

# cabletalk

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2026 | £4.50

→ **Taking action  
for safer homes**  
What the introduction  
of Awaab's Law could  
mean for contractors

**Simple test that  
can change lives**  
Special focus on what  
you need to know  
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**Networks of  
knowledge**  
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**SELECT**

## Keeping on top of current affairs

SELECT prepares to help Members face the many  
challenges ahead as we embark on another busy year



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# Ei3024

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GET READY TO HIT  
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PAST PRESIDENTS'  
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**"THE ENERGY  
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# The rising cost of a kilowatt: Why the UK must rethink its energy future

Higher electricity prices are a cause for concern, but this trend isn't inevitable. A change of structure and a balanced mix of renewables and nuclear can offer cause for optimism

**O**VER the past two decades, the price of electricity in the UK has undergone a dramatic transformation – one that has reshaped household budgets, squeezed businesses and forced the electrical industry to confront a rapidly changing energy landscape.

While the volatility of recent years has been widely discussed, the long-term trend is equally important: electricity today costs significantly more per kilowatt hour (kWh) than it did 20 years ago, and the structural reasons behind that increase demand a strategic response.

In 2023, the average cost of electricity reached 27p per kWh – a figure that would have been unthinkable in the early 2000s, when prices hovered in the single digits.

Even as the market stabilised after the 2022–2023 energy crisis, the price cap for late 2025 still set electricity at 26.35p per kWh, far above historic norms.

For electrical contractors, installers and engineers, these numbers are more than abstract statistics

– they shape customer behaviour, influence technology adoption and determine the pace of electrification across heating, transport and industry.

Understanding why prices have risen, and how they might fall again, is essential for anyone currently working in the trade.

## WHY HAVE ELECTRICITY COSTS CLIMBED?

Several structural factors have driven the long-term rise in electricity prices:

- **Dependence on gas** – despite major growth in renewables, the UK remains heavily reliant on natural gas for electricity generation. Gas prices are notoriously volatile, and the 2021–2023 global energy shock exposed the vulnerability of this dependence. When gas prices spike, electricity prices follow.

- **Network and system costs** – upgrading and maintaining the grid, especially to accommodate decentralised renewables, has added significant costs. These costs are then passed on directly to consumers through standing charges and per unit pricing.

## • Policy and environmental levies

– while many levies fund essential decarbonisation initiatives, they have historically added to electricity bills. The UK Government has begun reducing some of these costs, with further cuts planned for 2026, but the long-term impact remains uncertain.

## • Underinvestment in long-term generation

– the UK has retired coal plants and ageing nuclear stations faster than it has built new low-carbon baseload capacity. This has increased reliance on imported energy and gas-fired generation.

The result is a system that is cleaner than ever, but also more exposed to global price shocks.

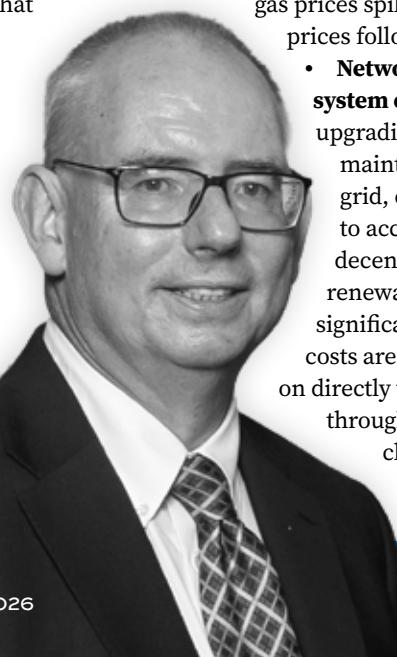
## WHY ARE RENEWABLES THE PATH TO CHEAPER POWER?

Renewables are often discussed in environmental terms, but their economic potential is just as significant.

Wind and solar power have some of the lowest marginal generation costs of any energy source. Once built, they require no fuel, and their operating costs are minimal.

Other reasons why renewables reduce long-term costs are:

- Zero fuel cost means insulation from global commodity markets
- Rapid deployment allows capacity to scale quickly
- Technological improvements



▼ Renewable energy has great environmental and economic potential



continue to drive down installation and maintenance costs

- Domestic generation reduces reliance on imports.

Offshore wind, in particular, has become a UK success story. However, the long-term trajectory remains clear – renewables are the cheapest new generation capacity available.

The primary barrier to renewables delivering consistently lower prices is variability.

Without sufficient storage or flexible backup generation, the grid must still rely on gas during periods of low wind or sunlight. This is where nuclear energy enters the picture...

#### WHY IS NUCLEAR THE MISSING PIECE OF THE PUZZLE?

Nuclear energy provides the stable, low-carbon baseload generation that renewables cannot. While upfront costs are high, nuclear plants operate for 60 years or more, providing predictable output at

#### "RENEWABLES ARE OFTEN DISCUSSED IN ENVIRONMENTAL TERMS, BUT THEIR ECONOMIC POTENTIAL IS JUST AS SIGNIFICANT"

a stable cost. Some other reasons why nuclear power matters for price stability include:

- High reliability ensures consistent supply
- Low operating costs once built
- Independence from global fuel markets, as uranium prices are far less volatile than gas
- Supports electrification by providing firm power for EV charging, heat pumps and industry.

The UK's current nuclear fleet is ageing rapidly and, without new investment, the country risks losing a major source of stable, low-carbon power. Projects such as Hinkley Point C and Sizewell C are essential,

but the industry also needs a clear pathway for small modular reactors (SMRs), which promise faster deployment and lower capital costs.

#### WHAT DOES THE ELECTROTECHNICAL INDUSTRY NEED TO KNOW?

The transition to a low-carbon, lower-cost energy system will reshape the electrical industry in several ways:

- **Electrification will accelerate** – as renewable and nuclear capacity grows, electricity will become the dominant energy vector for heating, transport and industrial processes.
- **Demand side technologies will expand** – battery storage, smart meters, EV chargers and heat pumps will become standard components of domestic and commercial installations.
- **Grid upgrades will create new opportunities** – reinforcement, flexibility services and microgeneration will drive demand for skilled electrical professionals.
- **Customers will expect expertise** – contractors will increasingly be asked to advise on energy efficiency, solar integration and smart home technologies.

#### WHAT IS THE WAY FORWARD?

The UK's high electricity prices are not inevitable. They are the result of structural choices and they can be reversed through structural solutions.

A balanced mix of renewables and nuclear offers the most credible path to long-term price stability, energy security and decarbonisation.

For the electrotechnical trade, this transition represents both a challenge and an unprecedented opportunity.

Those who understand the evolving energy landscape will be best positioned to lead the industry into a future where electricity is not only cleaner, but more affordable for all. ■

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WORDS  
ALAN WILSON  
Managing Director, SELECT

# News

**S**ELECT was among the Scottish construction bodies calling for urgent assurances that the new Tertiary Education and Training Bill would safeguard the nation's skills pipeline.

As it prepared for its Stage 3 Debate in January, the association joined industry leaders to insist that the Bill represented one of the most significant reforms to Scotland's skills landscape in a generation.

And along with MSP Monica Lennon, it also warned that unless the legislation fully recognised and protected the structures underpinning apprenticeships, Scotland risks undermining its ability to meet its climate, infrastructure and economic ambitions.

Alan Wilson, SELECT MD and chair of the Construction Industry Collective Voice (CICV), said: "The construction sector is calling on the Scottish Government to take two essential steps to ensure continuity and quality in the Bill.

"Firstly, to include explicit reference to managing agents in the Bill. Without this, the industry fears that organisations lacking the necessary expertise could be appointed, threatening the future supply of skilled apprentices.

"Secondly, to ensure that representative bodies, which includes employer and trade unions, are represented on the new Apprenticeship Committee.

"These bodies bring unparalleled expertise in safety, technical standards and professional development.

**ELECT** was among the Scottish construction bodies calling for urgent assurances that the new Tertiary Education and Training Bill would safeguard the nation's skills pipeline.



Alan Wilson

Apprentices are key to the industry's future

## Standing up for skills and standards

SELECT adds its voice to calls for urgent reassurance that new legislation will continue to protect the country's vital high-quality training and apprenticeships



Excluding these recognised bodies risks overlooking critical safety and operational considerations that directly affect young people entering the industry."

Assurances were also sought by Fiona Harper, Chief Executive of The Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT), who said:

"The role of managing agents for apprenticeships is widely regarded and these industry-led frameworks ensure that apprentices receive consistent, high-quality training aligned with employer needs and national standards.

"Managing agents roles extend far beyond administration. They provide pastoral support, monitor apprentice progress, ensure safeguarding and maintain the integrity of the Modern Apprenticeship programme. This

## + PAGE 8 /

Warning over dangers of unauthorised work on DNO backboards and equipment

## + PAGE 10 /

Tributes paid to popular SELECT stalwart Tom Mitchell following his death at age 78



## 4 FIRMS HAVE BECOME SELECT MEMBERS SINCE 1 DECEMBER 2025

1. Western Lettings Limited, Glasgow
2. PowerOn Electrics Ltd, Motherwell
3. KGR Electrical Services Ltd, Glasgow
4. N & A Masson Electrical Ltd, Huntly

infrastructure – built over decades – is central to maintaining the safety critical competence.”

Monica Lennon, Scottish Labour MSP for Central Scotland, also added her voice to the debate, saying: “It is essential that bodies such as the Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB) and other related bodies are included in the membership of the Apprenticeship Committee established under the Tertiary Education and Training Bill.

“Their involvement will ensure that any changes affecting the safety, technical standards and professional development of apprentices are properly scrutinised.

“Without the input of these recognised industry bodies, there is a real risk that critical safety and operational considerations

could be overlooked, potentially compromising the quality and safety of a young person's apprenticeship experience.”

After the Bill was passed, Alan said SELECT, SECTT and the SJIB would be among those willing to collaborate to ensure that it was rolled out correctly.

He added: “The construction industry stands ready to work with the Scottish Government to ensure the Bill strengthens – not destabilises – Scotland's apprenticeship system.

“Protecting the proven structures that support apprenticeships will be vital to delivering the skilled workforce required for Scotland's future infrastructure and net zero commitments.”

**“WITHOUT THE INPUT OF THESE RECOGNISED INDUSTRY BODIES, THERE IS A REAL RISK THAT CRITICAL SAFETY AND OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS COULD BE OVERLOOKED, POTENTIALLY COMPROMISING THE QUALITY AND SAFETY OF A YOUNG PERSON'S APPRENTICESHIP EXPERIENCE”**



## EXTRA PRIZES FOR MEDAL-WINNING PAIR

SELECT has visited two Member firms in Elgin to reward the talented youngsters who scooped gold and silver in the recent SKILL-ELECTRIC competition.

Membership Representative Emma Paterson popped into Campbell & McHardy Ltd to present Ellis Stevenson with an Amazon gift

voucher and letter of congratulation after the 22-year-old became the first female winner of the UK-wide competition in December.

Emma also visited nearby McDonald & Munro Ltd, where she handed over a voucher and official letter to fellow UHI Moray student Adam Souter, who was runner-

up in the three-day final held at Bridgend College in Wales.

SELECT MD Alan Wilson said: “We are delighted to recognise the outstanding achievements of Ellis and Adam, who should be very proud of their skill, hard work and dedication.”

SECTT Update: Pages 46-48

Emma congratulates Adam on winning silver



Emma, right, presents Ellis with her voucher



## Technical team's Keith celebrates retirement

SELECT recently said goodbye to Technical Adviser Keith Hagen, who retired after more than nine years with the association.

The popular technical expert – who covered the Tayside and Perthshire areas for nearly a decade – was given a fitting send-off by the team at The Walled Garden in December.

After a presentation and speeches, Keith was treated to lunch at a local restaurant, where he kept colleagues entertained with his legendary patter!

Director of Technical Services Bob Cairney said: “On behalf of the Technical and Training teams, I’d like to wish Keith a long and happy retirement.

“During his time with the association, he has been an enthusiastic asset to the team and his contribution to our Toolbox Talks was invaluable. In addition, he was a regular attendee at Tayside Branch Updates.

“Keith provided representation for a number of years at JPEL/64 sub committee JPELB/64, where he was a respected contributor to discussion. He also reported on matters discussed at JPELB/64 to the SELECT Electrotechnical Committee where his opinion and input were also greatly valued.

“We’d like to thank Keith for his time at SELECT and hope he will enjoy all the golf he can now play in his spare time, as well as watching his beloved Dundee United.”



↑Mike, centre, with his RSE colleagues

## Alert over danger of rogue DNO changes

Warning issued to Members after evidence of unauthorised adjustment of backboards, posing a “significant risk to safety”

# A

**N** alert about the unauthorised adjustment of Distribution Network Operator (DNO) backboards has been issued after the unsafe practice was brought to SELECT’s attention.

A new Technical Circular outlines the significant risks caused by cutting around DNO intake equipment and backboards during alterations or renovations using powered or manual cutting tools.

Vibration from cutting and movement can result in the loosening of cable connections and can also compromise conductor insulation in the service cable, cable head or metering equipment.

This movement, or the equipment being impacted accidentally, could result in damage to enclosures or insulation, exposing live conductors or equipment parts and introducing the risk of an electric shock.

Additionally, if an earth or short circuit current fault occurs, this may result in a significant arc flash, which could cause serious burn injuries or ignite adjacent flammable material.

Older service heads if disturbed are also particularly prone to cracking and become brittle over time and may contain hidden dangers such as asbestos containing materials (ACMs).

And finally, fused cut-outs manufactured from black phenolic plastics absorb moisture and under load conditions carbon deposit can build up, which could result in the normally non-conductive material becoming conductive, making the fuse carrier and service head live.

## Mike is honoured for commitment to skills

**SELECT** Branch Officer Mike Campbell has been recognised for his dedication to skills and training with an industry honour.

The Chair of our Inverness & North of Scotland Branch won the Apprentice Ambassador

Award at the Highlands and Islands Apprenticeship Awards in December.

Mike, who is Apprentice Training Officer at SELECT Member firm RSE, said: “I’m thrilled to have received this award and would like



↑DNO supply and backboard being cut around [generated with AI]

Robert McGoogan, Technical Services Manager Designate, said: "Alteration of this equipment not only poses a significant risk to the health and safety of the personnel involved in undertaking this practice but can lead to prosecution as statutory regulations will have been breached.

"Under no circumstances should members attempt to cut or alter DNO backboards or its associated equipment. If this equipment is required to be adjusted or repositioned the relevant DNO is to be contacted."

If further help or clarification is required, please contact SELECT Technical Services on **0131 445 9218**.

to express my thanks to the University of Highlands & Islands Inverness (UHI) for their ongoing support as training provider as their input ensures the success of our apprentices as they undertake the programme.

"I'm honoured to be an ambassador for the apprentices I look after, and special thanks also goes to the wider team who oversee the delivery of the

apprenticeship programme and its continued success year on year."

RSE was also named Large Employer of the Year at the event, which was held at the Kingsmill Hotel in Inverness.

Mike added: "We had a fantastic night and these two awards underline RSE's commitment to young people, ensuring they get the best apprenticeship possible."

## USEFUL LINKS



SELECT  
Technical Circular  
T513 – DNO  
backboards



SELECT  
Technical Circular  
T472 – DNO fused  
cut-outs



The Electricity  
Safety, Quality  
and Continuity  
Regulations 2002



Scottish and  
Southern Electricity  
Networks



Scottish  
Power Energy



↑MFT-X1 multi-function tester

## READY FOR A WINNING YEAR WITH MEGGER

Members will once again have the chance to win top-of-the range technical kit after Megger donated a range of prizes for our 2026 events.

The Associate Member has given the association more than 80 items for lucky winners, including:

- VF5 volt sticks
- MST 220 socket testers
- TPT 420 two-pole testers
- MPU 690 proving units
- An MPCC 230 socket tester worth £350.

The goodies will be handed out at Branch Updates and Toolbox Talks throughout the year, as well for the wordsearch winner in each issue of *cabletalk*.

A top-of-the range MFT-X1 multi-function tester worth £2,200 also awaits anyone who scores a hole in one at the President's Cup in July.

Events Manager Linda Rolfe said: "Once again, we are extremely grateful to Megger for donating these fantastic prizes and I would like to thank Strategic Account Manager Alastair Blyth for his cooperation and generosity."

Talk tech at your local event: **Pages 30&31**

→ MPCC 230

↓VF5 voltage sticks and MST220 socket testers



→TPT420  
voltage  
tester



↓MPU 690 unit



# Tributes to SELECT colleague and friend

Tom Mitchell, a “great character” who played a key role in association’s development, passes away aged 78

**S**ELECT was saddened to hear of the death of former colleague Tom Mitchell, who passed away

in December aged 78.

Tom joined the association in December 2001 and soon became a key part of the team, serving as Member Services Manager and later as Head of Specifier Relations.

He was closely involved with recruiting and advising Members when the Scottish Building Standards System became law in May 2005 and also helped set up and run the SELECT Awards from 2006 onwards.

After he retired from the association in September 2014, Tom remained closely involved with the SELECT

Awards judging panel, touring Scotland to visit the various nominees and feeding back his recommendations for prizes.

Managing Director Alan Wilson said: “Tom was a larger than life figure who played a key role in the transformation and ongoing development of SELECT in the early part of the century. Our condolences go out to his family and friends.”

Director of Technical Services Bob Cairney added: “Tom was a great character within SELECT and was always an approachable and friendly gentleman.”

Tom’s funeral took place at Falkirk Crematorium on Thursday 11 December, with SELECT staff among the mourners who wore bright colours in his memory.



▼ Tom Mitchell



**“TOM WAS A LARGER THAN LIFE FIGURE WHO PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN THE TRANSFORMATION AND ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF SELECT”**

## SCHNEIDER SUPPORT FOR 2026

SELECT has secured another significant sponsorship deal to help us deliver our 2026 President’s Lunch.

Associate Member Schneider Electric has generously agreed to be the entertainment sponsor at this year’s event, which will see 100 industry guests gather for an afternoon of networking.

SELECT is now in discussions with other Associates to secure further sponsorship for the event, along with our Branch Updates, President’s Cup and Past Presidents’ Lunch.

Events Manager Linda Rolfe said: “We are extremely grateful to the Schneider Electric team and would like to thank them once again for their ongoing support.”

To find out more about sponsorship and exhibition opportunities, please contact Linda at [linda.rolfe@select.org.uk](mailto:linda.rolfe@select.org.uk) or call us on 0131 445 5577.



**Free CPD delivered by Dimplex**

SELECT has teamed up with Associate Member Dimplex to offer a free CPD-accredited training module in electrification of heat in buildings.

The first half-day session on 25 November saw Members receive updates on the latest technologies,



↑ Tom, front left, with the winners at the 2009 SELECT Awards



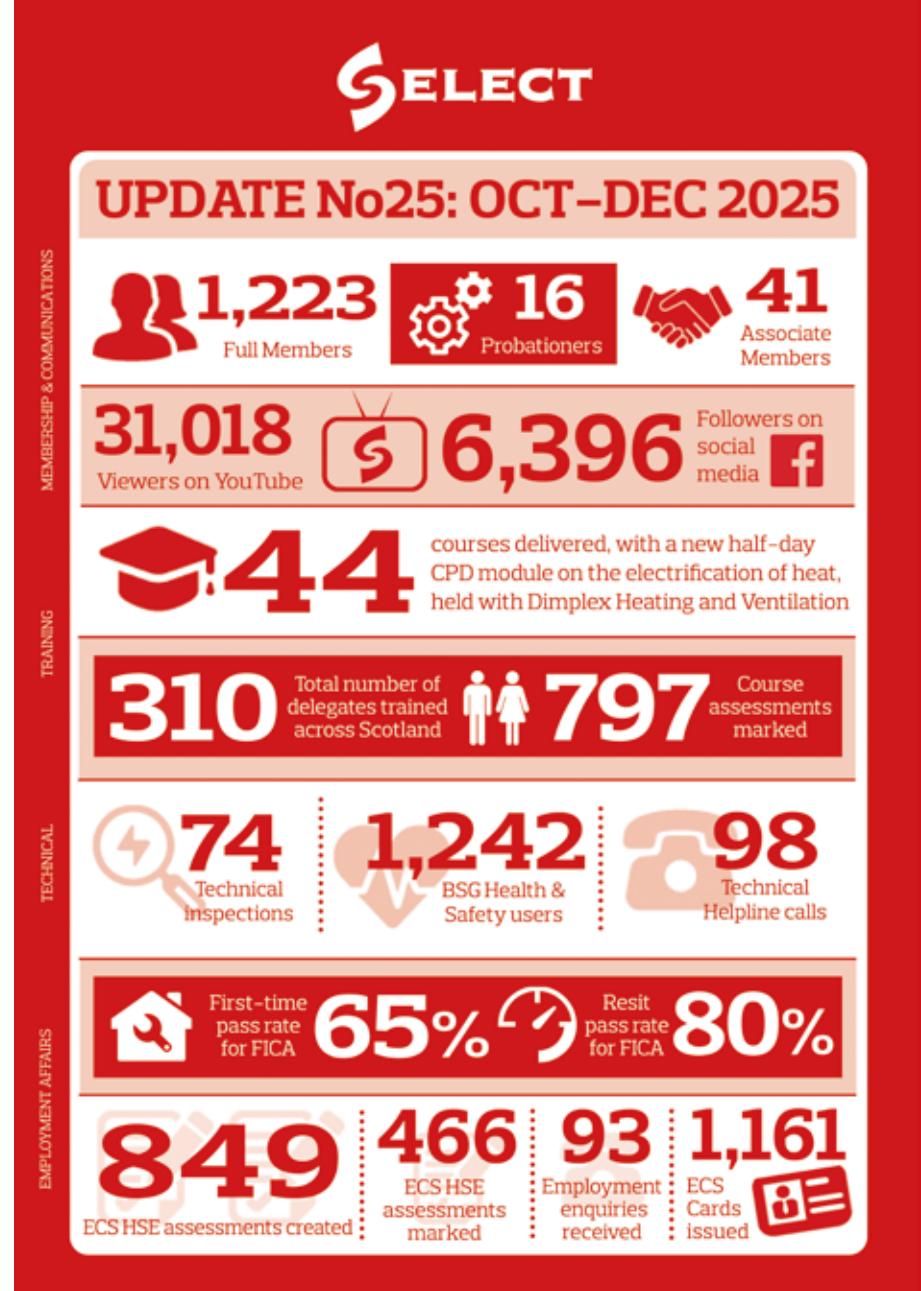
↑ Tom and colleague David Miller visit the Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh in 2008 as part of SELECT's 17th Edition roadshow

including heat pumps, high heat retention storage heaters and fan coil units.

They also learned about installation best practices, the importance of ventilation and Awaab's Law.

The Dimplex team was joined by Pilar Rodriguez from the Energy Saving Trust, who discussed policy, funding and available resources for installers.

Training Manager Jenny Cryans said: "We were delighted with this first session and look forward to working closely with the Dimplex team to deliver more training for Members."



## ADDING UP OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

The final SELECT infographic of 2025 has been released, showing the activity carried out by the association between October and December. The quarterly update shows our achievements in technical, training, membership, communications, employment and skills.

↓ Dimplex hosted the session at The Walled Garden



# I'm joining the fight for higher standards

Our new MD reveals why she is determined to continue the crusade for regulation of the electrotechnical industry – and why, with an election looming, it's more important than ever to persuade politicians to help build a safer Scotland

WORDS  
**SHARON MILLER**  
Managing Director  
Designate



**L**IKE most people, before I got involved with the construction sector, I assumed that there was some form of regulation to ensure that anyone undertaking any type of electrical work was properly qualified. I now know that anyone who claims they can wire a plug can call themselves an electrician.

As consumers, we've become complacent about electricity but in unqualified hands it can be dangerous and cause a significant

fire hazard. Scottish Fire and Rescue is clear that "poorly installed electrical work can put you at risk. One of the most effective ways to prevent electrical fires is to have your electrical system inspected regularly by a qualified electrician".

So how do consumers find someone properly qualified? It's a really complex landscape with many websites unclear about the level of qualification. Trading Standards



points to Trusted Traders but its system mainly relies on customer reviews and there aren't any specific qualification requirements – it's more of a Trip Advisor for traders.

Of course, using a SELECT Member provides a safe haven for confused consumers but not everyone is aware of our organisation and the high standards to which we operate.

## SAFETY MATTERS

SELECT Members have been calling for regulation since the organisation's inception more than 125 years ago. During that time, numerous people and politicians have agreed that "something must be done" but, in fact, little progress has been made.

So what is it going to take for governments across the

**SAFE, SKILFUL,  
SUSTAINABLE:  
POWERING  
SCOTLAND'S  
FUTURE**

↑ Our manifesto sets out the case for regulations



▲ Electrical work should only be done by qualified professionals

## **"USING A SELECT MEMBER PROVIDES A SAFE HAVEN FOR CONFUSED CONSUMERS BUT NOT EVERYONE IS AWARE OF OUR ORGANISATION AND THE HIGH STANDARDS TO WHICH WE OPERATE"**

UK to take action? We were all horrified by the tragic events at Grenfell in 2017 but, ever since, the focus has been entirely on the cladding installation that spread the fire, not the electrical fault that caused it.

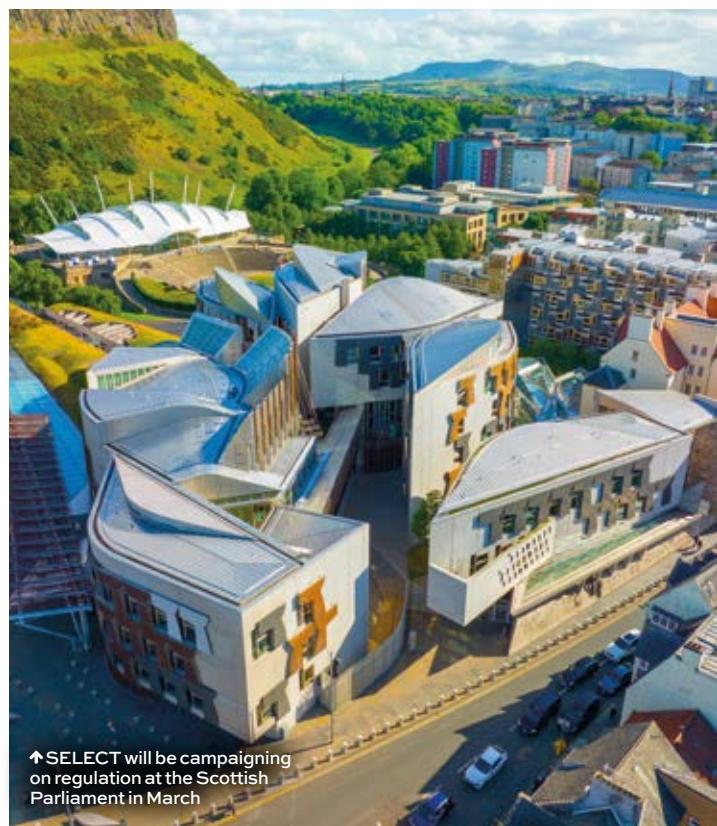
As we move towards net zero, our future is increasingly electric so it is vital that the future is built on sound and safe foundations.

Our increased reliance on lithium batteries for everything from solar to scooters is a particular area of concern. Scottish Fire and Rescue has

seen a seven-fold increase between 2018 and 2024 of fires caused by these batteries. Once they are on fire, they can burn for days and are extremely difficult to extinguish.

### **FORWARD THINKING**

As I start my tenure as Managing Director Designate, the drive for regulation will be at the heart of our activity going forward. As you know, it is the main priority in our manifesto



▲ SELECT will be campaigning on regulation at the Scottish Parliament in March

IMAGE: Wangkun Jia / Shutterstock

**"SUCH ACTIVITY WILL ONCE AGAIN PROVE THAT SELECT IS COMMITTED TO WORKING WITH MEMBERS AND PARTNERS TO ACHIEVE REGULATION AND BUILD A SAFE ELECTROTECHNICAL INDUSTRY OF WHICH WE CAN ALL BE PROUD"**

→ launched last June and with the approaching Scottish Parliamentary elections in May, we'll be working to convince politicians of all parties that it should be their priority too.

This work is already under way with our Wall of Support growing steadily and meetings already held with the likes of Reform's Cameron Rose.



In the first week of the new year, we also wrote to the leaders of all the major political parties encouraging them to build support for the electrotechnical industry into their election manifestos – and for regulation in particular. We also asked other MSPs to add their names to the Wall of Support.

This work will continue next month when I will be campaigning on this issue at the Scottish Parliament from 2-5 March alongside our Skills and Client Relations Manager, Yvonne Wilson.

Such activity will once again prove that SELECT is committed to working with Members and partners to achieve regulation and build a safe electrotechnical industry of which we can all be proud. ■

48

MSPs and MPs who have added a brick

20

SELECT Member firms who've signed

206

signatories on the Wall of Support



## Letter to the leaders

Dear Sir/Madam,

The construction sector is vital to the Scottish economy, generating more than £10 billion gross value added (GVA) through nearly 45,000 businesses and providing well paid jobs right across Scotland. It's central to tackling the housing crisis and to achieving net zero.

SELECT is the trade association which has represented the electrotechnical industry in Scotland for over 125 years. As Scotland's largest trade association, with more than 1,200 members who employ more than 15,000 people, 3,000 apprentices and a collective annual turnover of £1 billion, our reach is considerable.

We want to give all political parties the opportunity to build support for our sector into their election manifestos.

Our manifesto asks are simple:

- A properly regulated electrical profession
- A future-proofed skills strategy
- A sector fully enabled to drive Scotland's renewable transformation.

At present, unlike our colleagues in gas, there is no regulation, and anyone can call themselves an electrician. We hope you will agree that it makes sense to ensure that the electrical work carried out in homes, schools, hospitals and businesses in Scotland is done safely, by fully qualified operatives.

The future is electric and we want that transformation to be built on sound, safe foundations through skilled and properly qualified operatives.

I hope you feel able to support this important sector in your election manifesto and I am happy to meet with you at a time to suit your diary to discuss this in more depth.

Best wishes,

Sharon Miller  
SELECT Managing Director  
Designate

↓ Electrical contractors can play a key role in tackling damp and mould issues



# Removing the deadly risk at home

WORDS  
TONY BOYLE  
Regional Director, Aico



**aico**

With the first phase of Awaab's Law expected to be rolled out in Scotland later this year, our guest columnist outlines the main points of the new legislation – and the implications for electrical contractors

**A**WAAB'S Law has its origins in one of the most distressing housing failures in recent years. The death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak, caused by prolonged exposure to severe damp and mould, revealed serious weaknesses in how social landlords respond to hazards in the home.

In response, the UK Government introduced Awaab's Law in England, placing strict

legal timeframes on these landlords to investigate and remedy dangerous damp and mould conditions.

Scotland is now preparing to take a similar step. Following Royal Assent of the Housing (Scotland) Bill in late 2025, Scottish ministers have new powers to introduce time-bound duties on landlords, starting with damp and mould and potentially expanding to other hazards over time. Current indications suggest the first phase could come into force in October 2026. While

much of the public discussion has focused on mould, respiratory health and housing management, the implications for electrical contractors are significant – and potentially far-reaching.

## DAMP, MOULD AND THE ELECTRICAL CONNECTION

At first glance, damp and mould appear to be issues of building fabric, plumbing or ventilation. In



# TIMELINE OF TRAGEDY

**2018**

Awaab Ishak is born. He and his family live in a one-bedroom flat in the Ilminster block on the Freehold estate in Rochdale.

**2019**

Family applies for re-housing due to ongoing mould issues in their property, which is rented from Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH).

**JULY 2020**

Health visitor raises concerns with RBH about mould and Awaab's health. Family instructs solicitors for disrepair claim. RBH inspection confirms mould.

**DEC 2020**

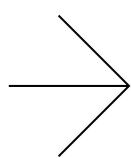
Awaab develops severe flu-like symptoms, cough and breathing difficulties.

**19 DEC 2020**

Awaab taken to Rochdale Urgent Care Centre, then transferred to Royal Oldham Hospital, where he receives treatment and is discharged.

**21 DEC 2020**

Awaab suffers respiratory and cardiac arrest at home and dies at Royal Oldham Hospital, aged two.



reality, electrical systems are often closely linked to both the causes and the consequences of these problems.

Inadequate or unsuitable mechanical ventilation, e.g. due to failure of an extract fan, poorly designed heating controls or incorrectly installed kitchen and bathroom electrical installations, can all contribute to moisture build-up. Once damp becomes established, it can accelerate corrosion, resulting in damage to electrical accessories, compromising enclosures and, in more serious cases, creating genuine electrical safety risks.

Under Awaab's Law-style legislation, landlords will not only be required to act, but to act quickly – and to demonstrate that they have addressed underlying causes rather than simply treating symptoms. That inevitably brings electrical contractors into sharper focus and the assistance that they can provide to implement solutions.

## FROM REACTIVE MAINTENANCE TO TIME-CRITICAL COMPLIANCE

One of the most significant changes introduced by Awaab's Law is the use of statutory timeframes.

In England, landlords must investigate serious damp and mould within defined periods and complete remedial works within set deadlines.

Scotland is expected to follow a phased approach, beginning with damp and mould and potentially extending to other risks over time. This places greater emphasis on early identification, prompt response and clear evidence of action by the landlord.

For electrical contractors, this may present opportunities as there will be a shift away from reactive maintenance towards more formal, compliance-led preventative work.

**"LANDLORDS WILL NEED TO SHOW WHEN IT WAS IDENTIFIED, HOW QUICKLY IT WAS ADDRESSED AND HOW CONDITIONS WERE VERIFIED AS SAFE"**



↑ Environmental sensors can monitor conditions to help prevent problems

## DOCUMENTATION IS NO LONGER OPTIONAL

Awaab's Law is as much about proof as performance. Landlords will need robust audit trails showing when issues were identified, how risks were assessed and when remedial actions were completed.

For contractors, this raises expectations around inspection notes, photographs, certification and reporting. Clear evidence may form part of a landlord's legal defence if their response is challenged.

Put simply, it will no longer be enough to say an issue was resolved; landlords will need to show when it was identified, how quickly it was addressed and how conditions were verified as safe.

## HARDWARE FEEDING SOFTWARE: THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SENSORS

As compliance becomes more time-critical and evidence-driven, there is growing interest in software platforms that are fed by data from installed hardware, rather than relying solely on periodic inspections or tenant reports.

Electrical contractors are well placed to support this shift. They already access properties regularly and are often the first professionals to notice signs of condensation, high humidity or inadequate ventilation. This positions



them as the practical 'eyes and ears' for landlords.

Connected environmental sensors – such as those developed by Aico – can be installed by electrical contractors to monitor conditions like temperature and humidity. The hardware collects the data, while the software provides landlords with time-stamped insight into conditions within the property.

Used appropriately, this data can help landlords identify emerging issues early, prioritise intervention and demonstrate that conditions are being monitored and managed in line with their legal duties. For contractors, installing this type of technology represents a natural extension of existing electrical work rather than a departure from it.

**THE  
SELECT  
VERDICT**  
**BOB CAIRNEY,**  
Director of  
Technical  
Services



SELECT welcomes the change made by the Scottish Government and the publication of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2025. The resulting legislation will undoubtedly improve the quality of social housing in Scotland and provide an additional level of protection for tenants from the potential dangers that damp and mould can present.

Modern technology, including Aico's range of HomeLINK products, will be of great help in achieving this, enabling landlords to monitor and identify potential issues early within their housing stock and helping them identify appropriate solutions to prevent such dangers arising.

Such technology will also provide a benefit to many SELECT Members, who may be best placed to assist landlords by installing sensors and equipment correctly, and who may also have a level of knowledge and understanding of the installation of electric heating and ventilation products which may be part of an agreed solution.

They may also be best placed to provide the level of response that such preventative maintenance and the new legislation will require.

## VENTILATION AND PREVENTATIVE WORK

Where damp or mould is identified, ventilation is often one of the first areas to be reviewed. This can result in electrical work such as replacing failed fans, upgrading under-performing units or installing controls that respond to humidity levels.

Contractors who understand how ventilation performance links to moisture control – and who can evidence improvements – are likely to be increasingly valued by landlords who are operating under tighter compliance regimes.

## PREPARING FOR WHAT COMES NEXT

Scotland already has a strong regulatory framework for electrical safety in rented housing. Awaab's Law will not replace these duties, but it will increase pressure on how quickly issues are identified and addressed by landlords once they arise.

The direction of travel is clear – greater scrutiny, clearer deadlines and a stronger focus on evidence. For electrical contractors, recognising the role that installed hardware and data-driven software can play in supporting landlords may open up new, longer-term opportunities as housing standards continue to evolve. ■

Aico, an Ei Company, is the European market-leader in home life safety, with integrated fire, CO and environmental sensors. Their UK-standard alarms and sensors are manufactured in Ireland, while their advanced software, developed in Bristol, provides real-time insights. By combining trust and innovation, Aico aims to create safer, healthier and more sustainable homes. Find out more at [www.aico.co.uk](http://www.aico.co.uk)

15 NOV  
2022

Inquest concludes Awaab died from a severe respiratory condition caused by prolonged mould exposure. Coroner criticises lack of action by RBH.

FEB  
2023

UK Government announces Awaab's Law to compel landlords to fix hazards within strict timeframes.

27 OCT  
2025

Phase 1 of Awaab's Law comes into force in England, requiring social landlords to address significant damp/mould and emergency hazards within set times.

6 OCT  
2026

First phase of Awaab's Law set to be introduced north of the border as amendment to Housing (Scotland) Act.



**"SUCH TECHNOLOGY WILL ALSO PROVIDE A BENEFIT TO MANY SELECT MEMBERS WHO MAY BE BEST PLACED TO ASSIST LANDLORDS BY INSTALLING SENSORS AND EQUIPMENT CORRECTLY"**



↑ Keith, wife Joyce, son Ally and his wife Danielle, and daughter Claire at the SELECT 125th Anniversary Grand Ball last November



# The simple test that changes lives

As part of our ongoing focus on prostate cancer, Tayside Branch Chair Keith Smith reveals how a chance remark led to him being diagnosed with the disease – and advises fellow Members how to spot it early and take action

WORDS  
DIANE HALES  
Membership  
Representative



## HI KEITH, HOW WERE YOU DIAGNOSED WITH PROSTATE CANCER?

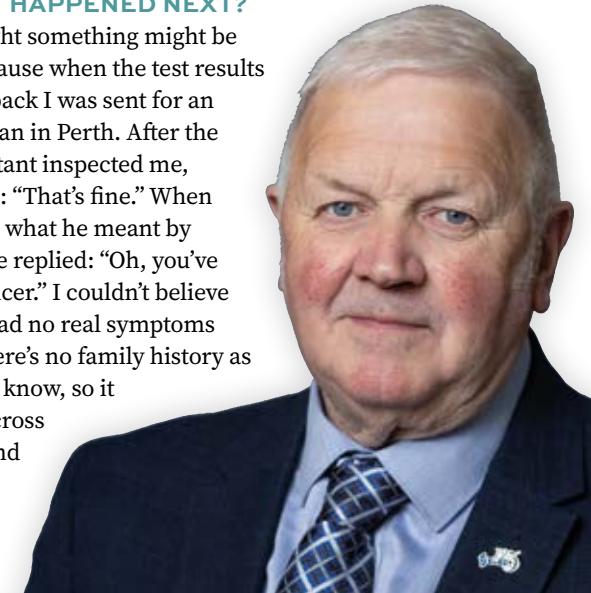
I'd first noticed something when I was on holiday in Fuerteventura with my wife Joyce and our daughter and son-in-law over New Year 2024. I was going to the loo more often, especially at night, which had been getting worse for a few months. But I was in good shape otherwise and didn't have any other symptoms, so I didn't think

**"I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT; I'D HAD NO REAL SYMPTOMS AND THERE'S NO FAMILY HISTORY AS FAR AS I KNOW"**

anything of it – I just put it down to my age. It was only when I got back and was at the doctor for something else that I mentioned it in passing, so he did a PSA test and urine sample.

## WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

I thought something might be up because when the test results came back I was sent for an MRI scan in Perth. After the consultant inspected me, he said: "That's fine." When I asked what he meant by 'fine' he replied: "Oh, you've got cancer." I couldn't believe it; I'd had no real symptoms and there's no family history as far as I know, so it didn't cross my mind at all.



# Career is a family matter

Keith followed in his father's footsteps, starting out in the family electrical firm, Davie Electrical Services, at the age of 16.

After serving part of his time with Lowdon Brothers in Dundee, he briefly left the electrical trade for a couple of years and spent two years working in an architect's office. But he said: "I was inside at a desk all day which didn't suit me, so I've worked for myself ever since."

The SELECT Member company carries out domestic, commercial and industrial work across Tayside, Fife and Perth – and is now set to continue into its fourth generation.

Keith said: "My son Ally has served his time and is trained up and waiting in the wings to take over, plus his son Ollie is in his first year Kingsway Tech, too."

He added: "I've enjoyed it all, which is why I'm still working, although I'm more desk-bound these days for obvious reasons."

"Being a SELECT Member has been good for training and technical information and it's good to know that we can always pick up the phone if we need anything."

## HOW DID YOU AND YOUR FAMILY REACT?

The consultant said my cancer was between Stages 3 and 4 which really floored me and took a bit of getting used to. I told Joyce but we held off telling the rest of the family until we were 100% sure of what was going to happen. As you can imagine, they were shocked – none of us really knew what prostate cancer might mean. It was new to all of us.

## WHAT KIND OF TREATMENT HAVE YOU HAD?

After my diagnosis it was pretty full-on and I spent a lot of time up at Ninewells Hospital in Dundee. I initially had 20 sessions of radiotherapy over four weeks, which meant I was in the hospital for a couple of hours almost every day. I also had hormone injections to try and counteract the side-effects. Radiotherapy wasn't too bad but I did feel tired.

## HOW DID IT IMPACT YOUR BUSINESS?

Obviously I had to take some time off and work from home. After being so active it was hard just sitting at my desk – I kind of lost motivation because of the impact of it all.



↑Keith, left, with fellow Branch Officers Chic Dobbie and Jim Cooper at the 2025 AGM

## WHAT ABOUT YOUR HOME LIFE?

I'd been a football referee for boys and amateurs in Tayside for 52 years and had planned to go back to it after a knee replacement. Then this came along so I don't think I'll ever return; I'm 73 so it's too much. If I'd been fitter it might have been easier but I was never a great one for exercising. I've also had to cut out caffeine and alcohol, so it's been Heineken Zero since

the diagnosis and I'm now the designated driver!

## QUICK FACTS

DAVIE  
electrical  
services

DAVIE ELECTRICAL  
SERVICES LTD

BRANCH:

Tayside

BASED:

Angus, Dundee

WEBSITE:

[www.davieelectricalservices.com](http://www.davieelectricalservices.com)



## WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST DIFFICULT PART?

The physical side, definitely. The hormone injections caused hot flushes, cold sweats and interrupted sleep, which meant I needed tablets. Trying to get my mind clear was also tough – that word, 'cancer', really hit me. However, not everyone is affected the same way, so in some respects I think I was 'the lucky one'.

## DID YOU KNOW MUCH ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER BEFOREHAND?

I didn't know anything, so it's been a steep learning curve but the Maggie's centre in Dundee were a big help – they talked me through what would happen, which put my mind at rest.

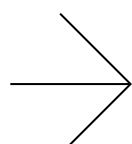
## WHAT STAGE ARE YOU AT NOW?

The radiotherapy has stopped and they hope it's treated the cancer successfully but I'm in limbo until we know for sure. I still get hormone injections and will need one every 12 weeks for two years, but we all hope everything's OK. I'm now just trying to get my fitness back, so I'm doing some exercises in the house and also have an exercise bike. I still feel tired though.

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR OTHER MEMBERS?

Even if you don't have any symptoms, if you're over 50 or have family history of prostate cancer, go for a PSA test and give a urine sample. It's really quick and easy and could make all the difference – as I know only too well. I'm just truly grateful for the unwavering support from my family and friends. ■

TAKE THE PSA CHALLENGE:  
Pages 20 & 21



WORDS  
ALISON WRIGHT  
CEO, Prostate  
Scotland



prostate  
scotland

# Ready to take the PSA challenge?

What is a PSA test? Who's it for? And how do you know if it's right for you? Here's some facts about the test – and why encouraging the men in your life to take it together can make a real difference

**A**s Keith's story on the previous page proves, one of the biggest issues with prostate cancer is that it can develop without symptoms, meaning many men feel well and have no reason to think that anything is wrong.

For men working in the electrotechnical sector, responsibility, professionalism and looking out for each other matters. Their prostate health deserves that same attention – which is where a PSA test comes in.

## WHAT IS A PSA TEST?

A PSA test is a simple blood test that measures the level of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) in your blood. PSA is a protein made by the prostate and it's normal for small amounts to be present.

The PSA test is not a diagnosis on its own, but it is a useful starting point that helps your GP decide whether

further checks are needed and gives you a baseline number that can be monitored over time.

In Scotland, any man aged 50 or over can ask their GP for a PSA test, even if they have no symptoms. Men at higher risk, including those with a family history of prostate cancer and black men, can request a test from age 45.

## WHO SHOULD CONSIDER GETTING TESTED?

You should consider speaking to your GP about a PSA test if you are aged 50 or over or aged 45 or over and at higher risk, including men with a father or brother who has had prostate cancer and black men, who are at higher risk of developing prostate cancer due to genetic factors.

If your dad was diagnosed with prostate cancer, we recommend getting checked around 10 years earlier than his age at diagnosis.

## A SIMPLE CHECKLIST BEFORE YOUR PSA TEST

Here's some things to remember before your PSA test:

- You can ask your GP directly for a PSA test – you don't need symptoms
- Avoid vigorous exercise and ejaculation for 48 hours beforehand
- Tell your GP if you've had a recent urine infection
- Let them know about any medications or supplements you're taking
- Ask for your PSA number and keep a note of it for future reference.

These small steps help make sure the result is as accurate and useful as possible.

## TAKE THE PSA CHALLENGE TOGETHER

One reason many men put off getting checked is that prostate health still isn't talked about enough. It can feel awkward, or easy to delay, especially when you feel fine. That's where the idea of a

▼ You can ask your GP directly for a PSA test



# PROSTATE PROFILE

- Specific Antigen (PSA)
- Specific Antigen Free (fPSA)
- PSA Ratio

**PSA TEST**  
PROSTATE SPECIFIC ANTIGEN

Men over the age of 50 should consider taking the test

**"WHEN PROSTATE CANCER IS FOUND EARLY, MOST MEN LIVE WELL FOR MANY YEARS, AND TREATMENT OPTIONS ARE OFTEN SIMPLER AND MORE EFFECTIVE"**

PSA challenge comes in. It's simple – one person decides to book a PSA test, says so out loud, and then encourages the other men in their life to do the same. That might be pals, workmates, a team or a group chat you're already part of.

As part of the PSA challenge, it can also help to learn a few simple facts about prostate health and share them when the opportunity comes up.

You don't need to be an expert – knowing just a handful of basics can help start conversations that don't happen often enough.

Sharing these facts on the job, on site and with family and friends helps normalise conversations that too often don't happen. Imagine awareness spreading faster than the disease itself. That's how change starts.

## WHY EARLY DIAGNOSIS MATTERS

Early diagnosis saves lives. When prostate cancer is found early, most men live well for many years, and treatment options are often simpler and more

## Why is prostate cancer so hard to spot?

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in Scotland. Every year, more than 4,000 men are diagnosed and more than 1,000 die from the disease.

The prostate is a small gland, about the size of a walnut, that sits just below the bladder and surrounds the urethra, the tube that carries urine out of the body. Because of where it's located, prostate cancer doesn't always cause obvious symptoms in its early stages.

Some men do notice changes, such as needing to pee more often, especially at night, difficulty starting or stopping, a weak flow, pain or burning when peeing, or blood in urine or semen. But many men with early prostate cancer have no symptoms at all. That's why awareness and proactive conversations with your GP are so important.

effective. When it's diagnosed late, the outcomes are far more serious.

Too many men in Scotland are still being diagnosed at an advanced stage. Changing

that starts with awareness, conversation and action, particularly among men who feel well and have no symptoms.

## WHAT TO DO NEXT

Firstly, if you're over 50, consider asking your GP about a PSA test. Secondly, if you're at higher risk, start the conversation from age 45. And finally, encourage the men in your life to learn about prostate health too.

For more information, visit [www.prostatescotland.org.uk](http://www.prostatescotland.org.uk), where you'll find an online symptom checker, clear guidance on PSA testing and trusted information about prostate disease and cancer. ■

It's important to start the conversation about men's health



# Understanding the new rights and wrongs

The next 12 months will see some important legal changes affecting employment rights. Here, we look at what's changing, how it could affect Member firms – and what to do to ensure you're on the right side of the new laws

WORDS  
ERIKA FERGUSON  
Employment & HR Manager



**T**HE Employment Rights Bill has been widely discussed in the past two years and received Royal Assent on 15 December last year.

Most of the elements of this new Bill will come into effect in April and October, making 2026 an important year for employment rights – and for a company review.

To help you navigate these updates, we've compiled the following summary of what laws are changing this year and when – along with recommended action points to implement. ■

FEBRUARY 2026

## Trade union change

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

Industrial action notice will be reduced from 14 to 10 days, with industrial action mandates lasting 12 months rather than six. Internal process changes include a simpler majority vote protocol for industrial action, along with a more straightforward ballot notice.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Review your industrial action policy.

FEBRUARY 2026

## Industrial action protection against dismissal

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

Dismissal for participation in industrial action will be automatically classed as unfair, meaning that the 12-week timeframe for raising a claim no longer applies.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Review your industrial action policy, fair procedure and company dismissal policy and procedure.

APRIL 2026

## Paternity leave

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

This is expected to become a Day One right, meaning that employees won't be required to work for their employer for 26 weeks before being eligible.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Review your relevant company policies and procedures.

APRIL 2026

## Statutory sick pay

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

Eligibility for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) will become a Day One right, removing 'waiting days'. The low earning threshold will be removed, meaning that all employees will be eligible for SSP, plus the weekly SSP rate will increase to £123.25.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Review your relevant company policy and procedures.

APRIL 2026

## Sexual harassment

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

A disclosure of sexual harassment is expected to be classed as a qualified disclosure under the Public Interest Disclosure Act, meaning it'll form part of whistleblowing.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Update your whistleblowing policy and grievance policy, expand your sexual harassment policy to include reference to whistleblowing and address all forms of disclosure, i.e. formal and informal, email, message, verbal, etc.

APRIL 2026

## Unpaid parental leave

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

Eligibility for unpaid parental leave will become a Day One right, with employees no longer required to fulfil 26 weeks' service first. There is no change to the rule that means a parent is eligible to 18 weeks' unpaid leave before the child is 18, which can be taken in blocks.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Review your relevant company policy and procedures.

OCTOBER 2026

## Fire and re-hire

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

Following the introduction of a statutory code of practice on dismissal and re-engagement in 2024, a company which fails to comply could currently face a 25% uplift on employment tribunal compensation awards. From October 2026, it's expected that established cases of 'fire-and-rehire' will automatically be deemed as unfair dismissal.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Consult the statutory code of practice on dismissal and re-engagement, consult your current practice for variation of contract and organisational change and review your company policy and procedures.

APRIL 2026

## Statutory pay and family pay rates

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

There will be an increase in the National Minimum Wage and Living Wage, as well as other

statutory rates. A full list can be found by scanning the QR code on this page or going to [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

**WHAT SHOULD I DO?**  
Ensure your company pay rates are compliant with statutory rates.



## WE'RE HERE TO HELP

SELECT offers a wide range of advice and information on employment issues. For general enquiries, or to discuss a specific case, please call **0131 455 5577** or email us at [generalenquiries@select.org.uk](mailto:generalenquiries@select.org.uk)

## USEFUL LINKS

UK Government services and information



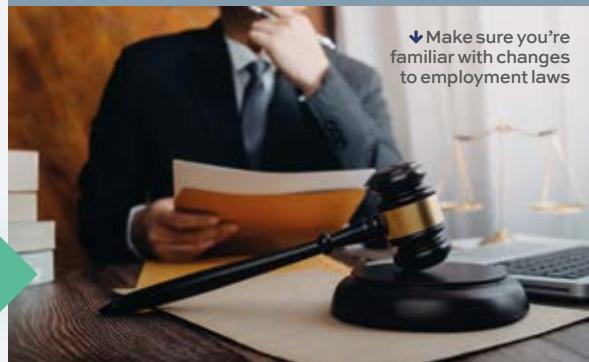
Acas advisory, conciliation and arbitration service



Dismissal and re-engagement code of practice



Proposed benefit and pension rates 2026



OCTOBER 2026

## Sexual harassment prevention

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

Companies will have a legal duty to take reasonable measures to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace, including sexual harassment from third parties.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Develop proactive preventative measures, to include training on prevention and reporting. Ensure reporting is protected, i.e. whistleblowing. Develop

APRIL 2026

## Collective redundancy protective awards

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

The maximum award granted by an employment tribunal for cases where it's found that collective redundancy consultation obligations haven't been met will increase from 90 days' pay to 180 days' pay.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Review your company policy and ensure all redundancy practices align with employment law.

OCTOBER 2026

## Employment tribunal time limits

### WHAT'S CHANGING?

For most claims, the time limit for raising an employment tribunal claim will increase from three months to six months. This time change is applicable to cases addressing unfair dismissal, breach of contract, redundancy pay disputes and discrimination.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Update your internal policy and procedure, ensure detailed records are kept and follow fair procedure.

sexual harassment workplace policy and procedures, review grievance and discipline to include sexual harassment, and communicate company expectations to third parties.

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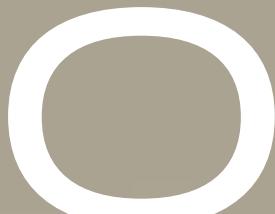


**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: [www.proteusswitchgear.com](http://www.proteusswitchgear.com)**

# Raising a glass to a landmark year

Fine food, celebratory speeches and presentations to long-serving staff were all served up as the association toasted an eventful 12 months at the annual Past Presidents' Christmas Lunch, sponsored by Wylex

WORDS  
LINDA ROLFE  
Events Manager



**O**FFICE bearers and staff celebrated the past and looked to the future as they gathered in Edinburgh for our annual Past Presidents' Christmas Lunch.

Sponsored for the first time by Associate Member Wylex, the association was joined by a number of special guests as we reviewed an eventful – and successful – 125th anniversary year. Around 30

guests gathered at The Balmoral hotel in the heart of the capital on Thursday 4 December for the festive get-together, which was hosted by Vice President Darren Crockett.

SELECT was delighted to welcome five Past Presidents to the event – David Smith, who held the position between 2005-2007, Eric Rae (2015-2017), Kevin Griffin (2017-2020), Donald W Orr (2020-2022) and Immediate Past President Alistair Grant (2022-2024).

Also among the guests at the historic railway hotel were Sales Managers Rob Stewart-Brackenridge and Belinda Colwell from Wylex, former SELECT Managing Director Newell McGuiness, SECTT CEO



↑ Members toast the association's anniversary year



**"I REALLY DO FEEL PROUD TO BE A PAST PRESIDENT OF SELECT AS IT IS A FINE AND FRIENDLY ORGANISATION"**

Fiona Harper  
and ECA Past  
President  
Stuart Smith.

**A WARM WELCOME**

Standing in for President Mike Stark, who was ill, Vice President Darren welcomed guests to the lunch and gave an overview of the association's celebratory year, including the recent 125th Anniversary Grand Ball in Glasgow.

As it was their last event, Darren also made special presentations to SELECT's Director of Technical Services Bob Cairney and Director of Finance and Association Secretary John McGhee, who will both be retiring in 2026.

David Smith then responded on behalf of the Past Presidents, joking that he remained a "Faithful" to the association, adding: "I'm certainly no Traitor as far as SELECT is concerned!"

"I really do feel proud to be a Past President of SELECT as it is a fine and friendly organisation."

Also in attendance were Branch Officers Mike Campbell (Aberdeen & North East of Scotland Branch), Chic Dobbie and Jim Cooper (Ayrshire), John Wilson (Dumfries & Galloway), Graeme Anderson (Edinburgh & South East Scotland), Alan Watt and Depute Vice President David Harris (Glasgow & West of Scotland), Stewart Anderson



↑ Stewart Anderson and Keith Smith

↑ Bob receives his gift



↓ John Wilson and Jim Cooper



↑ Five Past Presidents attended the lunch



↑ Belinda and Rob from sponsors Wylex were among the guests



↑ Sharon Miller chats with Newell McGuiness



↑ Past President David Smith assured guests he was no Traitor



↓ Darren stood in for President Mike Stark



↓ Office bearers, staff and guests mingled before lunch



↑ Kevin Griffin wished Alan Wilson all the best

↑ John McGhee was presented with a gift to mark his upcoming retirement



↑ Mike Campbell, Alan Watt, Graeme Anderson and Stewart Anderson

↑ Alan and Sharon welcomed ECA Past President Stuart Smith, left



↑ Lunch was preceded by a meeting of the Central Board



↑ Past Presidents Alistair Grant and Eric Rae



and Eric Rae (Inverness & North of Scotland), John Chambers (Lanarkshire) and Keith Smith (Tayside).

As well as Bob and John, SELECT was represented by Managing Director Alan Wilson, Directors of Function Catherine Gillon and Iain Mason, and Events Manager Linda Rolfe.

Also attending their first lunch were Managing Director Designate Sharon Miller, who will succeed Alan as MD in 2026, plus Robert McGoogan and Jenny Petrie who are set to become the Director of Technical Services and Director of Finance respectively at the end of March.

In addition to the speeches by Darren and David, Past President Kevin also thanked Alan for his time as MD, wishing him well for his retirement and Sharon good luck in her new role.

## LOOKING FORWARD

The lunch was preceded by a meeting of SELECT's Central Board, which reviewed association achievements during its anniversary year and outlined our priorities for 2026.

Stuart also gave an overview of ECA activities as it prepares to celebrate its own 125th birthday, and reinforced the importance of collaboration between the associations to keep pace with technological challenges.

Alan said: "The 2025 Past Presidents' Lunch was a friendly and welcoming event, with plenty of conversation between colleagues. I would like to thank all our guests for attending, and to our friends at Wylex for very generously sponsoring the event." ■

# Help at hand when you're starting out

The Electrical Industries Charity reveals how it recently teamed up with SECTT to help a young apprentice struggling with her finances – and is committed to supporting other young learners throughout 2026

WORDS  
JESS VAILIMA  
Managing Director



**F**INANCIAL stress can rear its head at any time and quickly become overwhelming – especially for those just starting out in their careers.

This was the case for Amy\*, a 1st Year apprentice living in a remote area of Scotland, who was made redundant shortly after purchasing her first home.

With a new mortgage to pay and the sudden loss of a steady income, her financial situation rapidly became unmanageable.

Amy reached out to the Electrical Industries Charity (EIC) for support and qualified for assistance through our Apprentice Support Programme (ASP). The ASP is designed

specifically to give support to apprentices and younger workers, addressing challenges that can hinder early career development. It provides financial grants and practical assistance tailored to the unique needs of those just starting out in their careers.

To provide Amy with well-rounded support, the EIC partnered with the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT), who assisted her in her search for a job and helped her secure a new employer so she could get back on her feet quickly.

Meanwhile, the EIC provided financial grants that covered her mortgage payments during the interim period.

Thanks to the ASP, Amy had a vital safety net during a time of uncertainty. The financial support gave her the freedom to focus on her job search without the mental burden of worrying about losing her home – allowing her to bring her best self to each new opportunity.

Amy's experience highlights the importance of supporting young workers when they face unforeseen challenges. Because of the help she received, she was able to remain in the industry, regain her stability and continue building a promising career.

You can find out more about the ASP by scanning the QR code on this page or going to [bit.ly/eic-asp](https://bit.ly/eic-asp)

## A SUPPORT NETWORK

As part of our long-term strategy, the EIC is placing a strong emphasis on raising awareness

## A complete year of wellbeing support

SELECT Members are being encouraged to take part in the EIC's Wellbeing Talk series as part of its 2026 Health Calendar.

The year-long programme of resources, tips and monthly

virtual sessions is designed to support the mental, emotional and physical wellbeing of people across the industry.

Delivered by EIC's experienced welfare team alongside trusted partners, the series aims to encourage open conversations, reduce stigma and provide practical tools for everyday life.

Each free one-hour virtual Wellbeing Talk will take place on the first Wednesday of every month from 12pm to 1pm

and will be available via EIC's YouTube channel afterwards.

Two talks have already been held, covering financial issues and setting boundaries with those we love, and are now available to watch again. Topics for the rest of the year are:

- **1 July** – Let's walk and talk
- **5 August** – Exploring neurodiversity
- **2 September** – Suicide prevention
- **7 October** – Menopause: Breaking the taboo
- **4 November** – Men's month
- **2 December** – Understanding addiction: Gambling harms.

Find out more by scanning the QR code on this page or going to [www.electricalcharity.org/health-calendar](https://www.electricalcharity.org/health-calendar)



↑ If you're facing financial problems, support is available

among apprentices throughout 2026 and beyond.

The aim is to ensure that, like Amy, every apprentice in the electrical and energy industries knows that EIC's services are available to them whenever they need support.

To support this initiative, the EIC is now offering its industry-specific training courses to apprentices completely free of charge.

There are 15 modules that can be accessed via the EIC Learning Management System covering a variety of topics based on real-life cases, including drugs and alcohol

## "AMY'S EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORTING YOUNG WORKERS WHEN THEY FACE UNFORESEEN CHALLENGES"

issues, suicide, bullying, money management and sexual abuse.

Other topics covered include:

- Relationships
- Dyslexia
- Homelessness
- Racism
- LBTQIA+ issues.

As part of its college engagement programme, the EIC can also provide shareable files to colleges to upload to their own

learning management systems. All resources are provided free of charge, helping colleges to support student wellbeing without additional cost or administration.

Find out more and sign up by scanning the QR code on this page or going to [bit.ly/eic-resources](https://bit.ly/eic-resources) ■

\*Name changed for privacy reasons

## KILTWALK WILL BE A TARTAN TREAT

The Edinburgh Kiltwalk is among four Challenge for a Cause events that have been launched by the EIC for 2026.

Held on 13 September, teams are being sought to gather in the capital in their finest activewear and tartan combos to raise funds and take on the 11-mile challenge.

Find out more and register your company team by scanning the QR code on this page or going to [bit.ly/eic-kiltwalk](https://bit.ly/eic-kiltwalk)

Simply select "Big Stroll" at 10am, then choose the Electrical Industries Charity and your JustGiving page will be set up.

Other EIC challenges include the London Marathon, climbing Mount Snowdon at night and the Pu Luong Trek in Vietnam.

All money raised will go directly back into the industry, allowing those who need it to access mental health support, financial aid, bereavement services, legal support and more.



↑ The Kiltwalk is a great chance to have fun while raising cash for charity

## USEFUL LINKS

↳ EIC Apprentice Support Programme



↳ EIC Learning Management System



↳ EIC help and support



↳ EIC Wellbeing Talks



↳ Edinburgh Kiltwalk



# Come and talk

SELECT's Technical team will be out in force this year, answering your questions and discussing the latest. Our experts will be attending the spring Branch Updates next month, before hitting the road in May for the



**E**MERGENCY lighting will be put in the spotlight at our first regional meetings of the year as Members gather to discuss local and industry issues.

A representative from the SELECT Technical team will attend each of the eight Branch Updates in March to deliver a presentation on the updates to emergency lighting standards and associated certification.

Presenting duties will be shared between Technical Director Designate Robert McGoogan, Training Development Adviser Stuart McKelvie and Consultant Technical Adviser Billy McRobert, who will also be on hand to discuss other technical issues.

There will be a prize draw at every update, with the chance to win a range of practical electrical equipment, which has once again kindly donated by Associate Member Megger.

In addition, updates on activity will also be delivered

by a SELECT Director of Function and member of the Presidential Team, with a Training Officer providing latest apprentice and adult trainee news from the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT).

Members will also have chance to ask questions, after which a short Branch AGM will be held to elect Branch Officers for 2026.

Iain Mason, Director of Membership, Events & Communication, said: "Branch Updates are an invaluable way for Members to come together, discuss topical issues and raise relevant questions. The March meetings will also be a good opportunity to meet



↑ LEFT TO RIGHT: Robert McGoogan, Stuart McKelvie and Billy McRobert

and chat with our technical experts face-to-face."

Members are encouraged to gather from 5.30pm onwards, with the meeting itself starting at 6pm and refreshments served at each event.

Iain added: "As always, we would encourage Members to attend their local meeting and make their voice heard." ■

THURSDAY  
2 JULY

Caladh Inn,  
Stornoway



↑ Stornoway will host one of our events at the start of July

 Branch  
UPDATE

↑ Stornoway will host one of our events at the start of July

WEDNESDAY  
10 JUNE

The Corran  
Halls, Oban



TUESDAY  
10 MARCH

Glasgow & West of  
Scotland Branch,  
Cardonald College

WEDNESDAY  
13 MAY

Hampden Park,  
Glasgow

TUESDAY  
30 JUNE

The Machrie, Islay



TUESDAY  
17 MARCH

Ayrshire Branch,  
Ayr College

THURSDAY  
5 MARCH

Dumfries &  
Galloway Branch,  
Dumfries &  
Galloway College



WEDNESDAY  
17 JUNE

Shetland Arts  
Development Agency,  
Mareel, Shetland

# tech with us

industry developments at Member events.  
2026 Toolbox Talks, sponsored by Aico



TUESDAY  
23 JUNE

The Pickaquoy  
Centre, Orkney

Head to Inverness in March and May  
to find out the latest industry updates

WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH  
Inverness & North of Scotland  
Branch, Inverness College

WEDNESDAY 27 MAY  
Kingsmill Hotel, Inverness

THURSDAY  
28 MAY

Pittodrie Stadium,  
Aberdeen

THURSDAY  
12 MARCH

Aberdeen &  
North East  
of Scotland  
Branch, Tullos  
Training

TUESDAY 12 MAY

Apex Hotel, Dundee

TUESDAY 3 MARCH  
Lanarkshire Branch, New  
College Lanarkshire,  
Motherwell Campus

WEDNESDAY  
25 MARCH

Tayside Branch,  
Perth College

WEDNESDAY  
6 MAY

The Walled Garden,  
Edinburgh

TUESDAY  
24 MARCH

Edinburgh & South East  
of Scotland Branch,  
Borders College

WEDNESDAY  
20 MAY

Fenwick Hotel,  
Ayrshire

THURSDAY  
7 MAY

Dryburgh  
Abbey Hotel,  
Borders

THURSDAY  
21 MAY

Easterbrook  
Hall, Dumfries

**T**HE latest amendment to BS 7671 provides the perfect opportunity for Members to get up to speed with essential updates as our popular Toolbox Talks return later this year.

Sponsored once again by Associate Member Aico, the 2026 events will discuss a range of topical trends from across the electrotechnical industry, with particular focus on Amendment 4.

Model forms will also be a timely subject for discussion, along with an update from Aico themselves, as Members once again enjoy four separate presentations.

Members will also have chance to ask questions and discuss matters face-to-face with our Technical Advisers as our free roadshows tour 13 venues across Scotland in May, June and July.

SELECT staff will also be on hand to answer any other queries,

along with representatives from the Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB) and SECTT.

In addition, a new prize game and interactive quiz will play a starring role, with goodies to be won courtesy of our generous Associate Members.

And exhibitors from a range of leading manufacturers and service providers will be there on the day too, so you'll have plenty of opportunity to get your hands on the latest electrotechnical technology.

Bob Cairney, Director of Technical Services, said: "With the launch of Amendment 4, there's a lot of technical information for Members to catch up on and we are anticipating plenty of questions and lively debate this year.

"Last year's Toolbox Talks were another huge success and we're looking forward to meeting even more Members in 2026."

Each event kicks off at around 9am with coffee and morning rolls, with lunch provided at each session and the event ending by 2pm. ■

Members attending this year's Toolbox Talks can pre-order their copy of BS 7671:2018+A4:2026 for £110. Please email [orders@select.org.uk](mailto:orders@select.org.uk) to place your order.



↑ The events are always popular,  
so book your place now

## BOOK YOUR PLACE

To book a place at your upcoming Branch Update or Toolbox Talk, speak to your Member Representative, email [memberservices@select.org.uk](mailto:memberservices@select.org.uk) or call 0131 445 5577.



# Technical

## MORE INFORMATION

For further information on our  
technical support and advice,  
please call 0131 445 9218 or email  
technicalhelp@select.org.uk



# Read all about the wiring regs changes

After months of work, including vital input from SELECT, Amendment 4 to the IET Wiring Regulations has finally been signed off. Here, we give an overview of the major changes – and why Members should get up to speed with them when the new book is published in April

WORDS  
BOB CAIRNEY  
Director of  
Technical Services



**M**EMBERS will be aware the IET and BSI have announced the completion of work on Amendment 4 (2026) to BS 7671:2018, AKA the 18th Edition of the IET Wiring Regulations.

Available for purchase from 15 April 2026, SELECT Members should now familiarise themselves with the significant changes, which include:

- A new chapter on stationary secondary batteries where the purpose is for electrical storage and supply of electrical installations

- A new section on functional earthing and functional equipotential bonding for information and communication technology (ICT) equipment and systems
- A new section on Power over Ethernet (PoE)
- A major revision of Section 710, Medical Locations, and the inclusion of a schedule of test results for recording the resistance of supplementary protective equipotential bonding conductors.

Other changes include the incorporation of Amendment 3:2024 to BS 7671:2018, which is now part of the main document.

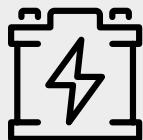
Amendment 4 also sees the further adoption of CENELEC

**"AMENDMENT 4  
IS AN ESSENTIAL  
UPDATE TO  
PROVIDE SAFE  
ELECTRICAL  
INSTALLATIONS  
IN THE UK"**

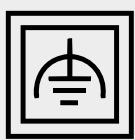
Harmonized Documents and IEC standards as the UK continues the inclusion of standards for new and developing technologies.

The new amendment can be implemented immediately when it has been published on 15 April 2026 and the previous version, BS 7671:2018+A2:2022+A3:2024, will be withdrawn six months after this on 15 October 2026.

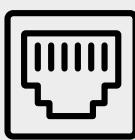
## The main changes



New chapter  
on stationary  
secondary  
batteries



New section on  
functional earthing  
and equipotential  
bonding for  
ICT systems



New section  
on Power over  
Ethernet (PoE)



Revision of  
Section 710,  
Medical Locations,  
and new schedule  
of test results



Amendment 3:  
2024 included  
as part of main  
document

**CENELEC**

Adoption of  
CENELEC  
Harmonized  
Documents and  
IEC standards



## AN ESSENTIAL UPDATE

Amendment 4 is an essential update to the IET Wiring Regulations and will form the UK national standard for:

- All new low voltage electrical installations
- Additions and alterations to existing installations
- Periodic inspection and testing of existing installations.

SELECT welcomes the amendment, which is an essential update to continue to provide safe electrical installations in the UK.

The association has participated with the IET and other industry bodies in the development of BS 7671 for many years through our contributions to the National Wiring Regulations JPEL/64 committee and we recognise the

IET as the authority for electrical installations in the UK.

JPEL/64 carefully considers all necessary updates to the regulations to ensure they continue to meet industry needs and Amendment 4 continues the thread of embracing new

↑ Members can pre-order their copy of the update through SELECT



↑ It's important to stay up to date with the latest changes in wiring regulations

## IS YOUR TRAINING UP TO DATE?

SELECT is reviewing its wide range of training courses to ensure they are updated in line with BS 7671:2018+A4:2026.

Members wishing to learn more about training packages should contact [training@select.org.uk](mailto:training@select.org.uk)

technologies. The inclusion of a new section on stationary secondary batteries is an exciting step into the future of renewable sources of energy and their integration into our lives.

## IN CONCLUSION

BS 7671 underpins safe, modern electrical infrastructure – essential for delivering the electrification needed to meet net zero ambitions.

As the electrification of society continues, it is therefore essential for contractors to keep abreast of the latest updates and we would encourage all Members to become familiar with Amendment 4 and its implications when it becomes available in April.

We are in agreement with Mark Coles, Head of Technical Regulations at the IET, who said: "Amendment 4 is an essential update to provide safe electrical installations in the UK and it is imperative that the industry is ready to work to this new amendment before BS 7671:2018+A2:2022+A3:2024 is withdrawn."

As outlined earlier in this issue, SELECT will be discussing Amendment 4 and its implications for contractors at our upcoming Toolbox Talks in May, June and July. Check your nearest event and book your place **NOW** to ensure you're up to speed. ■

BS 7671:2018+A4:2026 will be available for pre-order through SELECT by contacting [orders@select.org.uk](mailto:orders@select.org.uk)

# Training

## MORE INFORMATION

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



# Skills and education certs get new look

The Scottish Qualifications Authority has now become Qualifications Scotland. But what does it mean? How does it affect SELECT training? And will there be any impact on Members?

WORDS  
JENNY CRYVANS  
Training Manager



**T**HE Education (Scotland) Bill was passed last August, confirming the creation of Qualifications Scotland, a new public body that inherited the responsibilities held by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

Jenny Gilruth, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, confirmed in October that Qualifications Scotland would start work on 1 December 2025.

This date saw the new organisation's board appointed and governance arrangements set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 2025, which included setting up the:

- Strategic Advisory Council



↑ The changes won't affect candidates' learning experience

- Learner and Practitioner Interest Committees

- Accreditation Committee.

In addition, work also began on developing the learner and practitioner charters.

On 1 February, Qualifications Scotland became fully operational and began exercising its statutory awarding and accreditation functions. At this point, the new brand was launched and Qualifications Scotland certificates were issued.

## SCQF REGISTER AND SELECT TRAINING COURSES

From this month onwards, SELECT qualifications will be published on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Register under 'Qualifications Scotland' as the credit rating body.



The SCQF Register will feature a prominent notice on the website explaining the change of name.

This will have an impact on the following SELECT courses:

- Tailored Award in Design and Verification of Electrical Installations to BS 7671 (course number 208)
- Initial Verification of Electrical Installations to BS 7671 (209)

## Essential knowledge for safety on site

One of the most important SELECT courses approved by Qualifications Scotland is The Electrotechnical Site Safety Assessment (TESSA).

This one-day module is relevant to anyone who's not a qualified electrician but whose job requires them to access construction sites, either sporadically or on a regular basis.

As such, the course is suitable for applicants applying for the following new ECS Cards:

- Electrical Labourer
- Operative
- Site Support.

Anyone applying for such a card **MUST** complete the

TESSA course so they can complete the ECS Health, Safety and Environmental Assessment when renewing their card.

The course is applicable broadly across the construction sector and related industries and has been accredited to SCQF Level 6 by Qualifications Scotland.

Successful delegates will be awarded a Qualifications Scotland certificate that is acceptable to the SJIB for renewal of their ECS Card.

Candidates who pass should have the ability to operate safely on a construction site, demonstrate a good level



**"FROM 1 FEBRUARY ONWARDS, SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES WILL RECEIVE A QUALIFICATIONS SCOTLAND CERTIFICATE WHICH REPLACES THE ONE PREVIOUSLY RECEIVED FROM SQA"**

↑ Certificates showing your skills will now have new branding

- Inspection & Testing of Electrical Installations including Periodic Inspection to BS 7671 (214)
- Requirements for Electrical Installations to BS 7671 (218)
- The Electrotechnical Site Safety Assessment – TESSA (222)
- Electric Vehicle Charging Equipment Installations (324)
- Design, Installation, Commissioning and Maintenance of Fire Detection and Fire Alarm Systems (203)

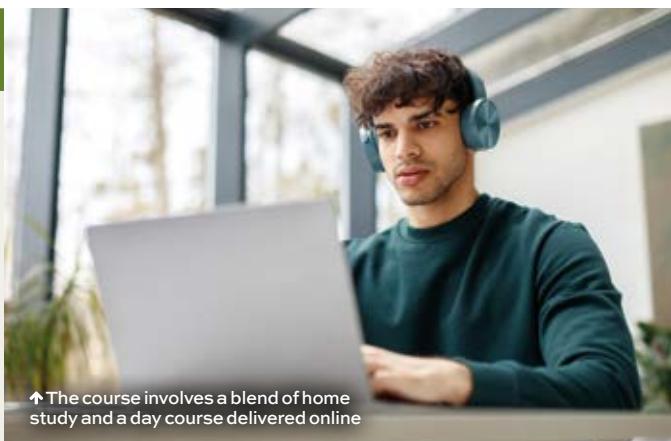
#### HOW WILL THIS AFFECT CANDIDATES?

There will be no change to the SELECT qualifications and the candidates' learning experience. The only change will be the branding from SQA to Qualifications Scotland.

This means that, from 1 February onwards, successful candidates will receive a Qualifications Scotland certificate which replaces the one previously received from SQA.

Training centres will also be expected to use Qualifications Scotland brand guidelines for any new and updated materials being produced. There is no expectation on centres to update existing materials straight away – these can be updated when they are naturally due to be replaced.

As always, SELECT's focus is on maintaining continuity, providing clarity and providing a positive experience for Members. If you have any queries about any of the above, please email [training@select.org.uk](mailto:training@select.org.uk) ■



↑ The course involves a blend of home study and a day course delivered online

of knowledge about health and safety practice and demonstrate a basic level of knowledge about the structures and mechanisms associated with regulation of electrical work.

The course is made up of two separate parts:

#### HOME STUDY

Candidates are emailed the course notes when they book, which they must read and study to gain the maximum benefit. At least six hours' study time is recommended.

The information in these course notes forms the basis of a closed book ECS Health, Safety and Environmental Assessment at the end of the day course.

#### DAY COURSE

Usually delivered online by

SELECT Technical staff as a virtual classroom, this part:

- Outlines the characteristics of good health and safety practice on a construction site.
- Describes the properties of electricity and their effect on the safety measures which must be taken.
- Names the key standards, legislation, documentation and certification associated with UK electrical installations.

- Describes the key practical measures which ensure that the risk of accidents involving electrical installations is minimised.
- Describes the purpose and scope of the Scottish Government's Building Standards Division.

There are also assessments at various points in the day, consisting of workbook exercises and questions.

Candidates must successfully complete **BOTH** the ECS Health, Safety and Environmental Assessment and the course workbook before SELECT can apply for the certificate from Qualifications Scotland.

If there is sufficient demand, the day course can be delivered face-to-face, either in the classroom or at your premises.

#### COSTS, DATES AND HOW TO BOOK

The TESSA course costs £200 + VAT for SELECT Members, with the next session scheduled to take place on Tuesday 17 March.

To book or find out more, call the Training team on 0131 445 5577, email [training@select.org.uk](mailto:training@select.org.uk) or visit the Training section at [www.select.org.uk](http://www.select.org.uk) and look for 'health & safety training'.

# Health & Safety



↑ It's important to follow the rules and stay safe at work

## Constructing better ways of working

Health and safety training in the construction industry poses a number of challenges that are essential to overcome. Here, we examine some of the issues faced by SELECT Members – and offer practical solutions to help you keep safe and on the right side of the law

WORDS  
**PAUL MACKLEY**  
Training Liaison Officer, BSG



**BSG** The Building Safety Group

**T**HE construction industry remains one of the UK's most hazardous sectors, with statistics from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) showing that construction accounts for around 30% of all work-related fatalities.

Despite significant improvements over recent decades, the complex nature of construction projects,

combined with evolving regulatory requirements, presents ongoing challenges in health and safety training.

So what are these issues? Let's take a look...

### DIVERSE WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT

One of the most significant challenges facing health and safety trainers is managing a diverse workforce. Construction sites typically employ workers

from various nationalities, creating substantial language barriers that complicate training delivery.

According to CITB data, approximately 10% of the UK construction workforce comprises non-native English speakers, meaning trainers must navigate multiple languages while ensuring critical safety information is accurately conveyed.

Varying education levels among workers presents additional complications. Some workers possess advanced technical qualifications, while others may have limited formal education. Trainers must adapt materials to accommodate different learning styles and comprehension levels while still maintaining consistent safety standards.

This often requires developing multi-format training resources and implementing visual learning aids to overcome any potential literacy challenges.

## REGULATORY COMPLIANCE AND UPDATES

The regulatory landscape for construction safety continues to evolve, particularly post-Brexit. Trainers must constantly update their knowledge and materials to reflect the latest HSE guidelines and industry standards.

The introduction of new regulations, such as the Building Safety Act 2022, requires trainers to rapidly assimilate and communicate complex regulatory changes to their audiences.

## DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD-KEEPING

Trainers must maintain detailed records of attendance, assessments and certifications while ensuring compliance with data protection regulations.

The transition from paper-based to digital systems, while necessary for efficiency, often creates additional training requirements for both trainers and participants.

## PRACTICAL TRAINING DELIVERY

Site conditions significantly impact training effectiveness. Weather constraints, particularly in outdoor settings, can disrupt scheduled sessions. Limited space availability and high noise levels on active construction sites often compromise the learning environment.

Trainers must be adaptable, sometimes delivering training in less-than-ideal conditions while maintaining professional standards.

## TIME MANAGEMENT

Production pressures and tight project deadlines often result in reduced training time allocation. Coordinating sessions across different shift patterns while ensuring adequate coverage for all workers requires careful planning and flexibility.

# How BSG can help

Successful health and safety training requires a structured approach, beginning with a thorough training needs analysis.

BSG can help SELECT Members develop comprehensive training programmes that include regular refresher courses and clear progression paths.

In addition, developing a positive safety culture is essential for effective H&S training. This requires visible leadership commitment, active worker involvement in safety initiatives, and clear communication channels.

Regular toolbox talks, safety committees and recognition programmes can help embed safety consciousness throughout the organisation.

Performance indicators or KPIs provide objective measures of training effectiveness, including:

- Reduction in accident rates and severity
- Increased near-miss reporting
- Training completion rates

- Positive worker feedback
- Improved site inspection results.

Continuous improvement should also be driven by regular reviews of training outcomes and implementation of feedback from all levels of the organisation.

Effective health and safety training remains crucial for reducing accidents and maintaining compliance in the construction industry.

While challenges exist, particularly around resource allocation and workforce diversity, modern solutions and systematic approaches can help overcome these obstacles.

Success requires commitment from all levels of the organisation and a willingness to embrace new training methodologies.

For further support and resources please contact BSG Training at [training@bsgltd.co.uk](mailto:training@bsgltd.co.uk) or consult the HSE website at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

According to recent industry surveys, 65% of trainers report difficulties in securing sufficient time to carry out comprehensive safety training.

## TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

The construction industry's digital transformation has introduced new challenges for trainers. While e-learning platforms and virtual reality applications offer innovative training solutions, implementation often faces resistance. Cost considerations, technical literacy levels among workers and reliable internet connectivity on construction sites can limit the effectiveness of digital training tools.

## MEASURING TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS

Evaluating training impact remains a persistent challenge. Trainers must develop robust assessment methods that demonstrate knowledge retention as well as practical application of safety principles.

Performance monitoring through site inspections and incident reporting helps measure

training effectiveness, but establishing direct correlations between training and safety improvements can be difficult.

## MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Health and safety trainers in the construction sector face multiple interconnected challenges that require innovative solutions and continuous adaptation.

Success depends on balancing regulatory requirements with practical constraints while meeting diverse workforce needs.

Industry support through increased resources, technology investment and recognition of training importance is essential for overcoming these challenges and improving construction safety standards.

The future of construction safety training lies in developing more flexible, accessible and effective delivery methods while maintaining high standards of instruction. Addressing these challenges requires collaborative effort from construction companies, regulatory bodies and training professionals to create a safer working environment for all construction workers. ■

## YOUR FREE HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVICE

SELECT's partnership with the BSG gives every Member free access to a wealth of benefits worth £750 via the BSG Hub, including risk assessments and method statements. All Member companies are enrolled automatically – just use your membership number to get started. To find out more, scan the QR code.





# Industry insight

## Right now is the right time to get things done

Small problems don't always stay small – so don't put them off until later. Our expert explains why the start of the year is the best time to take action and address the little things while you have time

**WORDS**  
**ROB LOW**

Business Development Executive, EC Insurance Services Limited



 ecis

**T**HE start of the year is when everyone talks about starting things. New routines. Better habits. Good intentions for the year ahead. But for most electrotechnical contractors, the most useful change isn't starting something new. It's stopping putting something off.

The shoulder that's been tight since November but still being worked around. Sleep that dipped during the last big project push and never quite recovered. That sense of feeling worn down, but not enough to justify making a fuss. It's a familiar pattern in construction. The start of the year doesn't create that gap, but it does make it easier to notice the difference between what people mean to deal with and what they keep delaying.

### THE FAMILIAR PATTERN OF DELAY

Putting health issues off usually isn't about a lack of awareness. Most people have a sense when something isn't right. The difficulty is finding the moment to deal with it. In contracting,

delay often sounds familiar: "I'll deal with it after this job." "It's not that bad." "I'm managing it."

At the time, that thinking makes sense. Work rarely slows down when you want it to, and busy spells have a habit of rolling on. It's easy to tell yourself that if something is manageable, it can wait.

The trouble is that small problems don't usually disappear just because they're ignored.

### WHY EARLY ACTION IS THE PRACTICAL CHOICE

Dealing with a symptom earlier often means it can be simpler to sort. Recovery can be more straightforward when you haven't been compensating for months.

Waiting rarely makes things simpler. It usually moves the problem further down the line, to a point where it's harder to ignore and harder to work around. Seen that way, early





action isn't about doing the right thing. It's about reducing friction, for employees and for the business.

#### SUPPORT THAT'S THERE TO BE USED

People tend to assume that health support like private medical insurance (PMI) is only there for major problems. Big moments. Situations that clearly justify picking up the phone.

### "HAVING HELP ON HAND SHOWS NEW STARTERS THAT IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT GETTING THE JOB DONE – IT'S ALSO ABOUT STAYING WELL WHILE DOING IT"

That assumption misses the point. The support PMI offers is often most useful earlier on when something is still a niggle rather than a barrier to leading a normal life. That support might mean access to a digital GP or telephone consultation, some initial clinical guidance or a referral where it's appropriate.

For members of the SELECT PMI scheme, this kind of support is designed to be accessed directly and privately, without needing to involve anyone at work or wait for approval.

Used early, support can help employees deal with things while they're still manageable.

#### WHAT FEBRUARY IS ACTUALLY GOOD FOR

The start of the year doesn't need to be about transformation. But it does offer a pause. The calendar resets. People take stock, even briefly.

That makes it a useful moment to notice what's been

put off, without turning it into a dramatic overhaul. It's simply asking a question: what would make the next few months easier if you dealt with it now?

The shoulder. The sleep. The worry. The thing you've been managing. Acting early doesn't mean overreacting. It means dealing with something while it's still straightforward.

#### IF YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR A TEAM

Where healthcare support is already in place, the start of the year is often one of the least disruptive moments to remind employees that it's available for them. Not a campaign. Not posters. Just a quiet reminder that support is available and intended for early use.

This isn't about starting conversations or checking in. It's simply making sure people know support exists and that using it early is exactly what it's there for.

And if that kind of early access isn't in place yet at your business, it's worth asking what delay costs over the course of a year. Not in dramatic terms, but in the day-to-day pressure created when small issues are left to run on and employees aren't at their best.

#### PUSH THROUGH OR ACT EARLY?

Construction is full of people who pride themselves on getting on with the job. That's part of the industry's strength. But there's a difference between pushing through and taking a moment to fix an ongoing health problem.

The start of the year doesn't need big promises. It just needs a bit of honesty about what's been delayed. If you've got healthcare support, use it early. If you haven't, consider what having it might change in terms of employee morale and productivity.

Small problems don't always stay small – so don't put it off. ■

#### HOW ECIS CAN HELP

As a leading chartered insurance broker, ECIS has been organising and managing SELECT's exclusive PMI scheme through Bupa for decades. Find out how ECIS can help you support the next generation at [www.ecins.co.uk](http://www.ecins.co.uk) or email [ecis@ecins.co.uk](mailto:ecis@ecins.co.uk)



# Keeping all your people connected

Communication is key to any successful business, but all too often key messages are misunderstood or lost. Our expert outlines how to make better connections in your company – and how to ensure everyone is singing from the same hymn sheet

WORDS  
PAUL McDEVITT  
Managing Director,  
McDevitt & Co



**McDevitt & Co**

In my 30-year career in the construction industry, the one issue that comes up time and time again is the need for better communication.

During my time in the industry, I've conducted more than 50 staff surveys across the sector, mostly with SMEs, and top of the list is always the need to improve communication. It doesn't matter the structure or the scale of the business, it's the one issue that most people agree needs to be improved.

Effective communication sits at the heart of every successful business. Whether coordinating on-site activities, negotiating with suppliers or responding to client needs, the ability of an SME to convey information clearly and consistently determines both operational efficiency and business growth.

Yet, in many SME construction firms, communication remains one of the toughest challenges. Misunderstandings, fragmented information flows and poor feedback mechanisms can lead to errors, project delays and, unfortunately, even safety incidents.

To address these issues, leaders must reshape how their organisations think about, practice and value communication.

## THE COMMUNICATION CHALLENGE

Construction-based SMEs operate in fast-paced, high-pressure environments. Teams are often distributed across multiple sites, involving a mix of internal staff, sub-contractors and clients.



The diversity of roles, from architects and engineers to builders and project managers, means that communication must bridge technical expertise, varying levels of literacy and cultural differences.

In many such businesses, leaders are accustomed to direct, task-oriented communication. Information passes quickly from the top down, often verbally or through informal channels.

While this might work for small teams, it fails once operations scale. Miscommunication can result in wastage, rework or compromised safety protocols. Employees may feel disconnected or undervalued when communication only flows in one direction.

## THE LEADERSHIP MINDSET: FROM COMMAND TO COLLABORATION

Leaders need a mindset shift – from command-based communication to collaborative communication. Traditional leadership models in construction often emphasise authority and instruction. However, modern SMEs thrive when collaboration replaces hierarchy as the communication norm.

Leaders must engage with teams not just to issue directives but also to listen actively and involve

them in decision-making. This requires empathy, patience and transparency. Instead of communicating merely to instruct, leaders should aim to inform, align and inspire. Transparency builds trust, and trust encourages employee engagement and ownership of tasks.

### EMPHASISING STRUCTURED COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

One of the biggest weaknesses in many contractors is the lack of structured, reliable communication channels. Too often, information is dispersed across emails, text messages or verbal briefings on-site, leading to confusion.

Leaders must establish and enforce consistent channels:

- **Daily or weekly briefings:** Short, structured meetings to review progress, safety issues and upcoming tasks. It is best if these meetings are minuted, so that a record is kept.
- **Digital platforms:** Tools like project management apps such as Procore, Buildertrend or Trello can centralise updates, documents and communications in real time.
- **Clear reporting lines:** Everyone should know whom to report to and how to escalate concerns efficiently.
- **Feedback loops:** Encourage two-way communication through surveys, check-ins or open-door policies.

Establishing these channels sends a clear signal that organised communication is a core part of company culture, not an afterthought.

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT: BUILDING COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

Many construction professionals rise through the ranks based on technical ability, not communication prowess. That's understandable – knowing how to complete a project is critical, but communicating effectively is what ensures projects are completed safely and correctly.

Leaders should invest in regular communication training for staff at all levels. Workshops on active listening, non-verbal cues, conflict resolution and clear instruction-writing can dramatically improve interpersonal effectiveness.

Furthermore, site managers and supervisors should receive leadership mentoring that includes the application of communication theory to real-

**"LEADERS MUST ENGAGE WITH TEAMS NOT JUST TO ISSUE DIRECTIVES BUT ALSO TO LISTEN ACTIVELY AND INVOLVE THEM IN DECISION-MAKING"**

life project management. SMEs can also integrate communication expectations into their performance metrics. When employees are evaluated partly on how well they share information and collaborate, it signals that communication isn't something that's optional – it's essential.

### LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO BRIDGE GAPS

Technology offers a powerful avenue for improving communication. However, many SMEs hesitate to adopt new systems, fearing complexity or additional cost. Leaders must embrace digital tools not as luxuries but as enablers of clarity and efficiency.

Cloud-based project management software is able to centralise documents, schedules and real-time updates.

Mobile apps allow construction teams to access drawings, specifications and safety alerts directly from site, minimising any errors caused by using outdated information.

Video calls and collaboration tools help connect remote teams and streamline coordination with clients and suppliers.

However, technology alone is not the answer. It must be accompanied by clear standards for usage, i.e. who updates what, how often and how communication integrates with reporting structures. Without these rules, even the best tools can become sources of confusion.

### FOSTERING A CULTURE OF FEEDBACK AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Workers often hesitate to speak up, particularly when they feel their opinions will not be valued or may cause friction. Leaders need to dismantle this fear by cultivating psychological safety – a culture where everyone feels comfortable raising concerns, asking questions and offering feedback without reprisal.

Psychological safety begins with leadership behaviour. When managers admit mistakes, invite critique and thank employees for honest input, they set an example. Over time, this openness encourages proactive problem-solving and innovation. A culture that values dialogue can prevent issues before they escalate – from safety hazards to client miscommunication.

Feedback should be viewed not as criticism but as improvement fuel. Leaders can formalise this through regular performance reviews and debrief sessions after project milestones, ensuring that lessons learned translate into better communication practices.

### ENHANCING CROSS-FUNCTIONAL UNDERSTANDING

Construction SMEs often rely on multiple specialists whose work



overlaps. Misalignment between departments, such as design and operations, can lead to costly errors. Leaders must champion cross-functional communication by ensuring teams understand one another's goals, constraints and timelines.

This can be achieved through joint planning sessions, shared documentation and interdepartmental workshops. When different teams see the broader picture, they communicate not only more clearly but also more respectfully. Empathy between functions reduces tension and fosters smoother collaboration.

#### PRIORITISING COMMUNICATION IN SAFETY MANAGEMENT

Safety is non-negotiable in construction. Yet many accidents occur because of unclear or incomplete communication.

Leaders must embed communication deeply within their safety strategies. Safety briefings should go beyond compliance – they should be interactive dialogues where all team members feel accountable for raising potential risks.

Visual aids, multilingual materials and clearly posted instructions can help overcome language or literacy barriers common in construction sites. Leaders should also reinforce safety communication through repetition and active engagement rather than dry policy dissemination.

#### LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Ultimately, improving communication in a construction business starts at the top. Employees model their behaviour after leaders. If leaders communicate clearly, listen actively and respond promptly, these behaviours spread throughout the organisation.

Consistency is key. Leaders must demonstrate respect in every interaction, whether that's with apprentices or clients, and maintain professionalism even under pressure.

#### MEASURING AND SUSTAINING IMPROVEMENT

Improving communication is not a one-time initiative – it's an ongoing evolution.

**"CONSISTENCY IS KEY. LEADERS MUST DEMONSTRATE RESPECT IN EVERY INTERACTION, WHETHER THAT'S WITH APPRENTICES OR CLIENTS, AND MAINTAIN PROFESSIONALISM EVEN UNDER PRESSURE"**

SMEs should measure the effectiveness of communication strategies through indicators such as project efficiency, safety performance, employee engagement and client satisfaction. Regular reviews and adjustments ensure the process remains dynamic.

#### CONCLUSION

For construction-based SMEs, communication is both a technical and cultural challenge. Leaders must shift from directive to collaborative communication, establish structured channels, invest in training and harness technology to ensure clarity.

More importantly, they must create environments where every team member feels heard and empowered to contribute.

Improving communication isn't about talking more – it's about talking better. With intentional leadership and consistent effort, communication can become the pillar that supports efficiency, safety and long-term success in the construction sector. ■

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)

# What's next for retentions?

The construction industry is still feeling the pain of bad payment practices, but new moves by the UK Government will hopefully help businesses across the country tackle the issue

WORDS  
DAVID WILSON  
Consultant



**MFM**  
MORTON  
FRASER  
MACROBERTS  
LLP

David Wilson regularly advises on arbitration and adjudication matters, often providing legal advice to adjudicators. As a litigator, he has extensive experience of acting for pursuers and defenders in commercial disputes in the Court of Session

**R**ESEARCH continues to show that poor payment practices are still the scourge of the construction sector.

Between July and October 2025, the Department for Business and Trade held a consultation process aimed at introducing UK-wide legislation directed towards tackling poor payment practices in the UK economy generally.

Specifically in relation to the construction sector, however, the UK Government has indicated that it proposes to legislate in relation to retention monies.

The proposal is that the Government will amend the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (the 1996 Act) to either abolish retentions entirely or allow retentions to be used in construction contracts but require any retention sums withheld to be protected. So what would each of those options mean in practice?

## OPTION 1: BAN OF RETENTIONS

Under the first option, the 1996 Act would be amended to make it unlawful for payers to deduct and withhold retention sums from payments to payees. Notwithstanding that ban on retention, payers could choose to seek alternative forms of insurance or surety in relation to performance "but this would not be mandated". The measure would be implemented for new construction contracts after a prescribed date, which will provide a transitional period for payers "to adjust to new requirements including management of working capital".

## OPTION 2: NO BAN BUT RETENTIONS TO BE PROTECTED

Under the second option, there would be no ban of retentions but, in order "to create the protection of retention sums for the benefit of the payee", payers would have the choice of either segregating

the retained sums in a separate bank account or protecting the sums through an instrument of guarantee (insurance or surety bond). This measure would also be implemented for new construction contracts to allow a transitional period within which payers could prepare for and adjust their practices to meet the new requirements.

It is anticipated that option two is likely to include the following features:

- It would only apply to construction contracts as defined in the 1996 Act
- Where the construction contract makes no appropriate provision, the 1996 Act will imply relevant terms
- Retention will require to be released "unless the required notice is made"
- Interest on the retention is to be "owned by the payee"
- The payer will be required to report to the payee on any retention held.

The use of retentions in the construction sector continues to be a highly controversial subject. The consultation meets this controversy head-on by suggesting two options for reform.

The consultation closed on 23 October 2025, and the outcome is expected to be published soon. Whichever option is chosen, it should be good news for all those on the contractual chain in construction contracts who are anxious to make sure that the use of retention doesn't lead to an unjustified delay in payment or, indeed, non-payment due to upstream insolvency and that retention monies retained aren't used for any inappropriate purposes. ■



**LEGAL  
HELPLINE**  
0141 303 1111

Delivering fair legislation is vital so that businesses get paid for the work they do

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

# Laying the foundations for a better resolution

Our hugely experienced industry expert talks us through a recent case that shows why the old adage 'fail to prepare, prepare to fail' has never been more relevant

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



▼ It's important to keep accurate records of every project

IT'S been a while since my last column, but I just wanted to share a recent conversation I had with a contractor that contains some vital lessons in how to go about handling a dispute.

In this particular case, the contractor asked me to arrange a meeting as they wanted to start adjudication proceedings against a client over issues relating to their final account.

They wanted me to "ambush the other side" before Christmas and instructed me as follows:

Contractor: "Can you get the notice of adjudication submitted in a couple of days?"

Me: "That's not the way you do it. You need to get your

referral documents in order first, so I'll need to meet up with your commercial and contract managers to get some background."

"Hmmm, that'll be a problem. The contracts manager is on holiday and the commercial manager who was involved in the project left us two weeks ago."

"Is there anybody else who can step into the commercial manager's shoes?"

"No, he did the work on his own."

"Can we contact him and recover his electronic records?"

"I doubt it. He left under a bit of a cloud as we had to make him redundant. He wasn't best pleased and it seems all the electronic records have been deleted from his laptop."

"Have you checked if they can be found in the server?"

"Not yet."

"OK. So where are all the contract documents, drawings, site minutes, photos and other records?"

"I don't know. We'll just have to manage as best as we can."

## THE RIGHT STRATEGY

After taking a moment,

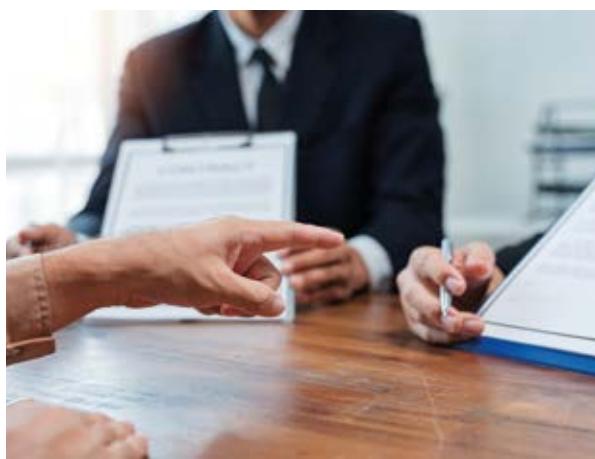


**"I CALMLY EXPLAINED THAT THERE WAS NO POINT GOING INTO ADJUDICATION WITH A HALF-BAKED PLAN"**

I calmly explained to him that there was no point going into adjudication with a half-baked plan, and that the ball certainly wouldn't be rolling before Christmas.

I explained that it was highly unlikely that any adjudicator would be working over the festive holidays and no doubt the other side would just say that their offices were shut.

I also explained that the other party in an adjudication often kicks off with a





↑ Successfully dealing with disputes requires strong preparation skills

jurisdictional challenge to delay the process and it would probably take the adjudicator a week to decide whether there was any merit in it.

Finally, I pointed out that if we didn't put the case together properly and lost, he would have to pay my costs, plus fees of anything up to £15,000.

Of course, the contractor came back with: "I don't care Len. I just want to go ahead."

In turn, I responded: "Even if we **ARE** successful, the other side is likely to disagree with the adjudicator's decision and refuse to pay up."

"Why would they do that?"

"Because that's what happens."

"What do we do then?"

Summoning all my patience, I replied: "We need to start an enforcement action in the courts which means we need to engage

a lawyer and counsel. It could take a couple of months before it's heard and then another few weeks to get a judgement. And again, if you're unsuccessful, then you'll be completely liable for both your own and the other side's costs."

The response was as expected: "That sounds like a waste of time. I thought adjudication was about helping payment and cashflow issues, but this could put us out of business!"

#### THE NEXT STEPS

After talking the contractor down, I led him through a plan that I've been through many times, starting with a day in his office, getting up to speed with whoever was been involved in the project.

I then explained that I would contact the managing director

of the opposing client and ask to meet for a 'without prejudice' discussion to try to get a resolution that suited everyone.

I told him I would point out the length of the relationship, that he wanted to work with them in the future and that both sides could learn a lot from what had happened.

If they weren't agreeable to that, I suggested we use the Conflict Avoidance Process and bring in an independent person to provide non-binding recommendations on all issues.

The contractor said: "I feel better with a proper plan in place Len. Can you deliver?"

I replied: "I'm not a miracle worker but I'll give it 100% to try to get it resolved as quickly – and painlessly – as possible."

#### LESSONS TO LEARN

As we speak, the case is still ongoing, but there are several lessons for this – and every other – electrical contractor to take on board.

Firstly, you should always keep excellent records on every project, archived in a safe place with all electronic communications protected, to ensure all your ducks are in a row if you ever need them.

Secondly, you should always strive to ensure that people leave your organisation amicably to ensure they are prepared to assist you in the future if needed.

And thirdly, to avoid getting into this position again, hold an internal workshop and take your colleagues through the CICV's Best Practice Guide to improve your commercial performance.

Above all, I hope SELECT Members take the most important lesson out of this whole saga: "Fail to prepare, prepare to fail." ■



#### EXPERT ADVICE IS CLOSE AT HAND

The Best Practice Guide is a free resource compiled by the Construction Industry Collective Voice (CICV), of which SELECT is a leading member. Download it by scanning the QR code or going to [bit.ly/CICV-BPG](http://bit.ly/CICV-BPG)



For other employment enquiries, email [len@buntonconsulting.co.uk](mailto:len@buntonconsulting.co.uk)

# SECTT Update

INDUSTRY leaders and the talent of tomorrow gathered at the Marriott Hotel in Edinburgh to mark the culmination of the SECTT Apprentice of the Year Competition 2025.

This significant event in the trade calendar served not merely as a ceremony, but as a definitive statement on the high standards currently being set in the Scottish electrical sector.

With a focus on the dedication required to master complex electrical installations, the summit on 3 December brought together the finalists who successfully navigated a rigorous selection process, distinguishing themselves from an initial cohort of approximately 1,600 participants across the North, East and West regions.

To reach the final candidates were subjected to intense scrutiny by a distinguished panel of industry experts, including:

- **Catherine Gillon**, Secretary of the SJIB and Director of Employment Affairs at SELECT
- **Scott Foley**, Regional Officer for Unite the Union and SECTT Trustee and Chair
- **Alick Smith**, employer representative, SELECT Past President, member of the SJIB board and Director of NET.

Reaching the final 21 represented a significant professional milestone, requiring candidates to demonstrate not only technical acuity but also the professional temperament expected of future industry leaders. The panel's deliberations ensured that the winners represented the absolute apex of current vocational training standards.

## AS GOOD AS GOLD

In the 1st Stage category, Albie Fuller of SELECT Member firm FES Ltd secured the gold award, demonstrating exceptional competency that set the standard for his peers.

Albie was followed by Jake Mitchell of fellow Member firm G & A Barnie Group Ltd, who took silver, while James Woodhouse of James Woodhouse Electrical Contractors claimed bronze.



## A showcase of Scotland's top talent

Electrical excellence and exceptional enthusiasm were both on show at the prestigious SECTT Apprentice of the Year awards – with a special appearance by Scotland's latest UK champion, too

The competition for the 2nd Stage apprentices was equally fierce, with Adam Souter of Member firm McDonald and Munro Ltd eventually taking the gold medal. SELECT

Members firms were also represented in the other two places, with Rhys Howey of WP Purves awarded silver and Evan McBain of Millar Electrics Ltd securing bronze.

SCOTT FOLEY

UNITE THE UNION  
AND SECTT TRUSTEE  
AND CHAIR

ALAN WILSON

SELECT MD AND  
SECTT TRUSTEE

JAMES WOODHOUSE

JAMES WOODHOUSE  
ELECTRICAL  
CONTRACTORS, 1ST  
STAGE BRONZE

JAKE MITCHELL

G & A BARNIE  
GROUP LTD, 1ST  
STAGE SILVER

BOB MacGREGOR

UNITE THE  
UNION

ADAM SOUTER

MCDONALD AND  
MUNRO LTD, 2ND  
STAGE GOLD

FIONA HARPER  
SECTT CEO

APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR // SECTT



## EV testers will help to educate apprentices

SELECT Associate Member Megger has once again demonstrated its commitment to the next generation of electrical contractors by donating EV testers to Scotland's learners.

Strategic Account Manager Alastair Blyth recently handed over the high-specification diagnostic hardware to SECTT, with the units in turn distributed to colleges by SECTT Training & Development Manager Barrie McKay.

Barrie said: "This isn't the first time Alastair and Megger have stepped in to help the apprenticeship scheme, reinforcing the value of industry stakeholders taking an active role in skills development.

"We are extremely grateful for the donation and the testers will be put to good use immediately, ensuring that apprentices have access to the best available tools during their formative training years."

Alastair said: "This donation ensures that apprentices can move beyond theoretical study and gain hands-on proficiency with the precise instrumentation required to verify and certify EV charging installations safely.

"By directly bridging the gap between the classroom and the site environment, lecturers can deliver up-to-the-minute instruction on modern testing, ensuring that the workforce of tomorrow is fully competent in the technologies now reshaping the electrical landscape."

SECTT CEO Fiona Harper said: "The investigative rigour applied to the selection of these finalists underscores the value of the accolades presented.

"Their victories highlight the critical role of employers in nurturing talent, as each winner's performance reflected both individual brilliance and high-quality mentorship."

### FLYING THE FLAG

As well as the regional apprentice accolades, the event also shone a spotlight on Scotland's dominance in the national stages of the recent UK-wide SkillELECTRIC competition.

Attending as our special guest was Ellis Stevenson, who returned home from Wales with the gold medal, solidifying

**"THEIR VICTORIES HIGHLIGHT THE CRITICAL ROLE OF EMPLOYERS IN NURTURING TALENT, AS EACH WINNER'S PERFORMANCE REFLECTED BOTH INDIVIDUAL BRILLIANCE AND HIGH-QUALITY MENTORSHIP"**



↑ Keith McMahon gratefully receives his kit from Barrie at New College Lanarkshire

her status as the premier electrical apprentice in the UK. The talented youngster, who attends UHI Moray and is employed by SELECT Member firm Campbell & McHardy Ltd, became the competition's first female winner after a gruelling three-day assessment at Bridgend College in December.

The competition involved a practical installation task alongside inspection and testing and a solar exercise, with Ellis eventually emerging triumphant.

In a remarkable display of consistency, SECTT 2nd Stage gold medallist Adam Souter was runner-up in the same competition, and joined Ellis at the event in Edinburgh to show off their gongs and receive well-deserved congratulations from the assembled guests.

Fiona said: "We were absolutely thrilled to see the cream of Scottish talent return from SkillELECTRIC 2025 with richly deserved gold and silver.

"Their success validates the superior electrical training infrastructure in Scotland and the strong partnership between SECTT and the industry's training centres and employers."

#### LOOKING AHEAD

As our prize-winning youngsters basked in their success, the day's proceedings concluded with a forward-looking address regarding the trajectory of the



↑ The event was a chance to honour Scotland's SkillELECTRIC medal winners

**"WE WERE ABSOLUTELY THRILLED TO SEE THE CREAM OF SCOTTISH TALENT RETURN FROM SKILLELECTRIC 2025 WITH RICHLY DESERVED GOLD AND SILVER"**

#### 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)

electrical industry. Fiona added: "By celebrating these achievements, SECTT has reinforced the critical narrative that apprentices are the bedrock of future innovation and infrastructure stability.

"The sheer calibre of talent displayed by Ellis, Adam and their fellow finalists offers a reassuring forecast for the sector, suggesting that the next generation of electricians possesses both the technical skills and the ambition to drive the industry forward."

As the delegates departed Edinburgh, the message was clear – excellence is not an act, but a habit formed through rigorous training and relentless dedication. ■

## AI IS DRIVING THE FUTURE OF TRAINING

SECTT's Barrie McKay recently took to the stage to explain how the organisation is using AI to help revolutionise training.

Our Training & Development Manager delivered a presentation at the Skills Development Scotland (SDS) Artificial Intelligence Community of Practice in December.

Joined by 60 in-person delegates and more than 150 online participants at the

Edinburgh Training and Conference Venue, Barrie gave practical examples of how SECTT is harnessing the power of AI to streamline operations and help learners.

A full report will appear in the next issue of *cabletalk* – delivered with the help of AI, of course!

EVERY ROLE IS TRANSFORMING – FROM BOARDROOM STRATEGY TO FRONTLINE SERVICE DELIVERY. THE QUESTION ISN'T WHETHER AI WILL IMPACT YOUR ORGANISATION, BUT HOW QUICKLY YOU CAN PREPARE YOURSELF AND YOUR WORKFORCE FOR THIS NEW REALITY.

# SJIB Bulletin

## The right way to get an ECS Card

It's important to use the correct website when you're applying, so here's some advice to make sure the process is as smooth as possible

In this issue, we wanted to reinforce the importance of using the right website when you're applying for an ECS Card.

Firstly, a reminder that the SJIB and its southern counterpart, the Joint Industry Board (JIB), operate as two separate organisations.

If you live in Scotland, the SJIB is responsible for administering ECS Cards, while the JIB manages applications for residents of England and Wales.

Although ECS Cards can be used across the UK, applications need to be made through the board linked to where you live – **NOT** where you work or who your employer is.

This means that if you live in Scotland, you should apply through the SJIB, even if you work in England or Wales or are employed by an English company. Applying through the right board ensures

that your application is processed smoothly and without delays.

### WHAT ARE WE SEEING?

Lately, we're seeing more Scottish operatives completing their ECS Card applications, or the ECS Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) Assessment, via the JIB website at [www.ecscard.org.uk](http://www.ecscard.org.uk) rather than through the SJIB.

It's an easy mistake to make as the two boards are linked and the JIB website appears first when googling "ECS Cards" or "ECS HSE assessments".

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

When an application is submitted to the wrong board, the SJIB can't access or track it. This can slow things down and, importantly, a card won't be issued if it's

submitted to the incorrect board. Using the correct board from the start helps to avoid these delays and ensures your ECS Card is processed quickly.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you live in Scotland, please use the SJIB website at [www.sjib.org.uk](http://www.sjib.org.uk) for ECS Cards and assessments. Once on the site, click 'ECS Cards' to apply for an ECS Card or 'ECS HSE Assessment' to access assessment applications.

If you think you may have applied through the wrong system, please contact the SJIB via the website. We can then check if we've received an application for you.

If we haven't and it seems it has been submitted through the JIB, we'll advise you to contact them directly to resolve it, as we aren't able to access applications or refund any fees. ■

### EXPERT SUPPORT IS ON THE CARDS

The Fire, Emergency and Security System (FESS) ECS Cards have been available for several years, however, we are still seeing many initial applications come through.

We would like to gently remind everyone to check the eligibility criteria, as the benchmark for new entrants into the FESS industry is now Level 3, as of January 2021.

The Occupational Qualification Structure

was developed by the FESS industry through a sector working group of trade associations and employer representatives, with input from across the industry.

These changes support the sector's drive to professionalise and ensure that all Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) partnered cards are issued against an industry-recognised qualification standard.

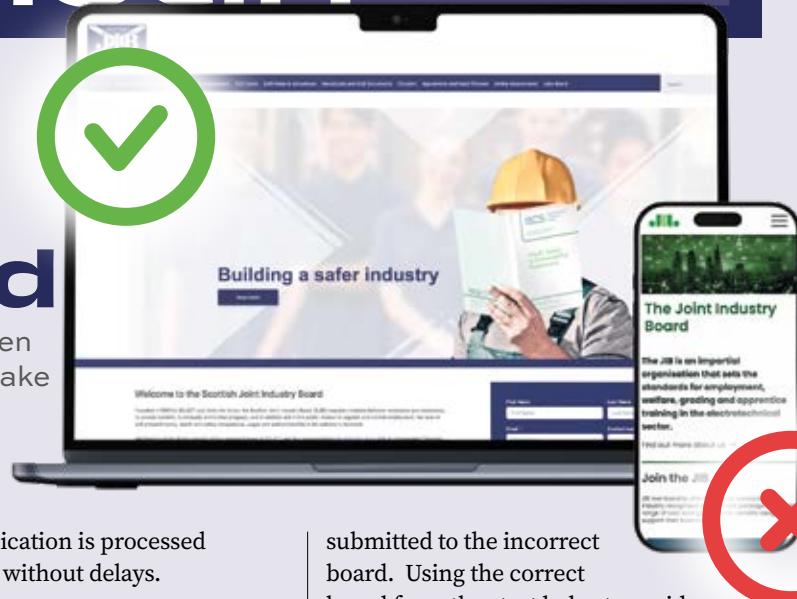
The SJIB does not have the discretion to alter these qualification requirements. However, we are here to help if you are unsure about your application before you submit it. We can answer questions about the process and clarify the requirements. If you are unsure or need guidance on whether you're ready to apply, please contact us and we'll help as much as we can.

### REMEMBER!

Our small team is still extremely busy and receiving a high volume of calls. The best way to get in touch with us is the 'Contact Us' form at [www.sjib.org.uk](http://www.sjib.org.uk) which ensures your query goes directly to the team member responsible.

### ABOUT THE SJIB

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



# ProZone

## NEW DEVICE IS MADE TO MEASURE

Following on from the success of its TIS 570 AC/DC leakage clampmeter, TIS has launched the highly accurate TIS 565 variant in AC format only.

Measuring true RMS leakage currents down to 0.001mA and standard levels up to 60A, the company sees the TIS 565 as the perfect solution for detecting nuisance RCD tripping issues, maintaining compliance with Regulation 531.3.2 (30% rule) and confirming correct board change configurations.

In addition to current, the instrument also measures TRMS AC and DC voltage up to 600V, resistance and continuity to 600 Kohms, along with having peak and data hold functions.

TIS will be attending most SELECT Toolbox Talks throughout 2026, where its full range of equipment will be available to view.

Find out more at [bit.ly/TIS-565TRMS](https://bit.ly/TIS-565TRMS)

The testing equipment is highly accurate



## Products break the mould on damp issues

NATIONAL Ventilation continues to champion healthier living environments with its comprehensive range of ventilation solutions designed to tackle condensation and mould in UK homes.

As damp-related issues remain a significant challenge for both homeowners and landlords, the company's product offering provides reliable, energy-efficient options that improve indoor air quality and protect building fabric.

National Ventilation's Monsoon ventilation range – including DMEV, MEV and positive input ventilation (PIV) systems – helps reduce excess moisture at the source, preventing the development of black mould and the long-term structural

problems associated with persistent damp.

These solutions are designed to be easy for contractors to install, providing consistent airflow that supports compliance with building regulations while delivering low running costs for end-users.

National Ventilation also offers expert design services to ensure that each system meets the unique requirements of the property, whether a retrofit project or new build development.

With condensation and mould now a key focus across social housing and private rental sectors, the company's solutions provide a practical way to safeguard occupant wellbeing throughout the year.

Find out more at [www.nationalventilation.co.uk](http://www.nationalventilation.co.uk)

The ventilation range is designed with wellbeing in mind



## NEW EV BOARDS ARE BUILT TO LAST LONGER

Elucian has added new IP65-rated EV boards to its popular consumer unit range, providing electricians with a robust solution tailored for the growing demand

in electric vehicle (EV) charging installations.

As EV adoption accelerates, the role of dedicated EV boards has never been more critical.

These specialist consumer units are designed to manage the unique electrical requirements of EV chargers, including high current loads,

isolation, surge protection and compliance with the latest wiring regulations.

A purpose-built EV board not only ensures safety but also simplifies installation, reducing the risk of errors and downtime.

For more information, visit [www.elucianuk.com](http://www.elucianuk.com) or download the Scolmore Group app



The EV boards are a robust choice

## MEET OUR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS





## Lighting puts safety front and centre

**N** today's design-led, design-and-build environment, external lighting must work harder than ever – balancing performance, compliance, aesthetics and sustainability. That is where NJS Lighting Solutions brings real value to electrical contractors and project teams across the UK.

Founded by Norman Scott, whose career in the electrical and building services sector began in 1972, NJS Lighting Solutions has evolved into one of Scotland's leading technical LED lighting agencies. Established in 2010, the business is built on decades of trusted industry relationships.

NJS is highly active in the specification world, working closely with consultants, architects and contractors to ensure lighting solutions are technically robust, compliant and straightforward to deliver on site.

One stand-out manufacturer within the NJS portfolio is Transit Handrail Lighting, a specialist in innovative LED handrail lighting for external architectural applications. Transit designs and manufactures high-quality solutions that seamlessly integrate safety lighting into the built form, enhancing both usability and visual appeal. Manufactured using durable materials such as marine-grade stainless steel and anodised aluminium, Transit products are engineered to withstand harsh environments, heavy use and vandalism.

Their designs actively address light pollution and energy efficiency. Backed by a five-year guarantee and excellent technical support, Transit is widely recognised as a leader in handrail lighting.

Find out more at [www.njslightingsolutions.co.uk](http://www.njslightingsolutions.co.uk) or contact Norman Scott directly on 0131 344 4345 or by emailing [sales@njslightingsolutions.co.uk](mailto:sales@njslightingsolutions.co.uk)

### SOCKET OUTLETS OFFER SOLUTIONS

Click Scolmore, one of the UK's leading manufacturers of wiring accessories, has launched its latest innovation – 13A one and two gang safety shutter socket outlets featuring twin USB type-C power delivery (PD) fast-charge ports.

Designed to meet the demands of today's connected environments, the new socket outlets allow fast and efficient

charging of modern devices such as smartphones, tablets and laptops – without the need for additional adapters.

With USB-C now the global standard for power delivery, Click Scolmore has fully integrated USB-PD fast-charging technology into its socket outlets, offering contractors and installers a future-proof solution that



delivers performance, safety and convenience in one product.

Safety and compliance remain central to the Click Scolmore product philosophy.

For more information, visit [www.scolmore.com](http://www.scolmore.com) or download the Scolmore Group app

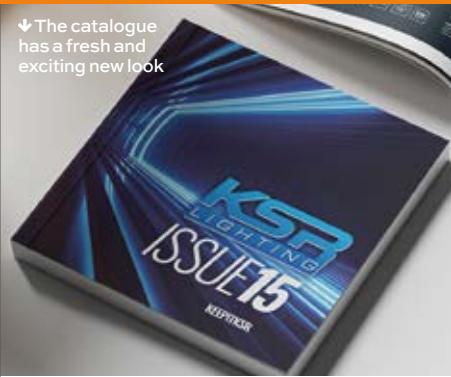
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David Hughes: 07767 407 402  
[davidh@connectcommunications.co.uk](mailto:davidh@connectcommunications.co.uk)

↓ The catalogue has a fresh and exciting new look



### CATALOGUE IS FULL OF BRIGHT IDEAS

The newly launched KSR Lighting Issue 15 catalogue introduces a fresh, new look, which helps move towards a more visual approach for showcasing its lighting products.

The catalogue features 40 new ranges including downlights, track systems, pendants and more and enables readers to visualise how products look and perform within real-life spaces. The aim is to provide practical guidance and creative ideas for a multitude of lighting projects.

Find out more at [bit.ly/ksr-iss15](http://bit.ly/ksr-iss15)



↑ The alarm range is designed to avoid false triggering

## HEAT ALARM RANGE IS A SAFE CHOICE

ESP is setting high standards in specialist fire detection with its Espire heat alarm range. Designed for use in garages, kitchens and dusty environments, these provide essential protection where traditional smoke alarms may be prone to false triggering.

The alarms utilise a thermistor, which acts as a heat sensor, capable of detecting temperature fluctuations. The Espire heat alarm activates at 58°C and offers optimal performance in spaces where smoke or particles from cooking or work machinery might interfere with optical detection. A compact and contemporary design with a secure lock-in base ensures a streamlined installation.

Key features include auto sensor testing, a 24-hour memory function and RF-link compatibility for wireless alarm integration.

Find out more at [www.espireuk.com](http://www.espireuk.com) and the Scolmore Group app



↑ The unit offers flexibility for the customer

# Why Starbreaker consumer units from Crabtree are easier, safer and faster

In domestic electrical installations, the consumer unit is central to safety, reliability and long-term performance. For installers and homeowners, choosing the right unit can significantly impact installation time, compliance and ongoing maintenance.

Crabtree Starbreaker is engineered around three core principles – easier installation, safer operation and faster working – making it a stand-out choice in UK homes. Starbreaker simplifies installation with a plug-in busbar system that eliminates loose terminations and speeds up device fitting.

RCBOs, AFDDs and SPDs clip in directly without removing the busbar, making upgrades quick and maintenance straightforward. Generous wiring space, multiple cable entry points and a self-closing hinged door ensure a neat, installer-friendly finish. Whether the job

requires a compact unit or a 40 module dualbank board, Starbreaker offers options to suit any domestic set-up.

Safety is built into every component. Fully compliant with the 18th Edition Wiring Regulations, Starbreaker supports AFDDs for fire prevention, switched neutral RCBOs for comprehensive protection and plug-in SPDs against transient overvoltage.

Only Starbreaker devices fit the board, strengthening adherence to BS EN 614393 and ensuring consistent, high-quality performance. The result is enhanced reliability and peace of mind for both homeowners and professionals.

Time saved on installation and maintenance is money saved. The plug-in design means devices can be added or replaced in seconds.

Find out more at [www.electrium.co.uk/about/our-brands/crabtree](http://www.electrium.co.uk/about/our-brands/crabtree)

## HELPING HAND FOR HOUSING PROVIDERS

Many housing providers continue to manage electrical compliance through spreadsheets, emails and disconnected systems, resulting in fragmented data, hidden risk and unnecessary pressure on teams.

For organisations responsible for thousands of properties, this makes it difficult to maintain clear visibility of EICRs, remedial works and certification, and even harder to demonstrate compliance with confidence. TCW helps housing

providers replace this fragmented approach with a single platform.

By centralising all electrical safety data in one secure system, TCW creates a true single source of truth – giving compliance teams instant visibility across portfolios, properties and contractors.

With TCW, housing providers can move from reactive management to proactive control.

Find out more at [www.tcwin.co.uk](http://www.tcwin.co.uk)



↑ The system is flexible and easy to use

# Welcome to the world's leading trade fairs for wire, cable and tube technologies

**F**ROM 13 to 17 April 2026, the world's leading trade fairs, Wire and Tube, will again be joining forces in Düsseldorf: around 2,700 international exhibitors from the wire, cable and tube industries will be presenting their products and solutions on approximately 120,000m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space.

"For these essential global industries, face-to-face interaction is more important than ever in these economically and geopolitically turbulent times," said Daniel Rysfisch, Director Wire/Tube & Flow Technologies

at Messe Düsseldorf. "Düsseldorf is the ultimate trade fair location when it comes to presenting innovations to a broad international audience from around 135 countries.

"This is where relationships get strengthened and new customers and partners are found."

## TOPICS AND SPECIAL AREAS

In addition to classic topics such as machines, production facilities and their end products, Wire and Tube 2026 will focus on the key subjects of AI and robotics, energy transition and renewable energies. Innovation



leaders will also demonstrate how intelligent automation and IoT networking, machine learning, smart manufacturing and modern robotic systems are making numerous processes more efficient and safer.

Regarding the energy transition, international thought leaders at Tube will showcase and discuss forward-looking solutions in hydrogen infrastructure, CO<sub>2</sub> transport, photovoltaics, wind power, decarbonisation and more.

After all, pipes and tubes play a key role in the implementation of sustainable energy systems.

## SUPPORTING PROGRAMMES

At both leading trade fairs, the programme will be complemented by the High Potential Day on Thursday and daily forums, expert presentations and live demonstrations – perfect for promoting dialogue between manufacturers, users and researchers. In addition, digital ecoMetals Trails will guide attendees to the pioneers of sustainability.

For more information and tickets, visit [www.wire-tradefair.com](http://www.wire-tradefair.com) and [www.tube-tradefair.com](http://www.tube-tradefair.com)

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# Tube



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## MAKITA'S VERSATILE ROTARY LASER DRAWS THE LINE ON ACCURACY

Makita has introduced its new SKR001 rechargeable rotary laser that makes levelling and alignment simple. With impressive range diameter capabilities and flexible charging options, the rotary laser provides outstanding accuracy, enhanced visibility and convenience for trade professionals undertaking levelling tasks.

The SKR001 delivers a measuring range of up to 800m in diameter when used with the laser receiver and provides horizontal and vertical accuracy of  $\pm 0.5\text{mm}$  and  $\pm 0.75\text{mm}$  per 10m respectively. With automatic self-levelling capabilities within  $\pm 5^\circ$ , and manual slope adjustment, the new rotary laser allows for quick set-up and consistent, high-precision layout work on large sites.

Thanks to its green laser beam, visibility is significantly improved over red laser models, especially in bright daylight conditions. Users can select from static, or three rotation speeds – 150, 300, 600 rpm – and three scan angles:  $10^\circ$ ,  $20^\circ$ ,  $30^\circ$ .

The SKR001 is extremely flexible given it is compatible with three Makita battery platforms: CXT (12V), LXT (18V) and XGT (40V). The rotary laser also comes equipped with a Bluetooth remote control for operation up to 100m and features auto shut-off and anti-drift systems to maintain laser integrity. Run time is equally impressive, with up to 160 hours of continuous use with a 40VMax 4.0Ah XGT battery.

Built for real-world durability, this rotary laser features IP67-rated protection against dust and water, as well as shock-absorbing rubber bumpers to safeguard the unit from drops of up to 2m. Weighing only 4kg (without battery), it is a manageable weight yet sturdy enough for demanding and daily professional use.

"With a green beam to provide clear visibility and its multi-platform battery support, the SKR001 sets a new benchmark for cordless rotary lasers. It's a must-have for professionals looking for flexibility and high performance," said Kevin Brannigan, Marketing Manager at Makita.

The SKR001 is supplied with an 18V LXT battery tray holder as standard.

Find out more at [www.makita.co.uk](http://www.makita.co.uk)



▲ The laser is accurate and simple to use

# Pipe system offers airtight solutions

**A**IRTIGHTNESS is essential to achieving efficient, reliable and high-performing ventilation systems. Ubbink's innovative Aerofaom insulated pipe system is designed to deliver 100% airtight performance, preventing unwanted air leakage that can lead to energy loss, reduced system efficiency and condensation issues.

Specifically developed for mechanical ventilation and balanced ventilation systems with heat recovery (WTW), Aerofaom ensures that conditioned air is transported exactly where it is needed, without losses.

Its fully insulated, airtight construction minimises heat loss and eliminates condensation caused by temperature differences between the air inside the duct and the surrounding environment.

Aerofaom is a time-saving solution for areas prone to condensation and for ductwork that would normally require additional post-insulation, such

as ventilation unit connections and terminal ducts. By integrating insulation and airtightness into one system, installation is faster, cleaner and more reliable, with no need for tapes or additional sealing measures.

The result is consistently high indoor air quality, optimal system efficiency and long-term performance. Airtight, well-insulated ducts also reduce maintenance demands and protect against moisture-related damage, ensuring durability over the lifetime of the system.

The Ubbink Aerofaom ductwork system offers a complete, easy-to-install and easy-to-maintain solution, delivering:

- 100% airtight and rustproof ducting
- High insulation value
- No heat loss or condensation
- Quick installation without tape
- Long-term efficiency and reliability

Because airtightness isn't an option – it's a necessity.

Find out more at [bit.ly/ubbink\\_aerofaom](http://bit.ly/ubbink_aerofaom)

▼ The system provides high quality air indoors



# Make your van stand out from the crowd

Your van is your busiest worker. Momentum Graphics provides a van-first brand kit for electrical contractors who want a consistent, professional look across their van and marketing.

The kit includes logo and brand basics, a bespoke van livery concept, plus matching essentials such as business card concepts and a social media graphics guide. Everything is supplied as digital artwork.

Start with a short brief and a few examples you like. You receive initial concepts, revisions where needed and

→ The kit gives vans a bright new look that will impress your customers



↓ The junction boxes and connectors are secure and efficient



## IT'S TIME TO GET THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS

The Q-Nect range of junction boxes and connectors from Unicrimp provides installers with secure and efficient connections for a range of residential, commercial and industrial environments.

A key product in the range is the Q-Nect IP weatherproof junction box, which is designed to make installations quicker and more efficient.

It can house four of the three port lever connectors using the 360° detachable cradle. The IP Box also utilises a curved lid which provides additional space for wires. The lid is locked using quarter turn fasteners,

final files for print and web. The aim is simple: a strong, reliable brand that looks the same everywhere, from the driveway to the job site and online. Momentum is based in Scotland and works across the UK. Fixed package price: £500.

→ Visit [www.momentumgraphics.co.uk/electrician](http://www.momentumgraphics.co.uk/electrician), email [sales@momentumgraphics.co.uk](mailto:sales@momentumgraphics.co.uk) or find us on Instagram @momentum\_graphics\_uk

## DOMESTIC DOWNLIGHTS ARE A HIGHLIGHT

The compact yet powerful Inceptor Milli Adjustable is the latest addition to Ovia's Milli family of fire-rated domestic downlights. Designed with the same innovation, fire-rated safety and ease of installation as the standard Milli, the adjustable version offers a seamless 360° rotation and 20° tilt capability to deliver total directional lighting control.

Complementing the Inceptor Milli Fixed and Inceptor Milli Baffle versions, Inceptor Milli Adjustable brings unparalleled flexibility, performance and aesthetic appeal.

Ideal for new installations and retrofit projects, it has a cut-out range of 68mm to 75mm, ensuring compatibility with a variety of ceiling apertures.

A key feature of the Inceptor Milli downlight range is the option to seamlessly switch between 6.4W and 4W power outputs using a single switch. There is also the ability to easily switch the colour temperatures.

Setting the Milli apart is the rotatable insulation cover, which allows you to install the downlights safely under insulation but also adjust the cover allowing for 5mm extra clearance.

All three versions are IP65-rated. The fittings are supplied pre-wired with a fast-fit, three-pole and loop flow connector as well as a loose push-fit flow connector. Five bezel finishes are available: white, black, chrome, satin chrome and antique brass.

→ Find out more at [www.oviauk.com](http://www.oviauk.com)



↑ The downlights are easy to fit

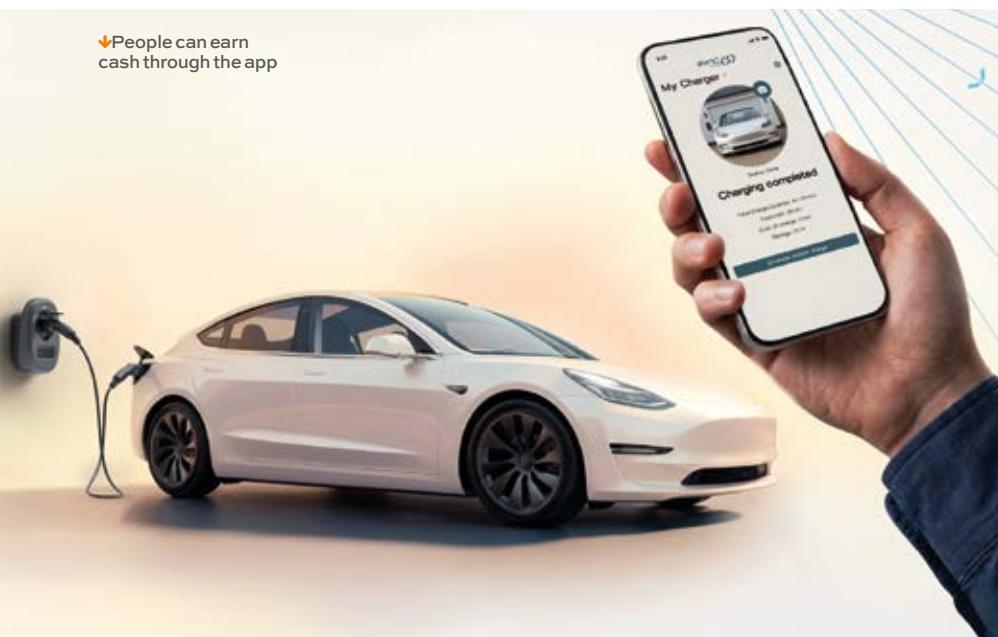
which allows for quick opening and closing.

Key features include enhanced protection thanks to IP66 rating and self-sealing membranes, 10 membrane entry points, up to eight M20 glands, multiple fixing options and semi-transparent lids

The boxes with semi-transparent lids are available in black and anthracite grey finishes, with the grey option designed to match the Click Scolmore Aquip66 weatherproof socket and switch enclosures, which are also available with the same semi-transparent lids.

→ For further information visit [www.unicrimp.com](http://www.unicrimp.com) or download the Scolmore Group app

▼ People can earn cash through the app



## Rewards scheme puts you in charge

A

EV charging evolves beyond simple hardware installation, Sync Energy

has launched Sync Energy Connect, a new rewards scheme designed to recognise best-practice commissioning and connected handover.

Running from January to the end of April, the scheme rewards installers

with £50 for every two verified, fully connected EV charger installations.

To qualify, chargers must be commissioned via the Sync Energy App, handed over to the homeowner, and the end user must complete their first charge through the app.

Smart EV chargers are increasingly expected to integrate with variable energy tariffs, solar generation and demand flexibility programmes. Without correct commissioning and app set-up, many of these features remain unused, limiting both customer benefit and system performance.

Demand flexibility plays a key role. Through the Sync Energy App, eligible homeowners can earn £5 per month by allowing charging to pause briefly during peak demand periods. The process is automatic, optional and requires no change in charging behaviour.

The scheme is open to Sync Energy installers in mainland Britain, with rewards available as digital vouchers or cashback by invoice, subject to eligibility.

Find out more at [sync.energy/sync-connect-rewards](http://sync.energy/sync-connect-rewards)

### FAST AND SIMPLE LIGHTING SOLUTIONS

Aurora has launched its upgraded R6 fire-rated downlight range, bringing faster installation, enhanced light performance and a simplified product selection designed specifically for contractors and specifiers.

The upgrade centres on faster, easier installation. The new FastRFix connector with LENNEL terminals enables quicker, safer and more intuitive wiring on site, while easy-glide soft springs are engineered to perform smoothly in double plasterboard ceilings, reducing installation time and effort.

Performance has also been enhanced, with the R6 range now delivering CRI90 for improved colour accuracy and a more natural, vibrant light output.

An energy rating of C ensures an effective balance between high light quality and improved efficiency, making the range suitable for both residential and commercial projects.

Despite these enhancements, the R6 continues to offer the proven reliability



Aurora is known for, including an L80B50 50,000-hour lifetime and a five-year warranty, providing long-term confidence for installers and end users.

Each downlight is supplied with a white IP65 bezel as standard, ideal for bathrooms and moisture-prone environments, with alternative bezel finishes available separately for added design flexibility.

To simplify specification, Aurora has reduced the number of SKUs. The range now includes fixed single colour

and colour and wattage switchable (CWS) options in fixed, adjustable and baffled formats. A fixed CWS contractor ten pack is also available for added convenience on larger projects.

The upgraded R6 fire-rated downlight range delivers a future-ready solution that combines ease of installation, superior light quality and long-term performance.

Find out more at [bit.ly/aurora-r6](http://bit.ly/aurora-r6)



↑ The lighting is warm and welcoming

# Uni lighting scheme is a class act

**T**HORN Lighting and sister brand Zumtobel have delivered a comprehensive lighting scheme for Sacred Heart University's refurbished Dingle campus in County Kerry.

For the exterior, Thorn's C5 corrosion-resistant luminaires were specified to withstand Atlantic conditions, Urba bollards and lanterns for safe wayfinding, Isaro Pro and Areaflood-style performance for wider coverage, Piazza for façades and canopies, plus Contrast and Eroa accents to reveal the historic envelope.

In the classroom, Thorn's IQ Wave and Chalice 3 provide low-glare, uniform illumination for teaching spaces, paired with absence and daylight sensing to trim energy use in real time.

Zumtobel complements this with precision architectural tools: VIVO track spotlights to highlight heritage stonework and SLOTLIGHT infinity II, including custom circular pendants in Sacred Heart red, to create clean,

contemporary general lighting with minimal ceiling impact.

Heritage sensitivity guided every choice. Warm 3000K creates a welcoming atmosphere in the communal areas, while 4000K supports focus in classrooms and offices.

Outdoors, a tuned mix of warmer light on sandstone and cooler white on limestone establishes the campus as a night-time landmark without overpowering its setting.

The result is a low-maintenance, energy-efficient scheme that enhances learning and future-proofs a distinctive academic destination.

Giles O'Connor of MRG Consulting Engineers and Architects said: "Integrating modern lighting into a 19th-century landmark demanded both restraint and performance.

"Thorn and Zumtobel delivered precise, glare-free illumination while protecting the building fabric and coping with the coastal climate."

Find out more at [www.thornlighting.co.uk](http://www.thornlighting.co.uk) and [www.zumtobel.co.uk](http://www.zumtobel.co.uk)

## BUSINESS IS MOVING WITH THE TIMES

Want to hear some good news for a change? The electrical industry continues to grow. Recent reports show that 72% of tradespeople feel optimistic about the future, with many planning to expand their businesses.

As the industry moves forward, ROBUS moves with it. Over the past year, hundreds of its customers have shared insights through focus groups, surveys, as well as visits to ROBUS HQ in Dublin.

This feedback has helped shape every area of the business, from new product development and customised conversions to lighting design and the all-new 2026 catalogue, which includes:

- New products and services with contractor-led design
- LED Group Academy – a new digital learning hub
- 99% stock availability
- Two-year on-site warranty
- Next-day product delivery
- 99% product reliability
- MyROBUS app and digital tools.

Proud to work alongside electricians and wholesale partners, ROBUS remains focused on supporting growing demand with dependable products, proven reliability, and service that can always be trusted.

Whether your target this year is to upskill, reduce admin, or get rewarded for a job well done, ROBUS is going your way.

Download the new catalogue at [www.ROBUS.com](http://www.ROBUS.com)

ROBUS is with its customers every step of the way



# SELECT EVENTS 2026

Catch up with colleagues  
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## CENTRAL BOARD

Wed 25 March

Thu 4 June, including AGM

Wed 2 September

Thu 3 December

Venues TBC

## Branch UPDATE

**Tue 3 March** – Lanarkshire Branch & AGM, New College Lanarkshire, Motherwell Campus

**Thu 5 March** – Dumfries & Galloway Branch & AGM, Dumfries & Galloway College

**Tue 10 March** – Glasgow & West of Scotland Branch & AGM, Cardonald College

**Thu 12 March** – Aberdeen & North East of Scotland Branch & AGM, Tullus Training

**Tue 17 March** – Ayrshire Branch & AGM, Ayr College

**Wed 18 March** – Inverness & North of Scotland Branch & AGM, Inverness College

**Tue 24 March** – Edinburgh & South East of Scotland Branch & AGM, Borders College

**Wed 25 March** – Tayside Branch & AGM, Perth College

w/c 5 October

Venues TBC

## President's CUP

Mon 27 July

Dunblane New Golf Club

## PROFESSIONALS' DAY 2026

Sponsored by **aico**

Thu 10 September

Venue TBC

For further information,  
email **memberservices  
@select.org.uk** or call  
**0131 445 5577** to book



**Fri 25 September**  
*The Balmoral, Edinburgh*

## Toolbox TALKS 2026

Sponsored by **aico**

**Wed 6 May** – Edinburgh, The Walled Garden

**Thur 7 May** – Borders, The Dryburgh Abbey Hotel

**Tues 12 May** – Dundee, The Apex Hotel

**Wed 13 May** – Glasgow, Hampden Park

**Wed 20 May** – Ayrshire, Fenwick Hotel

**Thu 21 May** – Dumfries, Easterbrook Hall

**Wed 27 May** – Inverness, Kingsmills Hotel

**Thu 28 May** – Aberdeen, Pittodrie Stadium

**Wed 10 June** – Oban, The Corran Halls

**Wed 17 June** – Shetland, Shetland Arts Development Agency, Lerwick

**Tue 23 June** – Orkney, The Pickaquoy Centre

**Tue 30 June** – Islay, The Machrie

**Thu 2 July** – Stornoway, Caladh Inn

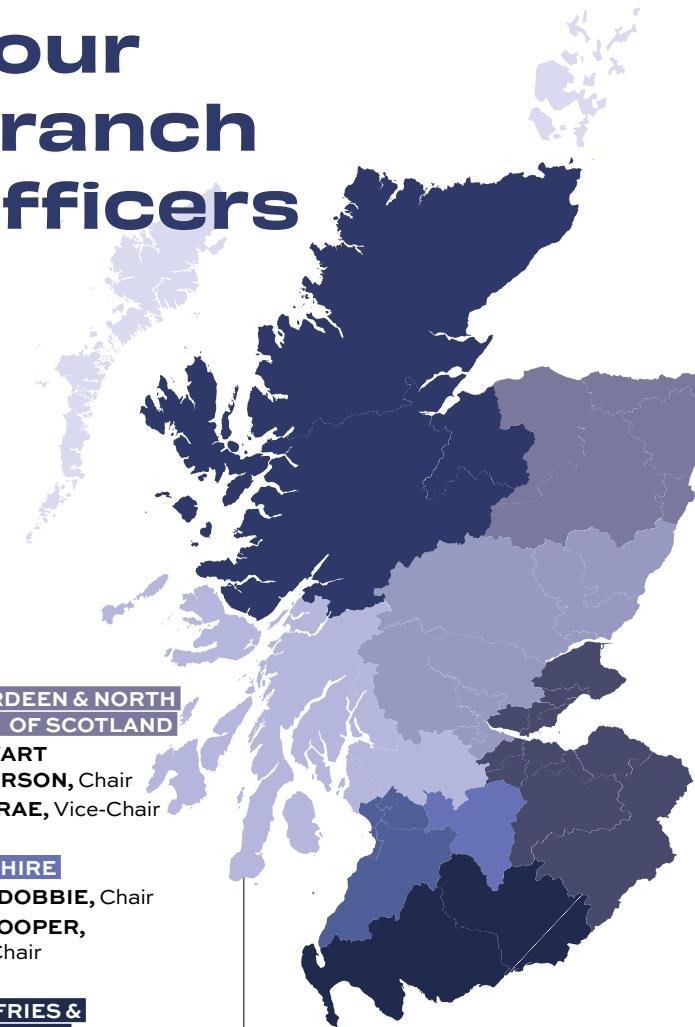


## PAST PRESIDENTS' CHRISTMAS LUNCH

**Thu 3 December**  
*The Balmoral, Edinburgh*

IMAGE: Olegboyko / Shutterstock

# Your Branch Officers



### ABERDEEN & NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND

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ANDERSON**, Chair  
**ERIC RAE**, Vice-Chair

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**CHIC DOBBIE**, Chair  
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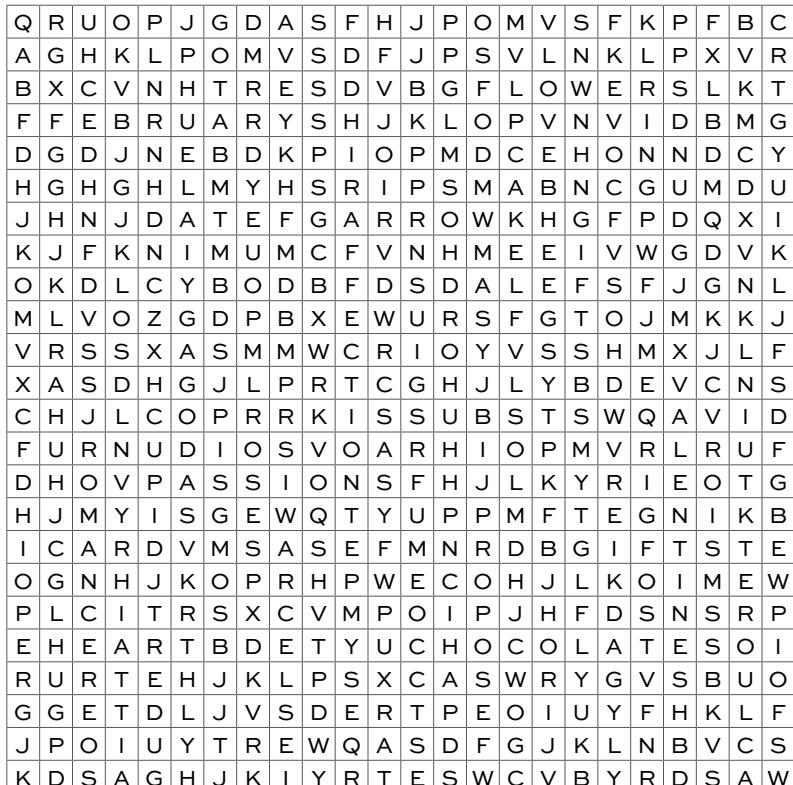
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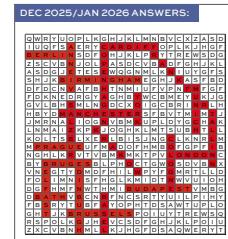
## Valentine's wordsearch



- AFFECTION
- ARROW
- CARD
- CHOCOLATES
- CUPID
- DATE
- FEBRUARY
- FLOWERS
- GIFTS
- HEART
- HUG
- KISS
- LOVE
- PASSION
- PROPOSE
- RED
- REMEMBER
- RING
- ROMANCE
- ROSES
- SWEETHEART
- VALENTINE

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Find all the words listed above then take a picture of your completed wordsearch and email it to [memberservices@select.org.uk](mailto:memberservices@select.org.uk) by Friday 6 March. The winner will be drawn at random. Ts&Cs are online. Congratulations to our December/January winner **Alain Barrère** from **The Northern Lights**.



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### READING THE SMALL PRINT

Expert Professor Rudi Klein explains why it's vital to always check a supplier's terms and conditions.  
Watch now at [bit.ly/STV-TCs](https://bit.ly/STV-TCs)

### CABLE SIZING

This easy-to-follow session

demonstrates a method of calculation in line with the requirements of BS 7671.

Watch now at [bit.ly/STV-cable](https://bit.ly/STV-cable)

### DESIGN LIABILITY

What exactly is 'design'? When do I take on responsibility for it? And what should I look out for

and avoid? Our answers will help guide you through the maze when it comes to the world of design.

Watch now at [bit.ly/STV-design](https://bit.ly/STV-design)

### BIDDING STRATEGIES

In this useful film, we offer exclusive guidance and practical

advice on bidding strategies.

Watch it now at [bit.ly/STV-matbid](https://bit.ly/STV-matbid)

Watch now at [bit.ly/SELECT-TV](https://bit.ly/SELECT-TV)



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