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electrotechnical industry

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SELECT

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of circuit breakers after
update to regulations

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How to stay protected
when you're working with
the dangers of asbestos



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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 2001, Mile End,
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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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BESPOKE TRAINING IS A PERFECT FIT

NEW DECORATIVE FINISHES

Our decorative range is now available in 5 new finishes - **painted matt black**, **painted matt white**, **granite blue**, **gunmetal** and **copper**. These new additions come from customer feedback and offer more choice when seeking that contemporary look.



ALSO AVAILABLE IN

M2 | decorative screwless



PAINTED MATT WHITE



GRANITE BLUE



GUNMETAL



COPPER

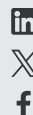
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Our industry is well placed to navigate the stormy waters ahead

THE beginning of 2024 has seen us endure a series of storms which have forced our public transport off the road and rails and

which have also led to wind and water damage to properties across Scotland.

Sadly, it seems that such occurrences will become more frequent as we've been told to expect more climate-related challenges as global warming begins to have a greater impact on our weather patterns.

In its own way, the construction sector could be said to be its own weather barometer of the economy. When things are going well, there is lots of work around which in turn reflects the mood of a wide range of businesses and public sector clients, with projects under way in all sorts of environments.

And when there **IS** a lot of work around, this often means that contractual relationships are good because everyone realises that contractors can perhaps afford to pick and choose who they work for and where. It also means that local businesses do well, as most work is done by local firms who employ local people and the money they earn is often then re-circulated in the local economy. A win-win for everyone.

However, when things take a downturn and become stormy, with workloads beginning to reduce, old ingrained and poor habits tend to resurface, particularly when it comes to tendering processes and payments.

In his preview of the year ahead, our friend and colleague Len Bunton has some clear advice that Members would be well advised to take on board and use to help navigate the next 11 months. You can read it on **pages 48 and 49**.

Regular columnist Paul McDewitt also looks into his crystal ball on what could be round the corner for electrical contractors in 2024 – you'll find his predictions, along with thoughts of one SELECT Member who's adopted new working practices, on **pages 44 to 46**.

Of course the electrical sector is never immune from challenges, and another round of public sector spending cuts and row-backs in the installation of renewable technologies will undoubtedly impact on the work available to Member businesses.

However, what is increasingly apparent is that we have now moved from electricity being a choice for our heating, transport and communications to it being the **ONLY** choice for the majority.

As I have said many times before, we used to speak about the future being electric, but in a recent conversation with an industry leader we've now adopted his phrase that we are currently in the process of the "electrification of society". There is no going back and electricity will be our fuel of necessity, if not choice.

Despite the gloomy projections, it is apparent that there is confidence across the industry which is not just reflected in the order books but also in the projected number of apprentices and adult trainees who are likely to be recruited in 2024.

The figure stands at more than 900 at present, and while I don't want to minimise the impact that spending cuts may have, I personally feel that our industry is well positioned and prepared to steer its way through the stormy waters which lie ahead. ■



WORDS
ALAN WILSON
Managing Director, SELECT

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

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retires after leading the
organisation for 12 years

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on our latest activity at local
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Associate Member Luceco
Group boosts training resources
with its generous donation

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Colleagues get together for
the annual SELECT Past
Presidents' Christmas Lunch

Support grows for regulation campaign

Four more MSPs have added their voices to our call to introduce protection of title for electricians and keep the public safe from dangerous work

THE groundswell of support for SELECT's campaign for regulation has been boosted with the addition of another four prominent MSPs.

Former Business and Trade Minister Ivan McKee and ex-Transport Minister Kevin Stewart have both shown their backing for regulation of the industry by signing up to our Wall of Support.

They have been joined by Conservative MSPs Craig Hoy and Oliver Mundell as the long-running campaign continues to attract cross-party support.

Mr McKee, SNP MSP for Glasgow Provan, said: "Our future heating and energy demands will be met by technology such as solar panels, battery storage and electric heating, which

means that electricians will play an ever-increasing role in all our lives.

"Regulation would provide the reassurance that someone calling themselves an electrician was qualified to undertake such work and would also enhance the profession's status and reputation.

"That's why I'm backing SELECT's campaign to regulate electricians by introducing protection of title for the profession of electrician."

Mr Stewart, who is the SNP MSP for Aberdeen Central, said: "Being an electrician is a safety-critical profession, so it vital that only those people with appropriate skills and qualifications carry out such work.



Ivan McKee



Kevin Stewart



"Using a qualified electrician gives consumers the confidence that they are employing an expert who undertakes continued professional development and regular assessments to ensure they maintain the highest standards of safety and technical integrity at all times."

MSP'S FACT-FINDING TALKS AT SELECT HQ

Craig Hoy signed up to the Wall of Support after visiting SELECT HQ and discussing regulation and other matters with senior SELECT staff.

We hosted the MSP at The Walled Garden on 11 December, during which he agreed to support our long-running campaign for the introduction of protection of title for electricians.

Mr Hoy also heard how we help businesses across Scotland during his get-together with Managing Director

"THE NEW NAMES ON THE WALL CLEARLY ILLUSTRATE THAT, WHILE THE CAMPAIGN IS UNDER CONSIDERATION IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT, AND HAS WESTMINSTER MP SUPPORT FOR RAISING THE MATTER IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, SUPPORT IS STILL VERY MUCH A LIVE ISSUE"

7 FIRMS HAVE BECOME SELECT MEMBERS SINCE DECEMBER 2023

1. Seamill Electrics, Irvine
2. N Geddes Electrical Ltd, Coatbridge
3. Taranis Electrical Installations, Baillieston
4. Toole Electrical Contractors Ltd, Perth
5. Ramsey Electrical Services Limited, Musselburgh
6. A McLelland Electrical, Newton Stewart
7. Kerr Electrical, Tighnabruaich



“REGULATION WOULD PROVIDE THE REASSURANCE THAT SOMEONE CALLING THEMSELF AN ELECTRICIAN WAS QUALIFIED TO UNDERTAKE SUCH WORK”

Mr Hoy, who represents South Scotland, said: “There are thousands of people in Scotland claiming to be electricians without adequate training or certification. This is a serious risk to public safety, and we need support in law for qualified electricians.”

Mr Mundell, who holds the Dumfries-shire seat, added: “It is vitally important consumers are helped to make informed choices whenever they employ an electrician.”

The latest expressions of support follow the addition of Labour MSP and businessman Foysol Choudhury and Associate Members the Building Safety Group, LINIAN, Flexel and Hager.

SELECT Managing Director Alan Wilson said: “As we enter another year in our long-running campaign, it’s heartening to receive even more support from prominent parliamentarians, particularly those who have served in a ministerial capacity.

“AT SELECT, we feel there is a growing understanding of the validity of the case that is being made for electricians, who will be the professionals we turn to as

we transition to net zero and an electric future. The campaign, which focuses on safety in the home and in businesses, has been a long, hard road, but there is a sense that we are entering the end game and we will continue to focus all our efforts in bringing it to a successful conclusion.”

Alan added: “The new names on the Wall clearly illustrate that, while the campaign is under consideration in the Scottish Parliament, and has Westminster MP support for raising the matter in the House of Commons, support is still very much a live issue.”

SELECT has been leading the campaign for years with other industry bodies, including the Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB) and Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT) to ensure that those who work in the industry do so in a safe and competent manner.

As well as more than a third of MSPs, other bodies that have contributed a brick to the Wall of Support include Unite the Union, Electrical Safety First, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, the Scottish Association of Landlords and the Energy Saving Trust.

➔ Why regulation matters: Pages 28 & 29

Alan Wilson, Director of Technical Services Bob Cairney, Director of Employment & Skills Fiona Harper and Specifier & Client Relations Manager Yvonne Wilson.

The Conservative MSP said: “I was delighted to join SELECT and find out more about how it is supporting Scotland’s electricians through ongoing advice and training support.”

Alan said: “We were only too pleased to host Mr Hoy and securing cross-party support like this will help us protect the safety of consumers and businesses across Scotland.”

↓ Craig Hoy at The Walled Garden in December

Landlords urged to take action over update

SELECT is urging Scotland's private landlords to ensure their electrical installations are compliant with the new Repairing Standard guidance which comes into force on March 1.

The updated Scottish Government guidance outlines the basic level of repair that all private rented properties must meet and requires electrical safety inspections to be carried out by a qualified electrician at least once every five years.

The association is now reminding landlords that it is their duty to familiarise themselves with the amendments and ensure that installations for the supply of electricity are in a reasonable state of repair and in proper working order.

The updated version of the Repairing Standard statutory guidance specifies that a rental property must have one or more residual current device (RCD) in its consumer unit to reduce the risk of electrocution and fire. Additionally, landlords should advise tenants to check that the RCD works by pressing the integral test button at specified times.

Bob Cairney, Director of Technical Services, said: "The changes in the Repairing Standard statutory guidance are not intended to create a different tier for a private rented property versus other forms of tenure when carrying out periodic inspection and testing.

"They are intended to enable landlords to respond appropriately where a deficiency has been identified that there is no RCD protection provided to meet the minimum requirement of the standard, i.e. there must be at least one RCD.

"Landlords may now need to take some action where a situation is identified in an electrical installation condition report (EICR) and the electrical contractor responsible for the periodic inspection and testing should be able to provide appropriate advice on how best to comply.

"Landlords who are unsure of what action to take should contact their local SELECT Member, who will be happy to conduct an inspection and advise accordingly."

The Scottish Government has introduced the amendments after pointing out that similar standards are already in place in the social rented sector.



Bob Cairney

Landlords must make sure they're up to date with the new guidance



8 cabletalk FEBRUARY/MARCH 2024



Anne Galbraith

Tributes as SECTT Anne steps down

Friends and colleagues say goodbye to the experienced CEO and hail her "leadership and vision" ahead of her retirement in April

COLLEAGUES from across the electrical sector have paid tribute to Anne Galbraith, who is stepping down as Chief Executive of the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT) after 12 years at the helm.

The experienced CEO will be retiring in early April after overseeing the development of electrical apprentices and adult trainees across Scotland for more than a decade.

Co-workers and industry partners have now saluted Anne, who joined SECTT in August 2011 from Building Engineering Services Training at the Heating and Ventilating Contractors' Association (HVAC), now the Building Engineering Services Association (BESA).

SELECT Managing Director Alan Wilson said: "On behalf of everyone at SELECT, I would like to thank Anne for her hard work and commitment over the past 12 years. Developing the talent of tomorrow is crucial if we are to achieve the

"ANNE'S RETIREMENT IS THE CULMINATION OF MORE THAN 28 YEARS IN APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING AND IT MARKS THE END OF AN ERA AT SECTT"

electrification of society and meet net zero targets, and Anne has been at the helm as record numbers of young learners come through to learn the skills that will be essential for our future."

SECTT manages high-quality training on behalf of the Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB), ensuring standards and safety are consistent so apprentices can pass the industry's assessment of competence, the Final Integrated Competence Assessment (FICA).

Fiona Harper, The Secretary of the SJIB, said: "Anne was key to the success of ongoing training during the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that measures were put in place so young learners could safely continue their electrical education."

"The SJIB would like to thank Anne and SECTT for their collaboration and we look forward to continuing the excellent relationship we have with SECTT as our managing agent and ensuring the ongoing success of the apprentice and adult training programmes in Scotland."

Anne was closely involved with both the Construction and Built Environment Challenge (CABEC) and Get Into Electrical Installation initiative with the Prince's Trust, which

encouraged youngsters to become involved in electrical work.

Barrie McKay, Training & Development Manager at SECTT, said: "Anne had a positive impact on so many people's lives, helping those who didn't have the chance of an electrical career take their first steps in the world of work."

"Her contributions have left a lasting impact on SECTT's training initiatives. Her leadership and vision have set a solid foundation for continued success and we will remember her with appreciation and respect."

Scott Foley, Chair of the SECTT Board of Trustees and Regional Officer at Unite the Union, said: "Anne's retirement is the culmination of more than 28 years in apprenticeship training and marks the end of an era at SECTT."

"Her tenure has been notable for the significant advancements made under her guidance, specifically the development of two Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) programmes which contributed to the overall growth and quality of training provided by SECTT."

"Her legacy also includes the successful implementation of the OneFile system for apprentices, employers and the college sector, a move that has undoubtedly modernised and standardised the training processes and which reflects Anne's commitment to staying at the forefront of training."

➔ SECTT Update: Pages 54 & 55

TWO NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

SELECT has welcomed two more manufacturers to its Associate Membership scheme as we continue to attract an impressive line-up of industry organisations.

Dimplex and Lumi-Plugin are the latest names to join the scheme, which now enables 32 companies to establish mutually beneficial relationships with SELECT Members.

Dimplex is a leading provider of sustainable and innovative electric heating solutions, committed to promoting decarbonising technologies and empowering homeowners to make environmentally conscious choices. Working with electricians for over 75 years, it offers more than 700 reliable and easy to install products. Using space-

saving design and life-saving technology, Lumi-Plugin combines lighting and alarm systems in one innovative and easy-to-install product. Its unique all-inclusive downlights minimise the disruptive impact of multiple ceiling components that ruin the aesthetics of a property.

Both are keen to take meet Members at Toolbox Talks, Branch Updates and Member Drop-Ins, as well as hosting webinars and offering advice in *cabletalk*.

Iain Mason, SELECT's Director of Membership & Communications, said: "We're delighted that Dimplex and Lumi-Plugin have joined us."

➔ Join the Dimplex PRO Installer Club: Pages 30 & 31

➔ Catch up with Associate Member news in ProZone: Pages 56-61

 Dimplex

 LUMI-PLUGIN®



↑ Anne was a keen supporter of the annual CABEC final

Stay up to date at local meet-ups

The latest technical issues will be on the agenda at our upcoming Branch Updates as Members gather for their first local get-together of 2024.

Once again we have invited our Associate Members, with Acutest attending all eight meetings to discuss the importance of test instrumentation and calibration. New Associate Lumi-Plugin will demonstrate its innovative technology at the Edinburgh, Ayrshire and Tayside events.

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

Members will also have chance to ask questions, after which a short Branch AGM will be held to elect Branch Officers for 2024. Meetings will start at 6pm, with refreshments served.

To book a place, speak to your Member Representative, email memberservices@select.org.uk or call 0131 445 5577.



BRANCH UPDATES & AGMS MARCH 2024

1. Tuesday 5 March:

Dumfries & Galloway – Dumfries & Galloway College

2. Thursday 7 March:

Glasgow – Leonardo Inn Hotel, Glasgow West End

3. Tuesday 12 March: Inverness – Inverness College

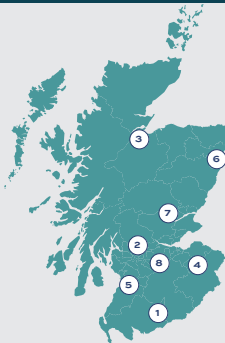
4. Thursday 14 March: Edinburgh – Borders College

5. Tuesday 19 March: Ayrshire – The Gailes Hotel

6. Thursday 21 March: Aberdeen – Tullos Training

7. Tuesday 26 March: Tayside – Perth College

8. Thursday 28 March: Lanarkshire – New College Lanarkshire, Motherwell Campus



On the road to training success

Associate Member Luceco Group's latest generous donation of electric vehicle kit will make sure our courses can keep on driving an increase in skills

S ELECT recently received another generous donation from Luceco Group that will help keep our electric vehicle (EV) training on the right track.

Representatives from the longstanding Associate Member visited SELECT HQ to deliver a new

Wall Charger 2 BG SyncEV charging station for use by our team.

The gesture comes hot on the heels of two similar 7.4kW units that were donated last July and which are now an integral part of our EV charge point installation course.

Bob Cairney, Director of Technical Services, said: "We are extremely grateful to Luceco Group for this further donation, which will help



New plan revealed to move industry forward

SELECT has welcomed a dynamic new Transformation Action Plan for the Scottish construction sector, unveiled by the Construction Leadership Forum (CLF).

The collaboration between government and industry launched the plan

in Edinburgh last month – and SELECT says it offers a unique opportunity to move the sector forward.

It includes visions for reforming procurement, improving quality, moving towards net zero and fair work, increasing the uptake of digital technology, and collating

and using meaningful data. It also outlines proposals to engage with and communicate more effectively with the sector.

Alan Wilson, SELECT Managing Director and Chair of the Construction Industry Collective Voice (CICV) said: "Collaboration, co-

with our practical demonstrations of charging units.”

Jenny Cryans, Training Manager at SELECT, added: “This additional mobile unit will help us continue delivering essential EV charge point training across Scotland.

“Our partnership with Luceco Group is also another example of the close relationships we’ve developed through our Associate Membership scheme.”

The new Wall Charger 2 unit was handed over by Luceco Area Sales Manager Steve Conn and EVCP Business Development Manager Leon Wong at The Walled Garden on 23 January.

Leon said: “We are delighted to be able to continue our excellent partnership with SELECT by donating this additional BG SyncEV charging unit.

“We’re also pleased to hear it’s been a key part of the SELECT EV charge point installation training course thanks to its simple set-up and host of features.”

Packed with smart technology, BG SyncEV charging stations comply with all EV smart charge point regulations and offer easy installation, with UK-based technical support.

With full smart functionality via the app, the stations offer configurable charging up to 7.4 kW (32A), with optional dynamic charging.

Thanks to the integrated open PEN conductor protection, no earth rod is required, and the integrated type A 30mA RCD with 6mA DC protection means they’re safe too. Seven models are available including the Wall Charger 2 Three Phase 22kW model.

operation and commitment are the three principles we at CICV have always aspired to follow and the Transformation Action Plan is a great opportunity for the industry to embed these into its key actions and move the whole sector forward dynamically.”

The plan aims to deliver the commitments at the heart of the CLF’s Scottish Construction Accord, launched in October 2022 as a shared vision between

the industry and the public sector to create a thriving construction sector.

Speaking at its launch at Edinburgh Napier University on 24 January, Richard Lochhead, Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade, said: “This plan will drive progress in important areas such as fair work and procurement, delivering the sustainable, innovative and prosperous industry Scotland needs.”



UPDATE No17: OCT-DEC 2023

MEMBERSHIP & COMMUNICATIONS



1,263
Full Members



25
Probationers



15
Applications

4,106
SELECT TV viewers



5,056

Social media followers



55

courses delivered, with SELECT’s new SQA accredited training course in electric vehicle (EV) charge point installation now available

TRAINING

438

Number of delegates trained



1,103

Course assessments marked

TECHNICAL

82

Technical inspections

227

BSG Health & Safety users

196

Technical Helpline calls

326

SELECTcerts subscriptions

EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS



First-time pass rate for FICA

61%



Resit pass rate for FICA

75%

648

ECS HSE assessments created

375

ECS HSE assessments marked

986

ECS Cards issued

FIGURING OUT OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

The fourth and final SELECT infographic of 2023 has been released, showing the activity carried

out by the association between October and the end of the year. The quarterly update shows our achievements in

technical, training, membership, communications, employment and skills.



Richard Lochhead, Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade, at the launch



↑ The seven Past Presidents line up at the Balmoral

Celebrating our past and present

The annual SELECT Past Presidents' Christmas Lunch reflected on another successful year and looked ahead to what we're hoping to achieve in 2024

S **ELECT** staff and office bearers celebrated a successful year and looked forward to 2024 at the Past Presidents' Christmas Lunch in Edinburgh.

More than 25 guests gathered at The Balmoral hotel in the heart of the capital on Thursday 7 December for the annual festive get-together.

As well as current SELECT President Alistair Grant, seven Past Presidents attended the event at the historic railway hotel – Kevin Griffin, Douglas

Kelly, John Noble, Donald W Orr, Eric Rae, Alick Smith and David Smith.

Also in attendance were Central Board members Graeme Anderson, Stewart Anderson, Jim Cooper, Darren Crockett, Chic Dobbie, Paul Erasmuson, David Harris, Tony Harvey, Gordon Paterson, Keith Smith, Mike Stark and John Wilson, along with SECTT CEO Anne Galbraith and Honorary Member and former SELECT Managing Director, Newell McGuiness.

"IT WAS EXCELLENT TO MEET UP WITH FORMER AND CURRENT COLLEAGUES FROM ACROSS THE ASSOCIATION"



SELECT cheer squad raises a smile

SELECT staff once again rose to the festive challenge as they played a starring role in our annual light-hearted Christmas film.

The 2023 Yuletide flick was inspired by the popular 'Pass the Mic' challenge on social media, with staff nominating a colleague to receive Christmas

cheer. Recipients included "the biggest Grinch", "the Scrooge of the office" and "the person most likely to eat everyone's Christmas dinner".

The film was once again put together by Events, Marketing & Communications Coordinator Linda Rolfe, with the soundtrack composed by

SELECT IT Coordinator Alan Paul.

Linda said: "Now in its fourth year, the SELECT Christmas film once more brought staff together for festive fun and helped spread plenty of cheer across social media."

➡ Watch the film at bit.ly/XMAS-FILM-23





↑ Alistair Grant gave a speech before the meal

SELECT was represented by Managing Director Alan Wilson, Directors of Function Bob Cairney, Fiona Harper, John McGhee and Iain Mason, and Events, Marketing & Communications Coordinator Linda Rolfe.

Alan said: "Once again, it was excellent to meet up with former and current colleagues from across the association and show our gratitude for all their hard work and dedication."

The lunch was preceded by a meeting of SELECT's Central Board, which reviewed the association's achievements over the past 12 months and outlined plans and priorities for 2024.



↓ Central Board held a meeting before the lunch

BLAIR TAKES THE PLUNGE FOR CHARITY

The director of a SELECT Member firm in Ayrshire braved the icy depths for a bracing Boxing Day dip in aid of charity.

Blair Campbell, of Irvine-based Premier Installation Electrical Services Ltd, joined scores of other hardy souls who donned fancy dress to take the plunge at Ayr Beach on 26 December.

Blair – who raised £1,200 for Ayrshire Cancer Support with wife Susan – said:



"It was a really fun day despite the cold and we were happy to raise funds for such a good cause."

↓ Susan and Blair braved the icy water to raise money for Ayrshire Cancer Support



We're going to be the talk of the towns

We're currently preparing for our 2024 Toolbox Talks, which will include technical presentations on neutral current diversion and alterations and additions. As always, each event is bound to be busy – so save the date and reserve your place now!

NEUTRAL current diversion will be among the burning issues being debated when our 2024 Toolbox Talks hit the road across Scotland later this year.

Delegates will enjoy an in-depth technical insight into the phenomenon, as well as discussing the many aspects and implications of additions and alterations in properties.

Our **FREE** update sessions will again be touring 12 venues across Scotland in May and June, kicking off at SELECT HQ outside Edinburgh on Wednesday 1 May. As always, our experts will be on hand to discuss hot technical topics in two presentations:

Presentation 1: Neutral current diversion (NCD) – what it is, where it may be found, how to assess the associated risks and test for it, and how to work safely. We'll also cover the relevant earthing systems and how and to whom this type of problem should be reported.

Presentation 2: Additions and alterations – what's required for compliance with BS 7671 and the requirement given in Regulation 132.16 and the checks, tests and notifications that may need to be done before and after carrying out such work. We'll also look at how to assess the rating and condition of existing equipment within the installation, including the distributor, and will include a look at the likely existing earthing

WORDS
LINDA ROLFE
Events, Marketing
& Communications
Coordinator, SELECT



Where you can meet our experts

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

Tuesday, 18 June
The Pickaquoy Centre,
Kirkwall, Orkney

Thursday, 30 May
Leonardo Hotel, Inverness

Wednesday, 29 May
Pittodrie Stadium, Aberdeen

Wednesday, 22 May
The Corran Halls, Oban

Wednesday, 8 May
The Apex Hotel, Dundee

Thursday, 23 May
Hampden Park, Glasgow

Wednesday, 26 June
The Machrie, Islay

Tuesday, 14 May
The Fenwick Hotel, Ayrshire

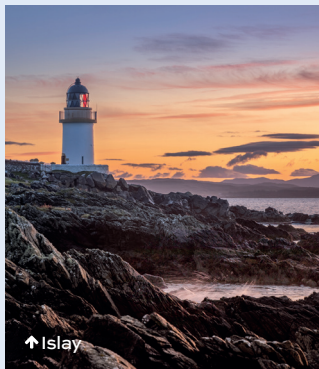
Wednesday, 15 May
Easterbrook Hall, Dumfries

**FREE
£50
VOUCHER**

for any SELECT
training course
for first 10 people
who sign up at
each venue
(One per company)



Tuesday, 11 June
Shetland Arts Development
Agency, Lerwick, Shetland



↑ Islay



↓ Inverness



↑ Edinburgh

Wednesday, 1 May
The Walled Garden, Edinburgh

Thursday, 2 May
Macdonald Cardrona Hotel, Peebles

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

Representatives from the Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB) and Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT) will also be in attendance.

And the team behind our popular SELECTcerts service will also be on hand at selected venues.

Bob Cairney, Director of Technical Services, said: "Last year's Toolbox Talks were a huge success and we're looking forward to meeting Members again.



↑ The events are a great opportunity to catch up with industry colleagues



↑ Bob Cairney will be on hand to answer technical questions and give advice



↑ A wide range of exhibitors will showcase their products and services



↑ Our speakers are ready to share their expertise and knowledge with Members




**BOOK YOUR
PLACE NOW**

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

"Neutral current diversion is attracting growing interest, so we are keen to equip Members with the necessary knowledge to identify and deal with it.

"We'll also be inviting representatives from selected Associate Members to take part in our presentation on additions and alterations, providing an additional viewpoint to that presented by our own team."

Each event will feature exhibitors from a range of leading manufacturers and service providers, including SELECT Associate Members Aico, Electrium, Luceco, Flexel, Scolmore and TIS, so you'll be able to see the latest technology first-hand. Events kick off at 9.30am with coffee and rolls, with lunch provided and goodie bags for delegates which will include the day's presentations. And of course, Toolbox Talks are free to attend for all SELECT Members. So check the map for this year's dates and venues and sign up **NOW** – it's bound to be busy! ■



RHUARI SMITH
2nd Year Apprentice,
3rd generation. Kevin
and Hilary's son

PAUL SMITH
Director, 2nd
generation.
Benny and
Rosemary's son

LINDA SMITH
Director, 2nd
generation.
Paul's wife

For Benny and Rosemary Smith, their firm AC Electrics has been a labour of love. Over the years, it's expanded and more family members have been welcomed on board. The result is a close-knit team that prides itself on high standards – and which recently celebrated 50 years as a SELECT Member

A business that's built on family values

WORDS
TIM POWER

CAMERON SMITH
Electrician, 3rd generation. Kevin and Hilary's son

HILARY SMITH
Director, 2nd generation. Kevin's wife

BENNY SMITH
Retired, 1st generation. Paul, Kevin and Pamela's father

KEVIN SMITH
Director, 2nd Generation. Benny & Rosemary's son

ROSEMARY SMITH
Retired, 1st generation. Benny's wife

CHRISTY SMITH
Electrician, 3rd generation. Kevin and Hilary's son

PAMELA SMITH
Senior Office Administrator, 2nd generation, Benny and Rosemary's daughter

↑ Benny and Rosemary with the other family members in the business

B

UYING your first house while raising two young children is generally not the best time to leave a safe and secure job and start out on your own, but that is what Benny and Rosemary

Smith did more than 50 years ago and now three generations of the family are working for AC Electrics – the company they started from their home in Cleland, near Motherwell, in 1973.

And for the past 50 years, SELECT has been supporting AC Electrics to navigate the changing regulatory environment and keep up with the technological advancements that have occurred during this period.

Benny joined the Electrical Contractors' Association of Scotland, as it was called back then, on 12 February 1974, and was a regular at his local Lanarkshire Branch, where he enjoyed meeting up with fellow electricians and keeping abreast of developments in the industry – a role that his son Paul has taken over as Vice Chair of the Branch.

Benny, together with his two brothers John and Edward, had all completed their apprenticeships at a local electrical contracting company in Motherwell, but after six years Benny was looking for something different, as he explained: "I felt I wasn't getting anywhere with this company, particularly financially, so I was thinking of doing something else.

"I spoke to a house builder I was doing some work for who convinced me that I should start up on my own. He said that I was too good to be working with 'that lot', and I should start my own business. To give me a helping hand, he offered me a contract to carry out the electrical works on a new housing development he had under way.

"This persuaded me to take the plunge but I needed transport, so I borrowed £90 off my mother and went down to the Glasgow Car Mart with a friend of mine who knew all there was to know about vans and trucks, and came back with an ex-fire brigade A30 Austin van for £60. The rest of the money went on tax and insurance but it meant I was in business." Now he needed a



name, and AC Electrics came to mind – ‘AC’ for alternating current but, more importantly, it would be listed at the start of the telephone directory!

He added: “I don’t think I thought about the risks of starting a business too much, I just went ahead and did it. Even though my wife Rosemary was looking after our small children at the time, she supported me and when the children got older she took over the financial side of the company.”

While working on the builder’s new housing development, Benny also got to know the architects well and they asked him to quote for a job on a new British Legion Club being built in Whitburn. Although Benny’s quote was initially too high, the project costs were overrunning so the architects asked him to requote for a lower spec job and AC Electrics was in business again; the success of this project brought in more contracts around the local areas in the coming years.

The ‘breakthrough’ contract that helped the company grow further came from South Lanarkshire County Council in the mid-1970s to carry out repairs to council houses in the local areas of Newarthill, Cleland and Carfin. Following this work, the local authority awarded the company more repair contracts across its estate, which meant that AC Electrics could expand, taking on apprentices and foreman Billy Lewis, who only recently retired from the company after 40 years’ service.

Benny said: “We have been very fortunate to gain business over the years through our reputation for doing work well and having great people like Billy and others who have stayed with us for years and have provided a great quality of service, fast response times and a professional work ethic.”

During the 1980s, AC Electrics went on to win larger contracts for

other local authorities such as North Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire Councils.

Benny added: “The first big contract from North Lanarkshire involved rewiring 600 houses in Motherwell, so we had to sub-contract plasterers and carpet fitters as well as some other independent electricians to help.

“We had some of the best rewiring professionals in Scotland; they worked in pairs and could run through two houses in a day, sometimes three as they were paid on work completed.”

Being a Member of SELECT was critical to AC Electrics winning new contracts as Benny explained: “It really helped us to win the big contracts as local authorities demanded evidence that you were a bona fide contractor and SELECT membership gave them the reassurance that we were a professional outfit with high standards.

“IT REALLY HELPED US TO WIN THE BIG CONTRACTS AS LOCAL AUTHORITIES DEMANDED EVIDENCE THAT YOU WERE A BONA FIDE CONTRACTOR”



↑ Benny and his wife Rosemary worked as a team to build their business



↑ Benny with his original Electrical Contractors' Association of Scotland membership certificate

Supporting vital health services during COVID-19

Like most companies across Scotland, the COVID-19 lockdown on Tuesday 24 March 2020 came as a complete shock. At the time, Paul, Kevin and their colleagues were working on a number of various contracts for NHS Lanarkshire and local authority rewires and, like everyone else, were suddenly told to finish up, go home and wait for further instructions. Little did they know that they would soon be working flat out as 'essential workers' helping to upgrade hospitals and community health centres and vaccination centres across the region.

Paul said: "The announcement of the lockdown was really unsettling as we did not know how this was going to affect the business and we knew nothing about how furlough would work, so it was a stressful time.

"However, the following day we got a call from NHS Lanarkshire calling us in to help convert one of their buildings at University Hospital Monklands into a 250-capacity temporary mortuary. Grim, but at the time, essential work.

"After that, we were working continuously on other hospital and community healthcare

projects, such as setting up electrical connections required for the installation of patient ventilators. This high level of work was necessary to cope with the increasing number of medical gas installations to wards and side rooms that previously did not have these critical facilities. Further into the pandemic, we were involved in the creation of a number of COVID-19 vaccination centres, which included working closely with the vaccination teams in respect to vaccine fridge requirements and installing the appropriate electrical wiring and connections and certification to suit.

"We were all given 'essential worker' status by NHS Lanarkshire, which allowed us unrestricted travel during lockdown. On the second week of the first lockdown, I remember driving on the M8 to Glasgow to get supplies from our wholesaler. It was a Friday afternoon and I was the only car on the motorway. On the way back, I drove into the city centre, and parked in George Square. Just me and the pigeons! A Friday afternoon ghost town."

QUICK FACTS

AC ELECTRICS

BRANCH:
Lanarkshire

BASED:
Motherwell

PHONE:
01698 860 228

WEBSITE:
acelectrics.com



"Rosemary and I found the SELECT helplines invaluable as you could just phone up to get questions answered right there and then. I know that Rosemary was grateful for the SELECT support when she was doing our books, particularly for employment and health and safety advice, and tax issues when paying our independent electricians that we contracted for some jobs."

AC Electrics' working relationship with East Dunbartonshire Council came about as a result of an advert in the *Glasgow Herald* in the mid-1980s and the company is still working with the council to this day, carrying out rewiring surveys and full and partial rewires of housing stock and other council-run properties, such as schools and offices.

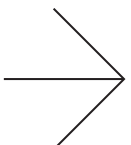
↓ Benny is proud of what his family has achieved



The strength of these working relationships, particularly with local authorities and NHS Trusts, helped AC Electrics to weather the downturns, such as the 2008 economic recession and the COVID-19 lockdowns. Benny said: "We've been lucky over the years as business has been fairly constant and we've had very strong relationships with our clients. For example, in 1979 we were called in to wire a 30 A socket-outlet in the telephone room of NHS Lanarkshire's Hartwood Hospital and we're still working for the trust 45 years later."

The only tough financial times the company experienced involved losing money for electrical contracting work from failed private housing developers. He explained: "In the past we have been involved with two developers that have left us out of pocket; one going broke and the other just doing a flit, so we do a lot of due diligence now and carefully vet private companies before we get involved in large development projects."

Benny added: "As a family-owned company we have always been careful to cut our cloth to suit the work we had on and to sub-contract specialists when we've needed them, rather than try to scale up to do everything ourselves. We've seen many companies win big contracts and expand rapidly only to fail later as the work tailed off. Our ambition is simple: we just want to focus on what we do best and then do it well, and to build up our staff through apprentices



On Her Majesty's not so secret service

While the majority of AC Electrics' work has been based around Scotland's Central Belt, in 2009 the company was called upon by Her Majesty's Government to undertake a special foreign assignment to upgrade the visa section in the British Embassy in Moscow.

After working on a security contract installing retractable car bollards at Holyrood, Edinburgh, AC Electrics was recommended for the project in Moscow for the installation of weather shelters and thermal heaters. This very unusual project also included the installation of body scanning and X-ray equipment to the embassy entrance compound.

Paul and his colleagues flew out to Moscow on 6 January 2009 for the three-month contract and one of the first people he met at the embassy was the daughter of his old next-door neighbour from Carlisle, who worked there as an interpreter!

He said: "It was tough work because it was the dead of winter and the temperatures would often be around minus 15-20 degrees centigrade. Working with galvanise conduit in those conditions is NOT recommended! However, I really enjoyed my months in Moscow as it is such a beautiful city. We stayed in Hotel Ukraine and my room looked out across the Moskva River to the White House government building opposite, and I could see all of central Moscow, including Red Square and St Basil's Cathedral. An awesome sight."

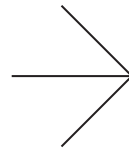
Another surprise was to find out how crazy the Russians are for Rabbie Burns, as he explained: "It was one of the guys' birthdays, on Burns Night, so we all went for a night out in Arbat Street, which is Moscow's equivalent to Sauchiehall Street. We went to a Mexican restaurant that had been recommended to us, and as we walked down into the basement of the venue, we heard bagpipes, and there right in front of us were six Mexicans in kilts, addressing the haggis in Russian. It was surreal!"

"IT WAS TOUGH WORK BECAUSE IT WAS THE DEAD OF WINTER AND THE TEMPERATURES WOULD OFTEN BE AROUND MINUS 15-20 DEGREES CENTIGRADE"



↑ Kevin and Paul took over the reins of the business in 2004

who we can train in our ways of doing things. Although we've had our ups and downs, I'm particularly proud that I've never laid off anyone over all the years we've been in business."



TIME TO HAND OVER THE REINS

Benny and Rosemary are unashamedly 'old school' and they admit it was the growing changes in technology that influenced their decision to call it a day and hand over the reins to their sons, Paul and Kevin, in 2004.

Benny added: "I think it's just our mindset and we could never really transition from faxes to emails, and that's what our customers wanted so we thought it was time for the next generation to take over."

Under Paul and Kevin's stewardship, AC Electrics was one of the first companies in Scotland to get involved with electric vehicle (EV) charging through its relationship with BMW-Schneider Electric in 2013. This involved installing EV chargers – BMW i Wallboxes – into domestic properties for owners of the electric BMWi3 vehicles. This early and valuable experience has laid a foundation for the ever-changing EV markets.

AC Electrics had looked at getting involved in other renewables but felt that the market was quite saturated at that moment, as Paul explained: "We dipped our toe into installing solar panels but at the time, with the dwindling financial incentives

↓ The business prides itself on carrying out work to the highest of standards



on offer to consumers and all sorts of 'tradesmen' offering cut-price installations, it just did not appeal to us.

I attended a solar panel course a few years back and was dismayed to find that other trades, with absolutely no electrical background, were looking to get into the market, so that made us stand back. However, we are looking at the new green technologies that are currently evolving at an increasing rate and think this will be a good area to get into as it develops.

"That's why being a Member of SELECT is helpful to us to keep on top of new ever-expanding developments within the industry. I have to say that SELECT is much more hands-on than other industry associations we have been involved with."

Today, AC Electrics employs around 14 people and continues to specialise in industrial and commercial electrical installations, lighting design and providing testing and maintenance throughout Scotland for its long-standing clients.

After 31 years working from the family home – from 1973 until 2004 – it was time for AC Electrics to move to newer and bigger premises, which also gave Benny and Rosemary their house, garage and driveway back!

Benny said: "Our driveway was always filled with cable drums, pallets and, of course, the vans. We also had a skip there too for 32 years that became part of the family; every Christmas we decorated it up with tinsel and lights!"

Although no longer in the driving seat,

Benny is proud of what he and his family has achieved over the past 50 years and the support that the business has had from SELECT. He said: "With our children Paul, Kevin and Pamela, and spouses Linda and Hilary, we are a tight-knit family and are always there to help each other out, and I think that attitude is reflected in our employees too.

"We've had people that have been with us for years, often starting with us as apprentices, so there is a strong element of trust and respect, and a shared goal of doing the best we can for our clients.

"Out of all my time with the company I'm most proud of

"WE ARE A TIGHT-KNIT FAMILY AND ARE ALWAYS THERE TO HELP EACH OTHER OUT, AND I THINK THAT ATTITUDE IS REFLECTED IN OUR EMPLOYEES TOO"

↓ The AC Electrics team includes family and colleagues who have worked with the firm for a long time



The missing brother

Benny's two brothers, John and Edward, also trained under him as electricians and while John joined him at AC Electrics, Edward's electrical career was foreshortened when the legendary football manager Tommy Docherty signed the 18-year-old to play for Chelsea FC. Unfortunately, when Dave Sexton joined the club in 1977 he had a clear out of Docherty's Scottish signings and Edward was out of job.

Instead of going back to Scotland, Edward moved to Australia and while he continued his electrical career at Victoria Hospital in Melbourne, he still kept up with his first passion of football, playing for Melbourne City Football Club and winning a number of league trophies. He is now retired in Australia.



my wife Rosemary who's been by my side at all times, and particularly for putting up with me during all the trials and aggravations of running this business over the years, sometimes not knowing how we are going to pay the wage bill and chasing invoices!

"She is the only typist I know who could rattle out 40 words per minute with two fingers! She's been fantastic." ■

Don't fall for the card fraudsters

Users of social media will be no strangers to unscrupulous online crooks offering fake ECS Cards. But how much of a menace are these scammers? And what should you do if you spot such a post – or suspect a card isn't the real deal?

WITH the help of Members, we're keeping a close eye on social media accounts offering fake electrical qualifications, including Electrotechnical Certification Scheme (ECS) Cards. Numerous accounts on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Twitter promote "payment in advance" scams for fraudulent certificates and other documents, and we've certainly seen a rise in activity in recent months.

WORDS

NATALIE SCOTT

Employment & Skills
Operations Manager,
SELECT



As well as ECS Cards, other qualifications offered include Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) health and safety records, competent person scheme membership, driving and HGV licences, passports and even degrees.

The fraudsters advertise their 'services' by using photos posted by real people on social media, as well as occasional Photoshopped images, and mostly ask for up-front payment. Of course, when no certificate or card appears, the victim tends not to report it to the police as they've been involved in fraudulent activity themselves.

Thankfully, the industry receives a relatively low number of reports from people who've been scammed – but a recent Facebook post about ECS Cards flagged up by a SELECT Member shows that the issue is still ongoing.

In this case, the image has been used on several other bogus accounts. The documents are genuine but when the individual – quite rightly proud of his accomplishments – posted them online, the fraudsters stole the images and passed them off as their own (forged) work.

Some social media platforms are disappointingly slow to remove such accounts when reported, while others regularly remove fraudulent posts when flagged up.

Facebook is among the quickest to respond, but unfortunately new posts seem to crop up just as quickly as they're removed, as the scammers use multiple fake accounts with the same images and blurb posted under a new name.



HOW TO CHECK CARDS

As well as an increase in social media accounts and websites offering fake qualifications and ECS Cards, the Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB) is also seeing an increase in the number of fraudulent ECS Cards and ECS Health, Safety and Environmental (ECS HS&E) certificates which appear to have been falsified by the cardholder themselves.

Although these types of occurrences are rare, with few fake cards in circulation, systems **ARE** in place for identifying if an ECS Card is valid.

The SJIB has a digital copy of every ECS Card it has issued that is currently in circulation, so the best way to check a card's validity is to contact the SJIB directly.

The SJIB team may be limited in the information it can give depending on the cardholder's GDPR permissions, but if it **DOES** transpire that a card is fraudulent, action will be taken.



The same procedure should be followed to verify an SJIB ECS HS&E assessment certificate.

Upon receiving a report of a suspected fraudulent card, each case is investigated and an outcome reached by the SJIB National Board. This can lead to individuals in possession of a fraudulent card being reported to the police and banned from applying for a card with the SJIB for up to six years.

KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED

Along with our colleagues in the Joint Industry

Board (JIB), fraud is something we take incredibly seriously.

All reports of these online scams are collated and passed on to fraud investigators, who we support with necessary information as part of their criminal prosecutions.

Pleasingly, thanks to the dedication and hard work of these teams, there **HAVE** been some successes in tracking down the small number of individuals behind fake online profiles, which has led to prosecutions.

We'll continue to keep tabs on all new posts as they appear, but if there's anything you spot and wish to report, please contact SELECT, the SJIB or your Member Representative so we can continue to support this industry and collaborative approach.

We'd like to thank all SELECT Members who take the time to report fraudulent activity and, in the most recent case, we're monitoring the account in the hope it's taken down ASAP.

As well as financially benefiting from criminal activity, the people behind these scams are putting people at risk. The best way to combat this is to spread the word to all staff and colleagues – particularly those checking competence – and encourage them to contact the SJIB to ensure any cards provided are genuine. ■

HOW TO REPORT A SCAM

To report a bogus electrical qualifications scam, email generalenquiries@sjib.org.uk To validate an ECS Card issued by the JIB in England, Wales or Northern Ireland, go to www.ecscard.org.uk/check For more information about the ECS Card scheme, go to www.ecscard.org.uk

Additional source material: Andy Reakes, Director of Growth and Development, JIB

↓ Make sure you know who's really behind the ECS Card

"THANKS TO THE DEDICATION AND HARD WORK OF THESE TEAMS, THERE HAVE BEEN SOME SUCCESSES IN TRACKING DOWN THE SMALL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS BEHIND FAKE ONLINE PROFILES"

Navigating a new route to net zero

In the continuing drive towards greater sustainability, it's vital for companies to take control of their energy measurement and carbon impact. Here, one Member firm reveals how it developed an innovative solution to cut costs and prepare for a greener future

WORDS

ANDY BRITTAN

Head of Technology and Digitalisation, Booth Welsh



BOOTH WELSH
Integrated Engineering Services

Technology can help businesses reduce their energy use

LIKE our fellow Member firms, Booth Welsh has been working towards net zero for a number of years and we've invested in our people, encouraging them to take the lead on future-focused initiatives and technologies.

In 2023, we attended several strategic events and exhibitions across the UK, showcasing the latest technology and services that we've been developing to align with our goal of net zero and support our clients in their journey to achieving a more sustainable future.

As an engineering technology company with a varied sector portfolio, some 34 years of experience in process control and automation and a dedicated team of more than 330 professionals, we're uniquely positioned to assist and support industries in achieving their net zero ambitions.

However, it's important to emphasise that there is no silver bullet to achieve net zero – there are only intelligent actions and practices.

Measurement and control are some of our core skills and we've been doing them for years. So when we started out on our net zero journey, it was a bit surprising to find that we weren't in control of our **OWN** energy measurement and carbon impact.

But as engineers, we love a good problem. So we started thinking: How do you manage what you don't measure? We have so many processes, both new and old, but what do we focus on? Is the data good enough?

These questions gave us the drive to utilise a cross section of our team, from graduates to directors, in our Fuel Change Sustainability Programme to engage our workforce and develop innovations to improve and change our usage for the better.

From this collaborative teamwork, we were able to develop an in-house energy monitoring dashboard (EMD) that now enables us to effectively monitor, analyse and optimise our energy usage.

Through our own implementation, we achieved remarkable savings of around 20% by diligently measuring, visualising and analysing our energy consumption data. This provided us with valuable insights, allowing us to identify and address areas of inefficiency.

TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

In today's dynamic business landscape, embracing digital transformation projects like this empowers manufacturers to make informed decisions. By taking control of energy costs and working towards emissions targets, organisations can contribute to their journey towards achieving net zero.

I'm pleased to say that not only do we have a stronger handle on our office's energy usage, but





↑ The Booth Welsh energy monitoring dashboard

"IT'S IMPORTANT TO EMPHASISE THAT THERE IS NO SILVER BULLET TO ACHIEVE NET ZERO – THERE ARE ONLY INTELLIGENT ACTIONS AND PRACTICES"

we've developed this into both small and large-scale energy monitoring projects, recently delivering a collaborative project in partnership with the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland.

This digital transformation project involved the energy and environmental monitoring of 73 machines, including new and legacy equipment, within the Advanced Forming Research Centre and Digital Factory. All energy and environmental data is then brought back to one shared platform for data dashboarding and analysis.

Our progress in this area was made possible by harnessing not only our industrial expertise but also the collective knowledge and talents of our dedicated staff and network of clients.

In essence, it wasn't just intelligent engineering that drove our success; it was the power of collaboration that provided the missing piece to the puzzle and, importantly, it now enables us to assist others on their journey toward the same goal.

We've also been successful in receiving funding from the Smart Manufacturing Data Hub (SMDH) to launch a new pilot for the EMD, allowing a number of early adopter businesses to take targeted actions in reducing their energy usage.

COLLABORATION IS KEY

At Booth Welsh, our mission statement is: "Through collaboration, we engineer a better future." A good

example of this is our continued involvement in the 12-month Net Zero Nation Accelerator programme, which measures, manages and reduces business emissions in collaboration with other organisations as part of a wider business initiative.

Now into our second year, we've helped build an ecosystem of more than 100 companies introduced to the Accelerator, who are now measuring and managing their emissions, supporting a significant impact on emission reductions across the industrial ecosystem

Embracing net zero like this has been a natural business decision as our core business is the measurement of processes and systems to maximise efficiency, profitability and planet positive outcomes for our clients.

By actively measuring and managing emissions while eliminating carbon from your business operations, you not only enhance efficiency and resilience but also create a win-win scenario for your business and the planet.

We strongly believe in collaboration over competition and are open to sharing our experience and best practice with fellow SELECT Member firms. So to find out more about how Booth Welsh can support you in **YOUR** net zero journey, please contact our team. ■

Founded in 1989, Booth Welsh is an independent integrated engineering services business that employs more than 300 people. Working mainly in the UK, but with international experience and capability, it delivers cutting-edge engineering solutions on a global scale. The company has built longstanding relationships with a host of major international companies across a wide range of industries, including life and chemical sciences, food and beverage, nuclear and defence pharmaceuticals, renewables, oil and gas.

QUICK FACTS

BOOTH WELSH

BRANCH:
Ayrshire

BASED:
Irvine

PHONE:
03450 344 344

WEBSITE:
boothwelsh.co.uk



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Jordan Davies from Amigo Electrical told us: "We use the RSWB as standard now for all our first fixing. It's so convenient, cost-effective and is a huge time-saver."

walraven.com

walraven

A digital journey

SELECT Member Alasdair Noble will play a starring role in our upcoming webinar with Simpro, explaining how his family business cut paperwork and became more efficient by making the leap to digital



M

MEMBERS who want to streamline their operations are being encouraged to tune into our next webinar, which will feature a first-hand testimonial from a Member who has embraced

the digital revolution.

Alasdair Noble will reveal how going online transformed his business in our latest one-hour session, which will be hosted in conjunction with Associate Member Simpro on **Wednesday 6 March at 1pm.**

The free session is designed to give an overview of how cloud-based systems can make day-to-day tasks more efficient, with Alasdair revealing how moving operations online helped his family firm, John Noble Electrical Ltd.

Alasdair, who is a director at the Bonnyrigg-based company, said:

"The modern electrician is often installing state-of-the-art technology, yet many are still doing things the old way and using scraps of paper rather than investing in the tech that would help them work better.

"There is no doubt that going digital has transformed the way we do things and, hopefully, I can share some of the positive and practical benefits of digital adoption with fellow SELECT Members."

Delegates will have the chance to ask questions at the end of the session,

with Simpro Account Executive Steven Crake on hand to demonstrate the many possibilities offered by going digital.

Steven said: "Simpro was founded by an electrician to help improve his business, so we truly understand the pain points and challenges facing today's busy contractor.

"With this session, we aim to show that making the transition to digital isn't as daunting as you might think and we'll show the many cost-effective solutions that are available."

The webinar is the latest in a series of handy webinars with Associate Members, which have included recent sessions on bespoke private medical insurance with ECIS and health and safety guidance from the Building Safety Group (BSG).

Iain Mason, Director of Membership & Communications, said: "We're grateful to Alasdair and Simpro for co-hosting this webinar and we hope Members will take advantage of the opportunity to find out how making the move to digital could help their business too." ■

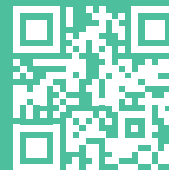
"HOPEFULLY I CAN SHARE SOME OF THE POSITIVE AND PRACTICAL BENEFITS OF DIGITAL ADOPTION WITH FELLOW MEMBERS"

▼ Alasdair Noble



Register for the free webinar on **Wednesday 6 March** by scanning the QR code or going to bit.ly/simpro-web24

SIMPRO



Give us the recognition we deserve

As SELECT steps up its high-profile campaign for regulation of the electrical industry, our guest columnist issues a timely reminder of why protection of title is so important – and why the arguments for doing nothing simply don't stand up

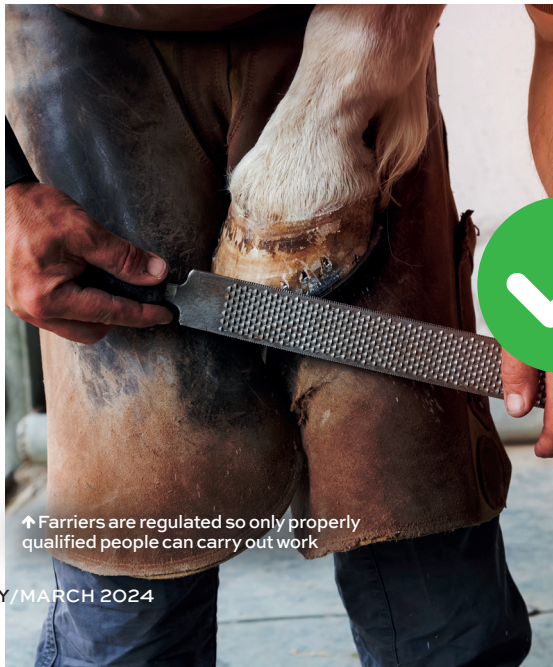
WHEN I was a boy (a while ago now) I sometimes accompanied my grandmother when she went for “messages”. She occasionally parked the car on the roof of a row of shops in Clarkston, East Renfrewshire. In October 1971, those shops were demolished in a gas explosion that tragically killed 22 people. Three years earlier, in May 1968, Ronan Point, a tower block in Canning Town, East London, partly collapsed just after it had opened. A gas explosion blew out some load-bearing walls, destroying an entire corner of the building. Four people died and 17 were injured.

These events and others led to statutory Gas Safety Regulations and to the regulation of gas engineers via the Confederation of Registered Gas Installers (CORGI), its successor and now Gas Safe.

WORDS
EUAN ROBSON
Public Affairs
Consultant



Euan Robson worked for the former statutory body, the Gas Consumers' Council, for 12 years in the 1980s and 1990s before serving two terms in the Scottish Parliament. Now a consultant with Edinburgh-based Caledonia Public Affairs, he assists SELECT in promoting the case for regulation in the electrotechnical industry.



↑ Farriers are regulated so only properly qualified people can carry out work



↑ People must be licensed before they can work as bouncers in night clubs

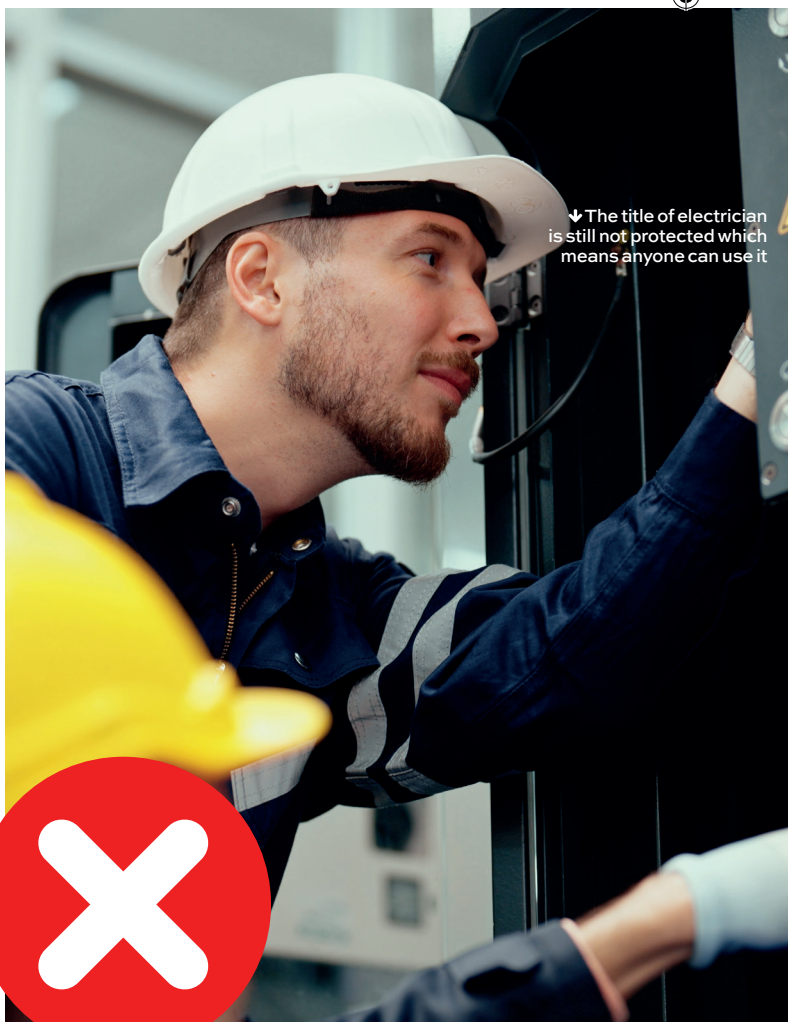
I cannot think of anyone who would argue that this should not have been the case.

Rightly, other professions are also regulated. Hands up anyone who would accept treatment from an unqualified dentist? Farriers, night club bouncers and street sweepers are regulated or enjoy protection of title. If you ask the public whether electricians are similarly regulated, most say yes.

SELECT has, of course, tried hard to educate the public over many years that this is simply not the case. Indeed, SELECT's vigorous campaigning has helped a lot of consumers to ask the key

questions before employing an electrician in the home or business. However that will never be the full answer to the question as to how to remove rogue traders and the incompetent from the market place.

Former MSP Neil Findlay put it vividly in a debate in the last session of the Scottish Parliament. As a trained brickie, which he said, tongue in cheek, everyone knows is the most important job on a building site, he still had to say that as far as he knew no brickie had ever killed anyone.



↓ The title of electrician is still not protected which means anyone can use it

NO EXCUSE FOR DOING NOTHING

SELECT has spent time, effort and resources to call government attention to the problem, yet neither the present UK Government or Scottish Government seem prepared to take the time to protect the title of electrician and require individuals to be properly trained and qualified.

It's baffling to be frank. Safer buildings and better protected consumers should surely be on the official agenda. So what's their problem?

SELECT has in fact disposed of all the arguments for doing nothing:

"There's no evidence to back safety concerns" – of course there is. Accident figures may not be as spectacularly bad as after the two gas explosions all those years ago but they are there in the death and injury statistics. Defect reports compiled by SELECT Members also show there's lots of poor work uncovered every year. Dangerous faults can of course be latent, lying dormant for years before causing injury or worse.

"It would be costly for businesses and consumers" – again, not so because the regulatory infrastructure could build upon the present Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB) and would be designed to be light touch in any event. In fact an analysis done by consultants showed conclusively that regulation would actually have overall economic benefits.

"There's no competence for the Scottish Parliament to pass the necessary law" – senior

FIND OUT MORE

Find out more and sign up to our Wall of Support by scanning the code or going to bit.ly/regulate24



counsel's opinion has said this is clearly not the case.

"There's no time to draw up a suitable Bill for Parliament to consider" – SELECT has a draft Bill to kick start the Parliamentary process.

And so it goes on... and on... and on. So where are we right now?

The Scottish Government has allowed the Electricians' Working Group, which it set up to study the issues, to peter out. Despite fears that the establishment of the group was a delaying tactic, SELECT took part to show good faith and goodwill.

The Scottish Government Minister responsible – whose father ironically was an electrician – has now admitted that there are no plans to introduce regulation.

The campaign goes on. The Member's Bill is drafted and is available upon request for Members' comments. Unfortunately, there is a queue of such Bills in the Scottish Parliament which makes it unlikely that the Bill will get into the Parliamentary process before the session ends in the spring of 2026.

However, SELECT is organising a meeting for MSPs who are signed up to the Wall of Support to take their advice on whether there may be any last-minute opportunities. One or more may try to get a change of heart from the Scottish Government. Even if that doesn't happen, the Bill can be re-presented after May 2026 and perhaps one of those present if re-elected will take it forward.

Prior to election, the parties issue their manifestos and work is under way already to try to ensure a commitment to introduce a Regulation Bill after the elections. I say elections because one way forward would be for the next UK Government to legislate.

Expect to hear more on these activities and others to promote the case in 2024. In the meantime, if you haven't already done so, sign up to SELECT's Wall of Support and show your backing for a safer – and regulated – electrical industry. ■



↑ Street sweepers are regulated

Welcome to the club!

As our latest Associate Member, Dimplex is offering SELECT Members the chance to sign up to its exclusive PRO Installer Club, where they can enjoy superior technical support and a wide range of rewards and incentives

AT Dimplex, we believe flawless installation is an integral part of the customer experience, so to maintain these high standards, we've launched the Dimplex PRO Installer Club. Aimed at contractors who buy and install Dimplex products, this exclusive programme offers a number of valuable resources, including dedicated aftercare support, free product training and unique offers and promotions.

As an Associate Member, we're now pleased to offer SELECT Members access to the club and the chance to enjoy its many features and benefits.

Upon successful registration, you'll be granted Club Member status, which provides access to a wide suite of resources, including:

- Free product training in the Dimplex Academy
- Valuable support from the digital toolbox
- Exclusive prize draws, competitions and promotions
- Information about new product launches and events.

Members with professional qualifications or certifications – plus evidence of great customer service and reviews – can also upgrade to Club

Partner and unlock even more fantastic benefits, including:

- Earning points on qualified purchases to spend on a wide range of rewards
- Being listed as accredited installers on the Dimplex website at www.dimplex.co.uk
- Access to enhanced professional-focussed aftercare and support
- Advanced training opportunities
- Special offers and promotions available to Club Partners only.

All Dimplex purchases qualify for such points, but Club Partners can earn three times more points and get better rewards for buying and installing products such as Quantum storage heaters, Q-Rad electric radiators, Edel hot water heat pumps and Dimplex Control Hubs.

ELECTRIFICATION OF HEAT

Dimplex is committed to being part of the drive to net zero, facilitating the electrification of society and enabling the transition to a sustainable world.

With nearly 25% of UK carbon emissions coming from buildings, it's essential that fossil fuelled home systems are replaced with efficient, smart devices that use renewable electricity.

Dimplex offers a range of options to help improve a building's energy performance and reduce bills, with bespoke solutions for the budgets and needs of every project.

We also specialise in decarbonising electrically heated properties, updating traditional storage heaters, panel heaters and direct-acting water cylinders to award-winning smart energy appliances such as thermal

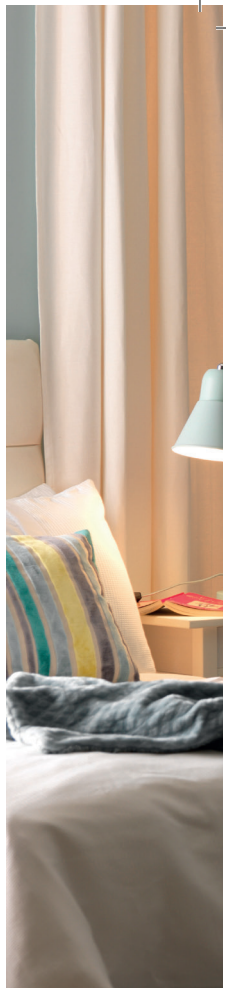
WORDS
SHAUN HURWORTH
Marketing Director,
Dimplex



Dimplex



↑ Club members have access to a dedicated support line





batteries and hot water heat pumps.

LOW-CARBON, COST-EFFECTIVE HEATING

The world's most advanced, lot 20-compliant and SAP-accredited high heat retention storage heater is Quantum, which is designed, developed and manufactured in the UK by Dimplex.

It stores up low-cost, off-peak energy to be used only when it's needed through the day, making it the most economical direct electric heating available on the market.

Quantum pairs the energy price of an economy tariff with the usability of an electric radiator for maximum comfort and minimum cost.

Plus, it now works with the grid as a battery which helps prioritise renewable generation, balancing loads and receiving payment for doing so. The result? Even cheaper energy tariffs. Find out more at www.dimplex.co.uk/tariffs

DECARBONISING DOMESTIC HOT WATER

Heat pump technology isn't constrained to traditional, large, space and water units. Our Edel hot water heat pump is a compact, low-carbon technology for heating domestic hot water.

It consists of a ducted system supplying external air to an internally installed air source heat pump, mounted on top of the water cylinder. The heat pump

"THIS EXCLUSIVE PROGRAMME OFFERS A NUMBER OF VALUABLE RESOURCES, INCLUDING UNIQUE OFFERS"

collects energy from the air and converts this into heat, which is then transferred to the water within the cylinder – creating hot water up to 60°C.

With a COP of up to 3.36 and special recognition in SAP, the Edel pump can work with any space heating technology to

reduce the cost and carbon footprint of a property by renewably supplying one of the most energy-intensive, year-round services in a home. Edel cylinders feature RF connectivity and can be controlled remotely when connected to a Dimplex Hub.

TAKING CONTROL OF TECHNOLOGY

The Hub is a central device that connects Dimplex radio frequency products like the Edel hot water heat pump and Quantum heater to Dimplex Control, allowing residents to manage the settings of supported Dimplex products, any time, anywhere.

The app allows them to control and configure their heaters or hot water cylinders, individually or by zone, and easily track the energy usage of each. This simplifies their use and helps reduce energy consumption. ■

Dimplex is a leading provider of sustainable and innovative electric heating solutions and is committed to promoting decarbonising technologies and empowering homeowners to make environmentally conscious choices. Working with electricians for over 75 years, Dimplex remains the market leader, with a portfolio of more than 700 products. Find out more at www.dimplex.co.uk

↑ By joining the PRO Installer Club, partners can earn rewards by purchasing Dimplex products such as the popular Quantum heater

MORE INFORMATION

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

WORDS
KEITH WILLCOCK
Commercial Circuit
Protection Product
Manager, Electrium



electrium

Are circuit breakers becoming obsolete?

Our guest columnist reviews the implications for designers and installers of electrical installations from the latest requirements for additional protection for socket-outlets in BS 7671:2018 +A2:2022 – and advises a simple solution

IN CHAPTER 41 of BS 7671, *Protection against electric shock*,

Regulation 411.3.3 now tells us that “in AC systems additional protection, by use of a 30 mA residual current device, must be provided for socket-outlets not rated higher than 32 A in locations where these are likely to be used by persons of capability BA1, BA3 or children (BA2, BA3). There is no exception to this requirement”.

Previously, this regulation did not overtly consider user capability and instead the regulation concerned itself with the equipment, i.e. the socket-outlet. Now the person using the socket-outlet should be the principal consideration for the designer and installer.

WHAT DO THE TERMS BA1, BA2 AND BA3 MEAN?

The terms BA1, BA2 and BA3 are explained in BS 7671. Appendix 5 of the Wiring Regulations includes

a list of external influences and, in table B under the sub-heading of ‘Utilisation’, BA refers to the capability of persons. BA1 is described as an ordinary person, i.e. a person who is neither a skilled person nor an instructed person, BA2 as children and BA3 as persons with a disability.

WHICH LOCATIONS ARE INCLUDED?

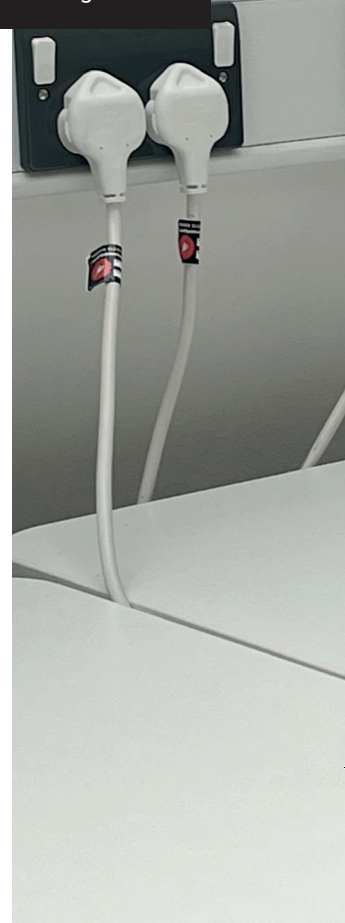
Typical obvious locations will include schools, universities, offices, factories, hospitals, nurseries, care facilities, hotels, indoor and outdoor locations. Actually, it’s hard to exclude any locations, the requirement really means all workplaces, all leisure

“BOTH PROTECTION AGAINST OVERCURRENT AND RESIDUAL CURRENTS MAY HOWEVER BE EASILY PROVIDED BY THE INSTALLATION OF AN RCBO WHICH COMBINES THE FUNCTIONS OF CIRCUIT BREAKER AND RCD IN ONE DEVICE”

↓ A single pole MCB



↑ Sockets used by the general public must have 30 mA protection



HOW TO AVOID TRIPPING TROUBLE

Designers should **NOT** group several socket-outlet circuits on a single 30 mA residual current device as this can cause unwanted or nuisance tripping of the device, causing power outages to healthy circuits that share the same RCD with the faulty circuit. It is also very unlikely to comply with the wider requirements of BS 7671, Chapters 13 and 31, Regulations 531.3.2 etc.

is intended to be installed with the fixed wiring, and intended to receive a plug. A luminaire track system is not regarded as a socket-outlet system.”

Taking account of the number of premises and users covered by this regulation, there will be a wide variety of socket-outlets that must have additional protection by a 30 mA residual current device, including 2 A, 5 A, 13 A, 15 A, 16 A, 20 A and 32 A, round pin, square pin, switched or unswitched and indoor or outdoor sockets.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

The simplest compliant solution is to use an individual Type A 30 mA residual current operated circuit-breaker with integral overcurrent protection (RCBO) on each circuit that supplies power to any socket-outlet. This will meet the requirement for additional protection, avoid

unwanted tripping, and maintain power continuity on healthy circuits.

Type A RCBOs are suitable for circuits with equipment incorporating electronic components that may produce

DC currents, such equipment is commonplace in modern installations. Type A RCBOs are designed to trip on alternating sinusoidal residual current and on residual pulsating direct current.

SO ARE CIRCUIT BREAKERS BECOMING OBSOLETE?

The simple answer is no, as circuit breakers are required as part of the protective measure automatic disconnection of supply (ADS) to provide protection against overcurrents such as overload and short circuit currents. However, they won't provide the required level of protection against residual currents for final circuits that supply socket-outlets.

BS 7671 requires additional protection to be provided, therefore a 30 mA residual current device (RCD) will be required in addition to any circuit breaker provided for circuit protection supplying a socket-outlet which will be used by ordinary persons, children or persons with a disability.

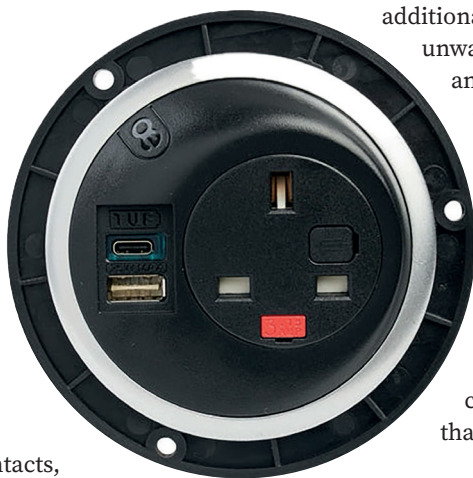
Both protection against overcurrent and residual currents may however be easily provided by the installation of an RCBO which combines the functions of circuit breaker and RCD in one device. ■

facilities, all living accommodation and all locations. No exceptions permitted.

WHAT IS A SOCKET-OUTLET?

People probably imagine a common household 13 A three-pin socket-outlet when they read Regulation 411.3.3, but the regulation isn't limited to 13 A sockets and includes all types of socket-outlets up to a maximum rating of 32 A.

The regulations state that a socket-outlet is a device, provided with contacts, which is intended to be installed with the fixed wiring, and intended to receive a plug. The actual terminology, defined in Part 2 of BS 7671, says: “Socket-outlet: A device, provided with female contacts, which



Electrium is an electrical engineering company with manufacturing operations in the UK and South Africa. With ISO 9001 accredited production facilities and UKAS accredited, ASTA recognised, test laboratories, Electrium delivers proven products for professional installers and specifiers via four of the UK's most impressive brands: Crabtree, Wylex, Volex Accessories and Appleby. Electrium is also a Siemens company, with its technologies and products part of a portfolio that includes circuit protection systems and devices, wiring accessories and cable management accessories for residential, commercial and industrial installations.

Take care with your inspections

In this guest article, our Associate Member takes us through the five most commonly missed observations they encounter during electrical audits on recently completed periodic inspection and tests

At its core, compliance auditing evaluates whether a housing organisation is meeting its regulatory responsibilities. In terms of electrical auditing, this will include measuring the organisation's performance in maintaining the housing stock against statutory and non-statutory requirements, such as those given in the EAWR 1989

WORDS
CALUM MANSELL MIET
Electrical Technical
Safety Manager,
CORGI Technical
Services



and BS 7671. Examples of the benefits of compliance auditing include:

- An assessment of the organisation's control systems to meet regulatory responsibilities and any recommendations for improvements where required
- The evaluation of risk in respect to performance and potential negligence
- The enhancement of credibility of the organisation's electrical services.

So what are the most commonly overlooked things we find when carrying out such auditing on electrical documentation, such as the Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs) received after periodic inspection and testing of an organisation's properties?

EXPOSED BASIC INSULATION

First up, we have insulated and sheathed cables not taken inside an enclosure. BS 7671 Regulation 526.8 requires that cores of sheathed cables from which the sheath has been removed

and non-sheathed cables shall be enclosed as required by Regulation 526.5.

Where issues concern the distribution network operators' (DNO) or meter operators' equipment, this should be reported to the relevant organisation by the person ordering the work.

Classification Code: A C2 may be awarded where the insulation is accessible to touch and/or there is potential for contact with metalwork, otherwise a C3 would generally suffice. No code need be awarded where basic insulation is undamaged and within a suitable enclosure, such as a lockable meter box in a satisfactory condition.

COMPATIBILITY OF PROTECTIVE DEVICES

The presence of differing manufacturer protective devices in a consumer unit is an observation that comes up regularly.

BS 7671 Regulation 536.4.203 requires that devices and components that are used in low voltage assemblies to BS EN 61439, such as consumer units and distribution boards, must only be those that have been declared suitable by the manufacturer of the assembly.

"WHERE ISSUES CONCERN THE DISTRIBUTION NETWORK OPERATORS' (DNO) OR METER OPERATORS' EQUIPMENT, THIS SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE RELEVANT ORGANISATION BY THE PERSON ORDERING THE WORK"



↑ There are a number of pitfalls which can be avoided with care





It is important to remember that this may include devices of the same manufacturer.

Classification Code: A C3, although this would be dependent on the potential for access to live parts and/or signs of thermal damage.

ABSENCE OF WARNING NOTICES

Check for warning notices! BS 7671 Regulation 514.13.1 requires that a durable notice to BS 951 with the words **'SAFETY ELECTRICAL CONNECTION – DO NOT REMOVE'** shall be permanently fixed in a visible position at or nearby:

- The point of connection of every earthing conductor to an earth electrode
- The point of connection of every bonding conductor to an extraneous-conductive-part
- The main earthing terminal, where separate from main switchgear.

Classification Code: Where a notice is absent, a C3 would be appropriate.

THERMAL INSULATION

Contractors often record 101 or 103 as a circuit's reference method when encountering twin and earth cables but fail to comment on the ongoing suitability of the installed cables.

BS 7671 Regulation 523.9 refers to the installation of cables and a preference to avoid areas where cables are liable to be



↑ Compatibility of protective devices is key to a safe installation

CORG Technical Services has been synonymous with safety for more than 50 years. Offering a range of safety services and expertise including auditing, consultancy and training, it works with housing associations, local authorities and facilities management companies, with extensive experience of electrical auditing across thousands of properties. Find out more at www.corgitechnical.com

covered by thermal insulation. Typically shower, cooker and ring final circuits are subject to a reduction in current carrying capacity following the installation of thermal insulation.

Here's one example: A 9.5 kW 230 V electric shower has been wired in 10.0mm² twin and earth cable and is run through a roof space. The design current is 41.3 A with an overcurrent protective device rated at 45 A. On inspection, thermal insulation has been added with a thickness greater than 100 mm. Using column 3 of Table 4D5 of BS 7671, the current-carrying capacity of the 10.0 mm² cable is 36 A. Therefore, the conductor's current carrying capacity does not conform with the recommendations of Table 4D5. Note: Additional rating factors and voltage drop have not been considered for the purpose of this example.

Classification Code: A C3 where no signs of thermal damage are observed upon inspection. Where signs of thermal damage have been found, a C2 would be appropriate.

RCD TYPES

Finally, we frequently see the type of RCD not considered on a periodic inspection and test. BS 7671 Regulation 531.3.3 states that Type AC RCDs shall only be used to serve fixed equipment where it is known that the load current contains no DC components.

Classification Code: A C3 where equipment or an appliance is connected or could foreseeably be supplied via a Type AC RCD, however when under test if the RCD fails to operate a C2 would be appropriate. Where no DC components exist or are likely to be connected in the future and the RCD operates, no code need be awarded.

AVOIDING THE PITFALLS

The classification codes suggested above are taken from recognised industry guidance, e.g. *Electrical Safety First Best Practice Guide 4*, Issue 7. This does not substitute the use of engineering judgement by a competent person undertaking periodic inspection and testing. To conclude, my three pieces of advice for contractors to avoid these, or any other missed observations, are:

- Stay up to date with the latest industry best practice guidance
- Educate yourself and staff with ongoing CPD
- Seek support where needed – SELECT is always on hand! ■

Health & Safety

Despite being outlawed for a quarter of a century, asbestos remains a risk for the modern electrician. In this special report, our Associate Member gives a comprehensive overview of its dangers, plus guidance on what steps to take if you do come across it

ASBESTOS was widely used in building construction for many years during the 20th century, both as a building material and for its useful insulation and fire protection properties.

Its use was progressively reduced between the 1970s

and 1999 when all remaining forms were finally prohibited in the UK with the implementation of the Asbestos (Prohibitions) (Amendment) Regulations 1999.

Asbestos has also been removed from various properties over the years for various reasons, e.g. damaged material, refurbishment and demolition, but a substantial proportion of the original products still remain.

If undetected, these materials can present an ongoing risk to workers carrying out building repair and maintenance or improvement and refurbishment work – including electricians.

Electrical contractors are particularly at risk because as well as extensive use as a building product, asbestos was also used in certain electrical equipment due to its heat resistance and fire protection properties.

Electricians are therefore likely to encounter asbestos at some points in their career, either in equipment or surrounding materials, so it's vital to identify the locations where it may be encountered to prevent accidental exposure.

WHERE MIGHT I FIND ASBESTOS?

Some of the most likely asbestos containing materials (ACMs) for electricians are flash guards in rewirable fuse carriers. Most likely to be found in distribution boards, these are a loosely bound material and extremely friable, which means that they release fibres easily.

Such guards would require an operative carrying out maintenance, e.g. replacing a fuse, to remove the fuse from the carrier, which would expose the guard and potentially release fibres into the



↑ It's important to wear the correct clothing when working with asbestos

Top tips on dealing with asbestos

atmosphere that could be breathed in. If such items are discovered during the course of an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR), the client should be advised of the hazard and the risk to persons likely to be in the vicinity or carrying out maintenance on the equipment assessed.


The safest course of action would be to remove and dispose of the equipment in accordance with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) requirements.

Removal of such items must only be carried out by competent persons and special precautions must be taken when handling or during removal or disposal of such items, in accordance with the guidance available at hse.gov.uk/asbestos – a QR code is also available with this article.

Another problem is arc chutes, used in circuit-breakers to insulate and protect circuits from

WORDS
ANDREW HARPER
CMIO SH IMAPS
Head of Technical
and CDM Support





shorting by acting as a barrier and preventing a high voltage spark jumping from one contact to another.

Before the mid-1980s, these were made from an asbestos-containing plastic moulding compound and it's possible that a high-voltage spark could crack the chute, creating dust and particles.

Storage heaters can also contain asbestos, with fibres possibly being released if the cover is removed.

The helpful list at www.armco.org.uk details the makes and models that contain asbestos, which can be reviewed before work commences.

WHAT OTHER ACMS MIGHT BE ENCOUNTERED WHILE ACCESSING WORK AREAS?

Asbestos insulating board (AIB) is particularly

dangerous if drilled, cut, broken or disturbed in any way, as it can release thousands of fibres which could be breathed in.

This material came in large sheets and had many uses, including lining the inside of boiler rooms or warm air unit cupboards.

AIB was also used extensively as fire protection on or in the vicinity of electricity and gas meters, with the following guidance published in 2014 by the Association of Meter Operators:

- Pipe lagging and insulation is a material that is particularly dangerous.
- It is fibrous and easily disturbed when carrying out electrical works in close proximity.
- Work on these products is to be carried out by a licensed contractor only.
- Older textured coatings, i.e. pre-1990 and more commonly known as Artex, represents another possible risk of exposure to asbestos.
- Asbestos in Artex ceased to be used around 1985-90 and was banned in 1992. Precautions should be taken if drilling is required in textured coatings.

HSE document a26 also provides guidance on drilling and boring through

"IF UNDETECTED, THESE MATERIALS CAN PRESENT AN ONGOING RISK TO WORKERS CARRYING OUT BUILDING REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OR IMPROVEMENT AND REFURBISHMENT WORK – INCLUDING ELECTRICIANS"

textured coatings and is available by scanning the QR code with this article or going to hse.gov.uk

WHY ARE ASBESTOS SURVEYS IMPORTANT?

Due to the extensive use of asbestos in buildings and electrical equipment, ACMs are likely to be encountered by electricians, so the potential for asbestos needs to be planned for and properly considered. The main source of information for this will be the asbestos survey.

The Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012 requires building duty holders, e.g. building owners and other persons with responsibility for maintenance, to manage asbestos in their premises.

ACMs should normally be identified by having a survey carried out, which will provide a report, detailing information to enable asbestos to be managed safely. It will provide accurate information on the type, quantity and condition of any ACMs present.

The asbestos register should be made available to anyone carrying out works in the building.

It is important to understand any restrictions to the report, which should be clearly documented.

↓ Warnings about asbestos should never be ignored



There are two types of asbestos survey:

- **A management survey** – likely to involve minor intrusive works. It will usually involve sampling and analysis to determine if suspected materials contain asbestos. It can also involve the presumption of the presence or absence of asbestos.
- **A refurbishment and demolition survey** – required before any refurbishment or demolition works are carried out. This is a fully intrusive survey. The asbestos surveyor will require extensive knowledge of the scope of works to be carried out in order to ensure the relevant areas are thoroughly inspected and samples taken and analysed.

This can sometimes be something of a chicken and egg situation as an asbestos inspector will not be competent to carry out the necessary procedures to isolate the supply for electrical equipment to safely carry out the inspection, so is likely to presume the presence or absence of ACMs.

This can be unhelpful as if the material is presumed to be an ACM, the electrical contractor will have to take additional precautions, which will increase the cost to the client. Equally, if the material is presumed not to be an ACM, the electrical contractor could be at risk if it turns out to contain asbestos after all. It may be prudent to consult a licensed asbestos contractor and electrical contractor to attend site at the same time.

Electricians must always check the survey document before starting work. There is a danger that the survey document won't be up to date or complete or won't cover the area to be worked on. If there is any doubt about the quality or completeness of the survey report, work should not start. Employers have legal duties to comply with

COURSE PUTS SAFETY FIRST

SELECT currently runs an asbestos awareness e-learning course in conjunction with Training First Safety.

Designed for anyone who may come into contact with asbestos in their work, the session is designed to give workers and supervisors the information they need

to avoid work that may disturb the material.

As well as warning about the risks of working with asbestos, the course will help you recognise ACMs, make you aware of where they are used, the steps you can take to minimise risk and the legislation that applies to working with asbestos.



To find out more, scan the QR code



the requirements of CAR 2012 to ensure workers are not exposed to asbestos. The HSE website provides more guidance on asbestos surveys.

WHAT ABOUT DOMESTIC PROPERTIES?

The requirement to manage asbestos in buildings only applies to non-domestic properties such as commercial, industrial and public buildings. In domestic properties, self-employed electricians and employers of electricians have a duty under Regulation 5 of CAR 12 to identify any asbestos before work starts to prevent disturbance and risk to health.

SO CAN I WORK WITH ASBESTOS?

There are certain items of work – classed as non-licensed work – that can be carried out by electricians if they are competent to do so, but this must be done carefully and in strict accordance with HSE guidance.

It can be very expensive and time-consuming to purchase the necessary equipment and gain sufficient information, instruction and training to work with asbestos as an electrical contractor, and therefore most employ the services of a licensed asbestos contractor as it is far more cost-effective. Again, the HSE website provides guidance on managing and working with asbestos.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I DISCOVER OR DISTURB ASBESTOS?

If you think you've discovered asbestos, it's important to stop work immediately and make sure nobody can access the area. You must report it to your supervisor or manager as it will need to be investigated.

If asbestos has actually been disturbed, then a precautionary approach should be applied. Clothing may have become contaminated, in which case you must follow the emergency procedures as detailed on the HSE website.

You must report the incident to your manager and person in charge of the building and provide a warning sign to alert others to the 'possible

↓ You must stop work immediately if you think you've discovered asbestos



asbestos contamination'. A licensed specialist asbestos contractor will be needed to decontaminate the area if required and to take a sample to be analysed and confirm the presence of asbestos.

If, following analysis, it is confirmed that asbestos exposure has occurred, the incident may have to be reported to the HSE as a dangerous occurrence under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR) Regulations 2013.

Details of the circumstances in which incidents should be reported are set out on the HSE Asbestos FAQ page, and if asbestos is discovered or disturbed, the HSE website provides guidance on what to do. Scan the relevant QR codes shown below to access these links.

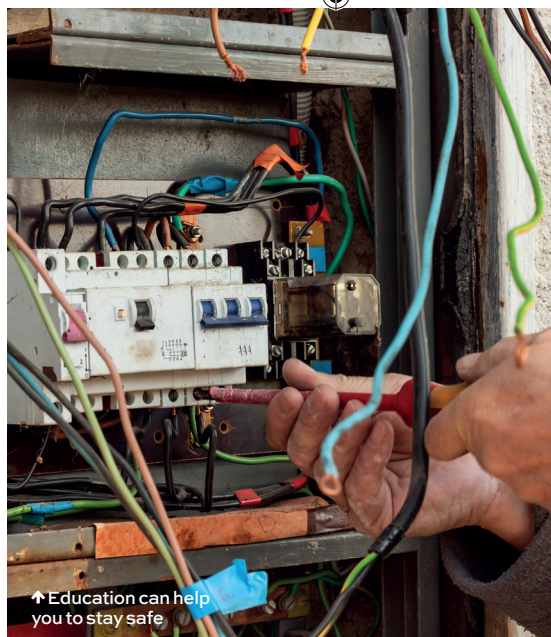
HOW CAN I MAKE SURE I STAY SAFE FROM ASBESTOS?

Education is the best way to stay safe from asbestos, so you should arm yourself with sufficient information, instruction and training.

Employers must ensure that anyone who is likely to disturb asbestos during the course of their work, including self-employed workers, has the correct training to enable them to work safely and competently without risk to anyone.

As well as the SELECT awareness course with Training First Safety, the BSG, Independent Asbestos Training Providers (IATP) and United Kingdom Asbestos Training Association (UKATA) can also provide information on asbestos training.

However, it's important to understand that simply attending a training course won't make an operative competent and that competence is a combination of training, learning on the job, instruction and assessment.



Using the right RPE and PPE

Some electricians feel that they're adequately protected from breathing in asbestos fibres by using a dust mask. However, many types of disposable masks aren't suitable for use against asbestos fibres, e.g. simple loose-fitting medical masks.

A type FFP3 disposable dust mask to EN 149 should be used, although half-masks with a P3 filter can also be suitable.

Anyone using respiratory protective equipment (RPE) must be properly trained and competent in its fitting and wearing.

In addition, a face-fit test is required to ensure that the mask selected correctly fits the wearer. It's also important to understand that a mask may provide little or no protection if the person has stubble or a beard, as fibres will be breathed in through the sides of the mask where it doesn't fit tightly.

There are other things to consider, such as protecting work areas, clothing and shoes from contamination. Personal protective equipment (PPE) should also be worn during asbestos work. Check out the QR code below to find out more.

IN SUMMARY

As an electrician, you're likely to encounter asbestos, so it's important to know how to identify it and deal with it. Asbestos awareness courses provide valuable information which you can retain and pass on to others, helping keep everyone safe. Also, don't be afraid to challenge an asbestos report. You should understand its limitations and if you feel it doesn't provide sufficient information to allow you to carry out the work safely, don't start the job. With regard to working with asbestos, you can only work with lower hazard, i.e. non-licensed, asbestos materials if you are properly trained and apply adequate controls. A specialist licensed asbestos contractor is therefore often better suited to carry out such work.

However, if you do work with or near asbestos, you must ensure the HSE guidance is strictly followed and the correct personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment is used. ■

Source material:
Institution of
Engineering &
Technology (IET)

SHORT CUTS

01



↑ Main HSE resources for information and guidance on asbestos

02



↑ HSE guidance on drilling or boring through protective coatings

03



↑ HSE advice on what to do if you discover or disturb asbestos

04



↑ HSE list of frequently asked questions about asbestos

05



↑ HSE advice on respiratory protective equipment

06



↑ List of storage heaters that contain asbestos

07



↑ Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012

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

Tailor-made course is a perfect fit

As part of our ongoing training offering, SELECT is happy to deliver bespoke training courses to suit Members' exact needs. One such request came from Edinburgh City Council, who asked us for a personalised session on EICRs, which we duly delivered to excellent feedback

WORDS
STUART MCKELVIE
Training Development
Adviser, SELECT



↓ The council's
electricians get busy
on the boards at The
Walled Garden

A recent meeting of the Local Authority and Client Forum (LACF) at The Walled Garden, discussions turned to the quality of electrical installation condition reports (EICRs). Several voices around the table said that EICRs weren't being very well completed by both sub-contractors and employees, with missing information being the main issue.

Among those present was Tam Meaney, Operation Manager, Housing Property, at new SELECT Member City of Edinburgh Council, who was keen to hear what the association could do to help rectify the issue.

Our Training team duly set up a meeting to discuss how we could assist,

and discovered that our usual two-day SQA periodic inspection and testing (PI&T) session – AKA the 214 course – wouldn't be suitable as Tam had 48 members of staff to be trained.

We therefore put our heads together and created a bespoke one-day version of the course, encompassing both practical training and a case study to complete the EICR to a satisfactory standard.

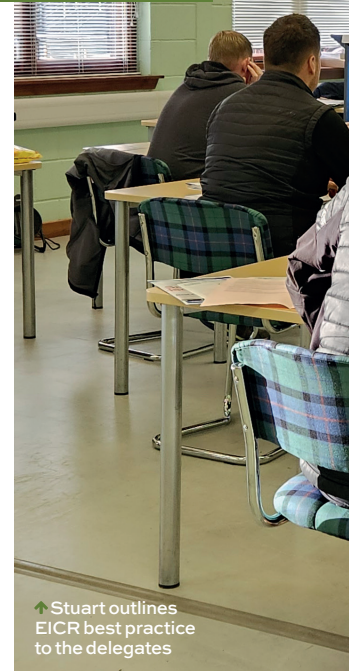
This would also allow the council's electrical team leaders to attend and gain the knowledge of checking completed EICRs, and also allow the electricians themselves to update their underpinning knowledge on the requirements of PI&T to BS 7671:2018+A2:2022.

Tam was happy with what we proposed as it dovetailed nicely with his electrical service improvement plan. So the scene was set at our dedicated Training Centre at The Walled Garden as we rolled out the courses across four separate days.

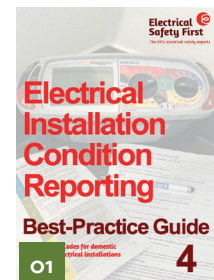
ON COURSE FOR LEARNING

Tam sent all electrical staff – including himself – to attend the one-day bespoke course, which meant he could stagger his team to accommodate their busy schedule of work.

During the course, the staff engaged in the principles of PI&T in a course



↑ Stuart outlines
EICR best practice
to the delegates



↑ Electrical Safety
First (ESF) Best
Practice Guide 4





available on the SELECT website at www.select.org.uk or the ESF site at www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

Training on neutral current diversion (NCD) was also discussed, with information in relation to Appendix D – safety check for diverted neutral currents – from the IET Guidance Note 3 Inspection and Testing book.

We also had our newly released flowchart poster available to talk through, both as a hard copy and on our Clevertouch interactive smart screen, which worked well.



↑ Delegates were encouraged to problem solve during the courses

CERTIFICATE OF SUCCESS

On completion of the training day, council staff were awarded a SELECT learning CPD certificate of attendance, with Tam saying that the course hit the spot perfectly. He told us: “The bespoke training provided by SELECT for testing, inspection and certification was excellent and met all the requirements that we were looking for from the training. The team also managed to book the four courses into their schedule at very short notice and provided the training before year end, which was appreciated.

“This gave our electricians the chance to go through the testing process and correct filling in of the certification, so now all our certification should be filled in identically. Stuart’s knowledge of the regulations was also phenomenal!”

Other feedback was equally positive, with one delegate telling us: “I got a better understanding of filling out EICRs correctly.” Another council employee said: “The course was very informative and all my questions were answered” while a third added: “The course notes and handouts were very helpful.”

I enjoyed delivering this course and it was great to see nearly 50 people leaving The Walled Garden with a greater knowledge of EICRs that can now be translated into practical application on-site. It also showed how flexible our training offering can be when we give it a little thought, which bodes well for any future bespoke courses required by Members. ■

workbook, with examples of observation and applicable classification codes based on industry guidance in *Electrical Safety First (ESF) Best Practice Guide 4*, which was updated in October 2023.

Delegates also studied the importance of the safe isolation process using SELECT’s own *10 Steps to Safe Isolation* resources, along with *ESF Best Practice Guide 2 Issue 4*, which gives guidance on the management of electrical safety and safe isolation procedures for low-voltage installations.

As outlined in previous editions of *cabletalk*, these ESF documents are a great resource and are freely

↓ Council staff get hands-on with equipment during the course



↑ 10 steps to Safe Isolation



↑ ESF Best Practice Guide 2 Issue 4

FIND OUT MORE

If you are interested in bespoke in-house CPD training for your employees, please get in contact with Training Manager Jenny Cryans by emailing jenny.cryans@select.org.uk or calling the Training team direct on 0131 445 9206.

A flexible approach to learning

Associate Member Hager is dedicated to educating the next generation of electricians while helping current contractors remain at the top of their game. Here, its training experts give an overview of how they do it – including details of two new in-depth and flexible CPD courses

EARNING is a fundamental part of any profession, especially so in the electrical sector, with ever-evolving wiring regulations, new legislation released regularly and customer requirements changing rapidly.

Installers, and the companies they work for, have to be proactive with their learning to ensure they remain at the very top of their game, while ensuring that their work remains compliant, safe and of the highest standard. It's not only a question of safety, but also one of reputation across the industry and among commercial and residential consumers.

For the team at Hager, supporting that essential learning process is a core aspect of our work and we are eager to continue supporting the contractor community by sharing industry news, the latest innovations and, of course, product knowledge too.

Electricians never stop learning. Many within the industry regularly take part in courses to learn or refresh their knowledge about the latest wiring regulations or sector solutions. With an influx of innovative products hitting the market in recent times, including EV chargers and renewable

energy installations, obtaining the relevant knowledge is a necessary requirement.

At Hager, like SELECT, we're committed to excellence, safety and efficiency. Our customers know they can expect these standards from us and by using our products they can pride themselves on them too. But this doesn't come without hard work and devotion to remaining up to date with the latest legislation and industry information.

As part of our dedication to assisting our customers to do business better, we're proud to offer bespoke learning courses to build upon existing knowledge and help installers discover solutions to the most important questions or problems in the industry.

While further and regular education is vital to provide the best service and solutions for customers, we understand that balancing working and learning can prove challenging. Finding sufficient time to master courses and review resources is often tricky. That's why we offer both online and in-person learning options, enabling our community of contractors to learn at a time and location which suits them.

WORDS
**PAUL CHAFFERS
& PAUL COLLINS**
Technical Training
Managers, Hager

:hager

"WE'RE PROUD TO OFFER BESPOKE LEARNING COURSES TO BUILD UPON EXISTING KNOWLEDGE AND HELP INSTALLERS DISCOVER SOLUTIONS TO THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS IN THE INDUSTRY"

↑ L-R Paul Chaffers and Paul Collins,
Technical Training Managers at Hager

:hager

Our catalogue of online interactive courses can be accessed any time and from anywhere, giving a level of flexibility that works no matter what the contractor's schedule or preferred method of learning. Plus, they vary in length – from taking just minutes to complete, to much more in-depth sessions, meaning there's an opportunity to learn no matter how long the gap in your diary is.

If in-person training is more your style, we regularly host training days at our dedicated facility in Shropshire – its central location means they attract contractors from across the country. We also have a team of experts who travel to deliver bespoke sessions.

With an array of topics to choose from, you can delve into in-depth technical and regulation training, insight on our product solutions or bitesize updates to keep you up-to-date with recent changes. Plus, we've partnered with some of the industry's leading training providers to offer a wide range of training courses. ■

COURSES TO CONSIDER

Hager is delighted to have launched two new CPD-accredited online courses which are now available to SELECT Members:

→ Residual Current Devices

In this module, you'll gain an extensive understanding of residual current devices (RCDs), their selectivity and coordination requirements and how the devices can be used for a wide range of applications. You'll also get an insight into how the devices detect specific residual currents, provide earth fault protection and other general characteristics of their RCD devices while staying compliant with BS 7671:2018+A2:2022.

→ Surge Protection Devices

In this course, you can gain a comprehensive understanding of how surge protection devices provide protection against transient overvoltages and switching events. Learn how to understand the causes behind surges and their potential risks to sensitive electronic equipment by keeping up with the latest wiring regulations.



↑ The online courses provide key information for electrical professionals – plus those all-important CPD points



FURTHER INFORMATION

To learn more about Hager training, browse their courses and book your place on one of their sessions, scan the QR code or visit hager.link/new-courses



Industry insight

Focus on a future of possibilities

Rampant inflation, sky-high interest rates, supply chain issues and skills shortages meant that 2023 was a challenging year for construction. So as we start the year, what can business leaders expect in 2024? Our man looks into his crystal ball...

FROM a geopolitical perspective, 2024 is a massive year with major elections taking place in the UK, across Europe and in the USA, India and Taiwan. All of these have the potential to create ripples in the UK economy and influence political decision making, with the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza also adding to the uncertainty.

None of this suggests that 2024 will be any less challenging than 2023, but I want to highlight four trends that I believe will become more prevalent over the coming months – and that business leaders need to become more conversant with.

Not only do they present challenges for business, but they will also present significant opportunities for those with vision and an open mind...

IMPROVED REMOTE AND HYBRID WORK MODELS

Before COVID-19, working from home was a rare privilege, but the pandemic accelerated the adoption of remote work and hybrid models, allowing employees to work from home and office. In my experience, most employers were forced into making these changes

and, unsurprisingly, they're desperate to get employees back into the office where they can keep an eye on them. Unfortunately, that genie is out of the bottle and I personally don't see it going back in, certainly not any time soon.

Leaders now need to be focused on building trust and enhancing employee engagement. This will involve moving away from the typical "command and control" approach and instead focusing on the employee experience.

↓ Offering flexible working will help keep your people happy and engaged

WORDS
PAUL McDEVITT
Managing Director,
McDevitt & Co



McDevitt & Co





In 2024, I expect these models will become more refined and widespread, with a focus on providing greater flexibility to employees.

As SELECT Member Chic Dobbie explains overleaf, many employers now recognise the benefits that flexible working has delivered in terms of better engagement, which has led to productivity improvements and greater retention rates.

FOCUS ON EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

As ECIS outlines on pages 50 and 51, companies are increasingly recognising the importance of employee wellbeing, including mental health and work-life balance. In 2024, this trend will likely evolve further, with organisations implementing more comprehensive wellbeing programmes and policies.

Remote working doesn't work for all and leaves some staff feeling isolated and abandoned. Employers need to give greater attention to creating more social connection and investments in employee wellness such as incorporating more health benefits, flexible policies to support mental health such as counselling and stress management workshops, and creating a culture that promotes connectivity and belonging.

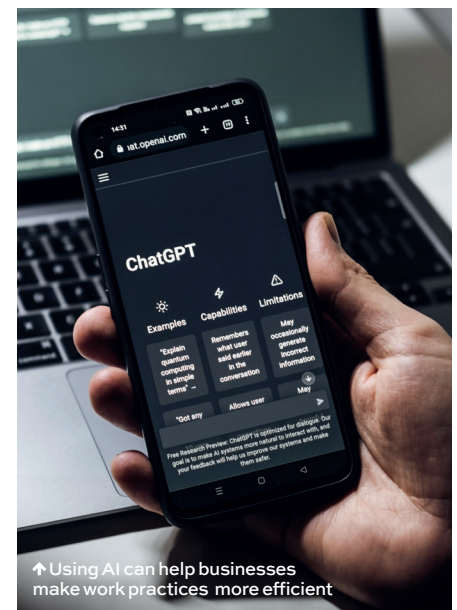
TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION AND AUTOMATION

In 2023, the talk was all about artificial intelligence (AI) taking over, with scare stories about how the technology would replace people and take jobs. In 2024, firms might be more invested in incorporating AI, machine learning and automation to streamline processes, boost efficiency and enable their employees to focus on more creative and strategic tasks.

According to Julian Birkinshaw at London Business School: "Generative AI is a cool productivity-enhancer and will have a profound long-term impact on how we access and process information. But it won't be as disruptive as the internet or smartphone and for most companies will be a 'sustaining innovation', reinforcing rather than undermining their competitive position."

From my perspective, many construction companies have been slow to embrace technological innovations – building information modelling (BIM) immediately springs to mind. The more enlightened businesses out there will see AI as an opportunity to improve productivity and help generate a competitive advantage over their

"LEADERS NOW NEED TO BE FOCUSED ON BUILDING TRUST AND ENHANCING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT"



© Iryna Imago/Shutterstock



THE SELECT VERDICT

CHIC DOBBIE
Vice Chair, SELECT
Ayrshire Branch

Firm's fab four

A four-day week has proved a major boost in Chic Dobbie's battle to retain staff and bring stability to his operations.

Chic, who is Vice Chair of SELECT's Ayrshire Branch, explained: "At the end of 2022, I was discussing with my son, who is also part of the business, how we could cut overheads and keep our workforce happy.

"Over the previous six months we'd had lots of guys coming and going. In a lightbulb moment, I suggested a four-day week on our construction projects."

Chic, who runs C Dobbie Electrical Ltd, said he'd noticed that Fridays on a building site could be unproductive. He told us: "Many close at 12 noon. Our people often travel from Ayrshire to Glasgow or beyond and parking always appears a problem. It made sense to move to a four-day week and the guys involved agreed."

Introduced in January 2023, the change meant longer working from Monday to Thursday. Instead of being on site from 7.30am to 4.00pm, Chic's team now works 7.00am to 5.30pm.

He said: "Initially it was applied over three sites in Glasgow and affected up to 10 people."

The company retained an element of flexibility, with Chic revealing: "We raised the prospect of a return to 'normal' working if necessary. As two of the jobs neared their end the main contractor was keen to have us in on Fridays, so we reverted to a five-day week for a while."

Chic believes it's delivered big benefits, telling us: "It's given our guys a better quality of life, cut our fuel costs and made it easier for us to compete.

"Notably, we've only applied it on construction projects. In our domestic business the guys are still working a five-day week."

If anyone else is thinking about a similar change Chic recommended talking to the client/main contractor first. He said: "Others on the sites where we operate have looked to copy us, but it won't suit everyone.

"For our part, we'll continue this on existing and new projects so long as the contractors and our people stay happy."

less innovative and more risk-averse competitors.

INCREASED FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability was high on the corporate agenda in 2023, with investment in renewable energy exceeding the amount spent on carbon-based energy for the first time ever. And a powerful combination of consumer and social pressure has now heaped more pressure on governments to increase regulation and reporting standards.

This could be the year for businesses to acknowledge the urgent need to adapt to environmental challenges, either because they face the financial cost of addressing environmental risks themselves or because current and future regulation will significantly impact their business.

This increased focus on sustainability will undoubtedly create opportunities. In the UK, research suggests that more than 80% of our current building stock will still exist in 2050, which offers a huge opportunity for retrofitting to ensure we meet net zero commitments.

This presents a significant challenge for our industry to respond in terms of getting up to speed with current and future renewable technologies and having a skilled workforce with the capacity to install these technologies.

In conclusion, 2024 will undoubtedly be another challenging year but there are significant opportunities out there. Business leaders who are open minded, willing to adapt and aren't too risk averse are mostly likely to see these trends as opportunities to thrive. ■

"2024 WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE ANOTHER CHALLENGING YEAR BUT THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES OUT THERE"

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



↑ Businesses will face environmental challenges that can lead to new revenue opportunities



Be very clear on contracts

Our legal experts explain why it's important to make sure you know if your work agreement is defined as a 'construction contract', as this can have a bearing on your rights if there's a dispute

THE question, 'is my contract a construction contract?'

can be very important for a number of reasons. If your contract is, by definition, a 'construction contract' it can inform your statutory rights should there be a dispute. Sections 104 and 105 of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 define what works qualify as 'construction operations'. Contracting parties involved in such operations have a statutory right to refer a dispute to adjudication.

The question as to what qualifies under the 1996 Act as a construction contract is one of fact but it can be fraught with ambiguity. The recent case of *Crystal Electronics Ltd v Digital*

WORDS
DAVID WILSON
Partner



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.

Mobile Spectrum Ltd [2023] EWHC 2656 (TCC) has shed some light on this.

DMSL engaged Crystal to carry out remedial works at residential properties experiencing issues with television reception and aerials. The agreement was ultimately terminated, and the dispute referred to two separate adjudications, where Crystal were awarded an aggregate sum of approximately £800,000.

At enforcement proceedings, the question for the court was whether the works qualified as construction operations and if the adjudicator thereby had jurisdiction.

Crystal disputed that the work qualified either as construction operations in terms of s105(1)(b) or that surveys conducted and engineering-type advice

qualified as surveying work in terms of s104(2). The court deduced that focus should be afforded to whether "the structures or other apparatus on which the works were undertaken form, or were to form, part of the land".

The court formed the view that televisions and television aerials are not fixtures and do not form part of the land as they were easily removable, irrespective of the fact that aerials are securely attached to a building. Furthermore, surveying the exterior of a building to examine aerials did not qualify as surveying work in terms of the Act – which had envisaged the provisions applying largely to building surveyors in the construction industry.

Consequently, neither adjudication was enforceable as the adjudicator did not have jurisdiction.

If undertaking this kind of work, it's worth contemplating whether a right to adjudicate is important for your needs and acknowledging that having express adjudication provisions in your contract will safeguard the right to adjudicate. This is a topic, however, to keep an eye on in the coming years as there have been indications recently that the exceptions to construction operations should be reconsidered. ■

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.

Reasons to be cheerful

A Despite the continuing economic uncertainty and ongoing payment issues, there is a glimmer of hope for the construction industry in Scotland in 2024, as our expert explains

WORDS
LEN BUNTON
FRICS FCI Arb,
HON FRIAS
Contract Expert



01

Find out more about the Conflict Avoidance Pledge and sign up by scanning the QR code or going to www.rics.org/capledge



As we begin 2024 there is no doubt it has been a tumultuous year for the UK construction industry, with significant business failures leaving a mountain of debt to sub-contractors across the sector.

Despite the collapse of house builder Stewart Milne at the start of January, Scotland appears to have avoided the biggest impact and fingers crossed we don't experience any more significant casualties in the year ahead.

The results of the recent Construction Industry Collective Voice (CICV) payment and cashflow survey made grim reading, but the responses really weren't surprising.

Many of us who advise contractors and sub-contractors felt it reflected the current supply chain in Scotland, i.e. a slowdown in payment periods and reductions in the amounts due.

Anecdotally, some clients say that they're experiencing a downturn in work opportunities, coupled with a tightening of margins, and that definite concerns are emerging about the pipeline of work in 2024.

However, it's not all doom and gloom, so I'd like to set out some positives in the hope that we'll see some of them delivered and experience a general improvement across Scotland.

FOCUS ON BEST PRACTICE

In 2024, we'll be educating the industry on the CICV's Best Practice Guide, which sets out some simple recommendations for contractors and sub-contractors to improve the commercial management of construction projects.

It's vital for contractors to buy into this and embed the recommendations into their businesses, and there are already several pilot workshops planned. In addition, several contractors are seeking internal sessions to bring their commercial and contract management teams up to speed on the SBCC Forms of Contract.

QUALITY MATTERS

The Construction Quality Improvement Collaborative (CQIC) is another great idea that I know SELECT and the CICV will be supporting over the next 12 months.

However, this initiative needs to be brought in at site level to ensure that fewer and fewer projects have issues concerning non-compliant workmanship, which inevitably results in the costs associated with rework and contra charges, from the contractor and

02

Details of the Construction Quality Improvement Collaborative can be found by scanning the QR code or going to www.cqic.org.uk



"IT REALLY IS UP TO EVERYONE TO ENSURE THAT THEIR FOCUS IS ON QUALITY AND TO END THE CRITICISMS EXPERIENCED BY THE INDUSTRY"



the clients. It really is up to **EVERYONE** to ensure that their focus is on quality and to end the criticisms experienced by the industry because of non-compliant workmanship and defects.

From my own point of view, the industry **DOES** want more collaboration between employers, contractors and the supply chain but it's a long-term process that needs energy and dedication.

Fortunately, much work is also happening behind the scenes on the Construction Accord to help make this happen, but it's vital that the Scottish Government and construction organisations work closely together to achieve its objectives.

This will take years to come to fruition, but some very positive ideas and objectives are already emerging.

CONFLICT PROGRESS

Another positive note is seeing the Conflict Avoidance Process (CAP) and Conflict Avoidance Pledge gaining traction, with a number of major projects incorporating CAP from the outset.

It's also pleasing to see an increase in requests for a third party to resolve issues at initial stages and avoid them escalating into expensive and time-consuming disputes.

The Conflict Avoidance Coalition will continue to grow in 2024 with a new structure and the provision of guidelines and processes.

A major conference will also be held in 2025 aimed at industry clients, consultants, contractors and sub-contractors.

CONTRACT HELP

I've also been encouraged by the work of SELECT's fellow CICV member, the Finishes and Interiors Sector (FIS), who have appointed experienced individuals to provide contract reviews to their members.

This means that when a tender enquiry comes in, a tenderer can have the conditions of contract reviewed to identify any high-risk clauses that might require financial recognition. In this way, parties can hopefully negotiate out some of the unacceptable risk transfer amendments and start the project with a balanced and fair set of conditions of contract.

It's beyond my comprehension why public and private sector clients continue to have pages of amendments to the Standard Forms and the industry needs to stand up to this type of conduct!

A POSITIVE APPROACH

One question I was asked recently was, "Are attitudes changing?" and so the answer to that is **YES**. In my own work, I've noticed that clients are walking away from employers who are only interested in lowest price, produce ridiculous amendments to the Standard Forms, pay late and reduce payments.

I find this approach refreshing and hopefully it will spread throughout the industry.

So, let's take a positive view in 2024 and hope that the industry can take on some of the many recommendations coming forward, to make the industry in Scotland and the wider UK a positive and profitable sector to be in. ■

EXPERT ADVICE IS CLOSE AT HAND

03

The CICV's Best Practice Guide is available to download by scanning the QR code or going to bit.ly/CICV-BPG



04

Results of the CICV's 2023 payment and cashflow survey are available to download by scanning the QR code or going to bit.ly/cicv-pay-survey



05

Details of the Scottish Construction Accord and recent updates can be found by scanning the QR code or going to bit.ly/clf-accord



WORDS
ROB LOWBusiness Development
Executive, EC Insurance
Services Limited

Unlock the value of employee wellbeing

Our expert outlines how to reap the rewards of looking after the mental and physical health of your staff – and how a thriving workforce is the key to business excellence

IN THE ever-evolving landscape of operating a business, one fact stands tall – a flourishing workforce is the cornerstone of success. And what is the key to nurturing a thriving workforce? An unwavering commitment to put your employees' wellbeing at the forefront of your management choices.

When you prioritise your employees' wellbeing, you kick-start a transformation that converts mundane workplaces into thriving centres of productivity. Absenteeism decreases and employees become more emotionally and mentally invested in their work, resulting in heightened productivity.

SELECT Members who have invested in private medical insurance (PMI) through ECIS already demonstrate a significant commitment to their employees' health and wellbeing.

By investing in PMI, your business not only ensures the wellbeing and swift recovery of your employees but also provides them with significant advantages. This includes expedited access to medical care, enabling timely treatment and a quicker return to work. Furthermore, the flexibility to choose when and where they receive specialised medical

attention empowers your employees to take control of their healthcare decisions.

Moreover, the ECIS PMI scheme extends beyond hospital treatment, offering additional services like a Digital GP service via Bupa Touch, which provides round-the-clock access to GPs with

"WHEN YOU PRIORITISE YOUR EMPLOYEES' WELLBEING, YOU KICK-START A TRANSFORMATION THAT CONVERTS MUNDANE WORKPLACES INTO THRIVING CENTRES OF PRODUCTIVITY"



rapid appointment scheduling, and the Employee Assistance Programme, a confidential helpline supporting employees facing personal and work-related challenges.

In return for that investment, employers benefit from a healthier, more engaged workforce. PMI can reduce absenteeism by providing timely access to healthcare, resulting in fewer sick days. It can also enhance employee morale and loyalty, increasing retention rates.

Moreover, offering PMI can be a competitive advantage in attracting top talent and maintaining a positive workplace culture. When employees feel valued and supported in their wellbeing, they are more likely to be productive and motivated, contributing to the company's success and growth.

To help you support your employees further, Bupa offers health and wellbeing rewards within its PMI policies at no extra expense to your business. These rewards incentivise your team to focus on their wellbeing.

PMI WITH HEALTH AND WELLBEING REWARDS

To supercharge your commitment to employee wellbeing, Bupa has an array of health and wellbeing rewards seamlessly integrated into its PMI policies. Remarkably, these rewards come at no extra cost to your business. These aren't your run-of-the-mill discounts and offers; they're the catalyst for a wellbeing revolution within your team.

These rewards encompass an array of benefits:

- **Health screenings** – grant your team access to regular health check-ups and screenings at reduced costs, empowering them to take control of their health proactively.
- **Discounted dental treatments** – ensure those smiles in your workforce remain radiant with discounted dental treatments, promoting both health and self-assuredness.
- **Gym membership discounts** – foster physical fitness and wellbeing with exclusive discounts on gym memberships, ensuring a healthier and more dynamic team.
- **Fitness equipment offers** – cultivate healthy habits with discounts on fitness equipment, including fitness trackers, to support your team in their journey towards wellness.
- **Sports activities booking deals** – encourage an active lifestyle with special rates for sports activities, nurturing a culture that thrives on movement and vitality.
- **Savings on family days out** – strengthen bonds among your team by facilitating enjoyable and cost-effective family outings, fostering well-rounded individuals.
- **Healthy eating discounts** – fuel wellbeing with discounts on healthier food choices, reinforcing your commitment to a balanced diet and overall wellness.

These benefits elevate your employees' wellbeing while offering them invaluable cost-saving opportunities.

MAKING THE MOST OF BUPA PMI REWARDS

Remember that for all employers with Bupa PMI schemes, these invaluable health and wellbeing benefits are already included in your employees' policies. Promoting these offerings to your employees will help everyone reap the rewards of employee wellbeing.

For businesses yet to embrace a PMI scheme through ECIS, seize the opportunity to support your workforce. The advantages extend beyond health; PMI can help improve the loyalty and productivity of your employees.

AN EXCLUSIVE SCHEME FOR SELECT MEMBERS

The SELECT scheme offers PMI coverage through Bupa, which is organised and managed by ECIS, a chartered insurance broker with extensive experience in the health and wellbeing sector.

This PMI program has been serving SELECT Members for decades and offers various advantages to promote the wellbeing of your workforce and assist them in case of illness.

Furthermore, it's not limited to your field workers and you can also extend Bupa PMI coverage to your office-based employees. ■

HOW ECIS CAN HELP YOUR BUSINESS

If you're thinking of a PMI policy for your office-based employees or would like ECIS to review your current arrangements, speak to the ECIS team on **0330 221 0241** or visit them at www.ecins.co.uk



SJIB Bulletin

The path to better fire and security

THE SJIB is currently putting the finishing touches to a new Fire Emergency and Security System (FESS) Assessment, which will be rolled out in spring.

In order to apply for an ECS Card as a FESS Systems Operative, a pathway-specific FESS assessment for the ECS occupation being applied for must be held, with a valid ECS Health, Safety and Environmental (HS&E) assessment also required.

The four occupations for FESS Systems Operatives, as identified by the FESS industry, are:

- Fire systems
- Fire and security systems
- Security systems
- Fire and emergency systems.

These occupations directly correlate to the four pathway-specific FESS assessments which will be available. These are:

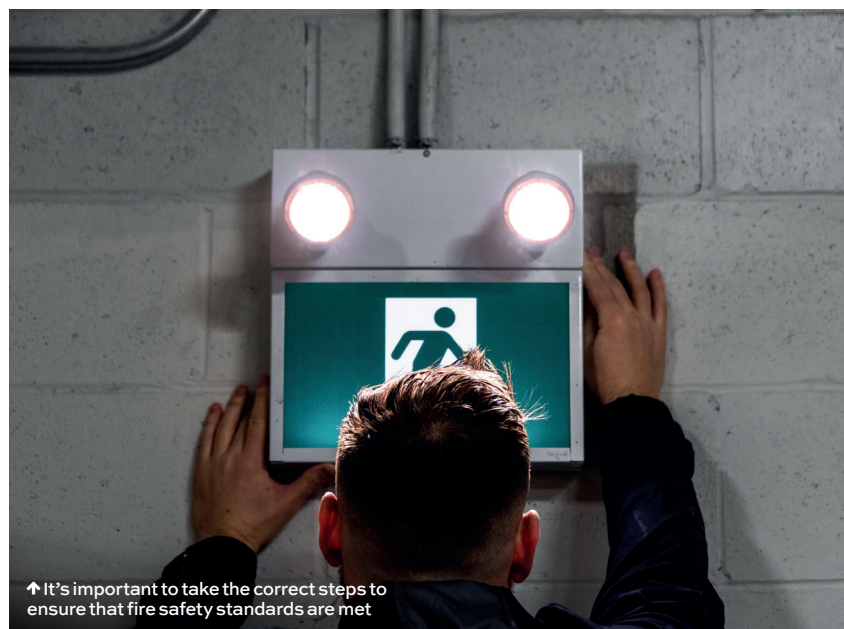
- Fire
- Fire and emergency lighting
- Security
- Fire and security.

Applicants **MUST** sit the correct multiple-choice assessment that corresponds to the FESS occupation for which they are applying. Please note that if applicants require ECS Card recognition in multiple pathways, they can sit additional tests.

Emergency lighting is not currently available as a standalone assessment. Operatives requiring this will need to take the combined fire and emergency lighting assessment, along with the security assessment if additional accreditation is required.

ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT

Each assessment is e-proctored and consists of 30 questions across a range of topics relevant to the chosen FESS occupation, to be completed in 30 minutes.



↑ It's important to take the correct steps to ensure that fire safety standards are met

Each question will require the correct answer to be selected from a choice of four possible answers given. The pass mark is 80%, i.e. 24 correctly answered questions.

Candidates must ensure they give themselves adequate time to set up and, as per the confirmation email, must be using the latest version of Google Chrome and must install the eNetSecure application before sitting the assessment.

Please note that the assessment is closed book, so we strongly encourage candidates to complete the SELECT FESS Systems Operative online training beforehand. This will be going live soon – keep checking the SJIB website for details.

More information on the new FESS Assessment can be found by going to www.sjib.org.uk/fess-assessment or scanning the relevant QR code on this page.

Please keep an eye on the SJIB News section of the website for the official go-live date – find it at www.sjib.org.uk/sjib-news or scan the QR code on the page opposite. ■

GET INVOLVED NOW

The SJIB will initially go live with the FESS assessment with a soft launch. If you or anyone you know is looking to apply for an FESS Systems Operative card and would be interested in trialling the assessment, please contact natalie.scott@select.org.uk – limited spaces are available and will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis.

ABOUT SJIB

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

Improved ways of working on the cards

THE SJIB has launched seven new Fire Emergency and Security System (FESS) ECS Cards. These cards are based on an occupational qualification structure developed by the FESS industry via a sector working group comprising trade associations and employer representatives, plus an industry consultation.

The new cards are as follows:

- FESS Apprentice
- FESS Trainee
- FESS Labourer



↑ The new cards have been created with better work practices in mind



↑ You will be given the most appropriate card to suit your working environment

- FESS Systems Operative
- FESS Systems Technician
- FESS Technical Manager
- FESS Technical Auditor.

The SJIB team will assist applicants wherever possible to understand the new criteria and to identify the most appropriate card.

All applicants should note that the SJIB team is tasked with applying the correct criteria to each card and is **NOT** able to amend the criteria of any cards to suit individual wishes.

To view the criteria for these cards and apply, please visit www.select.org.uk/SJIB or scan the QR code on this page.

REMEMBER!

Please ensure that you meet the criteria for your chosen card before applying, as applications are non-refundable. ■

SHORT CUTS

01



↑ Details of the new FESS assessment

02



↑ Criteria for new FESS ECS Cards

03



↑ SJIB latest news

04



↑ Contact Us form

PAY PACKET BOOST AS WAGE RATES ARE TO RISE

The UK Government has announced that the National Minimum Wage (NMW) and National Living Wage (NLW) rates will increase on 1 April 2024. These new rates are shown in Table 1 below.

Age	Pay per hour
21 and over	£11.44 (NLW)
18 to 20	£8.60
16 to 17	£6.40
Apprentice	£6.40

As a result of this, the SJIB National Board has agreed to amend the 2024 contractual rates which electrical installation apprentices should be paid with effect from 1 January 2024. These are shown in Table 2 below.

Apprentices	Effective 01/01/2024	Effective 01/01/2024
	At work	At college
Stage 1	£6.40	£6.40
Stage 2	£8.60	£8.60
Stage 3	£10.87	£10.18
Stage 3: FICA	£12.42	£11.65

Apprentice rates for 2025 are currently under review.

SECTT Update

Discussions deliver the right results

Sharing new resources and improving training programmes were just some of the hot topics debated during our annual college consortiums



SECTT was delighted to hand out SELECT's new resources on neutral current diversion (NCD) when it convened recently for its annual college consortiums.

The NCD posters were just one of the hot topics when representatives from across Scotland gathered for collaborative discussion on various aspects of apprenticeships.

With the new Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) programme now in its fourth year and record recruitment numbers over the past two years, the consortiums had plenty to discuss when they gathered in December. Topics for discussion included:

APPRENTICE PROGRESS REVIEWS

After the number of reviews carried out by SECTT Training Officers rose to more 11,000 last year, it was agreed that we will now update them to give

employers a clearer insight into the progress of their apprentices.

Barrie McKay, Training & Development Manager at SECTT, said: "In a recent survey, 97% of employers said they were happy with the content of the review and we want to build on this."

COURSEWORK IMPROVEMENTS

Discussions also delved into the coursework aspect, where SECTT receives feedback from SJIB external verifiers. This collaborative effort allows stakeholders to shape the future content of the programme and the consensus seemed to be that the programme is functioning well, with only minor improvements suggested.

A dedicated SECTT/college development group will now be established to further explore and implement these refinements.

FICA UPDATES

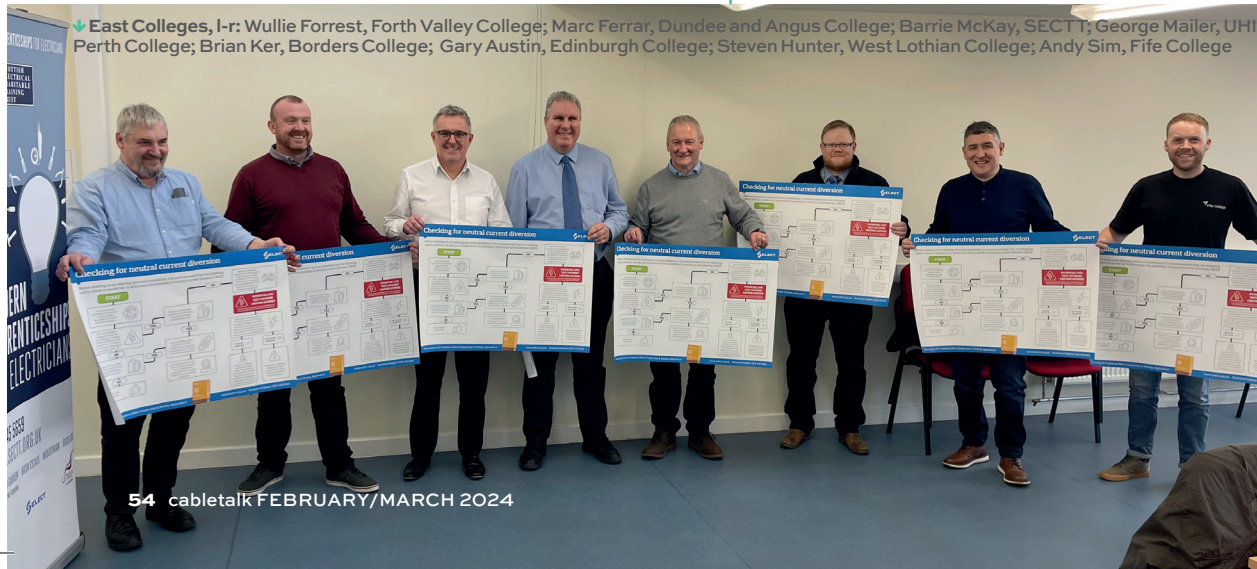
Some slight changes were introduced to the Final Integrated Competence Assessment (FICA) in

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

October to bring it in line with Amendment 2 of the 18th Edition, so these were discussed to allow the colleges to deliver up-to-date skills refresher training to apprentices.

SECTT has also developed online training material for the apprentices

East Colleges, l-r: Wullie Forrest, Forth Valley College; Marc Ferrar, Dundee and Angus College; Barrie McKay, SECTT; George Mailer, UHI Perth College; Brian Ker, Borders College; Gary Austin, Edinburgh College; Steven Hunter, West Lothian College; Andy Sim, Fife College





"IN A RECENT SURVEY, 97% OF EMPLOYERS SAID THEY WERE HAPPY WITH THE CONTENT OF THE REVIEW AND WE WANT TO BUILD ON THIS"

Other discussions at the meetings included the results of recent surveys, moving to digital regulation books, competition dates and venues in 2024 and possible future projects such as virtual reality safe isolation simulation and the rise of artificial intelligence (AI).

Finally, SECTT handed out the NCD posters that SELECT has developed especially for apprentices, employers and Members.

Along with the fold-out toolbox cards, the colleges will use these in their workshops to raise awareness of the issue in the industry, with a clear protocol for apprentices to follow.

Training & Development Manager Barrie McKay said: "As always, the meetings were extremely useful and it was heartening to hear so much positive feedback and discussion from across the country.

"Delegates were delighted with the new NCD posters, which will help raise awareness of this issue and reinforce the importance of safety and best practice at all times for those just starting out in the industry."

North Colleges, left to right: Kyle MacDonald, NESCol Aberdeen College; Kenny Mitchell, Tullis Training; Barrie McKay, SECTT; Iain McBean, UHI Moray; Murray Franklin, UHI Moray; Andrew McIntosh, UHI Inverness; David Blackhall, NESCol Fraserburgh College

to complete which will show employers what they are keen to prepare before attending the trade test on the new reviews.

In addition, SECTT gave each college their FICA statistics to enable them to monitor their results and compare them to the national average. In the past three months we've had a 60% first time pass rate and 75% second attempt overall pass, so things are moving in the right direction.

Toolkits are a big hit with our learners

SECTT has once again joined forces with Edmundson Electrical to deliver essential toolkits to 1st Stage apprentices across Scotland.

Thanks to the leading wholesaler, some 900 toolkits have been distributed to new-start learners, including apprentices at UHI North, West and Hebrides College in Stornoway and New College Lanarkshire in Motherwell.

Barrie McKay, Training & Development Manager at SECTT, said: "The delivery of these toolkits speaks volumes about our ongoing partnership and reflects a shared dedication to cultivating a skilled and well-prepared workforce in the electrical industry.

"It also goes beyond the physical tools themselves and represents an investment in the future of the sector, fostering a generation of apprentices who are not only well-equipped but also empowered to make meaningful contributions to the evolving landscape of electrical work."

SECTT Training Officer Gordon Penman added: "Thank you so much to Edmundson Electrical for this extremely kind donation to all new-start SECTT electrical apprentices in Scotland.

"These quality toolkits are invaluable to each and every learner, so this continued support and partnership is invaluable."



Youngsters at UHI North, West and Hebrides College in Stornoway were happy to receive their toolkits from Edmundson



Apprentices at New College Lanarkshire in Motherwell show off their new Edmundson kits

ProZone

CONTACT OUR TEAM TO
SHOWCASE YOUR GREAT
NEW PRODUCTS HERE

David Hughes: 07767 407 402

davidh@connectcommunications.co.uk

UNICRIMP SHOWS ITS METAL WITH CABLE CLEATS

Unicrimp has added a range of metal cable cleats to its growing Q-Fire portfolio of fire-rated cable accessory products.

The new Mmetal cable cleats meet BS 7671 (18th Edition) requirements and are designed to prevent cables from premature collapse during a fire and, in doing so, to keep emergency services and the public safe.

The 18th Edition wiring regulations stipulate that cable support systems must be constructed with materials that will withstand premature collapse caused by direct exposure to heat.

There are no applications excluded – trunking, conduit and cabling fixed to surfaces of the building or attached to cable support systems must all have fire-resistant supports.

Unicrimp's fire-rated black metal cable cleats are available in 14 different size options suitable for cable sizes from 5mm up to 50mm.

The key feature of the product is an oval fixing hole which allows for cable diameter tolerances. To install the metal cable cleat, the electrician just needs to bend it around the cable and fix in place to the designated wall.

➔ For further information, contact Unicrimp on 01827 300600; email sales@unicrimp.com or visit www.unicrimp.com

✚ The black metal cable cleats are available in 14 different sizes



Innovation meets simplicity in new KEWEVA charge point adaptor

THE new KEWEVA testing adapter from Kewtech is an innovative new electric vehicle (EV) charge point adaptor that couldn't be simpler to use.

The KEWEVA is the perfect choice for electricians looking to install and test EV charging points with minimal fuss – and here's why:

- **Single rotary dial** – the KEWEVA couldn't be easier to use, with just a single rotary dial to control the CP status simulation – standby, ready and charging – meaning there are no added or unnecessary extras.
- **CP auto check** – the in-built CP automatic communication check means there's one less thing to worry about, and a lower resistance design ensures the highest quality loop measurements.
- **No more awkward cable** – Kewtech has developed an innovative, compact new design that is the smallest in its class and has done away with the awkward cable – just plug it straight into the charging unit.



↑ The KEWEVA adapter is the ideal choice when installing EV charge points

- **Cost-effective** – the cost means there's a significant price advantage compared to most other EV charge point adapters on the market.

The KEWEVA works with any MFT with EV charging point testing capabilities, uses standard 4mm connectors and is suitable for single and three-phase charging equipment.

➔ To find out more, visit www.kewtechcorp.com

LUCECO GROUP LAUNCHES ITS FREE ELECTRICAL DESIGN CPD COURSE

Luceco Group's new free electrical design CPD accredited course is now available via the Luceco Academy.

With specially devised content, electrical contractors will learn how to safely design electrical circuits to comply with BS 7671, including:

- First steps in designing an electrical circuit
- Calculating design current for an electrical circuit

- Selecting the correct protective device for an electrical circuit
- Rating factors and how to apply them
- Choosing the correct cable size.

➔ Starting the course couldn't be easier and it's free to join – simply visit www.luceco-academy.com/electrical-cpd-courses

LUCECO ACADEMY



BECOME AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER

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

V-TAC's LED catalogue is released as countdown to Light + Building expo begins

LEADING LED brand V-TAC has released its 2024 lighting catalogue as it prepares for an historic outing at the upcoming Light + Building exhibition in Germany.

Taking its largest-ever stand at the industry get-together, the company is aiming to attract its highest number of visitors at the event in Frankfurt, which runs from 3-8 March.

With a focus on lighting trends, the electrification and digitalisation of home and building service technology and connected security, Light + Building 2024 will showcase future-oriented homes, next-generation buildings and intelligent lighting designs.

V-TAC CEO Satish Sajani says the company is aiming to leverage the massive trade fair to strengthen its network and connect with both new and existing stakeholders.

He said: "Light + Building 2024 is the perfect platform for us to showcase not just our latest innovations, but also the meaningfulness of our innovative technology.



↑ V-TAC's cutting edge technology will be on show at Light + Building 2024

"We are currently putting together modalities to showcase hands-on techniques and solutions that will help stakeholders, especially installers and wholesalers, shape the industry's future.

"We're excited to engage all professionals and stakeholders, offering them a glimpse into the transformative lighting technologies we've been developing. We will also make available our 2024 LED lighting catalogue, which has some of the latest lighting innovations.

"Look out for our booth at Light + Building 2024 and witness the unveiling of technologies that will redefine the landscape of lighting solutions."

With a theme of 'Be Electrified', Light + Building is the international meeting place for manufacturers from the lighting, electrical engineering, home and building automation and connected security technology sectors.



For more information, see the V-TAC LED lighting catalogue at bit.ly/vtac-light



↑ Built-in kneepads provide comfort and protection

STAY PROTECTED WITH SNICKERS

Snickers Workwear has been reinventing work trousers with kneepads since 1975. The process continues with the launch of the world's first built-in, certified kneepads, which are completely integrated into Snickers Workwear's premium stretch work trousers.

The AllroundWork trousers with Capsulized™ kneepads and

holster pockets deliver low-profile, comfortable protection. They combine cutting-edge sportswear technology and Snickers' world-renowned comfort, functionality and sustainable fabric design.

These street-smart trousers also have enhanced flexibility with two-way stretch fabric plus four-way stretch panels at key stress points.

Find out more by calling 01484 854788, check out www.snickersworkwear.co.uk or email sales@hultaforsgroup.co.uk

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LINIAN
LIGHTING & ELECTRICAL

LUCECO
GROUP

LUMI-PLUGIN

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NORTH PARK
MICROBIOLOGICAL

Megger

ROBUS

Schneider
Electric

Scolmore
ELECTRICAL

signify

SIMPRO

TCW

TIS

THORN
LIGHTING

V-TAC

AICO AND LOW CARBON EXCHANGE COLLABORATE FOR A GREENER FUTURE

Aico and Low Carbon Exchange (LCX), a training academy for renewable technologies, have announced a new partnership to help create safer, healthier and more sustainable homes.

Recognising the gap in skills across various trades, LCX established a cutting-edge training academy in 2022, providing accredited training in renewable technologies.

Aico created bespoke training boards for LCX, packed with information on British Standards and fire protection legislation to train and promote best practices in fire detection – especially crucial for retrofit clients installing solar panels.

In addition, Aico is also planning continuing professional development (CPD) training alongside LCX, building a comprehensive solution for the retrofitting challenges that lie ahead.

Paul Matthews, Training Academy Manager at LCX, said: “Aico’s unwavering commitment to ensuring safer, more comfortable homes aligns seamlessly with our mission, laying the foundation for an exciting collaborative journey.”

“Together, we anticipate fostering a collective effort that empowers individuals and organisations to spearhead the charge towards a greener, more sustainable world.”

➔ To find out how your Regional Specification Manager can support you, please visit www.aico.co.uk/find-a-regional-spec-manager



↑ Aico visited the LCX training academy



↑ Daikin's solutions can keep homes warm whatever the weather outside

Air-to-air is the efficient way to achieve year-round comfort

DAIKIN'S air-to-air systems will reduce environmental impact – and energy bills – with the highest possible energy efficiency available on the market. As such, they're the sustainable solution for a wide range of settings, from new builds to replacing electric heating and add-on systems to reduce energy consumption.

When the temperature drops below freezing, it's important to have the right system to maintain an ideal indoor climate. Air-to-air systems can heat homes in temperatures as low

as -20°C and Daikin systems use some of the industry's most cutting-edge technologies to achieve outstanding energy efficiency ratings.

Daikin also provides a full range of A2A training courses, with around 75 SELECT Members already signed up for Monobloc level 1 training over January and February.

Plus, Daikin has teamed up with HSS Training to offer F-Gas certification at a special discounted rate.

➔ To find out more, visit www.daikintraining.co.uk and contact your local Sustainable Home Centre or Daikin representative to find out more about its range of air-to-air products and how it can support your journey as an AC installer.

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL WITH 80A MCB

Have you ever needed a miniature circuit breaker (MCB) that allows you to connect a large load without expensive special arrangements via additional labour and equipment?

Siemens has introduced it – the 80A 5SY4 MCB, which can be used alongside the 5SL4 devices in standard 250A Alpha BSII 250A TP&N distribution boards.

There's no doubt how handy it is to be able to use an 80A MCB, especially when it's available as an 18mm DIN mounted 80A

MCB that can be fitted into a standard MCB distribution board.

Alpha BSII distribution boards are designed, tested and manufactured in the UK and are fully compliant with BSEN 61439-3 and can make compliance with Amendment 2 of the Wiring Regulations easier too, with an easy-fit single module miniature AFDD solution, an integral SPD facility plus metering options throughout the range.

➔ Find out more at www.electrium.co.uk/products



↑ The new miniature circuit breaker from Siemens

Dimplex tackles hot topics

REGULATIONS are changing. The national grid will be zero carbon from 2035 and electrification of heat is already being written into the laws that govern domestic heating systems.

Heat pumps have taken the spotlight, but a broad range of technologies will be required to meet these new needs.

You probably know us for our storage heaters, used to take advantage of excess energy produced at night. With the profile of renewable energy generation changing, these heaters, now known as thermal batteries, have a new role to play.

Quantum is a thermal battery which participates in a “virtual powerplant” – a collection of EVs, batteries and other tech which respond to the half-hourly settlement of energy, turning on when



Quantum thermal batteries have a new role to play in heating homes

energy is from low-carbon sources and cheap, and off when fossil fuel derived energy is expensive. They can save the grid millions of pounds and create a revenue stream into the pockets of consumers with the tech to use them.

Search Dimplex Quantum or visit www.dimplex.co.uk/tariffs to find out more.

LINIAN'S A REAL FAMILY FAVOURITE

Glasgow-based family business LINIAN is celebrating after being shortlisted for the Scottish Family Business of the Year Award 2024.

The LINIAN team is currently preparing for the second round of the selection process for the awards, which



are part of the National Family Business Awards, organised by Family Business United. The awards will culminate in a gala evening in London on 19 June.

An awards spokesman said: “Family firms make an incredible contribution to the economy in terms of employment, income generation and wealth creation, not forgetting their activities in communities and charitable support. It’s an honour to recognise their endeavours.”

Discover LINIAN's single component fire-rated cable clips and fixings at www.linianclip.co.uk

ESP DOOR ENTRY'S SMART AND SECURE

ESP's Aperta IP PoE access control range brings to market high-spec door entry solutions that are easy to install and suitable for a wide range of projects. From domestic dwellings to commercial properties, the range is designed to offer improved performance compared with two-wire and four-wire systems.

The perfect solution for private dwellings and commercial projects is the Aperta IP Single Way Outdoor Station, which offers an HD camera and full duplex audio. The simple PoE installation and IP65 ingress protection makes this small and compact outdoor station –

which also includes a combined keypad and proximity reader – the ideal solution.

The Aperta IP system is powered by the ClickSmart+ app, which gives full control of the whole Aperta IP range.

The single way door station can be viewed on the Aperta IP HD 7" monitors. They offer Wi-Fi and LAN connection to support the app's functions, including the 'Call Divert' feature, and incorporate a touch screen, HD live view from the outstation's camera and duplex audio.

All devices are connected via PoE switches and the Aperta IP door entry system does not require programming software to configure the system.

Find out more about the Aperta IP range at www.espu.com or the Scolmore Group app



The new catalogue contains even more of Aurora's groundbreaking lighting products and solutions

AURORA UNVEILS LATEST LIGHTING RANGE EXTRAS

Aurora, a leader in lighting solutions, has unveiled its latest addendum catalogue, showcasing a range of groundbreaking products designed to enhance its extensive collection.

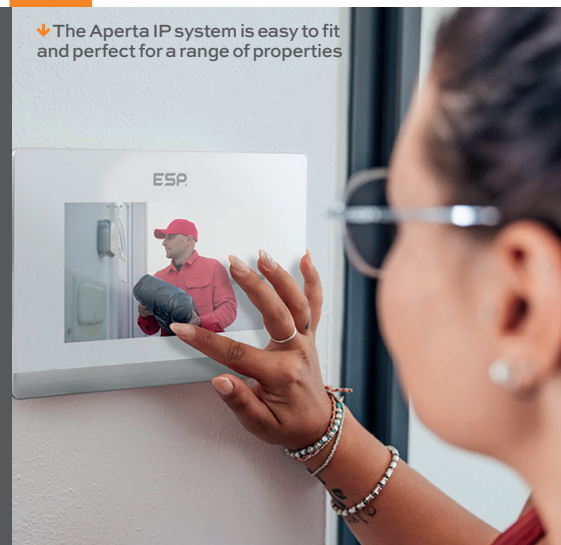
These new additions enrich Aurora's portfolio and cater to a range of sectors. From healthcare and education to commercial and industrial spaces, they integrate with the existing range.

Reliability is paramount, with all products backed by a three- or five-year warranty, complemented by an three-year on-site warranty.

Aurora also takes pride in the durability and performance of its products, and its new addendum catalogue is a testament to its dedication to excellence and innovation.

To view the catalogue and explore the future of lighting solutions, visit www.auroralighting.com

The Aperta IP system is easy to fit and perfect for a range of properties



INNOVATIVE ENERGY-SAVING ECOSUN SHINES

Flexel can't control rising costs, so are things looking bleak for its far infrared (FIR) heaters in the UK energy crisis? Of course not, because energy saving is what it does!

Its EcoSun panels can be incorporated with any PV panel and smart battery storage solution.

With free solar energy, storage and payback tariffs available, your clients can greatly reduce their heating bills with wall or ceiling-mounted low-energy heaters.

FIR panel energy consumption is around 40%-50% lower than traditional convection heaters due to the way they heat an open space.

Heating people and objects like walls and floors quickly, they then heat the air around as a secondary free heat, meaning the heat in a room lasts longer.

They are also zone controllable so heat is only required in occupied rooms. Plus they provide almost instantaneous heating so no energy is wasted to warm up the air first; warm air is secondary after people heat up first.

Flexel's larger EcoSun S+ units have been installed in a variety of non-domestic premises covering industrial, retail, commercial, warehousing, agriculture, NHS and fire and ambulance depots, where they can replace inefficient electric and gas heating.

So even the current unprecedented crisis provides a very wide scope for the installation of FIR heating systems for SELECT Members.

➔ To discuss your next heating project, call 01592 760 928 or email ch@flexel.co.uk

➔ Flexel's EcoSun heating panels can help your customers save energy



➔ The awards are a chance to recognise the industry's new generation of talent

Luceco Group sponsors 2024 eFIXX 30 Under 30 Awards

SHOWCASING and supporting the wealth of up-and-coming talent in the electrical industry, Luceco Group is the lead sponsor for the 2024 eFIXX 30 Under 30 Awards.

The hotly contested awards highlight the next generation of electrical contractors, recognising their skill, passion and enthusiasm in an exciting and rapidly evolving industry.

Nominees will need to demonstrate their ability to deliver outstanding service and results, go above and beyond for their customers and show their commitment to excellence.

John Williams, Trade and Specification Director at Luceco Group, said: "We are very proud to

support the 2024 30 Under 30 Awards as lead sponsor, rightly recognising the incredible young talent that exists within our dynamic industry."

Stephen Hurrell, director of eFIXX added: "The awards are firmly established as **THE** place to celebrate rising talent in the electrical industry. If you – or someone you know – has got what it takes, nominate now."

Entries close on 29 February. Entries are free and you can nominate yourself or a colleague. Entrants must be aged under 30 on 1 January 2024 and actively working in the electrical industry. Winners will be announced on 17 April.

➔ To nominate yourself or a colleague, visit awards.efixx.co.uk/30-under-30 and for more information visit www.luceco-academy.com/30-u-30

INCEPTOR MURUS IS LIGHT FANTASTIC

Ovia's floodlight range includes the Inceptor Murus – a range of LED wall packs with CTA switch and a robust IK10-rated housing that makes them ideal in outdoor settings.

Designed to be fast and simple to install, the IP66-rated Inceptor Murus is available in 15W and 25W options and in a choice of standard, photocell and photocell and emergency versions. The photocell version can assist with energy saving by allowing the light to turn on and off at set lux levels. Inceptor Murus will turn on when the lux level is below 10-30 lux.

Installation is quick and easy, thanks to the push fit/piano key terminal block and

the floodlight can be Besa box or trunking mounted.

All models include a CTA switch, allowing the product to change colour temperature between warm white 3000K, cool white 4000K and daylight 6000K. Inceptor Murus comes in light grey or anthracite grey and has a five-year warranty.

➔ The full range can be seen in the new Ovia Issue 4 catalogue which can be downloaded from the Ovia website – www.oviauk.com



➔ Inceptor Murus has a range of useful features

Safety and style in one

WITH Lumi-Plugin, one downlight offers many possibilities, with uniquely beautiful lighting that seamlessly integrates safety, sustainability and smart functionality.

The world's smallest fire alarms, fire suppression systems, energy efficient sensors and emergency lighting click into the centre of the best residential fire-rated downlight on the market. This unique modular design prioritises safety without compromising on aesthetics.

The many benefits include:

- Say goodbye to cluttered ceilings –



↑ Lumi-Plugin delivers safety and sustainability with a clean and contemporary look

streamline your interiors with lighting that integrates your choice of functionality.

- **Installation's never been so simple** – the unique lighting and plugins make installation straightforward with a prewired junction box.

- **Advanced protection and prevention** – with everything included in one compact package, it's life-saving design. Literally.

- **Serious about sustainability** – Lumi-Plugin is a proud certified carbon neutral company.

- **Simplify ceilings and make every space beautiful** – Lumi-Plugin is the sleek way to deliver more desirable homes, bringing beauty and safety to every space.

→ To find out more, visit www.lumi-plugin.com

ELUCIAN RANGE GETS BIGGER AND BETTER

Scolmore continues to expand its Elucian consumer unit range to provide electricians with the broadest possible range of units and protective devices. The latest addition to Elucian is the new 100A Single Phase Energy Meter.

The new meter provides a versatile and reliable solution for monitoring energy consumption in residential, solar PV, industrial and utility applications.

Featuring a high-efficiency white backlit LCD display which provides a clear indication of measures values in all light conditions, the new energy meters can be DIN rail mounted into any of Elucian's consumer units.

They're single tariff MID certified with two pulse outputs and RS485 Modbus communication protocol, offering import and export energy measurement. They have a three-year warranty.

→ Find out more by visiting www.scolmore.com



↑ Energy meter is a new addition to Elucian's line-up

PEACE OF MIND GUARANTEED WITH ROBUS WARRANTY

ROBUS is committed to adding as much value to contractors as possible, which is why 100% of its products now come with a two-year on-site warranty.

Provided in addition to its five-year warranty on many products, the cover gives you peace of mind that if you ever need to return to a job, they'll compensate you.

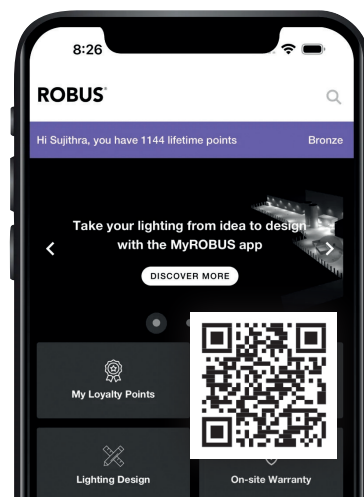
Whether you want to create a quote request or order a bespoke lighting design, ROBUS has got

you covered. You can also browse its entire catalogue on the MyROBUS app, redeem rewards and even plan projects on the go.

With more than 200 new products in the ROBUS 2024 catalogue and price cuts on some of its fastest-moving products, why not give it a try and see why it's striving to be the most trusted lighting brand.

→ Scan the QR code to download the MyROBUS app or find out more at www.robust.com

→ The MyROBUS app can help you keep working while you're on the go



→ The TIS 570 can detect both AC and DC leakage

TIS COMBINED CLAMP METER MEASURES UP

Clamp meters able to measure low values of AC leakage offer massive time-saving benefits for board changes and finding AC leakage problems due to nuisance RCD tripping.

However, there's a more sinister problem building momentum – DC leakage.

If more than 6mA of DC leakage flows in a circuit, then all AC, A and F type RCDs can be 'blinded' and might not trip in a fault condition. The installation of a B type RCD or RCD DD would then pick up the pure DC leakage current and trip if there

is more than 6mA of DC leakage. It can propagate to different properties, meaning a house without any DC current generating equipment could still be affected by a neighbour. And it can also cause corrosion within metal or metal reinforced buildings.

The TIS 570 is the only combined AC and DC leakage clamp meter on the UK market and is able to distinguish and measure DC leakage on electrical systems, even if it's super-imposed on AC currents.

→ Find out more at www.testinstrumentsolutions.co.uk

FIVE MINUTES WITH...

AMY WILLIAMSON

EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS ADMINISTRATOR

HELLO AMY. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AT SELECT?

Starting a new chapter at SELECT has been a truly welcoming experience since the end of January. The team's warm reception has made the transition into my new role exceptionally smooth.

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

In my previous role as a Compliance Administrator at Atalian Servest, I dealt with aspects of electrical testing and managing and coordinating electrical engineers, which 'sparked' my interest in more. The prospect of working with SELECT at The Walled Garden, where I can leverage my existing knowledge while delving into the unique requirements of ECS Cards, intrigued me.

WHAT DOES YOUR JOB ENTAIL? TELL US MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO.

My job entails a variety of different things within the Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB). My main role is the processing of grade cards for the electrotechnical side and having an understanding of the other grade cards we offer. I also help with the creating and marking side of the ECS health and safety assessments and help with the many queries we receive.

WHAT'S A TYPICAL DAY BEEN LIKE FOR YOU SO FAR?

No two days are the same, which keeps me on my toes. This variability adds a refreshing element to my routine, allowing me to adapt, problem-solve, and engage with diverse tasks regularly, creating a sense of excitement as I navigate through the daily tasks at hand.

HAVE YOU HAD CHANCE TO MEET SELECT MEMBERS?

I haven't had the pleasure of meeting any SELECT Members yet, but I'm excited about the prospect. I look forward to connecting with our valued Members and experiencing the positive interactions that come with being a part of the SELECT community. Building these connections is about creating meaningful relationships that contribute to a more enriching and customer-focused work environment. I'm eager to engage with our Members and share in the journey of success within the SELECT team.

WHAT HAVE YOU MOST ENJOYED ABOUT YOUR JOB SO FAR?

I enjoy every aspect, whether it's collaborating with office colleagues or connecting with Members on the phone. Going the extra mile to assist and guide Members is something I take pleasure in, and their expressions of gratitude make it even more rewarding. The changing nature of my tasks, where no two days are the same, keeps me occupied and adds variety to my work. ■

Quickfire questions:

Cheese or chocolate? Cheese
Dog or cat person? Both, but I have two cats
First car owned? Honda Civic
Favourite film? *The Rocky Horror Show*
Favourite TV show? *Community*
Favourite holiday spot? Greece
Dream date? June 15th!
One thing people might not know about you? I love all things cars – car shows, car meets – and my dream car is a Toyota Supra.



Your Branch Officers:

ABERDEEN & NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND

STEWART ANDERSON, Chair
 ERIC RAE, Vice-Chair
 ALICK J SMITH, 3rd Representative

AYRSHIRE

JAMES COOPER, Chair
 CHARLES DOBBIE, Vice-Chair

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

GORDON PATERSON, Chair
 JOHN WILSON, Vice-Chair

EDINBURGH & SOUTH EAST OF SCOTLAND

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 ALASDAIR NOBLE, 3rd Representative

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 CHRISTOPHER LIDDELL, 3rd Representative

TAYSIDE

TONY HARVEY, Chair
 KEITH SMITH, Vice-Chair
 GRAHAM LYALL, 3rd Representative



SELECT Events 2024:

Catch up with colleagues at Branch Updates, Toolbox Talks and our other events.

CENTRAL BOARD

Wed 27 March – online

Thu 6 June – Doubletree Edinburgh North Queensferry (Includes SELECT AGM and technical presentation)

Thu 5 September – online

Thu 5 December – venue TBC



Tue 5 March – Dumfries & Galloway, Dumfries & Galloway College

Thu 7 March – Glasgow, Leonardo Inn West End

Tue 12 March – Inverness, Inverness College

Thu 14 March – Edinburgh, Borders College

Competition

Winter wordsearch

WIN
£50 OF
amazon
VOUCHERS

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to date
with SELECT

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Visit our websites at:

select.org.uk

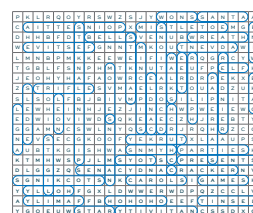
cabletalkmagazine.com

selectawards.co.uk

D	L	U	I	B	A	U	I	W	S	D	K	N	M	M	S	S	W
W	S	E	V	O	L	G	Z	Z	C	W	M	I	T	T	E	N	S
J	C	B	C	K	J	C	Q	G	U	X	F	D	N	E	V	O	L
T	A	I	K	S	Y	O	G	T	W	S	E	C	M	V	H	W	Z
T	R	N	K	A	Y	L	W	R	M	N	F	R	O	S	T	F	R
X	F	E	I	K	N	D	I	R	J	O	U	D	Y	X	A	L	E
L	F	X	T	A	I	M	N	R	M	W	N	A	D	M	G	A	R
V	Q	F	W	R	B	U	T	G	Y	B	U	L	C	I	Y	K	R
W	F	R	S	C	C	J	E	I	A	A	N	Q	E	C	F	E	U
X	A	E	N	T	Q	Y	R	E	S	L	E	D	G	E	U	Y	M
G	X	E	O	I	M	C	H	I	L	L	Y	K	D	N	G	Q	K
N	E	Z	W	C	I	T	S	L	O	H	G	R	M	T	N	W	N
B	T	E	I	I	C	I	C	L	E	K	J	T	F	E	I	G	F
S	L	E	E	T	T	H	Z	V	J	Q	B	V	J	W	I	L	H
V	B	L	I	Z	Z	A	R	D	T	C	N	P	L	O	K	B	X
N	B	W	G	Z	J	Q	X	Z	V	U	M	I	C	N	S	K	D
A	L	Z	H	L	L	V	A	M	S	T	S	N	Q	S	L	N	V
U	P	G	T	A	W	I	Y	Y	S	O	C	N	G	E	H	E	N

ARCTIC
BLIZZARD
CHILLY
COLD
COSY
FREEZE
FROST
GLOVES
ICE
ICICLE
MITTENS
SCARF
SKIING
SLEDGE
SLEET
SNOW
SNOWBALL
SNOWFLAKE
WINTER

DEC 23/JAN 24 ANSWERS



Here's your chance to win £50 of Amazon vouchers by completing our prize wordsearch with a winter theme.

Find the hidden words then take a photo of your completed puzzle and email it to memberservices@select.org.uk by 15 March. The winner will be drawn at random. Ts&Cs are online. There was no winner for the December 2023/January 2024 competition.

Membership Enquiries:

Please phone our membership team on **0131 445 5577** to apply to become a Member of SELECT or if you would like more information about joining. Alternatively you can email us on memberservices@select.org.uk or submit an online enquiry.

Tue 19 March – Ayrshire,
The Gailes Hotel

Thu 21 March – Aberdeen,
Tullos Training

Tue 26 March – Tayside,
Perth College

Thu 28 March – Lanarkshire,
New College Lanarkshire,
Motherwell Campus



Wed 1 May – Edinburgh,
The Walled Garden

Thurs 2 May – Borders,
Macdonald Cardrona Hotel,
Peebles

Wed 8 May – Dundee,
The Apex Hotel

Tue 14 May – Ayrshire,
Fenwick Hotel

Wed 15 May – Dumfries,
Easterbrook Hall

Wed 22 May – Oban,
The Corran Halls

Thu 23 May – Glasgow,
Hampden Park

Wed 29 May – Aberdeen,
Pittodrie Stadium

Thu 30 May – Inverness,
Leonardo Hotel

Tue 11 June – Shetland,
Shetland Arts Development
Agency, Lerwick

Tue 18 June – Orkney,
The Pickaquoy Centre

Wed 26 June – Islay,
The Machrie



Mon 29 July – Dunblane
New Golf Club, Perthshire



Mon 12 August-Fri 16 August – venues TBC

PROFESSIONALS' DAY

Thu 19 September – venue TBC

PRESIDENT'S LUNCH

Fri 27 September – Grand
Central Hotel, Glasgow

PAST PRESIDENTS' CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Thu 5 December – venue TBC



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



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



Access to Certificate
of Construction for
approved bodies/ACCs



Works with
any internet
enabled device

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Our upgraded **SELECTcerts**
service helps you create
a wide range of electronic
certificates quickly
and easily



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support via
a dedicated
helpline

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

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