
- UK degree level health and safety qualification.

If you have completed one of the above mentioned

Level 4 health and safety

qualifications more than three years ago, then in addition, you must also complete an ECS Health, Safety and Environmental Assessment or an approved equivalent within the

past three years. A list of approved exemptions can be found at [sjib.org.uk/ecs-hse-assessment/ecs-approved-equivalent-exemptions/](https://www.sjib.org.uk/ecs-hse-assessment/ecs-approved-equivalent-exemptions/)

Please note that the CITB Site Management Safety Training Scheme (SMSTS) Refresher is one of these exemptions and can be accepted as an exemption for the ECS Health, Safety and Environmental Assessment, as long as this has been completed within the past three years.

It is not, however, an exemption for the Level 4 health and safety requirement for this card. Therefore, you must also submit your original CITB Site Management Safety Training Scheme certificate. ■

### TAKE THE CIRCULAR ROUTE TO STAY UPDATED ONLINE

Remember to please keep an eye on the 'Circulars' area of the SJIB website for any updates. This can be found at [www.sjib.org.uk/category/circulars](https://www.sjib.org.uk/category/circulars)

We refresh this regularly with information such as changes to the National Working Rules, wage rate increases, holiday arrangements and office closures. If you work with someone who deals with tasks such as payroll, expenses, annual leave etc, please advise them to check this page regularly too.

A reminder also that the latest SJIB National Rates & Allowances can be found at [www.sjib.org.uk/rates-and-allowances/sjib-national-rates-allowances-2023](https://www.sjib.org.uk/rates-and-allowances/sjib-national-rates-allowances-2023)

### RAC Planner is quickest way to work out mileage

A reminder to all SELECT Members that with effect from 2 January 2023 the calculation of the actual distance between the shop and the job has been by way of the fastest route using the RAC Route Planner.

The mileage allowance and rate is payable to employees who are being paid travel rate and are travelling in their own time. Mileage allowance is payable to operatives and apprentices who use their own transport from the shop to their place of work and is free of tax.

Mileage rate is payable to operatives and apprentices where transport is provided and this rate is subject to the appropriate rate of income tax. Please refer to the National Working Rules for taxation information.



↑ Make sure you're claiming the right mileage for the job





↑ UK Government changes led to an increase in pay for apprentices

# SHORT CUTS

01



ECS Health, Safety and Environmental Assessment approved exemptions

02



SJIB National Rates & Allowances

03



Current SJIB rates of pay

04



SJIB Circulars section of website

05



Most recent SJIB Circulars

# Apprentices learn to live with a wage rise

**A**s mentioned in the previous issue of *cabletalk*, the National Minimum Wage (NMW) and National Living Wage (NLW) increased on 1 April 2023 after an announcement by the UK Government.

The rates are now as follows:

AGE	PAY PER HOUR
23 and over	£10.42 (NLW)
21 to 22	£10.18
18 to 20	£7.49
16 to 17	£5.28
Apprentice	£5.28

As this has had a direct effect on the SJIB Apprentice Rates, the SJIB agreed on amended contractual rates which electrical installation apprentices should be paid.

The current SJIB rates of pay – which took effect on 2 January 2023 – can be viewed at [www.sjib.org.uk/rates-and-allowances/sjib-national-rates-allowances-2023](http://www.sjib.org.uk/rates-and-allowances/sjib-national-rates-allowances-2023)

For more information, please visit [www.sjib.org.uk/category/circulars/circulars-2023](http://www.sjib.org.uk/category/circulars/circulars-2023) ■

## ↑ ABOUT SJIB

SJIB regulates relations between employers and employees engaged in the Scottish electrotechnical industry. To find out more about SJIB and its work, visit our website at [www.sjib.org.uk](http://www.sjib.org.uk)

## A CALL FOR ACTION OVER PHONE RAGE

As outlined in previous bulletins, and following a series of challenging situations faced by SJIB team members, we recently took part in a training course in how to manage challenging

phone calls. Organised by the Conflict Training Company, the session has helped the team better understand the issues that operatives and callers face and where frustration may stem from.

The team was given various techniques and strategies to help them to control and de-escalate challenging calls, manage their own reactions

and responses to a caller's anger, deal with challenging and abusive behaviour and turn around unproductive calls.

We expect anyone interacting with our staff to do so with dignity and respect. Our team is there to help as much as possible and communicate the rules and requirements that are in place.



↑ We expect all callers to treat our staff with dignity and respect



# ProZone



## Hard work pays off for talented Ian

LINIAN CEO Ian Arbuckle has been included in the inaugural Family Business Top 100, which showcases the exceptional contribution of individuals and their work in a family business.

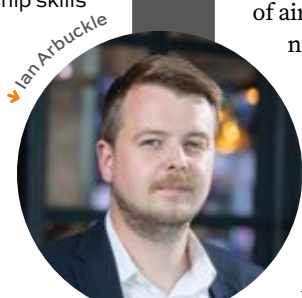
Ian, who founded LINIAN with his sister Lynne and their parents and is also Technical Director, was praised for his inspirational leadership and for being a “champion of change and innovation”.

The former electrician is the driver behind the new LINIAN apprenticeship programme, mentoring and supporting the next generation while increasing the leadership skills of the existing team.

Nominations were sought from all corners of the UK for the list, which was open to entrants who have worked in a senior position in the business for at least five years.

Paul Andrews of report creators Family Business United said: “Family businesses are the backbone of the UK economy and often the unsung heroes too.”

➔ Find out more about LINIAN at [www.linianclip.co.uk](http://www.linianclip.co.uk) and see the Family Business 100 at [www.familybusinessunited.com](http://www.familybusinessunited.com)



➔ Ian Arbuckle

## HomeLINK helps improve indoor air quality

**W**EST of Scotland Housing Association's (WSHA)

Springfield Cross development has been built to the highest energy standards specification called Passivhaus.

This standard ensures higher levels of airtightness in the building, produces net-zero residences and improves energy efficiency for residents.

To monitor the effects of this new standard on the project, WSHA has installed Aico's HomeLINK Connected Home Solution in every residence.

As higher standards of new builds are being introduced throughout Scotland, buildings are becoming more airtight, bringing indoor air quality to the forefront of the agenda.

With higher levels of airtightness in the high-rise to improve energy efficiency, there are increased risks of damp, mould, and poor indoor air quality.

WSHA implemented a Mechanical



➔ The environmental condition of the new homes will be monitored by the Ei1000G Gateway

Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) system to assist in maintaining good air quality. This works by increasing clean airflow within the property, extracting moisture-laden air and resupplying fresh filtered air back in, while recovering any heat generated by the occupants' use of the properties.

WSHA has implemented a proactive approach to ensure these systems' effectiveness by monitoring the building's environmental conditions with the HomeLINK Connected Home Solution.

➔ Read more at [bit.ly/aico-wsha](http://bit.ly/aico-wsha)

## Nico takes on CEO role at Signify

Nico van der Merwe has been appointed as Chief Executive Officer for Signify UK and Ireland.

Nico joined the world leader in lighting from Schneider Electric, where he spent 15 years in various roles, most recently as Vice President for Home & Distribution UK&I. Nico has two decades of experience in international business and leading strategic business transformations. He started his career in Sub-Saharan Africa, where he worked in sales, marketing and

general management roles, before taking the position of Vice President Channel Development – Europe, based in France.

He said: “I'm excited to join Signify as CEO of UK&I, and I look forward to working with the teams further to drive our lighting innovations in this dynamic market.

“Signify is a company with a rich heritage, a powerful product portfolio, a talented team, and a strong leadership position in sustainability. I am sure we are

well positioned to further grow the business and industry while continuing to make a positive impact on society and the environment through our innovations. The UK and Ireland have exciting opportunities in the market for us and our customers.”

Based in Guildford, Nico will report to Maria Letizia Mariani, CCO of Signify.

➔ Find out more about Signify at [www.signify.com](http://www.signify.com)

➔ Nico van der Merwe



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davidh@connectcommunications.co.uk

**BECOME AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER**

To inquire about becoming an Associate Member, email  
memberservices@select.org.uk

# V-TAC on lookout for Preferred Installers

**V**-TAC is inviting Members to become Preferred Installers and enjoy a range of products, technical support and exclusive benefits.

The company offers a complete solar PV solution, with stocks available via electrical wholesalers and free training and demo installations provided.

Becoming a V-TAC Preferred Installer means receiving installation intelligence directly from its network, which receives multiple enquiries from would-be customers on a daily basis.

Preferred Installers are listed on V-TAC's website and enjoy joint marketing support on social media and in leading renewables publications. Other benefits include:

- **Free training and demo installations** – including free use of the V-TAC demo site to showcase the monitoring app and a chance to view the PV system in action before installation. Training is



↑ Preferred Installers will enjoy a range of products and support

offered on new products, along with previews of the latest innovation.

- **Technical and commissioning support** – ensuring that solar products are installed correctly, leading to increased efficiency and customer satisfaction.
- **Design support** – V-TAC products are listed in solar design software, ensuring systems are designed correctly. If you don't have access to these, V-TAC offers free design support.

➔ To register your interest in becoming a V-TAC Preferred Installer, simply scan the QR code.



## DEFINITY COMPLETE – THE ALL-IN-ONE SOLUTION FROM CLICK SCOLMORE

Embracing feedback from the contractors is what drives product development across the Scolmore Group of companies. In response to the latest feedback, Scolmore has taken its popular Definity screwless wiring accessories range and simplified the ordering process.

Up until now, Click Scolmore's popular Definity screwless wiring accessories range has been supplied as two separate elements – insert and cover plate – with each requiring its own separate product

code. In a move to simplify the ordering process for customers, Definity inserts and cover plates will now be supplied as one unit with one product code.

Definity has evolved from Scolmore's Define flat plate accessory range and features all of the same attributes including modular switching but without the visible fixing screws. Definity goes one stage further by incorporating screwless, push-fit face plates in a range of finishes. Because the face plates are supplied independently of the electrical inserts, it means that the initial installation of the product can be carried out and any subsequent maintenance or decoration completed before the final fixing of the face plate.



➔ The full range is on the Scolmore website: [www.scolmore.com](http://www.scolmore.com)  
The Definity product brochure can be downloaded from the website as well as from the Scolmore Group app. The new Definity Complete range can be viewed here: [youtu.be/pKh4ObpJVRI](https://youtu.be/pKh4ObpJVRI)

**OUR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**





## Ovia's New Addition to Backlit LED Panel Range

Ovia continues to invest in its lighting solutions and has added new Burgess Brackets to its panel lighting accessories range.

Designed for fitting backlit panels into Burgess ceilings, the new brackets are compatible with all Ovia Backlit LED Panels.

Made from powder coated steel, with an



↑ The new addition to the range has a five-year warranty

IP20 rating, the Burgess Brackets measure 560mm x 16mm x 25.5mm and have six fixing points. They are supplied in packs of two and come with a five-year warranty.

📄 The latest Ovia catalogue, can be downloaded from [www.oviauk.com](http://www.oviauk.com) and the Scolmore Group app.

## Keep clean and safe with Thorn

Thorn Lighting has launched a new hygienic and durable luminaire for clean environments.

The Duoproof 2 is ideal for laboratories, clean rooms, commercial kitchens and industrial and pharmaceutical production facilities, where hygiene and reliability are essential.

The robust and durable luminaire features a high level of resistance to chemicals and heat and offers IP65 protection against dust, dirt, steam and water.

The smooth surface, rounded



↑ Thorn is an ideal choice for lab environments

corners and impermeable join between the polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) cover and steel housing also result in an optimised hygienic design that allows for quick and easy cleaning maintenance cycles.

Duoproof 2 is suitable for use in high temperature environments up to 50°C, can deliver up to 150 lm/W and offers excellent optical light distribution and recyclability.

🔗 Find out more at [bit.ly/thorn-duo](http://bit.ly/thorn-duo)

## TIS Ready for Roadshow

TIS will once again be attending most of SELECT's upcoming Toolbox Talks in May and June.

On show will be multi award-winning EVSE charger and

electrical installation testing equipment, market-leading solar PV installation testers and all-important electrical safe isolation kits.

One 'product of the moment' is the TIS 570 AC/DC leakage clampmeter, which can detect the potentially dangerous

and damaging effects of DC leakage currents.

The TIS range also includes equipment for measuring power quality, thermal imagery, the environment and more.

🔗 For more information, go to [www.testinstrumentsolutions.co.uk](http://www.testinstrumentsolutions.co.uk)



# INTRODUCING THE NEW LIGHTING CATALOGUE

# 2023

CCT Switchable lights, Solar Floods, and many more new products!

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Renewables range from V-TAC



## V-TAC'S SOLAR SOLUTIONS

V-TAC's new renewables range provides high-quality solar equipment to meet global energy demands and promote clean energy adoption. It offers a complete selection of solar solutions, such as panels, inverters, batteries and accessories, under one roof to create a seamless solar system.

V-TAC's monocrystalline solar panels are noted for their maximum power output and efficiency under low light, shading and degradation conditions. V-TAC panels come with a 25-year Linear Output Warranty, ensuring long-lasting power output.

The 410w panels are available in all black, black frames and silver frames. Higher wattages such as 450W and 545W in silver frame for commercial applications are also available. Fully MCS accredited.

Learn more at [www.vtacenergy.com](http://www.vtacenergy.com)

## SAVE TIME WITH MAGDUO FIRE ALARM

ESP's MAGDUO two-wire fire alarm system is aimed at small to medium contractors, offering them a highly flexible and adaptable system that will save them time and money on the installation process.

Two-wire fire alarm systems are based on standard conventional system

technology. Unlike standard conventional four-wired systems, where the detectors, call points and alarm devices for each zone are wired on separate circuits, MAGDUO utilises intelligent two-wire technology, which allows all devices to be wired on the same set of two-core zone cables back to the control panel – enabling it to use a single circuit per zone both for detection and to power the sounders.

This advanced technology can reduce both installation and material costs

ESP is offering full training on the system to all wholesalers and installers, see [www.espuke.com](http://www.espuke.com)



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### UP TO 36 COMBINATIONS

Perfect for storing less products, whilst offering a full range to contractors.

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- Push-Fit Terminals

PRO Range



SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION

[auroralighting.com](http://auroralighting.com)



## CUT CUSTOMERS' COSTS THANKS TO EFFICIENT LIGHTING DESIGN FROM LUCECO ACADEMY CPD

In a world of spiralling energy costs, it's never been more important to produce lighting installations that are as efficient as possible.

Luceco Academy's new efficiency in lighting design CPD looks at some clever tricks and tips to help you maximise the efficiency of your commercial and industrial lighting designs, including:

- Achieving the correct lighting levels for a given space
- How to calculate and consider payback periods on lighting
- How customers spending more up front can save more in the long term.

This CPD will provide you with the knowledge and understanding to advise your customers how they can save energy and money on lighting.

Register for the Luceco Academy and start the course at [www.luceco-academy.com/electrical-cpd-courses](http://www.luceco-academy.com/electrical-cpd-courses)

LUCECO ACADEMY

## Stay flexible with LumiCS colour switch downlight



**A** NEW colour switchable commercial downlight, the LumiCS™, has been launched by LED lighting specialist Aurora Lighting.

With wattage options between 12W and 35W, each variant also has the ability for the installer to select the desired colour temperature prior to installation. Choose between 3000K, 4000K and 6500K for a range of different applications.

Replacing the popular LumiFit downlight and offering an improved and upgraded downlight, the LumiCS allows wholesalers to stock a high-quality downlight in a range of wattages, without the need to also stock different colour temperature options.

↑ The new downlight offers more flexibility

Whereas the LumiFit was previously only available in 4000K, the new LumiCS has additional colour temperatures of 3000K and 6500K, to allow for more variety in different applications.

Adding to the flexibility of the LumiCS, the downlight comes as Triac dimmable as standard with the option of DALI or 1-10V dimming also available.

Darren Casey from Aurora Lighting said: "The LumiFit downlight was a really popular solution but it was time to replace it with a more technologically advanced offering. The new LumiCS provides the flexibility of selecting the colour temperature prior to installation."

More information is available on the LumiCS range at [bit.ly/aurora-lumics](http://bit.ly/aurora-lumics)

## VIDEOS PUT YOU IN THE PICTURE

SELECT TV keeps you updated with exclusive industry information and Member content



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**26**  
exclusive videos now hosted on SELECT TV

A wealth of invaluable technical updates and expert commercial guidance

SCAN THE CODE TO START WATCHING OR LOG IN TO MY SELECT AT [SELECT.ORG.UK](http://SELECT.ORG.UK)







Thorn Lighting will have access to the latest industry insights

## Q-CRIMP DELIVERS TRIED AND TRUSTED CABLE ACCESSORIES

Unicrimp, part of the Scolmore Group of companies, offers an extensive range of cable accessories under its well-known and trusted Q-Crimp brand.

The company continues to develop and expand the offer to provide electricians with everything they need when working on the tools.

Today, the Q-Crimp range incorporates more than 19 different product categories including cable clips, cable cleats, cable glands and cable ties, fixings, earthing rods, tape and sleeving, as well as trade tubs of fixings and clips in handy, durable and re-sealable plastic tubs.

Recent additions to the range include Nylon Meter Tail Glands and Catenary Kits. The 32mm and 40mm White Nylon Meter Tail Glands with Plug are designed to house incoming cables on a metal consumer unit. A blanking insert plug is also supplied as standard for optional use should no earth wire be present.

The Unicrimp catalogue which showcases the entire range of Q-Crimp accessories can be downloaded from the Unicrimp website at [www.unicrimp.com](http://www.unicrimp.com)

A wide range of cable accessories is available



# Thorn Lighting's bright move

**T**HORN Lighting has joined the Electrical Distributors' Association (EDA) as an Affiliate Member. The company will now be part of a community of leading supply chain businesses working together to promote the interests of the UK's electrotechnical sector.

As part of the EDA, Thorn Lighting will have access to the latest industry insights, trends and best practices, allowing it to serve its customers better and grow its business. The affiliation also strengthens its commitment to providing innovative, energy-efficient lighting solutions to customers.

Paul Kilburn, Managing Director UK & Ireland at Zumtobel Group, said: "We are thrilled to become an Affiliate Member of the EDA as it is crucial

for our business growth in distribution.

"This affiliation will further enhance our position as a leading provider of lighting solutions and better serve our customers. Our membership will provide access to their networking events, enabling us to build relationships with wholesale partners and create opportunities for us to engage on important subject matters such as training, marketing, CSR and HR."

Margaret Fitzsimons, Chief Executive of the EDA, added: "The EDA Board and team are delighted to welcome Thorn Lighting."

For further information on Thorn Lighting, visit [www.thornlighting.co.uk](http://www.thornlighting.co.uk)



## SNICKERS TROUSERS TO SUIT YOUR TRADE

With as many as 40,000 stitches, and up to 64 pieces of fabric in a single pair of Snickers Workwear trousers, it's little wonder they're built to last and the preferred choice of discerning tradesmen and women.

Ergonomically designed for maximum comfort, freedom of movement and functionality, there are more than 80 different styles and 71 different sizes in the Snickers Workwear trouser system, so you'll always find a pair to suit you. The range includes full-stretch slim-fit styles plus street-smart regular

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FIVE MINUTES WITH...

# DEBBIE GILLAN

EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS ADMINISTRATOR



**HELLO DEBBIE. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AT SELECT?**  
I joined the association last October, so have been here about six months now.

**TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR WORK LIFE SO FAR AND HOW YOU ENDED UP AT THE WALLED GARDEN.**

I worked in a five-star hotel in Edinburgh as a reservations manager, then left and trained to be a qualified childcare practitioner. I then went self-employed and worked as a childminder, which gave me a good work/life balance. When the pandemic came along it gave me time to think and I decided to change my job, so I went to work for a telephone answering service while looking for the right position. I then found out about the opening at SELECT which I knew was the right job for me, living with a family who all work in the electrical industry; my son is a qualified electrician and my husband works for a company that supplies parts for the electrical sector.

**WHAT DOES YOUR JOB ENTAIL? TELL US MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO.**

The role is very varied on a day-to-day basis. So I process ECS Card applications for grade cards, assist with the registration of apprentices and adult trainees, ensure cards are ordered and track payments. I also help with applications for Fire, Emergency and Security Systems (FESS) and answer any questions regarding ECS health and safety and general enquiries.

**WHAT'S A TYPICAL DAY BEEN LIKE FOR YOU SO FAR?**  
No two days are the same and

every day is different, which is what I love about it. I can honestly say since the day I started there's not a day that passes that I don't learn something new.

**HAVE YOU HAD CHANCE TO MEET SELECT MEMBERS?**

Not yet. I do speak with them regularly on the phone and am looking forward to meeting Members at this year's Toolbox Talks – come and say hello at the Borders event on 3 May!

**WHAT HAVE YOU MOST ENJOYED ABOUT YOUR JOB SO FAR?**

I love that no two days are the same; I enjoy speaking with Members on the phone and love when I can answer any questions that they may have.

## Quickfire questions:

- Cheese or chocolate?** Cheese
- Dog or cat person?** Dog
- First car owned?** Ford Escort RS2000
- Favourite film?** *Wizard of Oz* or *Annie*
- Favourite TV show?** *Suits*
- Favourite holiday spot?** Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic
- Dream date?** Out for dinner then cocktails at Harvey Nichols
- One thing people might not know about you?** While working in the hotel industry I met Billy Connolly, Sean Connery, Kylie Minogue and many others

**"I CAN HONESTLY SAY SINCE THE DAY I STARTED THERE'S NOT A DAY THAT PASSES THAT I DON'T LEARN SOMETHING NEW"**

# Your Branch Officers:

**ABERDEEN & NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND**

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KEITH SMITH, Vice-Chair  
GRAHAM LYALL, 3rd Representative



**Week commencing 2 October.**  
All venues TBC – contact your Member Representative for details.

## Upcoming SELECT events:

**CENTRAL BOARD**

- Thu 1 June** – Doubletree Edinburgh North Queensferry. Includes SELECT AGM and technical presentation
- Thu 7 September** – venue TBC
- Thu 7 December** – venue TBC



**TOOLBOX TALKS**

- Tue 2 May** – Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh
- Wed 3 May** – Macdonald Cardrona Hotel, Peebles
- Wed 10 May** – The Apex Hotel, Dundee
- Thu 11 May** – Hampden Park, Glasgow

# Competition



## Toolbox Talks wordsearch

S A B C D D U M F R I E S A N D G A L L O W A Y  
 H E D A D H P O G G K E P K L F A S B N R L P H  
 E F R U G B Y P A R K K I L M A R N O C K Q E K  
 T G U A N R Y L P H M N F N M L L F R B N F X L  
 L H M P E D I N B U R G H Q W K E R D F E J C H  
 A I O J R K E A S D F H L J N I B V E M Y Q I F  
 N J S L L L M E Q W Y J G K L R M G R U S W T N  
 D K S J P E B V C X M Y L Z N K M N S I E D Y M  
 A P I T T O D R I E S T A D I U M X C O A F Q D  
 R L E W P O Y T R E W Q S J H G F S T P S J U S  
 T S H E T L A N D R T U G X C V B N M M T L A R  
 S M O Q W E R T Y I S T O R N O W A Y N E M Y C  
 O N T U K Q W E R I U Y W R T Y I O P B R N A A  
 T H E P I C K A Q U O Y C E N T R E G V B B N R  
 P O L O L E R T U L K J H G F D A N M C R V D D  
 Q D J L M K L M N B V C X Z A S N A S X O J S R  
 M U R R A Y F I E L D S T A D I U M Z A O C P O  
 R T F I R A S D F G H J K L H R E M C B K C A N  
 S Y S I N V E R N E S S P D O I T E W E H V E A  
 T U K L O P O I U Y T R A E W A S D F R A M Q H  
 U R L K C N C X Z M J L O P L K J H G D L N X O  
 V F A L K I R K S T A D I U M A B C D E L B V T  
 W X Y U I O P H J C D S A S Z X C B N E T K L E  
 H A M P D E N P A R K S T A D I U M M N L P Y L

- Aberdeen
- Apex City Quay and Spa
- Borders
- Caladh Inn
- Cardrona Hotel
- Drumossie Hotel
- Dumfries and Galloway
- Dundee
- Easterbrook Hall
- Edinburgh
- Falkirk
- Falkirk Stadium
- Glasgow
- Hampden Park Stadium
- Inverness
- Kilmarnock
- Murrayfield Stadium
- Orkney
- Pittodrie Stadium
- Rugby Park
- Kilmarnock
- Shetland
- Shetland Arts
- Stornoway
- The Pickaquooy Centre

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Here's your chance to win £50 of Amazon vouchers with our prize wordsearch about our Toolbox Talks, compiled by SELECT Training Administrator Laurie Burns.

Find the words, take a pic of your finished grid and email it to [memberservices@select.org.uk](mailto:memberservices@select.org.uk) by 5 May. The winner will be drawn at random. T&Cs are online. Congratulations to February/March 2023 winner **Gregor James** from **James Ferguson Electrical, Aberdeenshire**.

February/March 2023 Answers

Q W E R T Y U I O P L K J H G F D S A Z  
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S  
 A D E T E R M I N E D H M N O F H L R C  
 S O L I F O J L A E T O U M N M B O V  
 D I I R O W S E R C A D O H S L M O U B  
 F M E T H T T Y R E S P E C T F N L D N  
 G O V R J H K U E W T U I O I D V O T M  
 M P E N K T T O D N B R A V E I C H L  
 J J S M C S H J A K H H P A W C F N K  
 K M L P M K L X L I B F S T R O N G U  
 L C H O I O C A O H J K S E R N J M I  
 O A A M O S S O L Y F R I T R O T F N F F  
 M A P P R E C I A T E A R E K I I N D G  
 F E P O O B S W U A D O H M O D L G H  
 C A I E P N W E O Z O G M J R P S T L L  
 R E N J O Y O R H U V T R L E B N K T M  
 Y B E R I M T E R T Y U P O S I T I V E  
 T F S T U K A S P H O J V O J R L E B  
 U Z E R N O H P K S U C C E S S C B N V  
 O P L K J H G F D S A Z X C V B N M C

### Membership Enquiries:

Please phone our membership team on 0131 445 5577 to apply to become a Member of SELECT or if you would like more information about joining. Alternatively you can email us on [memberservices@select.org.uk](mailto:memberservices@select.org.uk) or submit an online enquiry.

- Tue 16 May** – Easterbrook Hall, Dumfries
- Wed 17 May** – Rugby Park, Kilmarnock
- Wed 24 May** – Falkirk Stadium, Falkirk
- Tue 6 June** – Drumossie Hotel, Inverness
- Wed 7 June** – Pittodrie Stadium, Aberdeen
- Tue 13 June** – The Pickaquooy Centre, Kirkwall, Orkney

- Wed 14 June** – Shetland Arts Development Agency, Lerwick, Shetland

**Showing now on SELECT TV:**

Get expert advice and technical tips with the huge range of videos available for Members on SELECT TV. Watch now at [bit.ly/SELECT-TV](http://bit.ly/SELECT-TV)

- Wed 21 June** – Caladh Inn, Stornoway



- Mon 31 July** – Dunblane New Golf Club, Perthshire



- Sat 12 August** – The Walled Garden, Midlothian

### PROFESSIONALS' DAY

- Wed 20 September** – The Falkirk Wheel, Falkirk

### PRESIDENT'S LUNCH

- Fri 29 September** – Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow

For sponsorship opportunities, please contact Linda Rolfe on 07810 484 131 or email [linda.rolfe@select.org.uk](mailto:linda.rolfe@select.org.uk)



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