

Representing the Scottish
electrotechnical industry

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OCTOBER/NOVEMBER
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SELECT



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SELECT
The Walled Garden,
Bush Estate,
Midlothian
EH26 0SB
t: 0131 445 5577
e: admin@select.org.uk

MANAGING EDITOR
Iain Mason
iain.mason@select.org.uk

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Connect Publications (Scotland) Ltd,
Studio 4015, Mile End, Paisley PA1 1JS
t: 0141 561 0300
e: info@connectcommunications.co.uk

EDITOR
Sarah Wolstencroft
sarah.w@connectcommunications.co.uk

DESIGN & PRODUCTION
Ryan Swinney

ADVERTISING
David Hughes
davidh@connectcommunications.co.uk
07767 407 402

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WIN
£200 OF
Megger
TEST EQUIPMENT
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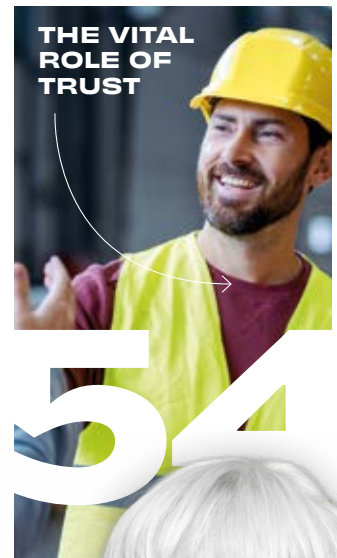
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OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2026



THE VITAL
ROLE OF
TRUST

**"COLLABORATION HAS TO BE
A MEETING OF EQUALS, NOT
ONE PARTY DICTATING TERMS"**

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2 YEAR
ON SITE
WARRANTY



Your safety, our priority.

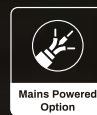
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LLP

Seeing both sides of the skills agenda

New Powering Potential initiative shows the value of proper apprenticeships and training, which makes our ongoing experiences with Qualifications Scotland all the more disappointing

As you'll read in this issue, last month saw the first President's Lunch of my new role, expertly delivered as always by the SELECT team. My thanks to everyone who attended and helped to ensure it was a very successful afternoon.

The event saw us launch a new initiative in partnership with Luceco Group called Powering Potential, which will give three Member firms £6,000 to help fund a 1st Year apprentice.

Following our recent survey, we listened to Members and recognised that college attendance is one of the biggest challenges for SMEs employing an apprentice.

Powering Potential is the response to those challenges and I'm very grateful to Luceco Group UK Trade Sales Director Ian Hunter for his vision and support in creating this exciting new initiative.

It was a proud moment to see the apprentices and their employers receive their award at the President's Lunch and hopefully other Associates will see the value of the scheme and consider investing in the future of our sector by funding more apprentices.

Details of the selection process have been shared with Branch Chairs and we will be working closely with them to identify the next round of awards for 2027. If you're an SME with a strong track record of success in training apprentices, who knows? It could be you on the podium next year!

On the subject of apprenticeships, since December last year we've been working with Qualifications Scotland to finalise a refreshed SVQ in Electrical Installation, based on decades of evidence to show that we train to the highest standards in Scotland and reinforced by multiple successes in the UK-wide SkilleLECTRIC competition.

We want to collaborate with Qualifications Scotland to reach an outcome that works for employers and apprentices but they seem

intent on forcing us down a route which isn't practical or implementable.

Collaboration has to be a meeting of equals, not one party dictating terms based solely on their own opinions. We're now working with Scottish Government officials and, as I write, are waiting to meet the new Minister for Innovation, Technology and Tertiary Education, Alyn Smith MSP. I'm hopeful that he will listen to industry and support us to reach a sensible conclusion.

Industry must be at the heart of our qualifications system. If qualifications aren't practical, deliverable and credible for businesses, it puts the whole system at risk. This at a time when we know we need more electricians and operatives right across construction and there are a million young people out of work. It's not hard to see how a huge win-win could be created out of those circumstances.

On a more positive note, I'm pleased to say that Unite the Union, NICEIC, ESF, ECA and NET are now actively lobbying the UK Government for protection of title alongside our own long-running campaign for regulation. This marks a new level of collaboration and is a really positive development.

Work with the Scottish Parliament continues and I will be attending the SNP conference in October to meet with MSPs and Ministers on your behalf. A UK-wide solution would be the most effective and we will continue our hard work on both sides of the border.

Finally, October sees the departure of a true SELECT stalwart as Training Development Adviser Stuart McKelvie steps down. Many of you will have met him over the years at training courses in The Walled Garden and around the country and I am very grateful to him for his excellent service to SELECT. Central Board and the whole SELECT team wishes him a long and happy retirement. ■

WORDS
SHARON MILLER
Managing Director SELECT



KEY INDUSTRY NEWS AND THE LATEST
ON SELECT STRATEGY, CAMPAIGNS
AND COLLABORATIONS

News

Building scheme renewed for 6 years

SELECT has been reappointed as a scheme provider for the Scottish Government's Building Standards Certification Scheme (BSCS) for another six years.

The association's continuing involvement was confirmed in a letter by Shirley-Anne Somerville, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice and Housing, on 28 September and will run until 2032.

Ms Somerville said: "I welcome SELECT's continued contribution to supporting compliance with building regulations and maintaining confidence in Scotland's building standards system.

"I look forward to the scheme continuing to play an important role in delivering high standards of construction and regulatory compliance across Scotland."

Director of Technical Services Robert McGoogan said: "This reappointment is excellent news and reflects the hard work that has gone into the SELECT scheme over the past 20 years."

SELECT was appointed the first scheme provider for Certification of Construction (Electrical Installations to BS 7671) when the new Scottish Building Standards Agency came into operation in May 2005.

→ Director of Technical Services Robert McGoogan



Supporting the talent of tomorrow

- SELECT and Luceco Group join forces on new Powering Potential funding initiative
- Members will receive £6,000 each to help with the cost of a 1st Year apprentice



SELLECT has partnered with Luceco Group to launch an ambitious new initiative that will deliver

much-needed apprentice funding to Members across Scotland.

The association has teamed up with the market-leading manufacturer to unveil the Powering Potential initiative, which will see three SMEs receive £6,000 each to help support the cost of a first-year apprentice.

Announced at the recent SELECT President's Lunch, the investment comes amid ongoing concerns about rising training costs, with a recent association

survey revealing that high wages and low employer funding are the biggest obstacles to recruiting apprentices.

Powering Potential will now provide three grants of £6,000 to selected employers in the East, West and North of Scotland, helping offset the costs associated with employing apprentices during their first year of training.

The inaugural recipients of the new funding are:

- **East: V C Electrical, Gullane** – presented to owner Val Chisholm to help support apprentice Reece Michie
- **West: T Walsh Contracts Ltd, Ayr** – presented to owner Tony Walsh to help support apprentice Thomas Shirkie
- **North: A B Electrical Scotland Ltd, Aboyne** – presented to owner Allan

↓ Apprentices Thomas, Ritchie and Reece with Lauren De'Ath, Steve Conn and Ian Hunter from Luceco Group



Scan the QR code to watch our Powering Potential video or go to bit.ly/ct-powering-potential

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Former MD Alan Wilson honoured with SELECT Lifetime Achievement Award

+ PAGE 12 /

Why qualified electricians are vital to the safe installation of plug-in solar panels

+ PAGE 11 /

Warning over rogue training organisations offering fast-track electrical courses

+ PAGE 14 /

SELECT's training department praised after audit by Qualifications Scotland

Beveridge Jnr to help support apprentice Ritchie Pirie.

Each company received its funding at The Balmoral in Edinburgh on Friday 25 September from SELECT President Darren Crockett and Ian Hunter, UK Trade Sales Director at Luceco Group, who also donated electrical equipment to the young learners.

Sharon Miller, Managing Director of SELECT, said: "We are extremely grateful to Luceco Group for helping us make this meaningful investment in the future of our sector.

"Employers continue to tell us that rising costs are making it increasingly difficult to recruit apprentices, particularly during the first year when they spend significant periods of time at college, so this partnership is a practical example of industry coming together to find solutions."

Ian Hunter said: "As someone who started my own career as an apprentice, I know first-hand the opportunities that apprenticeship training can create.

"Luceco is proud to support this initiative because we recognise

the pressures many employers face when investing in new talent.

Supporting apprentices is an investment in the future of our industry and a way of giving something back to the contractors who support our business every day.

"We hope this financial support will help remove barriers, create opportunities and encourage more young people to pursue successful careers in the electrical sector."

Developed with support from the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT), the Powering Potential recipients were chosen from long-standing SELECT Member firms who have a proven track record of recruiting and developing apprentices.

The funding has been specifically designed to help employers meet wage costs while first-year apprentices attend college as part of their training, reducing one of the key financial pressures associated with recruitment.

As well as receiving financial support, the apprentices will be invited to visit Luceco Group's headquarters in Telford, where they will gain insight into manufacturing, product development and the wider electrical supply chain.

However, Sharon added: "While this funding will make a difference to these three SELECT Members, it is only a fraction of what is needed and is not a replacement for proper funding across the board.

"If Scotland is serious about addressing skills shortages and growing the workforce of the future, increased support for apprenticeships from government remains essential."

"Running a business can feel quite lonely at times, so having this support and recognition from the industry means a lot and feels like a reward for the years of hard work, commitment and dedication that have gone into building the business."

VAL CHISHOLM, V C ELECTRICAL

"The cost of taking on an apprentice is massive and can make it unaffordable for some small businesses. In the current economic climate, any support is important and very much appreciated so I am extremely grateful for this funding. It really means a lot."

TONY WALSH, T WALSH CONTRACTS LTD

"This is extremely welcome as it feels like it's becoming a tighter climate for electricians. It also feels like recognition for taking apprentices through their careers. We all need to do something to ensure we don't end up with a shortage of qualified tradespeople."

ALLAN BEVERIDGE JNR, A B ELECTRICAL SCOTLAND LTD



← President Darren Crockett presented the funding

📖 Full report on the 2026 President's Lunch – Pages 28-41
🏆 Alan wins Lifetime Achievement Award – Pages 8&9

NEW CHAIR PAUL TAKES LEAD AT CICV

Paul Mitchell has replaced Alan Wilson as Chair of the Construction Industry Collective Voice (CICV) after six years in the hot seat.

The MD of the Scottish Building Federation (SBF) was appointed to succeed Alan at the latest CICV meeting on 29 July. Fiona Hodgson, Chief Executive of the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation (SNIPEF), was re-elected as Deputy Chair.

Alan said: "It has been a great privilege to chair CICV since its formation and I leave knowing it will be in excellent hands."

"Working together brings so much benefit to the industry. With many challenges on the horizon, it is more important than ever to maintain that co-operation."

Paul said: "It is a great honour to be elected. The group has shown what can be achieved when the construction sector works together."

"I look forward to working closely with Fiona and all of the representatives around the CICV table to build on that success, strengthen our engagement with government and collectively address the challenges facing the industry."

Alan helped establish CICV in early 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, when it launched as the Construction Industry Coronavirus Forum to coordinate the sector's response to the crisis.

The group now has 24 members, including SELECT, who provide a collective voice for Scotland's construction sector.

Fiona added: "On behalf of everyone involved with CICV, I would like to thank Alan for his outstanding leadership and commitment."



↑ Fiona Hodgson, Alan and Paul Mitchell at the meeting



↑ Alan Wilson with the SELECT 2026 Lifetime Achievement Award, sponsored by Schneider Electric

Alan honoured for 40yrs of service

Former SELECT Managing Director receives our Lifetime Achievement Award after decades of dedication to industry

FORMER Managing Director Alan Wilson has been presented with the SELECT Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of more than 40 years of service to the Scottish construction industry.

The award, sponsored by Schneider Electric, was handed over by President Darren Crockett at the 2026 SELECT President's Lunch at The Balmoral in Edinburgh on 25 September.

Alan retired in August after 12 years with SELECT, including seven as Managing Director, having played a pivotal role in shaping the organisation and strengthening its position as Scotland's largest construction trade association.

Presenting the award at the lunch, sponsored by Luceco Group, Darren paid tribute to Alan's long-standing commitment to the sector and his leadership during some of the industry's most challenging periods. He said:

"Alan has helped drive significant progress for SELECT, introducing new initiatives, strengthening membership and championing apprenticeships to help secure the future of the profession. He has left SELECT in an exceptionally strong position and he is a thoroughly deserving recipient of this award."

Accepting the accolade, Alan said:

"I am genuinely honoured and humbled to receive this award. While my name may be on the trophy, it really reflects the support, commitment and hard work of the many colleagues, members, presidents and industry partners I have had the privilege to work alongside throughout my career."

Sharon Miller, who succeeded

Alan as Managing Director, added: "On behalf of everyone at SELECT, I would like to congratulate Alan on this thoroughly deserved recognition and thank him for the remarkable legacy he leaves behind."



Scan the QR code to watch Alan's Lifetime Achievement Award video or go to bit.ly/ct-awspeech

Jim speaks up for industry with MP

MEMBER Jim Cooper has been flying the flag for the electrotechnical sector with his local MP to stress the importance of apprenticeships and regulation.

The Ayrshire Branch Vice Chair has been in close contact with Elaine Stewart, the Labour representative for Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock, to put forward his views.

They also met SELECT Managing Director Sharon Miller in Ayr on 4 September to discuss the UK Government's Youth Guarantee plan and the need for protection of title.

Jim, a director at Maybole-based Electro Installations (Scotland)

Ltd, said: "I firmly believe in the importance of apprenticeships but we need to start in schools to introduce better pathways to college and employment. Elaine comes across as a proactive politician who will get results and I look forward to working with her further."

Sharon added: "Jim is a fantastic ambassador for our sector and having him at the meeting was extremely welcome."

"We're hoping Elaine can champion our cause and I'll be approaching other Members to repeat this success with other MPs and MSPs around Scotland."



↑ Elaine, Sharon and Jim enjoyed a productive meeting



↑ The Ecostrad team at The Walled Garden on 5 October



NEW NAMES JOIN AS SELECT ASSOCIATES

SELECT has welcomed Knightsbridge and Ecostrad as its latest Associate Members, with Simpro also returning to the association's roster of industry experts.

Founded in 1998, Knightsbridge is one of the UK's leading brands in lighting and electrical wiring accessories, supplying the electrical wholesale, specification and home improvement sectors.

It combines product innovation, quality and competitive pricing with high levels of stock availability and customer service. Its UK distribution capability supports customers nationwide, including next-day delivery across mainland UK.

Established in 2014, Ecostrad is a leading UK manufacturer of high-specification electric heating. Its range includes wi-fi ceramic core electric radiators, app-enabled designer radiators, high-efficiency German electric radiators, smart infrared heaters and more – all offering simple installation, intuitive control and lengthy warranties as standard.

One of our founding Associate Members in 2022, Simpro has returned to the scheme. The group is a leading provider of field service management software tailored specifically for trade businesses. Its mission is to eliminate operational complexity and help trades businesses improve profitability.

Iain Mason, Director of Membership, Events & Communications, said: "We are delighted to welcome Knightsbridge, Ecostrad and Simpro."

SELECT VETERAN SUE SAYS GOODBYE

SELECT said goodbye to another association stalwart recently as Sue Ross retired after helping Members for more than 20 years.

The Training Administrator, who joined in October 2005, received an emotional send-off from her colleagues at The Walled Garden on 25 August.

Training Manager Jenny Cryans said: "Sue has been a wonderful ambassador for the association and a fantastic friend to everyone who has had the pleasure of working with her. We will miss her."

SELECT is currently preparing for another retirement as Training & Development Adviser Stuart McKelvie stands down in October after more than 15 years with us.

↓ Sue, second left, was given a fitting send-off by her colleagues



CRAIG'S PRIZE FOR WINNING WORDS

Congratulations to Craig Kirkwood of Member firm Active Energy Solutions Ltd in Glasgow, who won our wordsearch competition in the June/July edition of *cabletalk*. Craig scooped £200 of test equipment, donated by Associate Member Megger.

➔ This issue's competition: **Page 75**



↑ Craig Kirkwood

SELECT HQ'S CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS

SELECT would like to draw Members' attention to its opening hours over the upcoming festive period.

Our offices will close at 1.30pm on **Thursday 24 December** and re-open again on **Tuesday 5 January 2027**.

Any stationery orders should be placed well in advance of this closure to ensure successful delivery.



Pakhnyushchy/Shutterstock



UPDATE No28: JULY-SEPT 2026

MEMBERSHIP & COMMUNICATIONS

1,188
Full Members

8
Probationers

41
Associate Members

33,901
Viewers on YouTube



6,947

Followers on social media



TRAINING

55

courses delivered in total, including a free workshop in mechanical ventilation and heat recovery launched with Envirovent

480 Number of delegates trained



1,608

Course assessments marked

TECHNICAL

62
Technical inspections

1,195
BSG Health & Safety users

121
Technical Helpline calls

EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

First-time pass rate for FICA

45%

Resit pass rate for FICA

77%

650
ECS HSE assessments created

97%
ECS HSE assessment pass rate

70
Employment enquiries received

1,031
ECS Cards issued

FIGURING OUT OUR LATEST SUCCESSES

SELECT's third infographic of 2026 has been issued, detailing our achievements between July and September this year. The regular update outlines association activity across employment, technical, training, membership and communications.

FREE TECHNICAL GUIDES AVAILABLE FROM BEAMA

BEAMA has released three handy technical bulletins that are all available for free download.

The first, *DC PV Connectors and Couplers*, highlights practical safety considerations, including common causes of overheating and fire, compatibility, installation workmanship, relevant standards and safe disconnection practices.

The other two publications deal with premature collapse of cables and include a test specification for the prevention of such an event for wiring systems.

All three bulletins are available to download at www.beama.org.uk

➔ Technical round-up: **Pages 48 & 49**



↑ The new BEAMA guides are free

No shortcut to safe and skilled workers

SELECT and SJIB issue new joint warning about the dangers of fast-track electrical courses offered by rogue training organisations

↓ Catherine Gillon

S **ELECT** and the Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB) have issued a fresh warning about the dangers of rogue training

providers offering short courses which claim to provide a fast-track route into the electrical industry.

The two organisations say there is growing concern that people are being encouraged to believe they can acquire the knowledge, practical skills and occupational competence required of a qualified electrician after only a few weeks of classroom-based training.

They have now urged anyone considering a career in the electrotechnical sector – including adults looking to retrain – to make sure they follow an industry-approved route which combines structured learning with essential supervised experience in the workplace.

Sharon Miller, Managing Director of SELECT, said: “There is already a robust training programme in Scotland that raises electrical professionals to the high standard required of the modern contractor. This is proven to be the **ONLY** way to equip electricians with the skills required and give consumers confidence that work is being carried out safely and competently.

“This also applies to retraining, with an adult training scheme that offers on-site working to help develop skills in conjunction with the classroom aspect. A short course simply doesn’t cut it and endangers consumer safety.”

Catherine Gillon, Secretary of the SJIB, added: “Qualifications are obviously an important part of becoming an electrician, but qualifications alone do not demonstrate occupational competence.

“Working alongside experienced electrical professionals on-site is an essential part of the learning process. It enables trainees to put their technical knowledge into practice, encounter different situations and installations and gradually develop the judgement, ability and experience expected of a qualified electrician.

“That is why there can be no shortcut to competence. Anyone who is being

told that they can become an electrician simply by completing a handful of short courses in a classroom should think very carefully about what they are being promised.”

SELECT and SJIB have urged would-be electricians to contact SECTT and also visit the Rogue Trainers campaign run by The Electrotechnical Skills Partnership (TESP), which helps identify misleading training offers and understand the industry-approved routes to qualification.

Sharon added: “We would urge anyone considering electrical training to investigate exactly what a course will deliver before committing their time and money. The electrical installation apprenticeship remains the safe, recognised and proven route into our profession.”



↑ SELECT says there is no substitute for a proper apprenticeship

Monkey Business Images/Shutterstock



↑ cabletalk will be delivered quarterly in future

CABLETALK SET TO DELIVER MORE DIGITALLY

This will be the last edition of *cabletalk* for 2026 as we move to a new quarterly format from 2027 onwards.

Our stakeholder magazine will now be delivered in January, April, August and October, with an increased digital presence for SELECT news and features.

At the same time, the *cabletalk* website will be comprehensively redesigned and relaunched in the New Year.

Iain Mason, Director of Membership,

Events & Communications, said: “Rising production costs mean delivering a cost-effective printed publication is increasingly challenging.

“Moving more content online will enable us to be more reactive and deliver vital updates to Members as they happen. It will also reflect modern communications as consumers increasingly access content via their phones and other devices.”



PARTNERSHIP BOOST FOR CONTRACTS

SELECT has launched a new partnership with the Supplier Development Programme (SDP) after becoming its first official Network Partner.

Designed to bring both organisations together through shared expertise, collaborative communications and mutual support, the initiative will provide SELECT Members with greater awareness of public sector contract opportunities.

Members will also have oversight of, and access to, online tender training, in-person networking events and resources to help them find, bid for and win contracts.

Yvonne Wilson, Skills & Client Relations Manager at SELECT, said: “By aligning our communications and working collaboratively, we can better support our Members, connect them with relevant opportunities and help create stronger connections throughout the industry.”

SELECT will work alongside the SDP to highlight industry news, promote relevant events and contract opportunities, showcase best practice and increase engagement with businesses across the sector.

Gillian Cameron, SDP Programme Manager, said: “This partnership represents the type of relationship we want to build, based on collaboration and a shared ambition to deliver greater value for our respective communities.”

“Together, we can extend our reach and ensure important industry conversations and contract opportunities have a wider platform.”

SELECT’s appointment is the first step in SDP’s wider Network Partner programme, with further partnerships planned to expand the reach of procurement support, strengthen supplier engagement and encourage greater collaboration.

Shining a light on solar panel risks

SELECT supports call for qualified electricians to check domestic wiring before householders buy plug-in tech

S ELECT has backed calls for home owners to have their wiring checked by a qualified electrician before buying plug-in solar panels.

The association said an alert by Electrical Safety First (ESF) echoes its own concerns about the potential safety issues posed by the photovoltaic (PV) products, which can now be bought off the shelf in DIY shops and high street retailers.

ESF has issued its own guidance to help households reduce risk, including having electrics checked by a registered electrician before buying panels, particularly in older properties or where the age and condition of the wiring is unknown.

Robert McGoogan, Director of Technical Services, said: “It is encouraging to see ESF reinforcing a message that SELECT and other industry bodies have been stressing for some time. While we fully support efforts to make renewable energy more accessible and affordable, safety must never be treated as an afterthought.”

“Many homes across Scotland and the wider UK have electrical installations that have been altered, extended or simply aged over many decades. Introducing

a new source of electricity into those systems without first establishing their condition and suitability could create risks that householders are entirely unaware of.

“Plug-in solar products are not the same as buying a toaster or a kettle. They interact directly with a property’s fixed wiring and protective devices, which is why the installation should always be assessed by a competent, qualified electrician before any equipment is connected.”

From 27 August, compliant plug-in solar PV systems – sometimes referred to as “balcony solar” – will have a legal route to market in Great Britain.

The change follows the UK Government’s recent introduction of a new regulatory framework and accompanying Plug-in Solar Device Interim Product Specification, which sets out the technical and safety requirements that products must meet before being sold.

Sharon Miller, SELECT Managing Director, added: “Consumers understandably want to reduce their energy bills and play their part in the transition to net zero, and technologies such as plug-in solar may have an important role to play in the future.”

“However, accessibility must go hand in hand with electrical safety. The advice





↑ Solar panels must have the appropriate wiring in place

from ESF demonstrates why professional involvement remains essential, even where products are marketed as simple, off-the-shelf solutions.”

The alert follows a previous joint statement by SELECT and other industry bodies in June, which urged the UK Government to “proceed with caution and ensure that safety,

product assurance, competence and system resilience are designed into any rollout”.

Robert added: “Our message is simple – before investing in any plug-in solar technology, speak to a qualified and registered electrician. A straightforward inspection today could prevent significant problems tomorrow.”

EDDIE APPOINTED NEW EDA CHIEF

The Electrical Distributors’ Association (EDA) has announced the appointment of Eddie Embleton as its CEO Designate from 1 October.

Eddie brings more than a decade of senior-level experience within the electrical industry, most recently as Managing Director of Voltimum, where he led and grew its digital media and data business.

The appointment follows a highly successful 12-year tenure by Margaret Fitzsimons as Chief Executive and includes a structured transition period as she steps back into a part-time strategic role, ensuring continuity and a smooth handover of responsibilities.

EDA President, David Moore, said: “I am delighted to welcome Eddie to the EDA. He brings a strong understanding of our industry together with a proven track record of building partnerships across the sector.”



↑ Eddie Embleton is now CEO Designate of the EDA

COMMITTEE HEADS SOUTH FOR AICO HQ VISIT

SELECT’s Electrotechnical Committee recently enjoyed a fact-finding trip across the border, courtesy of our Associate Member Aico.

Members headed south for a two-day visit to Oswestry in Shropshire on Tuesday 8 September, during which they were given a guided tour of the Aico facilities.

The committee also held a hybrid meeting, during which they discussed topics including DNO issues, EICR coding, plug-in PV and Amendment 4 of BS 7671.

Among those who attended were Director of Technical Services Robert McGoogan, Technical Services Manager Bruce Findlay, Past President Kevin Griffin, former Director of Technical Services Bob Cairney and SECTT’s Barrie McKay.

Robert said: “It was excellent to see such a massive and impressive operation up-close and I’d like to thank Aico’s Gregor Morrison for arranging the visit.”

LUCECO EV GIFT POWERS UP TRAINING PLANS

SELECT has continued its close partnership with Luceco Group after another generous donation of electric vehicle (EV) charging equipment for its training courses.

A representative from the Associate Member visited SELECT HQ in August to deliver four top-of-the-range Sync Energy EV chargers.

As well as a tethered and untethered Sync Energy EV charger, Luceco Area Sales Manager Steve Conn also handed over two brand new Sync Energy Link EV chargers.

The latest gesture comes after similar donations of BG Sync EV charging stations in 2023 and 2024 which are now an integral part of SELECT’s EV charge point installation training course.

Robert McGoogan, Director of Technical Services at SELECT, said: “We are extremely grateful to Luceco Group for this further donation, which will continue to help us deliver in-depth demonstrations of modern charging units.

“Our partnership is an excellent example of the close relationships we’ve developed with leading manufacturers through our Associate Membership scheme.”

Jenny Cryans, Training Manager at SELECT, added: “These four units are extremely welcome and will help us continue delivering essential EV charge point training.”

The units were handed to Robert and SELECT Technical Manager Bruce Findlay. Steve said: “We are delighted to continue our excellent partnership with SELECT.”



↑ Robert, Steve and Bruce

Top marks for SELECT training team

Qualifications Scotland praises department's excellent work after annual audit of services at The Walled Garden

SELECT'S training department has been praised by Qualifications Scotland as part of its annual review of our services and courses.

The association's ongoing work to ensure all training is in line with Amendment 4 of BS 7671 was singled out for particular acclaim following the qualification verification visit to our dedicated training centre.

The Qualifications Scotland auditor commented: "The centre has again demonstrated that it has robust systems in place for planning, delivering,

assessing and verifying all the courses I have sampled and I have high confidence in all areas for continued training provision.

"The staff interviewed at time of visit have a vast

knowledge of these systems and have a vast knowledge of the electrical industry as a whole and are suitably qualified relevant to the courses they deliver."

The report verified a number of highlights in the training department, including:

- Staff being competent to assess



↓ Jenny Cryans

and internally verify in line with Qualifications Scotland customised awards.

- A new member of staff going through an induction process to ensure they are up to speed with all courses before delivering, assessing and verifying them.
- Initial and ongoing reviews of all processes to show the team is fully up to current regulation criteria.
- A robust assessing and paperwork

trail, including evidence of internal verification taking place.

- All processes, updates and feedback from qualification verifiers being disseminated to staff in a continual quality loop to ensure a robust quality system.

The audit took place on 25 August at The Walled Garden and was attended by Director of Technical Services Robert McGoogan, Training Manager Jenny Cryans, Training Development Adviser Stuart McKelvie and Technical Services Manager Bruce Findlay.

Jenny said: "This report highlights the hard work and dedication delivered by our team to ensure our Members and the wider electrotechnical sector in Scotland receive the highest standard of training. Well done to everyone involved."

"THIS REPORT HIGHLIGHTS THE HARD WORK AND DEDICATION DELIVERED BY OUR TEAM TO ENSURE OUR MEMBERS AND THE WIDER ELECTROTECHNICAL SECTOR IN SCOTLAND RECEIVE THE HIGHEST STANDARD OF TRAINING"

🔗 Training update: Pages 50 & 51

Bright future for electrical beginners

Four young people are set to continue their electrotechnical career journey after securing places on the pre-apprenticeship programme through the Get Into Electrical Installation initiative.

SECTT has partnered with The King's Trust and West College Scotland (WCS) for 14 years to deliver the programme, helping young people from disadvantaged backgrounds explore careers in the electrotechnical industry.

Fifteen young people were selected to take part in this year's programme, with 13 completing the course and four participants

moving into the pre-apprenticeship opportunities at WCS.

The six-week initiative concluded with a celebration event at WCS's Paisley Campus attended by learners, employers, family members and partner organisations.

Fiona Harper, SECTT CEO, said: "I was greatly impressed by the enthusiasm and determination shown by this year's learners. Many have overcome personal barriers to complete the programme, making their achievements all the more impressive."

🔗 Special SECTT report: Pages 60-64



↑ Youngsters celebrate at WCS

Screwfix names Neil top tradesperson

COCK-A-HOOP contractor Neil Claxton is celebrating after being voted the Screwfix Top Tradesperson 2026.

The Ayrshire Branch Member, who owns Test My Electrics, was crowned at Screwfix Live in Farnborough on 27 September.

The judging panel said: "Neil really impressed us with a business focused on great standards, strong community connections, looking after his team and creating opportunities for the next generation."

After working in the electrical industry for over 20 years, Neil started Test My Electrics in 2020 and has since grown from one van to a team carrying out work across Scotland.

He said: "This means so much because of the team, customers, family and local community who have supported us."

"I'm most passionate about the future of our trade and we invest in giving young people opportunities to build careers."

← Neil with his award



↑ Neil founded his business in 2020

ENVIROVENT SHARES MVHR EXPERTISE

Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) was the hot topic when envirovent delivered its first free CPD training session at The Walled Garden.

Held at our dedicated Training Centre on Wednesday 16 September, the event saw experts from the Associate Member raise awareness and understanding of MVHR systems.

Members also learned about system design, specification best practice, regulations and the role of ventilation in delivering healthier, more energy-efficient homes.

Training Manager Jenny Cryans said: "We were delighted to host the envirovent team at The Walled Garden and would be happy to host any similar CPD sessions for Members going forward."

↓ Delegates were instructed in the latest MVHR technology



TRIBUTES TO FORMER SELECT BRANCH CHAIR KEN

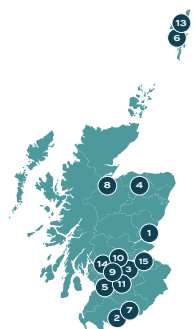
SELECT was saddened to hear of the recent passing of former Central Board member Ken Mackenzie.

Formerly of E M Mackenzie

& Co Ltd, Ken was Branch Chair and Vice Chair of the Glasgow & West of Scotland Branch between 2002 and 2008. Managing Director

Sharon Miller said: "On behalf of the association, I would like to pass on our deepest condolences to Ken's family."

15 FIRMS HAVE BECOME SELECT MEMBERS SINCE 1 AUGUST 2026



1. Pulse Electrical (Dundee) Ltd – Dundee
2. JP Electrical – Dumfries
3. Dcon Services Limited – Broxburn
4. Speyside Fire Solutions Ltd – Aberlour
5. CRH Electrical – East Kilbride
6. JDF Electrical (Shetland) Ltd – Cunningsburgh, Shetland

7. T's Electric – Dumfries
8. D.S. Electrical (Highland) Ltd – Inverness
9. Mikno Electrical Services Ltd – Coatbridge
10. Falkirk Council Place Services Environment & Operations Building Maintenance – Grangemouth

11. DPRO Limited – Wishaw
12. Alpha Electrical and Contracting Services Ltd – Bathgate
13. AEGW Electrical Ltd – Cunningsburgh, Shetland
14. MFO Electrical Services Ltd – Coatbridge
15. David Cassie Electrotechnical – Edinburgh



Five jobs worth handing over to AI

...and exactly where each one lets you down

In part one of our special report, our guest contributor told you not to trust anybody selling artificial intelligence, himself included. Now he owes you something useful: The five jobs a two-van firm can hand to a machine, what each is worth – and the point at which every one of them falls over

WORDS
DRU MCPHERSON
Founder, Whoza.ai

A **SELECT** Member in Elgin told me last year that he'd stopped answering his phone on site. Not out of rudeness. He'd worked out that breaking off mid-termination to speak to somebody who turns out to be selling photocopier toner cost him more in concentration than the call was ever

worth. So he let it ring and told himself he would get back to folk in the evening.

He didn't, of course. Nobody ever does.

That is really the whole subject of this article, and I would rather begin there than with anything clever, because the useful question about this technology is not what it can do. It's what you are currently losing.

Last issue, I gave you five reasons to be sceptical, which is the easy article to write; scepticism costs nothing and always sounds

wise. This is the harder one. Five jobs, what each is worth and where each falls over. The failure sits beside every one of them, because a job whose limits you don't know hasn't been delegated. It has just gone out of your sight.

1. THE PHONE

Start here. Not because the technology is impressive, but because this is the only item on the list where you can work out what you're losing before you've spent a penny finding out.

So, work it out. What's an average domestic job worth to you? Call it £280 and adjust to your own book. How many calls go unanswered in a week – two, three, five? Be honest and count the ones that ring out in the van, as well as the ones you ignore on site.

Now discount it hard, because not every missed call was work-related. Say only one in three of them would ever have become a job that you actually wanted. That's three missed calls a week, one real job, 48 working weeks: a total of **£13,000** over a year.

I've shown that arithmetic to a good number of contractors and the pause afterwards is always about the same length. It isn't that the figure is enormous. It's that it's been running quietly for years and nobody had ever written it down.

What a voice system does is answer every one of those calls, work out whether it's a job or a





nuisance and put the details on your phone before you're back down the ladder.

Where it lets you down: Wind... and Doric... and postcodes on a poor line. I admitted last issue that our own system still stumbles on a strong accent in a gale, and it does. That is precisely why it reads details back to have them confirmed and takes the number on the keypad as a backstop.

Ask any vendor to show you how their AI system hands a distressed caller to an actual human being and test that before you test anything else. If they can't demonstrate it inside five minutes, you have learnt what you needed to know.

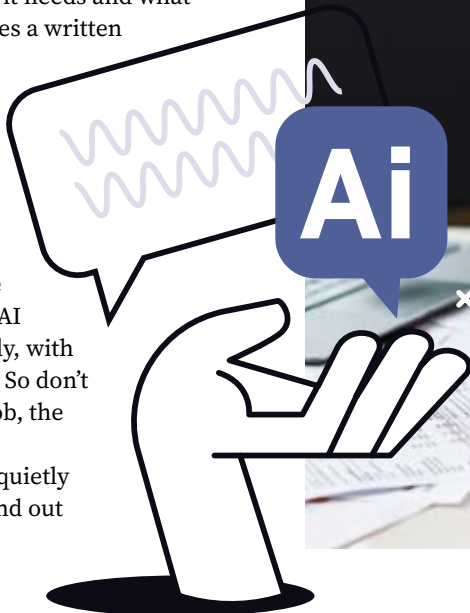
2. THE QUOTE

Best return for least effort on this list, and hardly anybody uses it.

Ninety seconds talking into your phone in the van – what the job is, what it needs and what you're charging. Back comes a written quote in your own format, ready to check. The hour it used to cost you after dinner becomes a five-minute read at the kitchen table.

Where it lets you down: Pricing. Leave a gap where a number ought to be and AI will fill that gap, confidently, with something it has invented. So don't leave one. **YOU** price the job, the machine types it up.

The day those two roles quietly swap over is the day you find out about it from a customer.



3. THE AWKWARD EMAIL

Every firm has one sitting in drafts. The invoice that is 40 days past. The delay you must explain. The polite refusal of work that was never in the spec.

They don't get sent because they're uncomfortable, not because they're long. Get a first draft out of the machine and the discomfort goes, because you're no longer writing, you're editing. And editing is easy.

Where it lets you down: Tone. Left alone, it writes like an American sales manager, all warmth and no edges. Tell it to be short and plain. Then read the thing properly before it goes, because your name is at the bottom of it.

4. THE REVIEW YOU NEVER ASK FOR

This has the highest return of anything here and it never gets done, because asking feels like begging.

It isn't. A message two days after the job, in your own words, will bring you more work next year than anything you will pay for.

Where it lets you down: Nowhere technical, and everywhere else if you are careless with it. Never let it write the review. Never invent one. Stop after a single reminder, because the gap between a nudge and a nuisance is about two messages wide, and the reputation that you are supposedly protecting is the entire point of the exercise.

5. FINDING WHAT YOU ALREADY WROTE DOWN

"What did we quote the Bruce job

"IT ISN'T THAT THE FIGURE IS ENORMOUS. IT'S THAT IT'S BEEN RUNNING QUIETLY FOR YEARS AND NOBODY HAD EVER WRITTEN IT DOWN"

ILLUSTRATIONS: Pure Solutions/Shutterstock



↑ Pricing a job with the help of AI offers a high return for very little effort

Premaster/Shutterstock

at back in March?"
Twenty minutes of scrolling, every time, usually with somebody holding on the phone. Point a properly configured tool at your own paperwork and that becomes a question you ask out loud.

Where it lets you down: The boundary. I am going to repeat myself from last issue and I make no apology for it: Searching your own records is a retrieval problem, and machines are genuinely excellent at that. Judging whether an installation complies is not a retrieval problem. Never the regs. Never the calculations. Never certification. That line has not moved, and it's not going to.

NEXT STEP? START WITH ONE

One job. Four weeks. Choose one number from the list above.

Pick whichever is costing you most – which for most firms reading this will be the first one – and ignore the other four entirely. Write down the figure it's meant to shift before you start; calls missed, quotes sent, days to payment. It hardly matters which, so long as you chose it in advance, because a number picked afterwards

will always flatter whatever you have just bought.

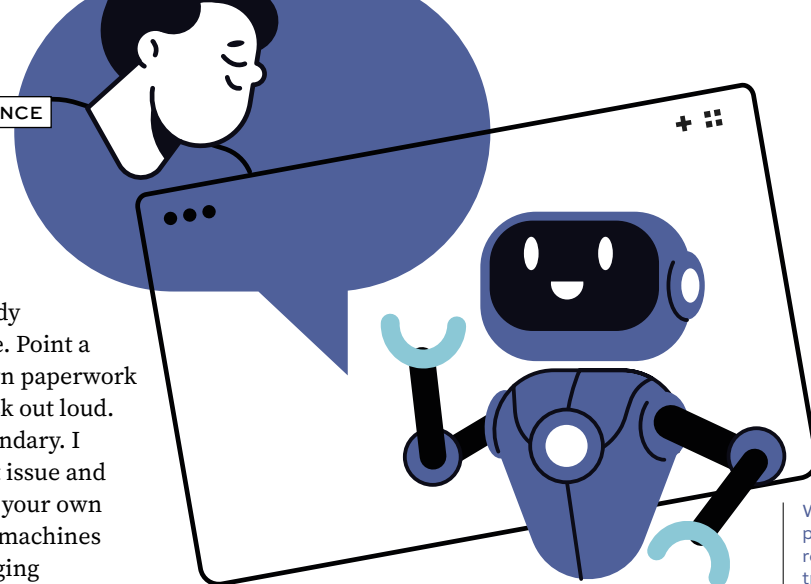
Then at the end of the month, three questions:

- Did it shift?
- What went wrong that you hadn't anticipated?
- Would you notice by Wednesday if you switched it off?

If the answer to that last one is 'no', switch it off. You will have spent a month and roughly the price of a multimeter establishing something true about your own business, which is a good deal more than most of what my industry will sell you this year.

And if it is 'yes', then take the second job off the list. Not before. ■

Whoza.ai builds AI phone answering and revenue teams for UK trade businesses. It answers every call 24/7, works out whether it's a real job, and sends the details straight to your WhatsApp – booking it into your diary if you let it. Built in Scotland. From £59/month, no contract. To find out more, visit whoza.ai, email dru@whoza.ai, WhatsApp +44 7463 141750 or scan the QR code.



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VIDEOS PUT YOU IN THE PICTURE



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



Enlarged prostate? Share YOUR story!

Prostate Scotland is calling on Members with prostate issues to take part in a new national survey to reveal how it affects their everyday lives

S **ELECT** Members are being asked to come forward and contribute to new research to help uncover the everyday impact of living with an enlarged prostate.

An enlarged prostate or benign prostate enlargement (BPE) is often dismissed as part of getting older. Yet the condition can affect far more than bladder function; it can change how men socialise, travel and work.

BPE symptoms can include needing to urinate more often, getting up several times during the night, a weaker flow, difficulty emptying the bladder and leakage.

The charity hopes men living with BPE will share their experiences, from symptoms and seeking help to diagnosis, treatment, support and the wider impact the condition has on quality of life.

This will help provide a clear picture of what living with BPE in Scotland is really like. Prostate Scotland plans to share the findings with NHS Scotland, the Scottish Government and others to improve understanding of BPE and inform future service provision.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

Sarah Henning, Patient Research Coordinator at Prostate Scotland, said: "BPE affects thousands of men across Scotland, but we don't fully understand how it shapes everyday life beyond the physical symptoms. That's why we're keen to hear from SELECT Members living with BPE.

"We want to know what's challenging, what helps and what support is missing. By taking part in this research, men can use their experiences to help us improve support for others living with BPE."

Leann McLaughlin, Uro-Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist and a member of Prostate Scotland's expert advisory group, added: "Needing to urinate more isn't always something sinister.

"It can be a sign of an enlarged prostate or other issues, but you should always go and



PeopleImages/Shutterstock

↑ Men with an enlarged prostate can face anxiety and start to live a smaller life



have this checked out by a GP. There are treatments available. Nobody should feel they have to put up with symptoms that are affecting their daily life.

"For some men, symptoms become so severe they need to have a long-term urinary catheter or self-catheterise while waiting for treatment. Alongside the physical challenges, living with a catheter can bring worries about dignity and body image.

"I see some men start to live a smaller life. They stop doing the things they love because they're embarrassed about their symptoms or having a catheter. They're anxious about leaking urine, finding a toilet in time and emptying a bag or disposing of self-catheters – especially when there's little provision for this in public places.

"Some men withdraw quietly without telling anyone why. This in turn can impact emotional wellbeing and mental health." ■

"BPE AFFECTS THOUSANDS OF MEN ACROSS SCOTLAND, BUT WE DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND HOW IT SHAPES EVERYDAY LIFE BEYOND THE PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS"

COMPLETE SURVEY ONLINE OR BY PHONE

Members living with BPE are invited to complete the anonymous 10–15-minute survey at www.prostatescotland.org.uk/research or by scanning the QR code. The survey is open until November. Prostate Scotland is also carrying out one-to-one telephone interviews. Members who would like to take part should email research@prostatescotland.org.uk



**prostate
scotland**

Experts share Professional points of view

WORDS
YVONNE WILSON
Skills & Client
Relations Manager



Competence, compliance and conversation were top of the agenda at the fifth SELECT Professionals' Day, sponsored by Aico, as senior industry decision-makers once again gathered to discuss topical talking points from across the construction industry

S **ELECT** certainly took centre stage at the fifth annual

Professionals' Day as our technical experts were joined by a Member to reinforce

the importance of competence and compliance.

Graeme Anderson, Chair of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland Branch, was among the speakers as our free event once again brought together a wide variety of decision-makers from across the construction industry.

Sponsored by Associate Member Aico, this year's gathering enjoyed an excellent mix of guests, including representatives from local authorities, housing associations, the Federation of Master Builders, the Chartered Institute of Building, the Social



↑ Immediate Past President Mike Stark makes his point



↓ New Associate NVC Lighting joined us in Dalkeith



↑ Member Graeme Anderson took centre stage

Housing Network, Home Energy Scotland and Warmworks.

SELECT President Darren Crockett and Immediate Past President Mike Stark were also in attendance at a packed Restoration Yard in Dalkeith Country Park on Thursday 10 September, as delegates took part in three discussions and a lively panel debate.

RAISING THE STANDARD

First up to the podium was Rory Fraser, Relationship Manager at Aico, who delivered the opening presentation on raising the standard of connected safety in Scottish homes.

After an overview of how landlords can ensure compliance with Awaab's Law, Rory also discussed the Repairing Standard and its implications, with plenty of questions afterwards.

Next up was SELECT's Director of Technical Services, Robert



McGoogan, who took to the stage for a two-handed discussion with Graeme, who is MD of Powertec Electrotechnical Services.

The duo discussed the importance of competence in the electrical workforce, regulations and codes of practice and the various work categories in SELECT's updated membership criteria.

They also emphasised the need for compliance among SELECT Members, offering

↑ Robert McGoogan discussed competence from the SELECT angle

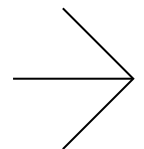


separate association and contractor insights into best practice and commercial integrity and the importance of Member credentials.

Robert and Graeme then fielded a number of questions from the audience, including queries about training, mandatory certification and supervision and site inspections of employees.

KNOWLEDGE GAPS

After a short break, our third speaker of the day was Russell Watson, Learning and Development Manager at the Scottish Building Standards Hub.



↑ Russell Watson in full flow



↑ Delegates took the opportunity to share their experience



↑ The FMB's Gordon Nelson asks a question



↑ Aico's Rory Fraser chats to attendees

Russell delivered an update on building regulations in Scotland, offering practical examples of the Building (Scotland) Act in action and when the regulations apply.

Our four speakers then swapped the podium for comfy chairs as they took part in a 45-minute panel discussion on a wide range of industry issues.

The quartet fielded questions on filling industry knowledge gaps and technical inspections, as well as improving staff competence and conformity under budgetary constraints.

They also discussed technical handbooks, BSI kitemarks and certification, with the audience keen to discover more about building warrants and damp, mould and environmental monitoring.

As well as presentations, delegates took the opportunity to chat to our exhibitors, who included Associate Members Dimplex, the Electric Heating Company, envirovent, Milwaukee Tools, NVC Lighting, Vectaire and Wylex.

Managing Director Sharon Miller said: "Once again, we were delighted to welcome decision-makers from across the construction sector to discuss the topics that matter most. It was an excellent day, with a lot of positive feedback from the attendees and the exhibitors alike." ■

Images: Mark Jackson Photography



↑ The four panellists are put through their paces by the crowd



↑ Rory delivered the first presentation of the day for sponsor Aico



↑ Robert and Graeme shared the stage in Dalkeith



↑ President Darren with Colleen Grant from Dimplex

EVENT PARTNERS





↑ The Milwaukee team mingled with delegates



↑ Darren Crockett shares a laugh with Mike Stark



↑ Our experts were quizzed by the audience



↑ Vectaire's Steve Thompson was happy to chat



↑ A range of important topics kept the audience engaged



↑ Wylex was well represented at the event



↑ Electric heating was discussed on the day



↑ Experienced workers joined those earlier in their careers



↑ Delegates came from across the industry



↑ The SELECT team was on hand to help delegates



↑ Representatives from envirovent were among the exhibitors

WORDS
JOSH O'BRIEN
Managing Director,
TrackTrade



↑ Failing to keep records properly can cost you payment and even reputation

It all comes down to the evidence

↓ Evidence gathering, such as taking photos, should be built into each stage of the job

Our guest contributor reveals how a single missing photo cost one electrical contractor thousands of pounds – and explains how you can ensure it doesn't happen to you



BilalAnsari/Stock

BY 9am on Monday, Jason, contracts manager at RPE

Electrical*, already had three missed calls from Martin, the facilities manager at one of his biggest clients.

When he finally got him on the phone, Martin was furious. He'd walked the site that morning, spotted the same fault they thought had been fixed weeks ago and demanded to know why they were paying for work that "clearly hadn't been done", threatening to withhold any invoices.

Unfortunately, this wasn't the first time this had happened.

Jason was incredulous. He knew the job had been done. His

engineer had phoned him. He remembered seeing photos. He remembered checking the RAMS. But where was the proof?

WHERE'S THE EVIDENCE?

RPE, like any good contractor, had procedures in place. Jobs were logged, engineers sent out, the paperwork came back and the hectic office team pulled everything together to get the billing done. On most days, this just about worked.

Yet when a client challenged a job, they found themselves scrambling to justify their bill; hunting down a photo on someone's phone, looking up certificates in the wrong folders or reading completion notes off old job sheets. The evidence simply wasn't ready to go when it

was needed. In Jason's case, a single photo was worth thousands of pounds.

The process relied too much on people remembering to send things to the right places and the office having the time to tidy it all later. A reactive process that was always vulnerable to a demand from a client, particularly if they were already in a poor Monday morning mood!

This isn't unusual. A 2024 King's College London/Adjudication Society report found that inadequate administration of contracts was cited as a leading cause in 50% of UK construction adjudication disputes.

It's a stark reminder that weak records, inconsistent processes and missing paperwork can quickly become commercial problems, and even reputational ones, particularly if it concerns anything to do with safety.

WHY ARE CONTRACTORS STILL GETTING CAUGHT OUT?

Jason's situation will be familiar to many SELECT Members. Most contractors know that in principle, capturing better records would help. But day-to-day, in the real world, gathering evidence is rarely the most urgent thing in the business.

There's always another job to get out or quote to price and taking the time to make sure every photo, note or certificate is captured properly can feel like admin for admin's sake. Especially when the job is done and everyone wants to move on.

So, naturally, small workarounds and shortcuts get accepted. If **someone** has the photo on their phone, the job sheet gets scanned in at **some point**, or the certs get saved **somewhere** and the business assumes it can always dig it up later if need be.

When clients are happy and invoices are being paid, it can appear to be working. But any

time saved is quickly lost when a client challenges the work and the business realises that the very thing it needs in order to get paid or prove it wasn't at fault – or in the worst case, rescue a contract – is the one thing that's missing.

And the cost isn't simply a delayed invoice; it's time, headache and energy all pulled away from the business.

WHAT DOES BETTER LOOK LIKE?

So how does a contractor avoid this without grinding everything to a halt and spending more time filing than winning work?

The answer is to build the evidence and documentation into the natural stages of each job, not as a separate tidy-up exercise at the end, but as an essential part of how the work moves from enquiry to site, to completion, to billing.

For example, if photos are needed, they're captured and documented while the engineer is at the job, rather than attempting to sort through hundreds of photos later or hunt one down when disputed. If certs or notes are required, the job isn't treated as complete until they're in place.

Done well and done consistently, this reduces the admin burden on any one part of the process, so jobs can be progressed smoothly without compromising on crucial evidence. Office teams don't spend as much time chasing up

SAVE 10% WITH TRACKTRADE

TrackTrade helps electrical businesses bring job workflow, site evidence and reporting into one place. As a SELECT Associate Member, TrackTrade is offering SELECT Members 10% off its services, plus a free review of how they currently manage these processes. To find out more, visit www.tracktrade.co.uk/select

↓ Some contractors must report to clients as work progresses, not when it is complete



engineers on site and engineers aren't being dragged into old jobs trying to remember what happened. A little extra effort at key stages of the work adds up to a big time saving later.

Most importantly, when challenged, the evidence is always to hand, taking pressure off the contracts manager, and giving the client confidence.

WINNING WORK REQUIRES BETTER REPORTING

However, capturing better evidence isn't just about preventing disputes; professional reporting can help win extra business as well.

Increasingly, frameworks and larger contracts expect contractors to provide evidence as the work progresses, not pull it together after something has gone wrong, and take this into account when awarding contracts.

This is partly about avoiding disputes, but it's also about how these clients manage their own reporting. Housing associations, local authorities and facilities teams often have their own performance reporting pressures – repair completion times, completion dates, evidence of attendance and the status of outstanding works.

In some cases, they're reporting against formal performance measures themselves. For example, social landlords have to submit performance information to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

A contractor that can provide job evidence quickly is easier to work with and easier to trust.

But, of course, it matters just as much on everyday jobs too. If the business can't prove what was done quickly, and why the bill is justified, the job may as well never have happened.

Capturing evidence is part of the job. One missing photo should never be enough to put payment, trust or future work at risk. ■

*Names have been changed and details lightly edited for clarity.

A network of help before it's needed most

WORDS

ROB LOW

Business Development
Executive, EC Insurance
Services Limited

The suicide rate
in construction
is 3.7 times
higher than the
national average

As a follow-up to Suicide Prevention Month in September, our guest contributor outlines the importance of building support around electricians' mental health – and how employers can play their part

MENTAL ill health is now the leading cause of long-term sickness absence in UK workplaces, and construction's own figures point to a markedly higher risk than the national picture.

Construction carries risk factors that compound each other. Long hours, demanding deadlines, physically tough work, time away from home and uncertainty between projects can all add pressure, while a workforce that's around 85% male and a culture that's traditionally valued resilience and self-reliance can make it harder to talk about struggling.

Add a workforce split between employees and self-employed sub-contractors – around 39% of the sector, with different levels of access to support – and it can be easier to carry a problem quietly than to raise it early.

Across construction, dedicated charities, workplace initiatives and healthcare services have created different routes to support, each with a different role to play. The challenge is making sure people know that support is there, and where to find it when they need it.

The construction sector has developed the following dedicated health and wellbeing support, designed around the particular needs of the people who work within it:

- **Mates in Mind** – a charity built specifically for construction and related sectors. Established in 2017, it helps employers improve mental health awareness and gives people the confidence to recognise when someone may be struggling and know how to respond. It now works with more than 700 supporter organisations across the industry.
- **Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity** – runs the Construction Industry Helpline, providing free, confidential 24/7 support to people working in construction and their families. Its support extends beyond mental health to include emotional, physical and financial wellbeing, including help for people facing financial hardship.
- **Electrical Industries Charity** – as the dedicated charity for the electrical industry, the EIC offers a helpline which offers support on a wide range of mental health issues. In addition, it can help with things like financial support, counselling, psychiatric assessments, private rehab and legal support.
- **Building Mental Health** – funded by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and delivered with Lighthouse, was created to help the sector develop a more consistent approach to mental health. Its work has included training mental health first aid instructors, helping to build access to trained support across the industry.

"THE CHALLENGE IS MAKING SURE PEOPLE KNOW THAT SUPPORT IS THERE, AND WHERE TO FIND IT WHEN THEY NEED IT"



↑ Mates in Mind gives people confidence to recognise when someone is struggling

Dmytro Zinkevych/Shutterstock



↑ Confidential support is available to construction workers and their families

16% of men say fear of medication is a reason for not seeking help

And they aren't duplicating each other. Mates in Mind focuses on awareness and helping people recognise when someone may be struggling. Lighthouse provides somewhere to turn when someone needs support directly. Building Mental Health helps develop trained support across the industry.

WHAT PMI ADDS ALONGSIDE IT

The SELECT Bupa Scheme from ECIS doesn't replace any of these services. Instead, it adds another layer of support. While charities and workplace initiatives help people recognise problems early, PMI can help people access clinical assessment and treatment when it's needed.

ECIS has built that support into the PMI scheme in several ways. The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) gives immediate access to a confidential 24/7 phone line and short-term counselling, and the scheme's helplines provide day-and-night access to qualified nurses for general health and family mental health queries.

For anyone who needs a formal assessment or treatment, the mental health fast-track offers rapid

USEFUL LINKS



SUICIDE IS THE SINGLE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH FOR MEN UNDER 50 IN THE UK

routing to assessment, with zero-excess talking therapies. Digital therapy apps add a further, self-guided option, with tools for managing stress and sleep issues, and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub in the My Bupa app includes resources covering sleep, stress, anxiety, depression, alcohol use and caring for a loved one.

Charities, workplace initiatives and what's built into PMI all add up to real support.

WHAT EMPLOYERS CAN DO

Having support available is only useful if people know it's there. So as an employer, here's what **YOU** can do:

- Make sure employees know about the Construction Industry Helpline. It's free, confidential and available to everyone in the sector, whether or not they're covered by the SELECT Bupa Scheme.
- Look at whether someone within the business could be trained as a mental health first aider, through Building Mental Health or Lighthouse's own courses.
- Make conversations about wellbeing a normal part of working life, rather than something that only happens when someone is already struggling.
- For employers already part of the SELECT Bupa Scheme, make sure employees understand what's included, from the EAP and mental health fast-track to the digital tools they can access themselves.

Charities and PMI each cover a different part of the picture, and together they add up to a stronger network than either alone. The important thing is making sure people can find that network before they reach the point where they need it most.

For those with an ECIS PMI scheme, that network extends further through the mental health support included within their cover. ■

If you're considering PMI for your employees, or want to understand more about the support available through an existing ECIS scheme, talk to ECIS at ecins.co.uk or email ecis@ecins.co.uk

40%

of men have never spoken to anyone about their mental health

A celebration

SELECT once again rolled out the red carpet for Members and industry colleagues at the 2026 President's Lunch, sponsored by Luceco Group. As well marking achievements and saluting the talent of tomorrow, there was also a surprise appearance from one very special presidential figure...



SELECT
PRESIDENT'S LUNCH
SPONSORED BY **LUCECO**
GROUP

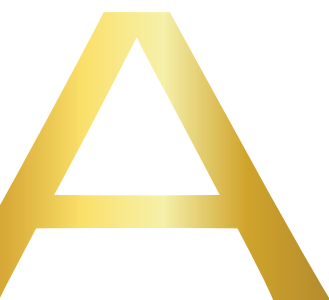
of success



↑ Darren Crockett addresses this year's President's Lunch

WORDS IAIN MASON

Director of
Membership, Events
& Communications



An ambitious new apprentice initiative was the main talking point as the 2026 President's

Lunch returned to Edinburgh to once again celebrate the very best of our sector.

More than 100 specially invited colleagues from across the construction industry gathered at The Balmoral for our annual networking event on Friday 25 September.

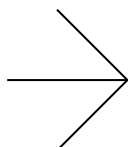
The event saw our Lifetime Achievement Award presented to a renowned industry veteran, along with special presentations to three youngsters just starting out on their career journeys.

And there was also a surprise appearance by a very special guest that ensured the event enjoyed a presidential flavour from across the pond.

As well as Past Presidents and members of the SELECT Central Board, delegates included Scottish Government and industry figures, along with other senior representatives from the UK's leading electrical and construction organisations.

Also in attendance were Ian Hunter, Lauren De'Ath and Steve Conn from Associate Member Luceco Group, who were the event's official headline sponsor.

Fellow Associate Morton Fraser MacRoberts once again kept guests refreshed as the official



↑ SNIEF President Steve Craig with SELECT MD Sharon Miller



↑ SJIB Secretary Catherine Gillon with SJIB Chair Jock Simpson



↑ The event provided the perfect opportunity for networking



↑ Past President Alistair Grant chats to ECA President Glenn Grant



↑ Edinburgh Branch Chair Graeme Anderson deep in conversation



↑ The IET's Mark Coles was among our special guests



↑ SECTT's Barrie McKay chats with Depute Vice President Mike Campbell



↑ Director of Technical Services Robert McGoogan with Gary Parker from the ECA





↑ Lisa Goldie from the Scottish Government and Theresa McGowan of Qualifications Scotland



↑ Gordon Nelson, Trevor Redmore, Steven Thompson and Gary Mees



↑ Past Presidents David Smith and Alick J Smith were among our special guests



↑ Luceco Group's Lauren De'Ath and Steve Conn



↑ Iain Mason makes his point to VP David Harris



↑ Robbie Toomey of RICS shares a laugh with Jocelyne Fleming of the CIOB



↑ Office Bearers Keith Smith, Stuart Anderson and Eric Rae made the journey south



↑ Darren Crockett with John McKinney of the NFRC



↑ Past President Kevin Griffin, wife Liz and former SELECT MD Alan Wilson



↑ Norrie Scott of NJS Lighting Solutions with Alasdair Noble



↑ SECTT CEO Fiona Harper with SELECT's Yvonne Wilson



↑ It was great to see our friends from sponsor Morton Fraser MacRoberts





↑ The SBF's Paul Mitchell joined us at The Balmoral



↑ Bob Cairney shares a joke with Luke Osborne and Haig Hamilton



↑ Past President Eric Rae with Member Allan Beveridge Jr



↑ Sharon Miller chats with Angus McAnish of Marsh



↑ Former SELECT MD Newell McGuinness, Jock Simpson and ECA MD Andrew Eldred



↑ Dylan Mansfield from Signature LED Lighting and Luceco's Lauren De'Ath



↑ Glasgow's Alan Watt, right, chats with ECA President Glenn Grant



↑ More than 100 industry guests gathered in the splendid surroundings of The Balmoral

drinks sponsor and they were represented on the day by Neil Kelly and Gavin Thomson.

And as sponsors of the Lifetime Achievement Award, we were delighted to welcome Neil MacEachern, Douglas Thomson, Barry McNally, Ivor Milne and John Patton from Schneider Electric to the celebrations.

RISING DEMAND

After an hour of reception drinks, the lunch itself began with a welcome speech from SELECT Managing Director Sharon Miller, who began by issuing a warning about losing sight of what construction can offer.

She told assembled guests: "The construction sector possesses unique abilities to drive economic growth

"THE GOVERNMENT IS FOCUSED ON SMALL, SHINY SECTORS YOU WON'T HAVE HEARD OF – PHOTONICS AND QUANTUM FOR EXAMPLE"



↑ SNIPF's Fiona Hodgson, Pilar Rodriguez from EST and Jocelyne Fleming



↑ Director of Finance Jenny Petrie catches up with Past President John Noble



↑ SECTT's David Henderson shares a joke



↑ Ben Sturdy from Knightsbridge with Luceco's Ian Hunter



↓ Branch Chairs Sean Harkin, left, and Greg Hutchings



↑ Associates Colin Hepplewhite, Barry Mackenzie and Craig Herriott



↑ Alan Ramsay and Alan Wilson discuss all things Heart of Midlothian



↑ cabletalk columnist Paul McDevitt was among the guests

all over our country; we provide employment for people at all levels of educational attainment and we pay them well.

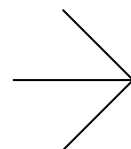
"Yet the government is focused on small, shiny sectors you won't have heard of – photonics and quantum for example. These are important for the future economy but growth in the current economy is vital if government

is to achieve its objectives around health, child poverty and housing. We are here and we can help if government is willing to engage.

"That said, the future for electricians looks bright. The increasing electrification of society means that the demand for our services is on the rise and SELECT is here to help navigate all the complexities of running a

business in this fast-changing world."

Sharon also revealed progress in our ongoing campaign for regulation, adding: "At the moment, anyone in the UK can still call themselves an electrician, which is wrong and why we have been campaigning for protection of title for



so long. However, I am pleased to say that the stars appear to be aligning for regulation and our sister organisations south of the border, ECA, ESF and Certsure – many of whom are here today – agree that this has to happen and it has to happen soon.

“Our Members train and operate to the highest standards and their names are bywords for quality across the industry. We all want to protect the public from rogue traders and also protect our Members from being undercut by dangerously unqualified operatives.

“I am more hopeful now than ever that protection of title can be achieved so I want to thank everyone who is supportive of that work and I look forward to strong collaboration to achieve our collective goals.”

A WARM WELCOME

Taking to the stage next, SELECT President Darren Crockett used his traditional welcome speech to thank members of fellow trade organisations for attending, including Luke Osborne from Electrical Safety First and Mark Coles from the IET.

He also congratulated the ECA on its 125th anniversary as he welcomed Andrew Eldred and Gary Parker from our “wee sister” down south, along with ECA President Glenn Grant.

SNIPF President Steve Craig and CEO Fiona Hodgson were welcomed next, along with Stephen Good from BE-ST and the chair of the SJIB, Jock Simpson.

“I AM MORE HOPEFUL NOW THAN EVER THAT PROTECTION OF TITLE CAN BE ACHIEVED SO I WANT TO THANK EVERYONE WHO IS SUPPORTIVE OF THAT WORK AND I LOOK FORWARD TO STRONG COLLABORATION TO ACHIEVE OUR COLLECTIVE GOALS”



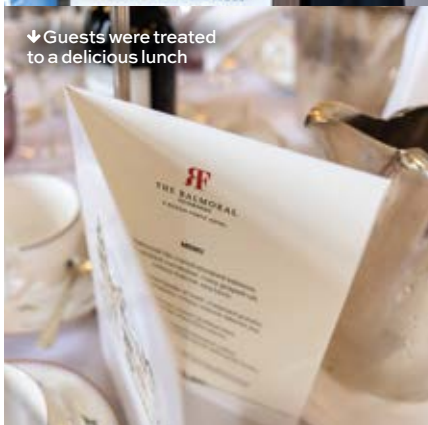
↑ Plenty of chat at Table 1



↑ SELECT MD Sharon was the first speaker of the day



↑ Jock Simpson and Alick J Smith deep in conversation



↓ Guests were treated to a delicious lunch



↑ All smiles during the meal



↓ Darren Crockett acts as host



↓ Stuart Mushet represented ROBUS



↑ Past President David Smith joined us for lunch



↑ Steve Conn has lots to say



↑ Jenny Petrie catches up with colleagues



↑ Darren thanks guests for attending



↑ The Balmoral Hotel provided a spectacular backdrop for the SELECT President's Lunch



↑ Margaret Fitzsimons prepares to take her seat



↑ SELECT's former Technical Director Bob Cairney



↑ Andrew Eldred and Glenn Grant don the famous SELECT bucket hats



Warning that the acronyms were only just beginning, Darren then went on to greet Gordon Nelson from the FMB, Dr Jocelyne Fleming (CIOB), Robbie Toomey (RICS), John McKinney and Scott Miller (NFRC), Paul Mitchell (SBF and CICV) and Gary Mees (CIAT).

Afterwards, he quipped: "I told you there were a lot of acronyms – but fortunately there's no one here from HMRC."

Darren's final greetings went to Fiona Harper, Barrie McKay and David Henderson from SECTT, along with Theresa McGowan from Qualifications Scotland, Pilar Rodriguez from the Energy Saving Trust and Lisa Goldie from the Scottish Government.

He also gave special mention to Margaret Fitzsimons, outgoing CEO of the Electrical Distributors' Association, saying: "Margaret, you have been an excellent friend to SELECT over the past decade and more, and we thank you for your invaluable guidance."

SERVICE TO THE SECTOR

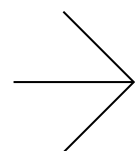
After lunch was served, Darren returned to the podium for the first presentation of the day as he revealed the recipient of the 2026 SELECT Lifetime Achievement Award, sponsored by Schneider Electric.

Announcing the honour, he said: "This year's winner has been a strong advocate for our sector for the last 40 years, working in both the public and private sectors and across a number of trade associations.

"Our recipient led the sector through one of the most difficult periods in our history during the COVID pandemic and his knowledge and standing are highly respected across the construction industry, not only in Scotland but also in Europe and Scandinavia.

"He is generous with his knowledge and respected as one of the leading lights of our industry, and for the last 14 years SELECT has been privileged to have him leading and growing our association.

"He is also passionate about the importance of apprenticeships to secure the future of our industry and has worked tirelessly to support and improve





Scan the QR code to watch our Powering Potential video or go to bit.ly/ct-poweringpotential

↑ Luceco's Ian Hunter announces the Powering Potential initiative at the SELECT President's Lunch 2026



↑ Val and Reece from V C Electrical collect their award



↑ Val Chisholm and apprentice Reece Michie of V C Electrical receive the funding from Luceco's Ian Hunter and Darren Crockett



↑ Apprentice Ritchie Pirie and Allan Beveridge Jnr of A B Electrical Scotland Ltd step on stage with Ian Hunter and Darren Crockett



↑ Ian Hunter and Darren Crockett present the Powering Potential funding to Thomas Shirkie and Tony Walsh of T Walsh Contracts Ltd



↑ Apprentice Thomas Shirkie is congratulated by Darren

the system for employers and candidates alike.”
Darren went on: “This year’s winner has built the reputation of our association to one of national standing. He has also worked throughout his career with kindness and humour; good qualities to survive and thrive at the top of your game. He officially stood down

from SELECT at the end of August, to enjoy a long and well-deserved retirement we hope.

“In typical style, he has left the association in great shape for the future to prosper and grow, and continue serving our Members for the next 126 years.”

To thunderous applause, Darren then revealed that the recipient of this year’s

award was former SELECT Managing Director Alan Wilson. After making his way to the stage through a standing ovation, a clearly emotional Alan made a short speech thanking his SELECT colleagues and the wider industry for their support.

He said: “I’m delighted to have received this award. It is such an unexpected honour and a testament to the team



↑ Alan received a standing ovation from guests



↑ Darren hands Alan his Lifetime Achievement Award



↑ An emotional Alan thanks the 100 assembled guests at The Balmoral

behind me and the work they've done over the years. "

SUPPORTING THE FUTURE

As Alan returned to his seat, Darren then made the second big announcement of the day as he introduced a new initiative in partnership with Luceco Group.

He told guests: "As a recent SELECT survey revealed, the cost of employing

apprentices is proving a problem for many Members across Scotland.

"Small businesses tell us that rising wages, National Insurance contributions and other costs are a real issue, particularly in the first year, when apprentices are away from their job for such a long period of time.

"HE HAS LEFT THE ASSOCIATION IN GREAT SHAPE FOR THE FUTURE TO PROSPER AND GROW, AND CONTINUE SERVING OUR MEMBERS FOR THE NEXT 126 YEARS"

“Lack of funding for employers can often be the difference between an SME taking on an apprentice or not – which is where our new initiative with Luceco Group comes in.”

UK Trade Sales Director Ian Hunter was then invited to the lectern, where he announced details of the new Powering Potential partnership, which will see three SELECT Member firms receive £6,000 each to help fund a 1st Year apprentice.

Ian told the crowd: “In true SELECT style, a lot of hard work and effort has gone into turning this idea into reality and it is an absolute privilege to be standing here.

“Today marks the beginning of what I hope will be an ongoing initiative that spreads wider than just a Luceco/SELECT activity and becomes something much bigger.

“I would like to thank SELECT for embracing this idea and wish all three recipients the very best in their new careers. Work hard and enjoy the opportunity – you are joining a fantastic industry and embarking on a journey that is both valuable and rewarding.”

The inaugural recipients of the £6,000 funding were then announced, as Allan Beveridge Jnr and apprentice Ritchie Pirie from A B Electrical Scotland Ltd in Aboyne took to the stage.

The duo were followed by Tony Walsh and Thomas Shirkie from T Walsh Contracts Ltd in Ayr, before Val Chisholm and Reece Michie of V C Electrical in Gullane also received their official handover.

Darren added: “These Members have been chosen after extensive deliberation, and we would like to thank SECTT for their invaluable input in helping us pick a final three.

“WORK HARD AND ENJOY THE OPPORTUNITY – YOU ARE JOINING A FANTASTIC INDUSTRY AND EMBARKING ON A JOURNEY THAT IS BOTH VALUABLE AND REWARDING”



↑ Anne Wilson can't quite believe what she's seeing



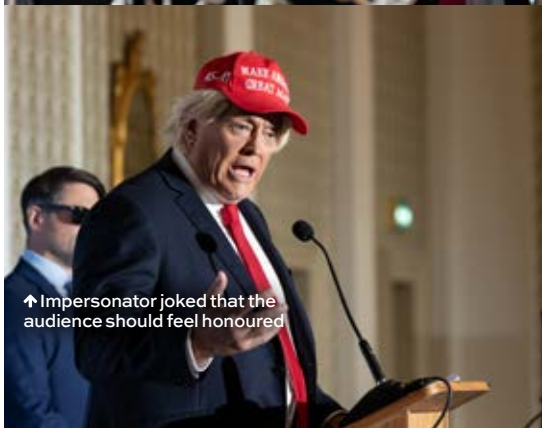
↑ Trump is escorted in by his security detail – Members Mike Campbell and Kevin Griffin



↓ Grimacing Trump lampooned gathered guests and himself



↑ John McKinney laps up the jokes



↑ Impersonator joked that the audience should feel honoured



↑ Bob Cairney enjoys himself



↑ MD Sharon gets the joke – but Ian Hunter's not too sure



↑ All smiles from the EDA's Margaret Fitzsimons and Andrew Eldred of the ECA



↑ Lewis MacLeod had crowd in stitches as President Trump



↑ Paul Mitchell enjoys the show



↑ Lunch guests were all smiles



↑ Lewis had the room in stitches as the US President

“As well as being longstanding Members, they have a proven track record of employing apprentices and cultivating young talent over a number of years, so this funding is extremely well deserved.”

COMEDIAN IN CHIEF

As Darren began the next part of his speech, he was interrupted by the unmistakable strains of *Hail to the Chief* as the door was flung open and in marched impressionist Lewis MacLeod as the event's second President of the day: Donald J Trump.

Flanked by his crack security detail – AKA Past President Kevin Griffin and Depute Vice President Mike Campbell – the TV and radio star already had the crowd in stitches as he made his way to the podium.

Grimacing from beneath his MAGA hat, our star turn told the crowd: “Thank you all so bigly much. What an honour this is... for you all.”

He then launched into a 20-minute routine, during which he lampooned everyone from assembled guests to the construction industry, the Luceco Group – and of course himself.

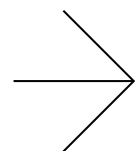
Showing off his fantastic range of impressions, Lewis then switched character to deliver messages from celebrities including Boris Johnson, Nigel Farage and Professor Brian Cox before being escorted back out by Kevin and Mike.

Once he had departed, Vice President David Harris had the unenviable task of following our entertainment as he delivered the closing remarks to the room.

After thanking The Balmoral, Lewis and the event sponsors, David turned his attention to our new apprentice funding partnership.

He told the assembled guests: “I would like to thank Ian Hunter and the wider team at Luceco Group for partnering with SELECT on the Powering Potential initiative.

“Together, we have started something truly special and it's great to know that we have such a keen supporter of skills and our sector as a whole.” ■





↑ Lewis MacLeod out of costume with Events Manager Linda Rolfe and MD Sharon Miller



↑ Vice President David Harris made the closing speech



↑ Apprentice Thomas Shirkie is interviewed after the main event



↑ SELECT President Darren Crockett, Alan Wilson and Neil MacEachern of Schneider Electric



↑ Apprentices were filmed following the presentations



↑ Guests from sponsor Schneider Electric enjoyed the day



↑ Darren thanks his SNIPEF counterpart Steve Craig for attending



Four decades as a sector champion

Lifetime Achievement Award winner Alan Wilson retired in August after 12 years with SELECT, the last seven as Managing Director.

During that time, he oversaw a number of successful initiatives and spearheaded our ongoing campaign for regulation of the electrotechnical industry.

With a Master's degree in Construction Law, Alan spent more than four decades championing the interests of contractors through a career spanning trade associations, the private sector and public sector organisations.

During that time, he was widely recognised as a leading advocate for fair payment practices, improved regulation and greater recognition of the electrical industry's contribution to the Scottish economy.

After receiving his award, Alan said: "I've been lucky enough to have worked in construction for 40-odd years and to have seen a lot of positive things in the industry."

"The thing I'm probably most proud of was leading the industry through the COVID-19 pandemic. It was something that none of us had ever expected to see in our lifetime, so seeing



Scan the QR code to watch Alan's Lifetime Achievement Award video or go to bit.ly/ct-awspeech

the sector work together and really get things done was a great achievement.

"Regulation is also coming closer and I'm convinced that if we all get on board and put our shoulder behind it we will achieve protection of title, which will be a great thing.

"The future is bright for the electrotechnical sector so it's important that people look after electricians and protect them; they are the lifeblood and the future of our industry."

↑ Lewis shares a joke with President Darren after the event



↑ Yvonne Wilson, Paul Mitchell and John McKinney enjoy a debrief at the end of the event



↑ VP David Harris swaps notes with Robert McGoogan as the afternoon comes to a close



↑ Lewis MacLeod, minus make-up, with Darren Crockett and Alan Wilson



↑ Alan, right, helps SELECT take part in the Low Carbon Property Festival in August 2013



↑ Alan Wilson shows off his award to wife Anne

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Sponsor



Meet our Powering
Potential recipients:
Pages 42-47

IMAGES: Mark K Jackson Photography



↓ Ian Hunter, left, and Darren Crockett,
right, with the three apprentices

Empowering Scotland's
electrical industry since 1900

POWERING POTENTIAL

Providing the power to succeed

PRESENTED ON 25 SEPTEMBER 2026 TO SELECT MEMBER FIRM
V C ELECTRICAL
SUPPORT TRAINING OF 1ST STAGE APPRENTICE REECE THOMSON MICHIE

SELECT

LUCECO
GROUP

As our first three Member firms celebrated receiving the Powering Potential funding, we caught up with each business owner and their apprentice to find out more about them...

QUICK FACTS

THOMAS SHIRKIE

T WALSH
CONTRACTS LTD

OWNER:
Tony Walsh
BRANCH:
Ayrshire

WORDS
IAIN MASON

Director of
Membership, Events
& Communications



↑ Thomas Shirkie and Tony Walsh from T Walsh Contracts

➤ **CONGRATULATIONS ON RECEIVING THIS FUNDING. HOW DOES IT FEEL?**
TONY WALSH: In the current economic climate, any support is important and very much appreciated so I'm extremely grateful for this funding. I feel strongly about the importance of taking on apprentices and this means a lot.
VAL CHISHOLM: Running a business can feel quite lonely at times, so having this support

and recognition from the industry feels like a reward for the years of hard work and commitment that have gone into building the business. It also gives me a real sense of encouragement and motivation to keep moving forward and continue growing. This funding will now allow us to invest in training in new areas that would otherwise be out of reach. It will help us expand our skills, broaden the services we offer and create new opportunities for the business to grow. It's great to see the industry showing such a strong commitment to investing in the next generation, so I'd just like to say a big thank you to SELECT and Luceco Group for this support.
ALLAN BEVERIDGE JNR: The funding is an extremely welcome boost as it definitely

"ALTHOUGH THE COSTS ARE HIGH, YOU'RE INVESTING IN THE PERSON, YOUR BUSINESS AND THE FUTURE OF THE INDUSTRY"

feels like it's becoming a tighter climate for electricians lately. It also feels like recognition for taking a number of apprentices through their careers.

HOW SIGNIFICANT ARE THE COSTS OF TAKING ON AN APPRENTICE IN THE CURRENT CLIMATE?

TW: Massive. They're in college for 17 weeks during their first year, which can make it an unaffordable option for some small businesses.

VC: It's a huge responsibility, especially in today's economic climate. There are times where you're without that extra pair of hands on site while still carrying the cost and responsibility of their training and development. That said, seeing an apprentice develop into a confident and competent tradesperson is incredibly rewarding.

"INCREASING COSTS MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE. CLIENTS ARE OFTEN ONLY LOOKING TO GET ESSENTIAL WORK DONE AND AT THE CHEAPEST PRICE POSSIBLE"

AB: Absolutely. Although the costs are high, you're investing in the person, your business and the future of the industry.

WHAT OTHER CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE?

TW: Increasing costs for materials and fuel make it difficult to remain competitive. Clients are often only looking to get essential work done and at the cheapest price possible.

AB: I agree with that – it's getting tougher out there.

VC: It's becoming increasingly difficult to absorb all the rising costs without passing them on to customers. More employer funding would make a real difference, both for apprentices coming into the trade and established businesses looking to develop their skills and move into new areas. On the customer side, targeted VAT relief on certain projects could help stimulate spending, making improvements such as EV

charging and energy-efficient electrical solutions more affordable and encouraging more customers to invest.

✦ Ritchie Pirie and Allan Beveridge Jnr from A B Electrical



QUICK FACTS

RITCHIE PIRIE

A B ELECTRICAL SCOTLAND LTD

OWNER: Allan Beveridge Snr
BRANCH: Aberdeen and North East of Scotland

↓ Val Chisholm and Reece Michie from V C Electrical

Empowering Scotland's
electrical industry since 1900

POWERING POTENTIAL

PRESENTED ON 25 SEPTEMBER 2026 TO SELECT MEMBER FIRM

V C ELECTRICAL

TO SUPPORT TRAINING OF 1ST STAGE APPRENTICE REECE THOMSON MICHIE



QUICK FACTS

REECE MICHIE

V C ELECTRICAL

OWNER:
Val Chisholm
BRANCH:
Edinburgh & South
East of Scotland



"MORE PEOPLE MAY ENTER THE INDUSTRY SEEING IT AS AN EASY OR QUICK ROUTE INTO A TRADE, WITHOUT FULLY UNDERSTANDING THE LEVEL OF TRAINING, RESPONSIBILITY AND SKILL REQUIRED"

HOW IMPORTANT ARE APPRENTICES TO YOUR BUSINESS?

TW: Without apprentices the industry will die, so it's our duty

to pass on our knowledge and skills to the next generation. After training up apprentices I went from being a one-man band to having five vans on the road, but I knew they'd all been properly trained and would represent the company to a high standard.

VC: Investing in apprentices ensures the next generation gains the right experience and knowledge to keep the industry safe and the standards high. If businesses stop recruiting and developing home-grown talent, the electrical industry risks facing a shortage of well-trained and competent electricians, which is bad news for everyone.

AB: Apprentices are vital for the future of the sector, which is why we've brought on five ourselves so far. For me, there just don't seem to be as many apprentices on-site these days so we need to do something to ensure we prevent a shortage of qualified tradespeople.

VC: Without enough businesses taking on apprentices, more people may enter the industry seeing it as an easy or quick route into a trade, without fully understanding the level of training, responsibility and skill required.

AND WHAT MAKES A GOOD APPRENTICE?

VC: We look for someone with a good attitude, good manners and a sense of humour. Being able to take instructions, listen and learn is important, but we also value someone who can think proactively, show initiative and get stuck in.

TW: Common sense and a good attitude is definitely important – but unfortunately you can't always teach that!

AB: I'd agree with Tony and Val. Technical skills can be taught, but the right attitude and willingness to learn are much harder.

VC: What I would say to other employers is that there are plenty of employable young people out there who are keen to learn and build a career in the trade. So if you're a good electrician, why not pass on the skills and knowledge you've developed over the years? Taking on an apprentice is a big commitment, but you don't need to know everything or have all the answers to make it work.

FIND OUT MORE

Scan the QR code to watch our Powering Potential video or go to bit.ly/ct-poweringpotential



OVER TO THE APPRENTICES NOW. WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO JOIN THE INDUSTRY?

THOMAS SHIRKIE, 19: My uncle is an electrician and has always said it's a good career. I then did some work experience at BAE Systems and City Builders, which really reinforced it for me. When I left school, I went into the pre-apprenticeship programme at Springburn College which I enjoyed and which made me more determined to become an electrician.

RITCHIE PIRIE, 17: I've always wanted to be an electrician too. I was supposed to start with another company last year but it didn't happen so I'm excited to have this second chance.

REECE MICHIE, 18: I enjoy hands-on work and problem-solving and I knew that the electrical industry offered a secure career, so it seemed like the perfect fit.

WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO AN APPRENTICESHIP OVER ANOTHER CAREER PATH?

TS: I feel I work better hands-on, so an apprenticeship was more suited to me than an office job or university. I enjoyed school and stayed on until sixth year, but uni was never really in my plans.

RM: An apprenticeship appealed because it allowed me to earn while I learn, plus I like the combination of classroom learning and practical experience. I enjoy working with my hands and learning new skills, so this was perfect.

RP: I agree; gaining qualifications while getting real experience on the job is definitely the best part.

AND FINALLY, WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO THE MOST?

TS: Learning more about the trade and, further down the line, getting my own van and being trusted to go to jobs by myself. My long-term ambitions are to get my qualifications and be an electrician producing high-quality work.

RM: Gaining practical experience on site, learning from qualified professionals, developing new skills and working towards becoming a fully qualified electrician. In the long run, I'd like to start up my own electrical business.

RP: I'm pretty much the same as Thomas and Reece – I'm hard working and enthusiastic, so just want to do my best in whatever the future brings. ■

Technical

New form for medical locations

Free fillable certificate can be used for recording test results of supplementary bonding conductors and will aid record-keeping of maintenance as well as periodic inspection and testing

A **NEW** model form has been introduced in BS 7671:2018+A4:2026 under Part 7: Special Installations or Locations: Section 710 for Medical Locations.

The form, located in Annex B710, is titled Generic Schedule of Supplementary Protective Equipotential Bonding Inspection and Test Results.

It can be used for recording the test results of supplementary protective bonding conductors for initial verification and periodic inspection and testing purposes.

In each medical location of Group 1 and Group 2, a supplementary protective equipotential bonding system shall be installed.

The suitably-sized supplementary protective bonding conductors shall be connected to the equipotential bonding busbar (EBB) for the purpose of equalising potential differences between the following parts in the patient environment:

- Protective conductors
- Extraneous-conductive-parts, unless they are intended to be isolated from earth
- Screens against electromagnetic fields, electromagnetic interference and electrostatic fields, if installed
- Connection to conductive floor grids, mesh and tapes, including those for static protection, if installed
- Metal screens of isolating transformers, cable shields, etc
- Supplementary equipotential

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

↑ The schedule is available for free in the MY SELECT area of the SELECT website

bonding connection points, where provided. The resistance between these simultaneously accessible exposed-conductive-parts, including the terminals for the protective conductor of socket-outlets and of fixed equipment, extraneous-conductive-parts and the equipotential bonding points shall not exceed 0.2 Ω.

The schedule of test results has been developed for an EBB enclosure which allows connection of up to 18 supplementary protective bonding conductors. Additional schedules may need to be provided for Group 1 and

DEADLINE HERE FOR NEW CERTIFICATION ALIGNMENT

As you'll know from previous issues and this year's Toolbox Talks, BS 7671:2018+A2:2022+A3:2024 was set to be withdrawn on 15 October 2026.

With that deadline now here, Members should be aware of a few key points:

- BS 7671:2018+A2:2022+A3:2024 can no longer be used for the design, erection and verification of electrical installations, including additions and alterations to existing installations occurring after 15 October.
- Certification issued to clients

will need to align with the model forms contained in Appendix 6 of BS 7671:2018+A4:2026, with the current date of amendment inserted.

- As stated in SELECT's criteria for membership, Members are required to hold current publications for the categories of work in which they are registered. As stated above, BS 7671:2018+A4:2026 will be the current publication after 15 October. If you do not yet hold this, it can be purchased from SELECT.

- Although BS 7671:2018+A2:2022+A3:2024 will be withdrawn, it does note in the introduction of BS 7671:2018+A4:2026 under 'Contractual and Legal Considerations' that completion of an electrical installation designed to the specific withdrawn standard can be subject to the contractual agreement between all parties involved. This may be the case on large complex construction projects.

Director of Technical Services Robert McGoogan said: "The

So what's new?

Overview of BS 7671:2018 + Amendment 4:2026
Requirements for Electrical Installations
(IET Wiring Regulations 18th Edition)





LOWDOWN ON CIRCUIT-BREAKERS

BEAMA has published a comprehensive practical resource to enable designers, specifiers and installers to specify low voltage circuit-breakers in accordance with the BS EN 60898 series and BS EN IEC 60947-2.

Entitled *Guide to Low Voltage Circuit-Breakers Standards*, the publication explains the harmonisation of international, European and UK standards, details the types and characteristics of circuit-breakers such as MCBs, MCCBs and ACBs, and covers critical topics like rated values, installation factors and protection coordination.

The guide also emphasises the importance of using verified devices, following manufacturer instructions and understanding the implications of regulatory changes post-Brexit, with specific focus on:

- Presumption of conformity
- Application of breaking capacities I_{cn1} and I_{cu1}
- Application of 1P+N or 3P+N, i.e. solid neutral, devices.

A BEAMA spokesperson said: "This guide serves as both a reference and an educational tool for professionals seeking to ensure their installations meet current safety and performance standards."



The new guide can be downloaded by scanning the QR code or going to bit.ly/ct-beamalowvoltage



Safety notice published after fire in substation

The HSE has published a safety notice following the failure of a GEC VMX high voltage (HV) vacuum circuit breaker, which resulted in electrical arcing and fire within a substation.

HSE's investigation identified partial discharge activity as the most likely cause, with previous warning signs being detected but not acted upon.

The notice applies to GEC VMX switchgear manufactured between 1985 and January 2003, including GEC Alsthom, Alstom and Areva T&D models.

HSE has highlighted concerns that ageing equipment, inadequate environmental conditions and unresolved legacy design issues may increase the risk of catastrophic failure, potentially causing serious injury or death.

Key actions for duty holders include:

- Identify whether affected VMX switchgear is installed on your site
- Review maintenance records and confirm all required modifications and improvement programmes have been completed
- Verify that substation environmental conditions meet manufacturer requirements
- Implement routine partial discharge monitoring and vacuum integrity checks
- Review risk assessments and any access or operational restrictions.

Robert McGoogan, Director of Technical Services, said: "This information may be



↑ Electrical arcing and fire was caused by failure of GEC VMX high voltage vacuum circuit breaker

of particular interest to Members who undertake work in the HV sector and/or liaise with contractors and duty holders who have responsibility for the operation and maintenance of HV switchgear and circuit breakers."

Find out more and view the safety notice in full by scanning the QR code or going to bit.ly/ct-hsebulletin



Group 2 medical locations that contain larger EBB enclosures.

Director of Technical Services Robert McGoogan said: "We recognise that not all Members undertake work in medical locations, but making this schedule available as a free fillable certificate for those who do will be of benefit for record-keeping in relation to monitoring the condition, reviewing recent maintenance and annual periodic inspection and testing."

Members can access the certificate by logging into the MY SELECT area of the SELECT website at www.select.org.uk ■

SELECT Technical Helpline is still available to ask any questions about changes in BS 7671:2018+A4:2026.

"In addition, all SELECT BS 7671-related training courses have been updated to include the modifications and changes in the new regulations, and can be booked via the SELECT Training department."

An overview of changes can be found in the free SELECT publication, *So What's New?*. Download it by scanning the QR code or going to bit.ly/ct-sowhatsnew



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

Training

MORE INFORMATION

To enquire about SELECT's range of training courses, please call 0131 445 5577 or email training@select.org.uk



Customer service

Customer service is the act of taking care of the customer's needs by providing and delivering professional, helpful, high-quality service and assistance before, during and after interaction with the customer.

But how is this done? How do you ensure it's consistent across your business? And what are the benefits of delivering great customer service?

To help, this course covers the following topics:

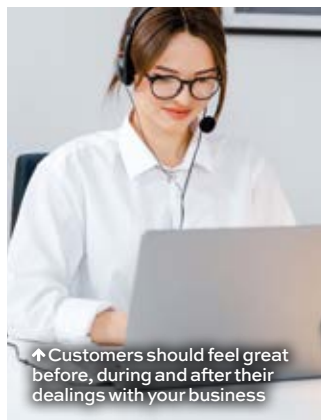
- What is customer service?
- The goals of great customer service
- Discovering and understanding customer needs
- Delivering maximum levels of customer service
- Making customers feel great from the start
- Communication skills
- Non-verbal communication and body language
- Dealing with customer complaints.

The course starts by making it very clear exactly what is meant by customer service and why it's so vital. It then goes into detail about the goals of great customer service, communication skills – both verbal and non-verbal – discovering and understanding customer needs and much more.

Approved by CPD

Duration: 75 mins

Cost: £35 + VAT



Mart Production/Pexels

↑ Customers should feel great before, during and after their dealings with your business

Halfpoint/Shutterstock



↑ Training modules are a vital way to broaden knowledge for qualified electricians

Taking care of business the easy way

WORDS
JENNY CRYANS
Training Manager



Recent changes to the SELECT membership criteria mean that some new Members must now complete three e-learning modules in business skills training. Here's what they offer – and how they could help your business too

Leadership skills

A leader doesn't necessarily have to be a 'manager', but it's difficult to see how a manager could be truly effective without having at least some leadership skills.

This course starts by introducing the basics of leadership and explores where the concept originated from. It then

goes on to discuss various leadership theories, including situational leadership, contingency theories, transactional and transformational leadership and more.

It then moves on to discuss developing teams and including team members by looking at the role leaders play in this.

Project management

The effective management of projects is an essential skill in many workplaces.

Correct control of stages and different aspects of projects helps to increase the chances of projects being successful.

There are many tools and approaches to managing projects, from a simple 'to do' list, to complex methodologies.

When a project is managed correctly, it ensures that there's a sound business reason for undertaking the project, that it's clear who's involved in delivering the project, what the expected outcomes are, and how resources and risks will be managed throughout the project.

When it's done poorly the project can suffer from feature creep, delays, go over budget or not get finished at all.

To help you learn the relevant skills, this course covers the following topics:

- Introducing project management
- Terminology and project life cycle
- Identifying needs, project aims and objectives
- Project aims, objectives and initiation
- Gantt charts, budgets, risks and issues
- Monitoring change, stakeholders and terminology.



↑ Project management tools can help ensure that work is finished on time and on budget

In addition, the course covers some of the common project management methodologies, setting goals, and actually achieving them, identifying the need for a project to be started, using key project management tools and much more.

Approved by CPD

Duration: 90 mins

Cost: £35 + VAT

WHAT NEW CRITERIA MEAN FOR MEMBERS

Recent changes have been made to the SELECT Membership Criteria for work category 3.1, electrical installations up to and including 1000 V AC and/or 1500 V DC.

Where turnover is under £125,000, a qualified electrician can now apply for SELECT membership if they meet the following criteria:

- Has FICA or AM2
- Has held an ECS Grade Card for a minimum of two years
- Has undertaken requirements for electrical installation training within the last five years
- Has undertaken inspection and testing training, e.g. SELECT courses 209 or 214
- Has completed the ECS Health & Safety Assessment, or equivalent, within the last three years.

These Members must agree to undertake three SELECT e-learning business training modules within the first year of membership.



FIND OUT MORE AND BOOK YOUR PLACE

For further information and details of how to book, please visit the Training section of the SELECT website at www.select.org.uk, email us on training@select.org.uk or call the Training team on 0131 445 5577.

With more than 30 e-learning courses to choose from, the SELECT Business Skills suite offers a selection of practical learning to enhance professional development and productivity for you and your employees.

Scan the QR code to download the brochure of the full list of training available. Alternatively, further information can be found under 'Training > Business Skills' on the SELECT website.



↑ Leadership skills are essential for developing teams and team members

The final two modules cover the role communication plays in effective leadership and finishes off with a module about moving forward together to achieve a shared vision.

The following topics will be covered:

- Leadership and management

- Leadership theories
- Team development and leadership
- Individuals within teams
- Communicating one-to-one with individuals
- Moving forward together.

Aimed at supervisors and managers that want to develop more effective relationships with members of their

teams, the course can be a great starting point for people new to their leadership role, as well as more established managers who want to enhance their skills.

Approved by CPD

Duration: 90 mins

Cost: £35 + VAT

Health & Safety

WORDS
CHRIS MAY

Regional Manager,
BSG



BSG The Building
Safety Group

hsavect/Adobe Stock



↑ Many accidents on construction sites involve hand and power tools

With power comes great responsibility

Hand and power tools remain fundamental to daily operations across the UK construction sector, yet they continue to represent a significant source of workplace injuries. Here's how to keep yourself safe...

HEALTH and Safety Executive (HSE) data consistently demonstrates that tool-related incidents account for a substantial proportion of reportable accidents in construction environments.

Construction environments present numerous hazards when hand and power tools are utilised without adequate safety measures. Common injuries include severe cuts, lacerations and

amputations resulting from improper handling or equipment malfunction.

Electrical hazards also pose life-threatening risks, particularly when tools are used in damp conditions or with damaged cabling.

Proper training and comprehensive safety awareness are not merely regulatory requirements – they are essential safeguards that protect workers' wellbeing while ensuring organisational compliance with stringent UK legislation.

Below, we examine the critical safety protocols surrounding hand and power tool usage, and explore accessible training solutions designed to mitigate workplace risks.

HAND-ARM VIBRATION SYNDROME

Hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) affects thousands of construction workers annually,

"ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS AND CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES MUST PRIORITISE SAFETY AWARENESS TRAINING AS A FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENT OF OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE"

causing permanent nerve and circulatory damage from prolonged exposure to vibrating equipment.

Additionally, noise-induced hearing loss remains prevalent among operatives using high-decibel power tools, while flying debris continues to cause serious eye injuries.

The financial implications of tool-related accidents extend beyond immediate medical costs, encompassing productivity losses, insurance premium increases and potential project delays.

For employers, the legal ramifications can prove equally severe, with prosecutions and substantial fines imposed for safety breaches that result in worker harm.

YOUR LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

The legislative landscape governing tool safety in UK construction is comprehensive and uncompromising. The main laws to be aware of are:

- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** – establishes fundamental employer duties to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all employees.
- **Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998** – specifically mandate that all work equipment must be suitable for purpose, properly maintained and operated by adequately trained personnel.
- **Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005** – impose strict exposure limits and require employers to assess and manage vibration risks systematically.
- **Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015** – under these, principal contractors bear responsibility for coordinating safety measures across construction sites.

Non-compliance with these regulations can result in prosecution, unlimited fines and irreparable reputational damage.

Recent HSE enforcement actions demonstrate the regulator's commitment to holding negligent employers accountable, with several high-profile cases resulting in six-figure penalties.

MULTIPLE HAZARDS AND SAFETY TRAINING

Effective workplace safety requires a holistic approach that addresses multiple hazard categories.

Construction workers using cutting and grinding tools face additional risks from silica dust exposure – a serious health hazard that demands specific awareness and control measures.

Effective tool safety training must encompass multiple competency areas to adequately protect workers.

COURSE COVERS CRITICAL ASPECTS

BSG offers an IIRSM-approved hand and power tool safety awareness course that provides flexible, accessible learning which fits in with demanding work schedules.

The 40-minute online programme delivers essential safety competencies at just £25 per person, with same-day digital certification valid for three years upon successful completion.

The course content addresses all critical aspects of tool safety, from hazard identification through to regulatory compliance requirements.

This structured approach ensures that contractors can demonstrate due diligence while equipping their workforce with practical knowledge that translates directly to safer working practices.

Find out more by scanning the QR code or going to bsgltd.co.uk/training



DOWNLOAD THE HSE GUIDE

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has produced a useful guide to hand-arm vibration at work. Download it by scanning the QR code or going to hse.gov.uk



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.



Pre-use inspection protocols enable operatives to identify defects before equipment failure occurs.

Training should emphasise proper tool selection for specific tasks, recognising that inappropriate equipment increases accident risk substantially.

Correct operating procedures and techniques form the foundation of safe practice by combatting the risk at source, e.g. via on tool extraction or water suppression. Personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements must also be clearly communicated and enforced.

Maintenance and storage best practices prevent equipment degradation and unauthorised access, while emergency response procedures ensure swift action when incidents occur.

Risk assessment competencies enable workers to evaluate hazards proactively, and adherence to manufacturer guidelines ensures equipment is used within design parameters.

Regular refresher training maintains competency levels and reinforces safety culture throughout organisations.

IN CONCLUSION

Hand and power tool safety awareness represents a non-negotiable priority for responsible construction employers.

The regulatory framework demands comprehensive training, while the human cost of inadequate safety measures proves immeasurable.

Investing in accredited, accessible training solutions such as those offered by BSG demonstrates organisational commitment to worker protection while satisfying legal obligations.

Electrical contractors and construction companies must prioritise safety awareness training as a fundamental component of operational excellence.

By fostering a culture of education and vigilance, the industry can create safer working environments where every operative returns home unharmed at day's end. ■

Industry insight

Build your business on trust

For SME contractors, trust is a day-to-day discipline in how you quote, plan, communicate, deliver and get paid. In a market that's pushing for more accountability, consistency and fairer supply-chain culture, building trust is critical to success. Here's how to do it...

WORDS
PAUL McDEVITT
Managing Director,
McDevitt & Co



McDevitt & Co

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

TRUST is the currency that wins work, keeps margins intact and turns one-off projects into repeat business. In a sector where reputation travels fast and late payment, disputes and fragmented teams remain common, trust is not a “nice to have” – it is a core commercial capability.

Trust is the confidence that another party will do what they say, when they say it, to the standard agreed and will act fairly when things go wrong. For SME contractors, trust operates on three levels:

- **Competence trust:** “They know their job and can deliver.” This covers technical ability, planning, safety, quality and compliance.
- **Reliability trust:** “They do what they promise.” This is about hitting dates, sticking to programmes, responding quickly and keeping promises on price and scope.
- **Integrity trust:** “They’ll be honest and fair, even under pressure.” This is transparency on risks, variations, mistakes and money – especially in difficult conversations.

Clients, main contractors, consultants and suppliers all weigh these differently, but all three must be present for long-term relationships to form. In construction, where projects are complex and teams change, trust reduces friction, speeds decisions and lowers transaction costs.

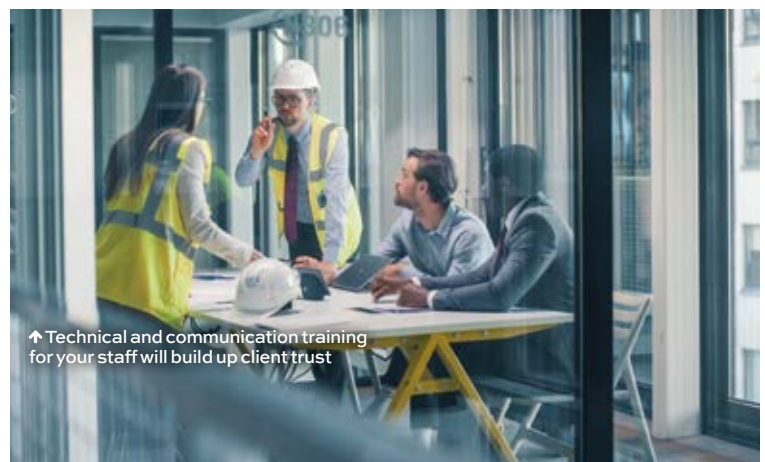
WHY TRUST MATTERS

SMEs face specific headwinds: tighter cashflow, less bargaining power and greater exposure to late payment and unfair risk transfer. In that environment, trust becomes a competitive advantage:

- **Access to better work:** Clients and Tier 1s increasingly prefer suppliers they can rely on, especially on frameworks, MoD work and higher-value projects.

- **Faster procurement:** When you're trusted, prequalification, tender evaluation and onboarding are smoother. You're invited back, shortlisted more often and sometimes brought in earlier.
- **Better commercial terms:** Trusted suppliers negotiate fairer payment terms, fewer onerous clauses and more collaborative risk sharing.
- **Resilience in downturns:** When the market tightens, clients protect relationships with contractors they trust to deliver without drama.

Recent industry commentary highlights that “building trust across contractors, consultants



↑ Technical and communication training for your staff will build up client trust

Gordonhoff/Shutterstock



and clients” is central to the next phase of transformation the industry needs to make to ensure more stable, predictable project delivery.

HOW TO BUILD TRUST

Building trust is not about slogans; it's about consistent behaviour over time. I suggest focusing on the following.

1. Be clear and realistic from the first conversation

– From the outset, be honest about expectations on scope, programme, constraints and price. Avoid under-quoting to win work and then “finding” variations later. Clients trust contractors who make uncertainty visible and manageable.

2. Deliver on the basics, every time – Hit key dates, attend meetings prepared, submit documentation on time and keep the site safe and tidy. These small, repeated actions are strong signals of reliability.

3. Communicate early, especially when things go wrong

– If there is a delay, defect or cost

issue, raise it early with options and a recommended solution. Bad news delivered early with a plan builds trust; bad news delivered late destroys trust.

4. Show commercial fairness

– Be reasonable on variations: price them transparently, justify them with evidence and try to avoid claims at the end of a job. A reputation for paying on time and not squeezing the supply chain feeds back to clients and main contractors.

5. Invest in people and proof

– Develop your team's technical and communication skills. Clients trust firms whose site managers and engineers can explain issues clearly and solve problems.

↑ Competence, reliability and integrity are the three levels of trust your business must operate on

HOW TO MAINTAIN TRUST

There is no silver bullet, only continuous hard work. Winning trust once is not enough – you must maintain it across multiple projects and changing contacts.

1. Be consistent, not occasional

– Trust is cumulative. One brilliant project followed by two messy ones will erase the goodwill. Aim for steady, predictable performance rather than heroic recoveries.

2. Keep promises on money and time

– Pay your invoices when you say you will and chase your own debts professionally. Cashflow reliability is a core part of trust in construction.

3. Protect confidentiality and act with integrity

– Respect sensitive information about clients, designs and pricing. Do not use one client's data to win work with another. Avoid conflicts of interest and be open if a potential conflict arises.

4. Ask for, and act on, feedback

– After key milestones and at project close, ask clients, consultants and your own team what worked and what didn't. Implement changes and tell people what you've improved.

5. Align with partners who share your values

– Employ people who share your values, and work with clients, main contractors and suppliers who value fair payment, clear communication and collaborative problem-solving. Distance yourself from relationships built on pressure, ambiguity and blame. ■

YOUR TRUST CHECKLIST

Use this before tendering or starting a new project:

- ✓ Do our proposals clearly state assumptions, risks and exclusions?
- ✓ Do we have a simple, shared programme and communication plan for every live job?
- ✓ Do we raise issues early with options, not just problems?
- ✓ Are our variation processes transparent and evidence-based?
- ✓ Do we pay our own supply chain on time and treat them fairly?
- ✓ Do we collect and use feedback to improve how we work?

Unlocking barriers to prosperity

In his latest exclusive insight, our experienced industry expert reveals some of the ongoing issues he's currently tackling – and offers advice on how not to fall into the same traps

WORDS
LEN BUNTON
FRICS FCI Arb,
HON FRIAS
Contract Expert



SINCE December, we've been involved with a number of contractors on a number of fronts, and I thought it would be useful to share and explain how we're dealing with them.

The reason for their initial contact was no surprise: Christmas and New Year have historically always been a problem for the construction supply chain as clients and contractors switch off their computers and mobile phones, and don't re-engage again until early January. But of course that doesn't help those of you who are chasing vital cashflow for your business!

One matter that was drawn to my attention was a payment schedule that a Member had been provided with, which incredibly stated that no payments would be made to the supply chain in June and December. Presumably this is to assist with the client's cashflow and accounting periods, but it's something you need to be aware of on your own projects.

There's also been a sudden surge in the number of contractors seeking the payment of retentions, some of which go back two or three years. Of course, personnel and client offices may have moved on since then, with no records left, so it takes a few weeks' serious digging to establish why the retention hasn't been paid.

This is one area where the industry needs to become much more efficient, which is why I've been helping to produce a retention template for contractors. When projects are completed, this can be populated, showing the future dates when retentions will be released. Of course you also need to ensure that every QS involved puts the same dates into their calendars so they can contact the client when payment is due.

ACCEPT YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

A big issue we continually see are complaints that defects haven't been attended to. It's therefore vital to ensure that your organisation is squeaky clean and that you accept your



"SO IF IT'S WHEELED OUT AS AN EXCUSE, YOU CAN KICK BOTH THE ARGUMENT AND ATTITUDE FIRMLY INTO TOUCH"

NON-PAYMENTS PAYMENT RETENTIONS SCHEDULES DEFECTS PAYMENT NOTICES CONTRACT REVIEWS NATIONAL COLLATERAL WARRANTIES

DOWNLOAD INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

A wealth of commercial and business advice can be found in the Best Practice Guide, 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. For other employment enquiries, email len@buntonconsulting.co.uk



responsibilities and carry out remedial works as and when the matters are raised.

Another common reason for retentions not being released is things like operations and maintenance (O&M) manuals not being provided, despite being set out in the contract documents. There have also been issues where collateral warranties are omitted – with the result that the contractor simply sits on the retention until they're produced.

In previous articles, I've highlighted the importance of having contract reviews carried out, with careful consideration of the retention provisions. Sometimes the standard contracts have been amended and the retention periods and defects liability periods for sub-contractors extended to 24 months. These are the type of clauses that you definitely want to flag up at tender stage and have removed.

An additional problem area we've noticed is employers revisiting payment notices and arguing at final account stage that any previously paid variations were on account, and the contractor should open these up and renegotiate. This is an area where you need to take a strong stance. One way round it is to ensure that, in applications where variations are agreed, they should be marked "as agreed".

I also make no apologies for reiterating to Members that you should have a payment schedule in your contract and to make sure that the dates are extended after the last date of the schedule, e.g. if there is a contract overrun. I always encourage commercial managers to put these payment dates into their computer calendar to flag up when an application for payment is to be made, so there can be no arguments later.

GOVERNMENT GRASPS THE NETTLE

So what else are we seeing? Well, the old chestnut "we can't pay you because we haven't been paid" is still complete nonsense because pay-when-paid provisions were outlawed some time ago. So if it's wheeled out as an excuse, you can kick both the argument and attitude firmly into touch.

And of course, there **HAS** been some good news after the UK Government announced new legislation in March to ban the use of retentions. This has been a burning issue for many years and finally – finally! – the nettle has been grasped.

However, the downside is that client advisers are already talking about finding some other method to take its place which is absolutely absurd and doesn't resolve the problem for hard-working contractors like yourselves.

Within the Construction Industry Collective Voice (CICV), a group has been set up to collate the industry views on ways forward for this issue. Personally, I'm convinced that if we improve the quality of the end product, it will discourage employers from finding a reason to bypass the abolition of retention at all.

Finally, I once again encourage every Member to download and read the CIVC Best Practice Guide which contains a number of very sensible recommendations that will allow you to improve the way in which the commercial management of projects is carried out.

I would also ask each and every Member company to please sign the Conflict Avoidance Pledge at www.conflictavoidance.org and help us improve the construction industry, one step at a time. ■

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The cost of missing detail

A case in which the courts overturned an adjudication should alert contractors to provide enough information about the work claimed for in payment applications

WORDS
DAVID WILSON
Consultant



MFR
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

FOR contractors, maintaining a healthy cashflow depends on getting the payment process right. While adjudication remains a powerful tool for resolving disputes quickly, a recent court decision is a reminder that the detail behind a payment application can be just as important as the amount being claimed. The case highlights the need for contractors and sub-contractors to ensure that payment applications contain enough information for the paying party to properly verify what work has been carried out.

THE CASE

The decision in *Netomnia Ltd v MJ Quinn Integrated Services Ltd* [2026] EWHC 1824 (TCC) was handed down by the Technology and Construction Court (TCC) on 24 July 2026. A clause in the parties' contract required that any payment application must include information "as may reasonably be required in order to verify the accuracy" of the claim being made. A payment application submitted by the supplier on 5 February 2026 gave a work order reference, but no additional identifying details. The customer argued that further information was needed for the application to comply with the contract and refused payment.

The dispute was referred to adjudication, where the adjudicator decided that the payment application was valid. The customer then raised proceedings under Part 8 of the Civil Procedure Rules, asking the TCC to determine whether the adjudicator's decision was correct.

THE DECISION

The TCC accepted that, using only the information included within the payment application, it was technically possible to identify the relevant works. However, the court concluded it was not reasonable to expect the customer to verify the accuracy of the claim using only a work order number.

The Master Services Agreement between the parties covered a nationwide operation involving 100 telecommunications centres, 12,396 "Polygons" and more than five million individual infrastructure "Features". The payment application in dispute was one of 168 applications submitted on the same day.

Although the work order in this case related to only one Polygon, work orders generally covered multiple areas. As a result, a work order reference alone would not usually allow the customer to verify whether the amount claimed was accurate.

The court found that details identifying the specific Polygons and Features to which the work related were reasonably required. Because that information had not been provided, the payment application failed to comply with the contractual requirements.

THE IMPACT

Adjudicators' decisions are rarely overturned by the courts. The decision demonstrates that, although the courts generally support the adjudication process, they will intervene where an adjudicator has misconstrued a clear contractual requirement.

For contractors and sub-contractors, the lesson is straightforward. When submitting payment applications, especially on large projects involving numerous work orders, locations or work packages, it is vital to provide enough information for the payer to understand exactly what work is being claimed.

Ultimately, the case serves as a reminder that good payment administration is not simply a matter of formality. Clear, accurate and verifiable payment applications remain one of the best protections against costly disputes and delayed payment. ■



LEGAL
HELPLINE

0141 303 1111

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.

SECTT Update

It pays to be prepared for fee rise

In the first part of a four-page special, we outline how the cost of resitting a section of the FICA will begin a three-year climb from January – and why the industry should focus on assessment readiness rather than assessment recovery

WORDS
DAVID HENDERSON
Assessment Centre
Manager, SECTT



FOR several years, the fees charged for resitting a section of the Final Integrated Competence Assessment (FICA) have remained unchanged. That is about to change.

From 1 January 2027, SECTT will introduce a revised resit fee structure, phased across three annual steps in 2027, 2028 and 2029, after which increases will track the SJIB percentage increase in wage rates.

The decision to phase rather than uplift in one move was deliberate. A single-step correction after several years of stagnation would have landed heavily on employers in a single budget cycle, particularly smaller contractors with two or three apprentices.

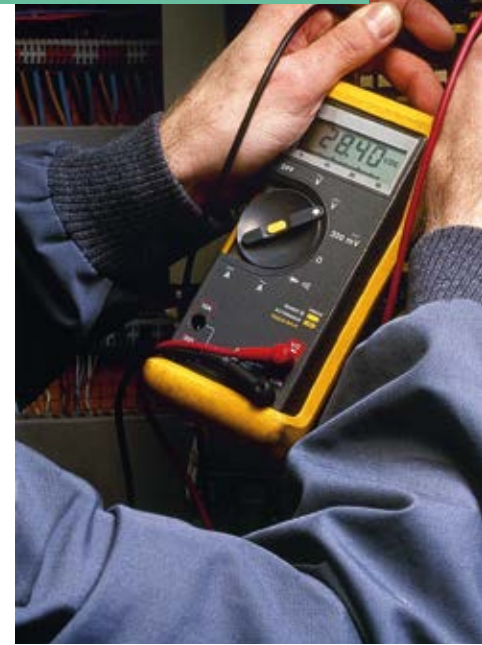
Spreading the change over three years gives the industry time to plan and employers a clear window to deal with any resits already in the pipeline.

THE NUMBERS

FICA is assessed and charged by section, and that principle is unchanged. The revised fees are set out in the table on the

opposite page. Resitting the full suite of six sections would total £798 in 2027 and £1,370 by 2029 – but in practice the cap intervenes. Where a candidate resits multiple sections, charges are capped: £588 in 2027, £680 in 2028 and £860 in 2029.

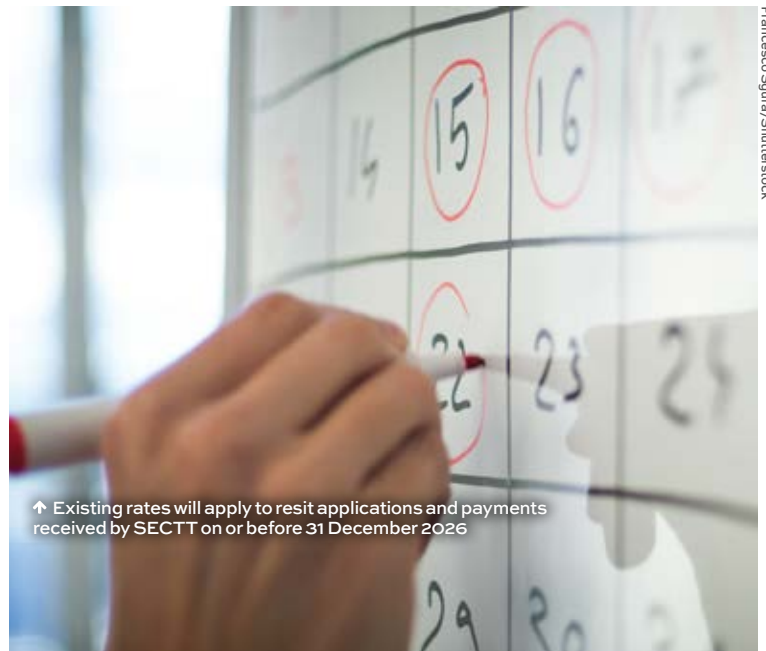
One element of the current arrangement disappears. The £60 administration fee charged separately alongside resit fees will be absorbed into the section fees from 2027 onwards. Candidates and employers will see a single charge rather than a fee plus an add-on.



A WINDOW UNTIL THE END OF 2026

The transitional arrangements are simple, and the date is worth circling. Resit applications and payments received by SECTT on or before 31 December 2026 will be charged at the existing rates. Applications or payments received after that date are subject to the new fees.

Apprentices and adult trainees who already have a FICA booked on or before 31 December 2026



↑ Existing rates will apply to resit applications and payments received by SECTT on or before 31 December 2026

Francesco Sgura/Shutterstock



"THE MORE INTERESTING CONSEQUENCE OF THE CHANGE IS NOT THE FEE ITSELF, BUT WHAT IT DOES TO THE INCENTIVES AROUND ASSESSMENT PREPARATION"

as the real one. As resit costs rise, that approach becomes expensive.

The alternative is better front-loading. Structured pre-FICA preparation, mock assessments and honest readiness conversations between training officers, employers and apprentices all cost time rather than money.

At 2029 rates, a candidate needing to resit Sections B and C alone would pay £555. Set against that, a half-day of targeted preparation is inexpensive – and it produces a better electrician, not just a cheaper outcome.

There is also a retention angle. Where an apprentice leaves an employer before attempting FICA, the current rates apply through the end of 2026, with the new fees applying thereafter. Keeping an apprentice through to completion has always made sense for productivity and continuity of training. From 2027, it also has a direct financial argument.

Finally, the per-section structure rewards precision. Employers and training officers who know where a candidate is genuinely weak – and prepare for that specifically – will pay less than those who send a

candidate back to resit broadly. Identifying and closing a single gap in Section C is a very different proposition from a wholesale second attempt.

WHAT TO DO NOW

Employers should be doing three things over the coming months:

1. Reviewing which apprentices and adult trainees have outstanding resits and whether these can be booked and paid before 31 December 2026
2. Assessing whether anyone approaching FICA is genuinely ready to sit it
3. Reflecting the phased increases in training budgets from 2027 onwards.

Candidates should talk to their employer and SECTT Training Officer about the sections in which they are least confident and make full use of the preparation material available to them before their first attempt.

The change is a modest one in isolation. Its real value will be in what it encourages – apprentices who arrive at FICA properly prepared and pass it first time. ■

ACA fee changes:
Pages 62 & 63

remain on the existing fee structure until they successfully complete the assessment – so a candidate part-way through the process is not caught mid-stream by the change.

For employers with candidates who have already failed a section, the practical advice is unambiguous – get the application and the payment in before the end of 2026.

READINESS, NOT RECOVERY

The more interesting consequence of the change is not the fee itself, but what it does to the incentives around assessment preparation.

FICA exists to confirm that an apprentice can do the job safely and competently and is designed to be demanding. Resits are a normal and legitimate part of a competence-based system – nobody should be discouraged from resitting a section they have not yet passed. But the industry has, in places, drifted towards treating the first attempt as a diagnostic exercise and the resit

↑ Fees for resitting sections of the FICA will increase over the next three years

For further information on FICA resit fees and the transitional arrangements, please contact SECTT by emailing admin@sectt.org.uk or calling 0131 445 5659.

FICA SECTION	2027	2028	2029
A – Safe Working Practices	£90	£137	£185
B – Composite Installation	£205	£250	£295
C – Inspection & Testing	£144	£202	£260
D – Safe Isolation of Supplies	£90	£137	£185
E – Fault Diagnosis & Rectification	£173	£216	£260
F – Underpinning Knowledge	£96	£141	£185
Admin fee	included	included	included
Total – all sections	£798	£1,083	£1,370
Maximum cap	£588	£680	£860

Revised FICA resit fees, 2027–2029. Source: SECTT.



↑ Those sitting their ACA will soon have to hand over £399 for their first attempt

Make sure you're ready to upgrade

From April 2027, electricians sitting the ACA will pay for their first attempt for the first time. There is a window until March in which it stays free – and a stronger case than ever for turning up prepared

FOR SJIB-graded electricians looking to upgrade to Approved Electrician, the Advanced Competence Assessment (ACA) is the industry-approved route; a day of assessment at the Cambuslang Assessment Centre, at no cost for the first attempt. That is now coming to an end.

SECTT will introduce a first attempt fee of £399, applying to new bookings from 1 April 2027. Resit fees, unchanged for several years, are being revised from 1 January 2027. From January 2028, both will rise annually in line with the SJIB-negotiated increases to wage rates for graded operatives.

The reasoning is cost recovery rather than revenue. SECTT receives no funding for the ACA, and the assessment – a one-day, largely practical exercise requiring centre space, equipment and assessor time – is not cheap to deliver. The new fees are set to cover that cost.

THE WINDOW UNTIL MARCH 2027

The transitional arrangements give the trade a run-in, but they carry two dates rather than one, and the earlier of the two is the one that matters. See Table A on the facing page for details.

In short, a booking made before 23 December 2026 and sat by 31 March 2027 is honoured under the current arrangements – which for a first attempt means free of charge.

Assessment dates are issued first come, first served, so the practical deadline for anyone intending to take advantage of this is rather earlier than March.

WHAT A RESIT WILL COST

As Table B shows, candidates resit only the sections they have not passed, charged per section plus the existing £60 marking fee.

The distribution of those fees is worth reading closely, because it tells you where the assessment's weight actually sits.

Sections A, B, C1 and D are £30 apiece – half-hour exercises in risk assessment, safe isolation, initial verification and supervision. Section E, the

DATE	WHAT HAPPENS
23 December 2026	Last date to make a booking that will be honoured at existing rates.
1 January 2027	Revised resit fees take effect.
31 March 2027	Last date on which a booking made before 23 December 2026 will be honoured at existing resit rates, and the last date on which a first attempt will be honoured free of charge.
1 April 2027	First attempt fee of £399 applies to new bookings.
1 January each year thereafter	First attempt and resit fees increase in line with SJIB negotiated increases to wage rates for graded operatives.

Table A

50-question underpinning knowledge assessment, is £90. And Section C2, Periodic Inspection & Testing, is £150 on its own: two-and-a-half hours producing an EICR for a private landlord, identifying observations and recording the correct observation codes.

WHERE CANDIDATES ACTUALLY COME UNSTUCK

That C2 figure is not arbitrary. Periodic inspection is the part of the ACA that leans hardest on genuine site experience, and it is the part that most reliably separates candidates who do this work regularly from those who do not. Coding observations correctly on an EICR is a judgement that's built up over time; it does not respond well to revision the night before.

For an electrician whose day-to-day work is largely new installation, that is the gap worth closing before booking. For an employer, it is the argument for releasing a candidate to get some periodic inspection experience under their belt rather than simply putting their name down.

The wider point is that a charged first attempt changes how the assessment gets used. When

For booking enquiries and further information on ACA, please contact SECTT by emailing admin@sectt.org.uk or calling 0131 445 5659.

the first sitting was free, there was little to lose in treating it as a reconnaissance run – turn up, see what it involves, come back properly next time. From April 2027, the resit is charged on top of the first attempt rather than instead of it, so that approach means paying twice for one qualification. Reconnaissance stops being free.

The per-section structure cuts the other way, though, and usefully so. A candidate who passes five sections and returns for one pays £30 or £90 plus the marking fee, against £399 for a full second sitting. That puts a premium on diagnosis as much as on revision: knowing precisely which section failed, and why, and preparing for that alone. Employers and training officers who work that out before rebooking will pay considerably less than those who send a candidate back to sit the lot again.

THE ROUTE TO APPROVED ELECTRICIAN

None of this changes what the ACA is for. It remains the established route for Graded Electricians to demonstrate the competence required for Approved Electrician status, and SECTT's position is that the fee only covers the cost of the assessment and it makes no revenue from it. What changes is that the cost is now visible at the first attempt rather than only at the second.

For anyone in the trade currently weighing up the upgrade, the message is straightforward enough: The assessment is unchanged, the standard is unchanged and until 23 December 2026 the first attempt is still free. After that, prepare properly before you book and if you do have to return, returning for the right section is what keeps the cost down. ■

➔ MSP visit and Amendment 4 update: Page 64

SECTION	TITLE AND DESCRIPTION	DURATION	RESIT FEE
A	Safe Working Practices Complete two risk assessments for the scenarios given	30 mins	£30
B	Safe Isolation of Supplies Single-phase and three-phase circuits across the three installations	30 mins	£30
C1	Initial Verification Carry out all appropriate tests to BS 7671 and complete an EIC, Schedule of Circuit Details and Schedule of Test Results	approx. 30 mins	£30
C2	Periodic Inspection & Testing Produce an EICR for a private landlord, identifying observations and recording the correct observation codes	approx. 2 hrs 30 mins	£150
D	Supervision (Operatives and Installation Work) Four scenarios, ten statements each	30 mins	£30
E	Underpinning Knowledge Assessment 50 multiple-choice questions across 5 sets of 10	1 hr 30 mins	£90
	Marking fee (per resit, unchanged)		£60
	Maximum cap – full resit		£399

Table B: Revised ACA resit fees from 1 January 2027

Stay up to date with wiring rules

From 19 October, all FICA and ACA assessments will be marked against the latest edition of the IET Wiring Regulations, i.e. BS 7671:2018+A4:2026.

Both assessments have been reviewed and updated to reflect Amendment 4, with questions in the underpinning knowledge elements revised so that regulatory references, terminology and technical content all align with the amended standard.

The practical elements aren't changing, with installation and inspection and testing tasks keeping the same structure and format, so candidates preparing for this part of their assessment can carry on as planned.

With BS 7671:2018+A2:2022+A3:2024 now withdrawn, employers of apprentices and adult trainees due to sit their FICA or ACA should therefore take a few practical steps:

- **Get the new edition into their hands** – make sure every apprentice and adult trainee coming forward for assessment has access to BS 7671:2018+A4:2026.
- **Give them time to get to know it** – allow your employees enough time to become familiar with the amended requirements before they sit.
- **Build it into your plans** – take the changes into account when planning internal training, revision activities and assessment preparation.

Candidates who are well prepared for the amended knowledge content will go into their assessment with confidence and will leave it ready to work to the standard that now applies across the industry.

↓ The latest edition of the IET Wiring Regulations will be used for assessment



↑ SECTT Chief Executive Fiona Harper, left, with visiting MSP Angela Ross

SECTT welcomes MSP Angela's visit

Ms Ross praised 'incredible work' after learning how the Trust helps both adult trainees and the new generation of apprentices forge the future of Scotland's electrical installation workforce

ANGELA Ross MSP visited SECTT recently to learn more about its vital role in developing Scotland's future electrical installation workforce.

The Regional MSP for Edinburgh and Lothians East met Chief Executive Fiona Harper and Training & Development Manager Barrie McKay during the visit on 12 August, and learned more about SECTT's work supporting Scotland's apprentices and adult trainees.

The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the opportunities and challenges facing the electrotechnical sector, including the need to ensure Scotland has the skilled workforce required to meet growing demand for electrical expertise across housing, infrastructure, renewables and the energy mix.

Ms Ross also heard about SECTT's work with employers, colleges and training centres and the importance of

continued investment in high-quality apprenticeships and skills.

Fiona said: "Angela's visit provided a valuable opportunity to take her through SECTT's work and discuss some of the opportunities and challenges facing electrical installation apprenticeships in Scotland.

"We're incredibly grateful to her for giving us her time and taking such a genuine interest in the issues affecting apprentices, employers and the wider electrotechnical sector. We look forward to continuing the conversation and working with Angela to ensure skills and apprenticeships receive the support and recognition they deserve."

Ms Ross said: "Apprenticeships are vital to Scotland's economy, so it was fantastic to hear first-hand about the incredible work SECTT is doing to train the next generation of electricians." ■

← 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 or visit www.sectt.org.uk

SJIB Bulletin

Claiming your card is ECS 1-2-3

We still receive a number of queries about ECS Cards, so here's a handy reminder about how to apply – and what you should do if you want to renew or upgrade

WHETHER you're applying for your first ECS Card, renewing an existing card or looking to upgrade, a few simple checks before you apply can help make things quicker and easier.

The SJIB Card Portal contains information on the requirements for each card type, together with guidance on how to apply. Taking a few minutes to check the requirements before you apply can help make sure you have everything you need and avoid unnecessary delays.

Applications should be completed by the individual cardholder rather than their employer, as the portal is designed for personal use. Where employers wish to cover the cost of a card, payment arrangements can be agreed directly between the employer and employee.

One of the most common requirements relates to BS 7671 qualifications. For many ECS Cards, particularly where it's been expired for more than 12 months, applicants must have successfully completed an SJIB-recognised BS 7671 course within the previous five years.

MEET THE PEOPLE WHO STAND UP FOR MEMBERS ACROSS THE BOARD

Many electricians, apprentices and employers are familiar with the SJIB but may not know who sits on the National Board or the role they play in shaping the future of the industry.

The SJIB Board brings together representatives from both employers and Unite the Union, ensuring that key decisions relating to grading, apprenticeships, training, industry standards, and terms and conditions reflect the needs of the Scottish electrical sector.

To help provide greater insight into the people behind these decisions, the SJIB website now features a Meet the SJIB National Board page where you can learn more about each Board member, their background and the experience they bring to the industry. Scan the QR code on this page to find it.

Whether you're a long-established Member of SELECT, have recently joined or simply interested in learning more about the SJIB, the new page offers an insight into the people helping to guide and support the Scottish electrical industry.



↑ The SJIB portal features information on each card type and guidance on how to apply

A list of recognised BS 7671 courses can be found by scanning the QR code on this page.

All ECS Cards also have a health and safety requirement. For many applicants, this will be the ECS Health, Safety and Environmental Assessment. Information on the assessment and how to apply can be found by scanning the QR code below.

If your card has been lost or stolen, or you'd like an additional qualification added to the reverse, you don't need to submit a new card application through the portal. Instead, contact the SJIB using the 'Contact Us' form and the team will advise on the next steps. Please note that replacement cards, and cards updated with additional qualifications, will retain the same expiry date as the original card.

The SJIB issues reminder emails up to six months before a card expires, provided a valid email address is held on our records. If you're unsure about your eligibility, card status or application requirements, we're always happy to help. Scan the QR code to contact us. ■

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

USEFUL LINKS



↑ SJIB Card Portal



↑ Recognised BS 7671 courses



↑ ECS Health, Safety and Environmental Assessment



↑ Contact the SJIB



↑ Meet the SJIB National Board

ProZone



**BECOME AN
ASSOCIATE MEMBER**
To inquire about becoming an
Associate Member, email
memberservices@select.org.uk

New guidance for working in danger areas

THE recent UK publication of BS EN IEC 60079-14:2024 brings important additional guidance for electrical contractors working in hazardous areas.

IEC 60079-14:2024 Edition 6, covering the design, selection, installation and initial inspection of electrical equipment in explosive atmospheres, was originally published internationally in August 2024.

Two years later, BSI has now formally adopted and published the standard in the UK as BS EN IEC 60079-14:2024. While technically identical to the IEC standard, the British implementation includes an important UK-specific National Foreword and informative National Annex NA.

The National Foreword records that the UK committee voted against approval of the European Standard, principally because of concerns around extra-low voltage circuits, earthing and equipotential bonding, and consistency with established UK electrical installation practice. National Annex



↑ The BSI's explosive atmospheres guide has extra UK-specific content

NA provides additional guidance for applying the standard alongside BS 7671, BS 7430 and other relevant British Standards. Topics include TN-S earthing arrangements, protective equipotential bonding, cable armour and screens, intrinsically safe circuits, unused cable cores, EMC, lightning and static electricity.

For SELECT Members undertaking hazardous area work, the message is important: Hazardous area requirements add further ignition-

risk controls, they do not displace safe and well-established UK electrical installation practices.

UK practitioners should therefore familiarise themselves with the complete British implementation, including its National Foreword and National Annex, rather than relying solely on the international IEC publication.

➔ More information is available in the CompEx Standards Guide. Download it at bit.ly/ct-compex

INFINITY COB KNOCKS SPOTS OFF LED STRIPS

Ovia, part of the Scolmore Group, has introduced its Infinity COB LED strip, designed to deliver smooth, dotless illumination for residential and commercial applications. COB technology provides continuous, uniform light without visible LED spotting, creating a clean,

seamless lighting effect.

Available in Standard and Pro Series options, the range delivers up to 135 lumens per watt and is available in 3000K, 4000K, adjustable CCT, RGB3K and RGB4K options. IP20 and IP67 versions are available, alongside 5M, 30M and 50M reels. Operating at

24V, the strip supports drivers from 30W to 250W and features 50mm cutting points, adhesive backing and multiple control options, including Zigbee and Click Smart+ compatibility.

➔ Find out more at www.oviauk.com or download the Scolmore Group app.

↓ Ovia's Infinity COB delivers a dotless LED illumination strip



**MEET OUR
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**



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NEW PRODUCTS HERE**

David Hughes: 07767 407 402

davidh@connectcommunications.co.uk

ELUCIAN THINKS INSIDE THE BOX TO AID INSTALLATION

Click Scolmore continues to strengthen its Elucian consumer unit range with a focus on practical solutions that support efficient, high-quality installations. A key part of this offering is its range of pre-populated consumer units.

Designed to support installers across both small and large-scale projects, Elucian's pre-populated consumer units come pre-fitted with main switches, SPDs/main switches, and RCDs – providing a convenient, ready-configured solution that helps reduce installation time.

Available in sizes ranging from five-way up to 44-way, the range offers the flexibility required to suit a wide variety of applications, from residential installations to more complex commercial environments.

Each consumer unit is carefully configured to ensure consistent reliability and straightforward installation, enabling professionals to work more efficiently while meeting current safety and compliance requirements.

➔ For more information, visit Elucian's website – www.elucianuk.com – or download the Scolmore Group app



➔ The pre-populated consumer units, above, can help reduce installation time

↑ The Ubbink Compact Unit is perfect for when space is tight

Ubbink Compact is a breath of fresh air

As homes become more airtight and energy-efficient, installers are increasingly being asked to deliver ventilation systems that perform well without making the job more complicated on site.

The challenge is finding a unit that provides reliable indoor air quality, fits neatly into smaller spaces and supports a straightforward installation. This is where the Ubbink Compact Unit comes into its own.

Designed for apartments, smaller homes and projects where space is tight, the Ubbink Compact Unit gives installers a practical MVHR solution without demanding large plant rooms.

Its compact footprint makes it easier to position within a property, while still delivering a continuous supply of fresh, filtered air and extracting stale, moist air from kitchens, bathrooms and utility areas.

For installers, the benefit is clear: a space-saving unit that helps meet

modern ventilation requirements while keeping installation practical. By recovering heat that would otherwise be lost, the unit supports energy efficiency and helps create a healthier indoor environment for occupants. It is a useful option for projects where performance, space and ease of installation all need to work together.

The Ubbink Compact Unit also reflects Ubbink's focus on making building solutions easier to work with in real site conditions. By combining practical product design with installation know-how, Ubbink helps installers reduce complexity, work efficiently and deliver consistent results across a range of residential projects.

For projects where every square metre matters, the Ubbink Compact Unit gives installers a compact, reliable and straightforward way to deliver effective ventilation. It proves that saving space does not have to mean compromising on performance, comfort or long-term efficiency.

➔ Find out more at bit.ly/ct-ubiflux

CDimplex

ecis

ecostad

envirovent

EUROPA

ehc
the electric heating company

FLEXEL

FLUKE

FuseBox

Interpanel Systems and Automation

K
Knightsbridge

KST
LABOUR TOWN

Schneider Electric

Scolmore

SIGNATURE
LED LIGHTING

SIMPRO

TCW

TIS

THORN
LIGHTING

tracktrade

ubbink

vectaire

WYLEX

Details of our Associate scheme can be found in the 'Join' section at www.select.org.uk



↑ Matt finishes were added to premium 6mm flatplate options

BLACK AND BRONZE JOIN DEFINE RANGE

Click Scolmore has announced a significant expansion to its Define flatplate wiring accessory range with the introduction of matt bronze and matt black finishes across the entire product portfolio. This adds 170 new product combinations, extending two of the company's newest and most in-demand decorative finishes into its premium 6mm flatplate platform.

All new Define products in matt bronze and matt black come with Click's new installer-friendly foam gasket. This has been engineered for improved durability during installation, reduced visual intrusion around the plate edge and a more precise flush finish that supports clean alignment on uneven surfaces. It improves installation efficiency while maintaining the premium flatplate appearance expected from the Define range and will be introduced across the full range in the future.

Define suits projects that require flatplate aesthetics, modular configuration flexibility, contemporary decorative finishes and consistent finish options across Click ranges.

➔ Find out more at www.scolmore.com/products/define

Keep damp down with envirovent

CONDENSATION damp remains one of the most common issues affecting UK homes, particularly during the colder months.

Left untreated, excess moisture can lead to mould growth, damage to walls and furnishings and poor indoor air quality, creating an uncomfortable and unhealthy living environment.

As homes become increasingly airtight in pursuit of energy efficiency, managing moisture levels has never been more important. Everyday activities such as cooking, showering and drying clothes indoors all generate humidity, which can quickly build up and settle on colder surfaces throughout the home.

Designed to help control condensation at its source, envirovent provides a range of ventilation solutions. From high-performance extractor fans for kitchens and bathrooms to whole-house ventilation systems such as Positive Input Ventilation (PIV), envirovent's solutions

work to remove excess moisture and improve airflow throughout the property.

While simple lifestyle changes such as covering pans when cooking, keeping bathroom doors closed during showers and avoiding indoor clothes-drying can help reduce humidity, effective ventilation offers a long-term solution.

Whole-house systems continuously introduce filtered air into the home, helping dilute and displace humid air before condensation has a chance to develop into a damp problem.

Backed by expert advice and nationwide support, envirovent helps identify the root cause of condensation and recommend the most suitable ventilation solution for each property.

With decades of ventilation expertise, envirovent continues to help create healthier homes by improving indoor air quality, reducing condensation and protecting properties from damp and mould.

➔ Explore envirovent's ventilation solutions at bit.ly/ct-envirovent-extract



↑ There is a range of envirovent fans and ventilation systems to help control condensation and humidity

HOW SIGNATURE LED LIGHTING IS MAKING ITS MARK

Signature LED Lighting supplies commercial and industrial LED fittings to trade branches across the UK, working with major distributors including CEF, Rexel and Edmundson Electrical alongside independent stockists.

Based in Liverpool, it designs its range specifically for contractors, specifiers and



↑ A selection of fittings from Signature LED Lighting's highbay range

housing providers, covering panels, downlights, battens, bulkheads, highbays, lowbays, floodlights, streetlights and emergency lighting. For wholesalers, the proposition is built around reducing the cost of doing business as much as the product itself. All fittings carry a

five-year warranty with two-year on-site cover, cutting down on callbacks and warranty claims.

A free lighting design service – lux calculations, layouts and energy analysis – is available with rapid turnaround and no obligation, helping branches win specification-led business

without needing in-house design expertise. Same-day delivery is offered across the north west of England on orders placed before 1pm.

Signature LED Lighting is a member of SELECT, ECA, LIA and Recolight, giving stockists confidence in compliance and end-of-life recycling support. It also produces guidance for education, healthcare, social housing and sports lighting.

➔ Find out more at www.signatureledlighting.co.uk



↑ The new system at St Augustine's in Dumbarton warms people directly instead of heating the air

Far infrared heating brings new comfort to historic church

HEATING a large historic church efficiently is rarely straightforward. High ceilings, traditional construction and intermittent use can make conventional heating expensive and slow to deliver comfort.

St Augustine's Church in Dumbarton faced exactly this challenge. Rising gas costs and an ageing heating system led the church to explore alternatives as part of its longer-term net zero ambitions.

Following consultation with the Scottish Episcopal Church Net Zero Team and an Energy Assessment Report from Business Energy Scotland, far infrared heating was identified as a potential solution.

Unlike conventional systems that primarily heat the air, far infrared heaters warm people and surfaces

directly. This allows occupied areas to feel comfortable quickly without lengthy pre-heating of the entire building.

A pilot installation of Flexel radiant heaters began in October 2025, with the system sympathetically positioned within the 19th-century church.

Following the successful trial period, the installation was expanded to a total of 15 Flexel radiant heaters, with the ability to raise the perceived temperature in localised areas without lengthy pre-heating described as a "game-changing feature".

The project demonstrates how correctly designed electric radiant heating can provide a practical option for difficult-to-heat churches and heritage buildings while supporting the transition towards lower-carbon heating.

➔ Read the full St Augustine's case study at bit.ly/ct-church If you work with a church, place of worship or community hall, feel free to contact craig@flexel.co.uk to arrange a free site heating survey.

TIMEGUARD'S EV CHARGER BUILT FOR THE FUTURE

As demand for electric vehicle (EV) charging grows, installers need dependable, compliant solutions that make installations straightforward.

The Timeguard TX1926EV EV Consumer Unit has been designed to provide a practical solution for residential and light commercial EV charging applications. Built with the professional electrician in mind, it provides a dedicated consumer unit solution for EV charging installations, helping to achieve a neat, reliable and professional installation.

The robust IP65 enclosure offers the quality expected from Timeguard, while its compact design makes it suitable where space is limited.

By providing a purpose-designed board for EV applications, the TX1926EV can simplify product selection and help reduce installation complexity on site.

Importantly, the TX1926EV is part of Timeguard's growing circuit protection range, giving contractors access to consumer units, protective devices and specialist boards from a trusted and established electrical brand.

Timeguard also understands that competitive pricing should never mean compromising on safety, quality or support. The TX1926EV is backed by the technical knowledge and customer service associated with the Timeguard name, giving installers additional confidence when specifying the product.

Whether being used as part of a new EV charger installation or an upgrade to an existing property, the TX1926EV provides electricians with a straightforward and cost-

effective EV circuit protection solution.

➔ Find out more at bit.ly/ct-deta-timeguard

➔ Timeguard's TX1926EV offers quality and reliability in a compact design



Forum gives industry a seat at the table

The conversation around the future of heating can sometimes feel as though the destination has already been decided.

But for those in the industry, the reality is more complicated. Different homes present different challenges, and there is rarely a single solution that fits every building, tenant or budget.

That is one of the reasons the Smart Direct Electric Heating Forum (SDEHF) was established – to give the direct electric heating industry a collective voice and ensure its expertise is part of the wider policy conversation.

The Electric Heating Company (EHC) is proud to be involved. Service & Technical Director Chris Allan currently chairs the SDEHF, while Project Support Officer Kevin Hilton represents EHC as a member. Between them, they bring practical experience from the direct electric heating sector to the table.

Originally formed by Scottish manufacturers, the forum has grown into a UK-wide group. Its aim is not

to argue that direct electric heating is the answer to every heating challenge, but to ensure it is properly understood and considered alongside other technologies. The forum has already responded to government consultations and is looking at how it can engage more effectively with MPs and policymakers.

For EHC, being involved means more than simply having a seat at the table. It means showing up, sharing what

it's learned from decades of working with installers, housing providers and residents, and ensuring the realities of heating homes are part of the conversation. Because the future of heating should be informed by the people who understand the challenges on the ground.

Find out more about the SDEHF at www.sdehf.org.uk and EHC at www.electric-heatingcompany.co.uk



↑ Chris Allan represents the Electric Heating Company

SYNC AIMS TO EASE CHARGER INSTALLATION

For electricians, a well-designed EV charger is about more than how it looks on the wall. The details inside can make the difference between a straightforward installation and unnecessary time spent on site.

This practical thinking is built into Sync Energy's EV charger range, with installer-friendly features designed to make installation and commissioning simpler.

It starts with the new fixing bracket, which offers a fully sealed installation to help reduce the risk of water ingress.

Inside, pre-fitted CT connectors integrated into



↑ The Sync Energy EV charger includes installer-friendly features

the base mean fewer loose components to manage on site, while colour-coded push-lever terminals make wiring faster and tool-free.

Laser strip-length markings help achieve a consistent, tidy finish, with upgraded pin power

connectors adding to a design that has clearly considered the practicalities of installation.

That same focus on simplicity continues through to commissioning, with smart functionality available through the Sync Energy app.

Customers can schedule charging, monitor energy use and make better use of off-peak tariffs or excess solar.

The charger is also compatible with Intelligent Octopus Go, while eligible customers can earn up to £5 a month by taking part in Demand Flexibility through the Sync Energy app.

With EV charger installations becoming a growing part of domestic electrical work, these design details matter. By considering how electricians actually fit and commission a charger, Sync Energy helps make the job simpler, from first fix through to handover.

Find out more at www.sync.energy

Vectaire's a fan of quiet efficiency

T'S that time of year again – trying to keep condensation at bay. Vectaire products ensure optimal air quality, low noise levels and reduced running costs and are designed to meet the needs of modern homes while prioritising energy efficiency and environmental sustainability.

New to Vectaire's ventilation range is the MFCF100 Constant Flow fan. This dMEV provides low level, continuous ventilation to control condensation.

Its integral sensor recognises changes in system pressure and ensures the chosen airflow is maintained. It has a choice of six trickle airflows (from 5 to 20 l/sec) to cater for all installation situations, and a boost speed of 27.8 l/sec which will either kick in automatically or manually by the user. Models

are available with timer and/or humidistat. They are all IPX4 rated, but for special installations, Vectaire can supply SELV models. These fans are easy to fit into wall, ceiling or window (with an optional window kit) and easy to maintain.

Providing quiet, energy-saving ventilation, they help keep homes free of condensation, odours and mould.

➡ Find out more at bit.ly/ct-mfcf100

➡ Vectaire's new MFCF100 Constant Flow fan has a choice of six trickle airflows



➡ ESP cameras offer full-colour surveillance around the clock, complete with smart detection

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR BUSINESS WITH ESP

ESP has strengthened its security offering with the launch of its new HDView IP 24/7 camera range, delivering full-colour imaging around the clock.

Available in 4MP and 8MP resolutions, they combine intelligent infrared and white light illumination with smart detection. Bullet and turret models come with PoE or 12V DC power options and compatibility with ESP's HDView IP 24/7 NVRs. Features include a 2.8mm wide-angle lens, built-in microphone, MicroSD up to 512GB, H.265 compression and IP67 protection.

➡ Find out more at www.espuk.com/products/ip-cctv



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MOLYSLIP IS A CUT ABOVE FOR METALS

Unicrimp, a Scolmore Group company, is now a distributor of the Molslip Metal Cutting Compound – a high-performance soft paste that complements Unicrimp's Q-Crimp range. Fortified with MoS₂, the compound has been developed to deliver excellent lubricity and cutting performance in steel conduit installations and other metal cutting applications.

Designed for demanding metal cutting applications, Molslip Metal Cutting Compound features a low melting point of 52°C and extreme pressure additives, which help deliver an excellent surface finish to components while helping to reduce tooling from wear and damage.

Ideal for a wide range of metal-cutting applications, the compound is suitable for drilling, reaming, tapping, single-point thread cutting and sawing operations on even the toughest workpiece materials.

➔ For more information, visit Unicrimp's website – www.unicrimp.com – or download the Scolmore Group app

↓ Unicrimp has become a distributor of Molslip Metal Cutting Compound, below



TCW compliance tech wins CEO recognition



↑ CEO Monthly gave TCW two awards for its work on compliance technology

FOR electrical contractors, compliance is about more than completing the work. It is about having the right information, evidence and documentation to demonstrate that work has been carried out safely and to the required standards.

As technology continues to transform the industry, TCW believes the opportunity is not to replace professional expertise, but to make the information surrounding it work harder.

TCW develops technology designed to turn complex compliance information into clear, actionable insight. By bringing data and documentation together, potential risks can be identified earlier, helping organisations focus attention where it is needed and maintain a stronger audit trail.

This approach has recently received recognition from *CEO Monthly*, with TCW winning both Most Influential CEO 2026: PropTech Innovation, UK and Leading Compliance Technology Provider 2026, UK.

For the electrical sector, where standards, regulations and technology continue to evolve, better use of information can support more informed decisions, stronger compliance and safer outcomes.

The future of compliance isn't necessarily about creating more paperwork. It is about making the information that's already being collected more useful.

Ryan Dempsey, CEO of TCW, said: "We're embracing technology cautiously but confidently, with one goal – making compliance smarter, not harder."

➔ Find out how TCW turns information into insight at www.tcwin.co.uk

RED DOT AWARD PUTS THORN'S AVENUE RANGE IN SPOTLIGHT

Thorn Lighting's Avenue range has received international recognition, winning a Red Dot Award: Product Design 2026.

Designed for urban and residential environments, Avenue combines a contemporary aesthetic with high-performance LED technology. Its clean, understated appearance has

been developed to complement a wide variety of streetscapes and public spaces, while providing specifiers with the flexibility needed for different applications.

The Red Dot Award is one of the world's best-known design competitions, with products assessed by an independent international jury against criteria

including functionality, quality of use, innovation and design.

Avenue was recognised for the way its design brings together aesthetics, performance and practicality. The luminaire has been developed with careful attention to proportion and detail, creating a distinctive appearance without dominating



↑ Sensors can help monitor humidity and alert landlords before damp causes issues



Aico calls on industry to tackle dangers of damp

DAMP & Mould Action and Awareness Week takes place from 19–25 October 2026, with Aico encouraging industry professionals to support a coordinated response to damp and mould.

More than seven million UK households are affected and research found 21% lacked confidence in raising concerns with their landlord or housing officer, highlighting the importance of communication and practical support.

The campaign comes as Awaab's Law brings new responsibilities. In Scotland, duties introduced on 6 October 2026 set deadlines for investigating reported damp and mould and starting necessary

repairs across social and most private rented housing.

In England, Awaab's Law already sets deadlines for significant damp and mould hazards and all emergency hazards in social housing. Phase 2 takes effect on 30 November 2026, extending these requirements to further significant hazards, including excess heat and cold, fire and electrical hazards. Early identification and preventative maintenance can help protect residents' health and prevent damage to buildings.

Practical measures include improving ventilation, maintaining extractor fans, checking for leaks and ensuring adequate heating and insulation. Environmental sensors can monitor humidity and alert landlords and

residents to conditions that could lead to condensation or damp.

The week offers an opportunity to strengthen conversations with customers and housing partners, keeping prevention and timely action on the agenda beyond the campaign.

Aico's campaign webpage provides guidance and webinars on damp, mould and healthier indoor environments. Industry professionals can also pledge their support to receive campaign updates.

🔗 Further information and supporter registration can be found at bit.ly/ct-aico-awareness

its surroundings. Its adaptable approach also enables lighting designers to respond to the differing requirements of urban spaces while maintaining a consistent visual identity.

The award adds to Thorn's long history of developing exterior lighting solutions that combine technical

performance with considered product design.

Avenue offers a solution designed not only around the quality of light delivered, but also around installation, operation and long-term use. This combination of design and practical performance helped the range stand out to the Red Dot jury.

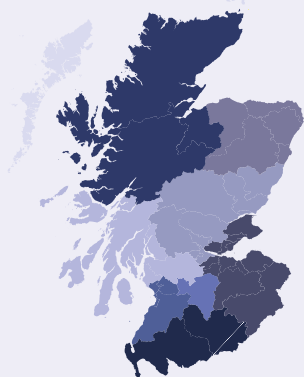
The accolade provides independent recognition of Thorn's approach to urban lighting design and reinforces Avenue's credentials for projects where appearance, performance and integration within the environment are equally important.

🔗 Find out more at bit.ly/ct-red-dot



↑ Thorn Lighting's Avenue range won the Red Dot Award: Product Design 2026

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SELECT EVENTS

Catch up with colleagues throughout
the year at our popular events

2026

CENTRAL BOARD

Thu 3 December –
The Balmoral, Edinburgh



**PAST
PRESIDENTS'
CHRISTMAS LUNCH**

Thu 3 December –
The Balmoral, Edinburgh



2027

CENTRAL BOARD

Wed 24 March

Thu 4 June, including AGM

Wed 1 September

Thu 2 December
Venues TBC



**Branch
UPDATE**

w/c 1 March

w/c 4 October
Dates and venues TBC



**Toolbox
TALKS
2026**

w/c 3 May
Dates and venues TBC



**President's
CUP**

Mon 26 July –

Dunblane New Golf Club



**SELECT
PRESIDENT'S
LUNCH**

Fri 24 September –

venue TBC



**PAST
PRESIDENTS'
CHRISTMAS LUNCH**

Thu 2 December –

venue TBC



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01 HOME OFFICES & HOT TUBS

In 2021, Bob Cairney led
a special online Toolbox
Talk on the rise of hot
tubs and home offices
during lockdown.

➔ Watch now
at bit.ly/TTalk-3

02 READING THE SMALL PRINT

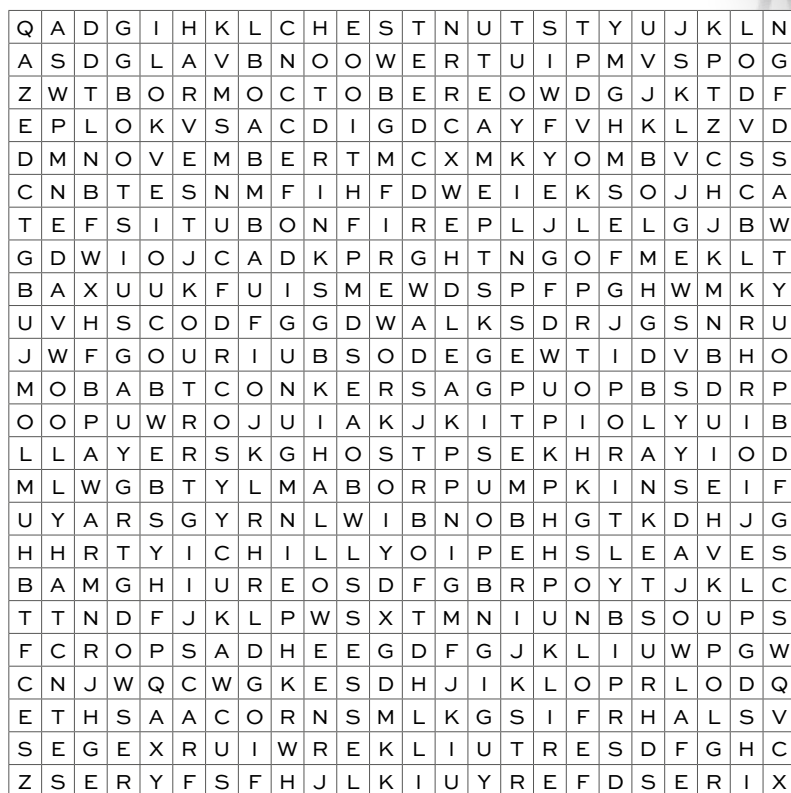
Expert Professor
Rudi Klein explains
why it's vital to always
check a supplier's
terms and conditions.

➔ Watch now
at bit.ly/STV-TCs

£200 OF **Megger** TEST EQUIPMENT

Autumn wordsearch

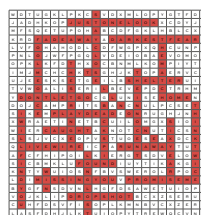
You could win a top-of-the-range Megger voltage tester and proving unit worth more than £200 with our prize wordsearch about autumn



ACORNS	CONKERS	HOT DRINKS	RAKE
BLANKETS	COSY	LAYERS	SCARF
BONFIRE	CROPS	LEAVES	SEPTEMBER
BOOTS	FIREWORKS	NOVEMBER	SOUP
CHESTNUTS	GHOST	OCTOBER	WALKS
CHILLY	HALLOWEEN	OWL	WOOLLY HAT
COBWEBS	HARVEST	PUMPKINS	

Find all the words linked to autumn then email a picture of your finished puzzle to memberservices@select.org.uk by 11 November. The winner will be drawn at random. Ts&Cs are online. Congratulations to Aug/Sept winner **Scott Brown** from **SB Electrical (Scotland) Ltd** of the Aberdeen and North East of Scotland Branch

AUG/SEPT 2026 ANSWERS:



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03 BIDDING STRATEGIES

In this useful film, we offer exclusive guidance and practical advice on bidding strategies.

Watch now at bit.ly/STV-matbid

04 DESIGN LIABILITY

What is 'design'? When am I responsible for it? And what should I avoid? Our guide will help you navigate design.

Watch now at bit.ly/STV-design

05 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

06 EICR CODING

Three-part tutorial on Electrical Inspection Condition Reports (EICRs) and classification codes in line with BS 7671:2018.

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